

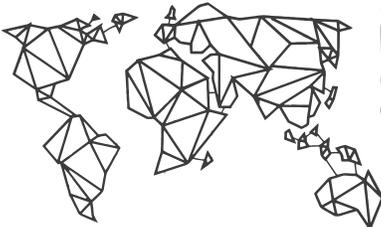


¹ Charles F. Stanley, *God Has a Plan for Your Life: The Discovery that Makes All the Difference* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2008), x.

Notes:

GREAT COMMISSION LEADERSHIP

HOMEWORK PACKET EIGHT



LEADING WITH PURPOSE & VISION

In spite of any difficulty or sin that you may have faced, God still has a fantastic plan in mind for your life.¹

Charles F. Stanley

BEFORE GOING ANY FURTHER, IS CHRIST ON THE THRONE?

If not, make sure He is!

MEMORY VERSE

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

Jeremiah 29:11 [NIV]

VISIONARY LEADERSHIP

Jesus taught that those who follow Him will do even greater things than He did (Jn. 14:12). That’s quite the visionary statement! He was obviously referring to Spirit-empowered Christians fulfilling the Great Commission. Great Commission leaders must be willing to live purpose-directed, visionary lives. Jonathan demonstrated this, taking huge risks for God, attempting great things for Him even in the face of impossible odds. He told his armor bearer, “Perhaps the LORD will act in our behalf. Nothing can hinder the LORD from saving, whether by many or by few” (1 Sam. 14:6 NIV). He had a sense of purpose and a willingness to follow God’s will trusting Him no matter what. Because of his radical obedience, God was able to do great things through him. God will do the same with you as you live surrendered to Him, following His purpose for your life.

LIVING WITH PURPOSE, MISSION, & VISION

The fact that you are a Christian carries with it a job description. This week’s memory verse was written to a very specific situation but it reveals a truth about God’s nature and His will for His people. He has a plan for His people and He has a plan for you (Eph. 2:10). Many Christians have ignorantly believed that the world’s idea of purpose is also their life calling – this “American dream” has been dubbed the 5 C’s (cash, cars, careers, condos, and cuties). Mark Batterson describes how many Christians have

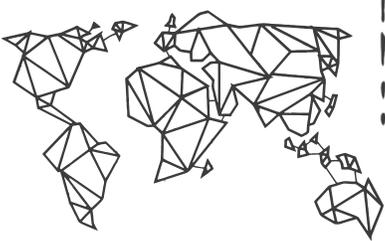
² Mark Batterson, *All In: You Are One Decision Away From a Totally Different Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2013), 24.

³ C.H. Spurgeon, *An All Around Ministry: Addresses to Ministers and Students* (BookAndSuchNW, 2009), Ch. 3, Kindle.

Notes:

Americanized the gospel which is the same thing as spiritualizing the American dream.² Both are wrong. God has put you here for a purpose no one else can accomplish. The Christian has a new identity and specific purpose. It is your responsibility and opportunity to know and live God's purpose and will for your life. The Christian's life purpose is a life of meaning, accomplishment and fulfillment. If you do not understand your new identity and if you have not articulated a well-defined purpose, mission and vision statement, in line with His Word, you will experience little of the abundant and fulfilling life God has planned for you. God has a wonderful, elaborate plan for your life. Will you follow it? Your answer to that question describes how you will follow those whose shoulders you stand on and how you'll prepare for those who will stand on yours (remember how David did this for Solomon in 1 Chr. 28).

Following His will for your life will result in a life of accomplishing His purpose and mission for you. Understanding your purpose, mission, vision and strategy are important. As a leader you must lead with a strong sense of each of these. Leaders must be able to make the right decisions, at the right time and in the right way, all in line with God's will. Indecisiveness is often worse than making a bad decision. (God can correct a bad decision but it is difficult to overcome a habit of indecisiveness.) Leaders must be able to know God's will and follow Him, making the right decisions. That includes avoiding distractions. Spurgeon warned that if you can't do two things well, don't!³ Live focused on your God-given purpose, unwilling to be sidetracked from it. (If you're not clear what His purpose, mission, and vision for your life are, you'll likely be distracted by anything.) The following diagram (figure 8.1) explains the relationships between each of these terms and how they relate to accomplishing your purpose.



Running with Intentionality

"THE PRIZE" [1 Cor. 9:24-27]

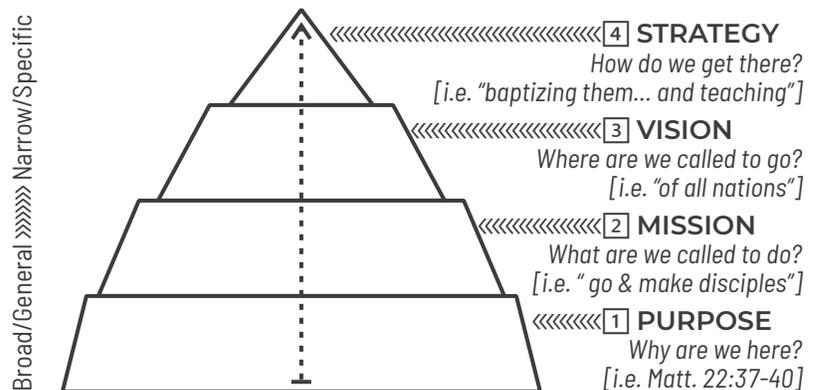


Figure 8.1

⁴ Aubrey Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning: A New Model for Church and Ministry Leaders* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2005).

⁵ Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 17.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 285.

Notes:

A great resource for leaders is Aubrey Malphurs' book, "Advanced Strategic Planning."⁴ This will help you lead with vision and strategy. His book was written more for churches and ministries but the principles of writing purpose, mission, vision and strategy statements will benefit individuals as well. Check out the Great Commission Alliance values, purpose, mission and vision statements that were derived from Malphurs' strategic planning process. God has a great purpose, mission, vision and strategy for you and you'll benefit from having them written out in a way that makes them memorable.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR PURPOSE

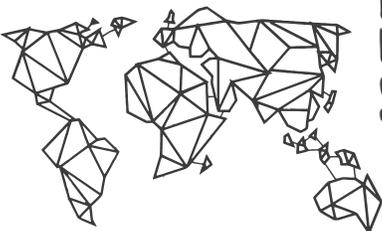
Rick Warren writes:

*The purpose of your life is far greater than your own personal fulfillment, your peace of mind or even your happiness. It's far greater than your family, your career, or even your wildest dreams and ambitions. If you want to know why you were placed on this planet you must begin with God. You were born by His purpose and for His purpose.*⁵

There are a few main callings every Christian is called to, and created for. These make up your purpose, the reason you exist. They are ① to love God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength (Mk. 12:30), ② to love others as yourself (Mk. 12:31), ③ to make disciples of all nations (Mt. 28:18-20), ④ to grow in the context of a Biblically based body of believers (Heb. 10:24-25), and ⑤ to glorify God in all that you do (1 Cor. 10:31). Warren summarizes those main purposes as worship, fellowship, spiritual growth, ministry and mission.⁶ There are individual callings that derive from the context of the 5 listed above; these would constitute your mission. Before considering your specific mission, you must clearly articulate your broader purpose.

→ **Considering the 5 passages listed above, why do you exist?**

→ **If you are currently leading some type of ministry, why does the ministry exist? What is its purpose?** (Note: it is important that this be clear for those you lead.)



⁷ Mark Batterson, *All In: You Are One Decision Away From a Totally Different Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2013), 16.

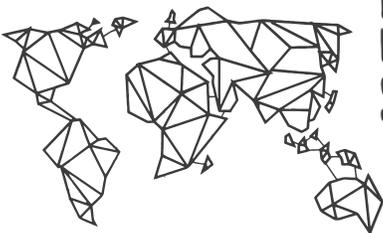
Notes:

ACCOMPLISHING YOUR MISSION

Your specific mission is what you should be doing. This is more specific than your general purpose but it necessarily flows from it. Your mission is to accomplish God's will for your life. Your mission is a description of what you should be doing. Before you seek to know God's will, make sure you're committed to following His will whatever that is. Ask God what He wants you to do with your life. Batterson writes, "That's a dangerous question to ask God but not nearly as dangerous as not asking that question."⁷ Here are some simple guidelines that will help you know God's will. Remember Jer. 29:11 and Eph. 2:10 as we dive into this topic. God's Word literally gives us a three-step method for knowing His will in Rom. 12:1-2: ① Present your body as a living sacrifice, in effect, living for Him rather than yourself, ② do not be conformed to the patterns of this world (don't be worldly) and ③ be transformed by the renewing of your mind (the renewing of your mind occurs when you read, meditate on, study, memorize and apply His Word). If you are following those 3 steps and dedicated to doing His will, desiring to do His will, knowing confidently that His way is best and being willing to do His will whatever that may be, you won't miss His will for your life!

→ **Do you find it easy or difficult to know God's will for your life? Why or why not?**

Here are are a few important characteristics of knowing God's will (the references included give general examples of these). God reveals His specific will as you are obedient to His general will (Mt. 6:33). God may not reveal more of His will to you if you are being disobedient to what He has already given you (Jonah chapters 1-3). God is eager to reveal His will (Ps. 127:1). God isn't obligated to reveal His will if you aren't willing (Jn. 17:7). God's will is often in line with the desires of a Spirit filled Christian (Php. 2:13, Ps.37:4). God expects us to use sanctified common sense – not emotionalism or mysticism (Pr. 16:9). God won't lead you into failure (Ps. 37:5, Rom. 8:28). God's will is in the present tense – a lifestyle (Dt. 30:1-6). God won't reveal His will for your entire life all at once; He will always reveal it to you at exactly the right time (Ps. 32:8). God's will is always in agreement with His Word (Ps. 119:9-11). God wants you to be careful about who you go to for advice (Pr.



Notes:

11:14). God's will is about a relationship not a situation – focus on Him not the circumstance (Jn. 15:1-5). God's will cannot be improved upon, it is perfect (Rom. 12:1-2).

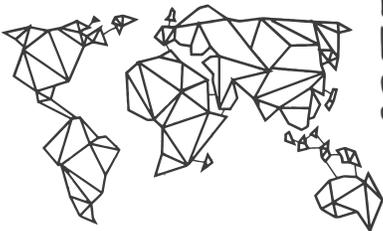
God will give you specific direction at times via "speaking to you" in various ways, but this is fairly rare Biblically (and 1 Kings 19:10-13 is often taken out of context). God's voice occurs primarily in Scripture and God's followers will follow His Word (Jn. 10:27). God can also encourage you in other ways (Ex. in your mind, through other believers, etc). Don't rely solely on those other ways. There are only a few examples of this in the entire Bible and there are no commands to emphasize this anywhere. He will guide your thinking according to His will. Always check what you think God says with Scripture and get confirmation of it from spiritual authority.

God will open doors as you step out in faith but you shouldn't determine God's will by what appears to be an open door. Understand that the open door policy (whatever door opens is God's will) is not correct. David and Bathsheba was an open door situation. Seek God's will and then when you know His will definitely step out in faith and watch Him open the door.

A friend and pastor, Randy Ash, uses the analogy of a river when describing God's will. God's will is like a river. You'll never know where it is going until you get into it. Sometimes it will be calm, while other times it will be raging. Sometimes you'll be able to see what lies ahead, while others you will not. Sometimes it will be peaceful and enjoyable, while other times may be terrifying. If you're in it you can't possibly miss getting where it is going. If you're waiting on the side to see where it is going you can't possibly ever get there. The only way to know God's will is to jump in feet first, taking steps of faith today, expecting Him to show you the next step when the time comes.

- **Which of these characteristics of knowing God's will seem most significant to you?**

- **Have you ever listened to the wrong "voices" when determining God's will (Jn. 10:1-5). What was the result?**



⁸ Aubrey Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning: A New Model for Church and Ministry Leaders* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2005).

⁹ Warren G. Bennis, "Brainy Quote," <http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/w/warrenge121713.html> (Accessed November 21, 2013).

¹⁰ George Barna, *The Power of Vision: Discover and Apply God's Plan for Your Life and Ministry—3rd Ed.* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2009), 26.

Notes:

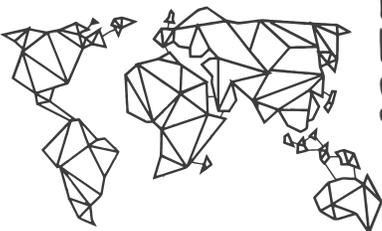
God wants you to know and follow His will, embracing it as your mission. Eph. 5:17 says, "...do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.." Knowing God's will is a command and God never commands you to do something He won't enable you to do. As you seek to know His will, maintain a "Your will be done" (Matt. 6:10) perspective. Check out the Knowing God's Will section at the end of this homework packet. Work through this checklist as you seek to discern God's will for your life. This checklist can be used as you seek to know God's will for small, short term or lifelong parts of your life. You can craft a mission statement for any chapter of your life (for example, for your time in college, for your current job, for your parenting, your marriage, etc.) or for your life as a whole.

→ **After reviewing the *Knowing God's Will* section (in the *Act Now* section of today's homework), describe your mission—God's will for you (this could be a short term answer or a long term answer).** (Note: Keep this mission statement brief enough to remember. Make sure it is action oriented, flowing from your purpose statement, and clarifying it in a specific and personal way.)

→ **If you are currently leading some type of a ministry, also write out a mission statement for that.** (Malphurs states this should be "a broad, brief, Biblical statement of what the ministry is supposed to be doing"⁸)

MOTIVATED BY VISION

Leadership expert Warren Bennis defines leadership as "the capacity to translate vision into reality."⁹ Barna defines vision as "foresight with insight based on hindsight."¹⁰ You must understand the vision God has called you to. A vision is a picture of what the future will be like if you fulfill your purpose and mission. This picture of the future will inspire you to continue to accomplish His will each day. Jesus modeled this for us. He came for a purpose (Lk. 19:10) and persevered through the pain of the cross, His mission, because of the vision that He looked forward



¹¹ Aubrey Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning: A New Model for Church and Ministry Leaders* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2005).

Notes:

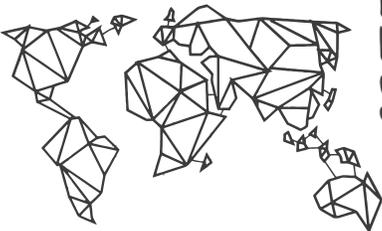
to (Heb. 12:2). Similarly, you must have a personal vision for your life as well as a clear vision for any ministry you lead. A leader without vision has nowhere to go and no way to lead. A leader with a clear vision must articulate that vision to their team.

→ **Briefly describe what the future will look like if you accomplish your life purpose and mission.**

→ **Briefly describe what the future will look like if your ministry accomplishes its purpose and mission.**

DEVELOPING A STRATEGY

Once you know the vision you must also consider what must be done to accomplish it and what obstacles could keep you from it. It is imperative that a leader has a clear strategy to achieve the vision God gives them. You must determine what resources will be needed to make the vision a reality. You must also determine what roles key team members will play in accomplishing the vision. Once these factors have all been considered, write out a clear step by step strategy for accomplishing the vision, including every aspect that will be necessary for success. Review your strategy and determine what measurable outcomes will confirm it is working and what to do if these criteria aren't met. Finally, implement your strategy. If the trajectory isn't set exactly right at the start, you'll be far off in the end. Devote the time and energy necessary to start right, doing whatever it takes early on to ensure the goal is reached down the road. Every ministry needs a strategic plan to accomplish its God given vision and mission. Again, check out Aubrey Malphurs' book "Advanced Strategic Planning"¹¹ for more on developing a strategic plan. A ministry "strategic plan" that works anywhere and anytime is the "Exponential Harvest" description of how to fulfill the Great Commission. This will be the focus of the entire second section of this week's homework.



Notes:

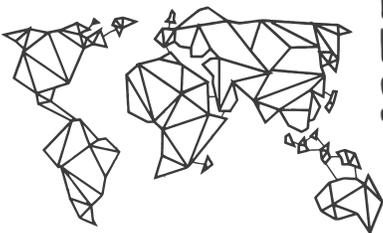
→ Describe a past experience in which a lack of strategy had negative results and prevented you from reaching a goal.

→ Prayerfully seek God concerning a strategy that will help you accomplish your life and ministry purpose, mission, and vision. (Again, check out Aubrey Malphurs' *Advanced Strategic Planning* for more on this. This will obviously take some time, but for now, go ahead and list any key "critical success factors" which this strategy will include.)

JESUS IS OUR EXAMPLE

Jesus prepared for His purpose (Luke 2:52), planned for His purpose (Mark 11:1-7, 14:13-15) & did only what the Father directed (Jn. 5:19). We are to imitate Him (Phil. 2:5). Choose today to accomplish all that God has planned for your life, through His Holy Spirit's power. Decide now that you will know and commit to God's purpose, mission and vision for your life and ministry. Prayerfully seek to clearly articulate what each of those are while simultaneously holding them with an open hand, allowing God to lead and guide you. Also seek to lead clearly, articulating the purpose, mission, vision, and strategy to those you lead. Your purpose, mission and vision will become clearer over time. You can and will turn this world upside down for Him if you'll fully commit to Him and His will for your life. You only have one life to live! God made you unique and only you can accomplish His will for your life. You're never too young nor old to begin living for the purpose He has for you. Refuse to be distracted by anything, even good things, that isn't in line with His purpose, mission and vision for your life.

Remember, your weaknesses, inabilities, failures and past present no challenge to God's will for your life. Your willingness does. Be willing to be and do what God made you for. You don't have what it takes but God's Spirit in you does so be the leader He made you to be and turn this world upside down for Him!



Notes:

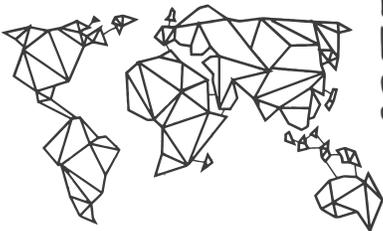
ACT NOW

KNOWING GOD'S WILL

Eph.5:17 says, "...do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is." This is a command and God never commands you to do something He won't enable you to do.

- **List the issue you are seeking God's will about.** (Note: Will it glorify God? If not, it is not His will. If so, proceed.)

- **Work through the following checklist. If you can honestly check each of the 10 points in this checklist, you'll likely be certain of God's will.**
 - I am presenting my life continually for His purposes, living a life of surrender and obedience and being conformed to His character—not the world's (Rom. 12:1-2).
 - I am walking with Christ on the throne, being filled with His Spirit (Eph. 5:18).
 - I desire to obey His will whatever that is (Ps. 40:8).
 - I am being obedient to God's general will (as revealed through Scripture) and being faithful with all God has given me to be faithful with so far (Lk. 16:10).
 - I am praying, fasting and asking God for wisdom about the issue (James 1:5).
 - I have sensed Him changing my desires in this direction as I have sought God's will and walked in close fellowship with Him (Ps. 37:4). List any passions God has given you that relate to the issue above:
 -
 -
 -
 -
 - I have God-given talents and abilities in this area (Rom. 12:3-8). List any talents God has given you that relate to the issue above:
 -
 -



Notes:

-
-
- I am checking general scriptural principles and what the Word directly says about the issue (Ps. 119:105).
- I am using wisdom and common sense and have written out a pro's and con's list (2 Tim. 1:7, 1 Cor. 2:16).

PROS:

- +
- +
- +
- +
- +
- +

CONS:

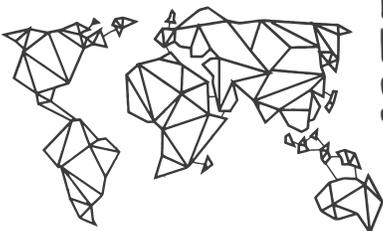
-
-
-
-
-
-

- I have sought confirmation from godly authority (pastor, parents, accountability partners, etc.) in my life and they are in agreement (Pr. 11:14).

→ **Based on the previous steps, what do you think God's will is in regard to the issue mentioned above?**

If you still aren't certain, continue seeking Him first, trusting He will clarify His will at the correct time (Mt. 6:33).

If He has clarified His will for you, step out by faith! Remember, the only times a leader stops are when they realize they've missed God's will or when God's will has been accomplished. Knowing God's will is not enough, you must obey Him too! Prioritize God's will over all other distractions (remember time management). Set goals (remember SMART goals) to achieve God's will. Develop a strategy and plan for how you'll follow His will. Take action; step out by faith and go for it 100%. Periodically evaluate how you're doing to ensure you're accomplishing God's will. Stay motivated to accomplish God's will (review chapter 5 notes on motivation). Finally, seek to follow His will in the Power of His Spirit because there's no other way you'll be able to accomplish it!



¹² Mark Batterson, *All In: You Are One Decision Away From a Totally Different Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2013), 85.

¹³ Bill Bright, *The Journey Home: Finishing with Joy* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2003), 102.

¹⁴ Aubrey Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning: A New Model for Church and Ministry Leaders* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2005), 126.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 151.

Notes:

WRITING OUT YOUR PURPOSE, MISSION, & VISION STATEMENTS

Clearly define purpose, mission, and vision statements that will glorify God and turn this world upside down for Him. Keep Mark Batterson's advice in mind as you do this: "Pursue God-ordained passions. Go after a dream that is destined to fail without divine intervention."¹² Also remember Bill Bright's challenge to "Set goals so big that unless God helps you, you will be a miserable failure."¹³ Write these statements by faith!

PURPOSE

On the following page, write out a short and memorable statement that describes why you exist as it relates to loving God and others (Mark 12:29-31), fulfilling the Great Commission (Matt.28:18-20), growing in the context of Christian fellowship (Heb. 10:24-25), and glorifying Him in all that you do (1 Cor. 10:31). Review the statement you wrote out in this section of these notes and clarify as needed.

» **Example:** *I exist to passionately love God, my family, and those around me, glorifying God in all I do and fulfilling His Great Commission by sharing my faith and making disciples.*

MISSION

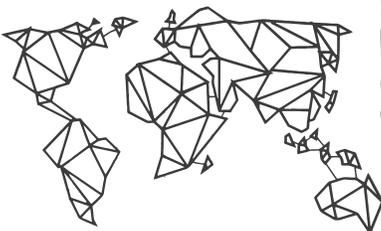
Consider the things God has called you to do with your life (i.e. having a family, etc.). Then, on the following page, summarize all of that into a "broad, brief, Biblical statement of what you should be doing."¹⁴ Make sure this is an easy-to-remember, action-oriented statement.

» **Example:** *My mission is to be a godly husband and father who is multiplying Christ-like multipliers in full time ministry.*

VISION

On the following page, write out a short, memorable, exciting, and motivating description of what the future will look like if you fulfill your purpose and mission. Malphurs defines this as a clear, challenging picture of your future, as you believe that it can and must be.¹⁵ This will motivate you to keep fulfilling your purpose and mission.

» **Example:** *The vision that inspires me is someday, after a life lived fully for Him and His Great Commission, standing before Jesus, with my family, hearing Him say "well done good and faithful servant."*





Notes:

SUMMARIZE YOUR PURPOSE, MISSION, & VISION

Note: If you are currently leading some type of ministry, work through this again on a separate sheet of paper (& communicate this with your team).

DATE:

PURPOSE:

My purpose is... (I exist to...)

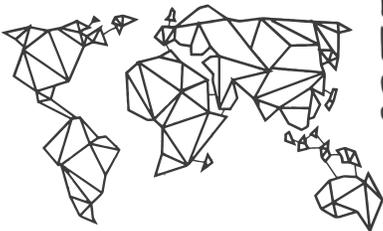
MISSION:

My mission is... (God's will is for me to join Him in doing...)

VISION:

The vision (the picture of the future) that inspires me is...

Take the following critical steps to implement these statements. Memorize these statements (write them on a notecard and keep it in your Bible for frequent review). Make them a focus of daily prayer. Stay accountable as you pursue them. Develop a strategic plan for them. Schedule your time and make decisions in light of these statements. Finally, keep developing these statements as you grow and develop.



¹⁶ G. T. Doran, *There's a S.M.A.R.T. Way to Write Management's Goals and Objectives* (Management Review, Volume 70, Issue 11, 1981), 35-36.

Notes:

PERSONAL GROWTH

→ Write out this lesson's memory verse (also, write it out several more times this week):

→ List a SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant & within a Time-frame) goal¹⁶ for this lesson and action plans for achieving it.

SMART Goal:

Action plan:

Action plan:

Action plan:

→ How are you staying close to Jesus, walking by faith and in integrity, trusting Him and the power of His Spirit in life and ministry rather than yourself, and how can you more?

→ Jesus insisted that serving Him and serving others was the highest attribute of leadership (Mt. 20:25-28). How are you growing as a servant leader?

→ How will this lesson help you better accomplish the Great Commission and multiply Christ-like multipliers?

→ List any last thoughts and then put everything you learned in this lesson in God's hands, trusting Him to build these things into your life.

