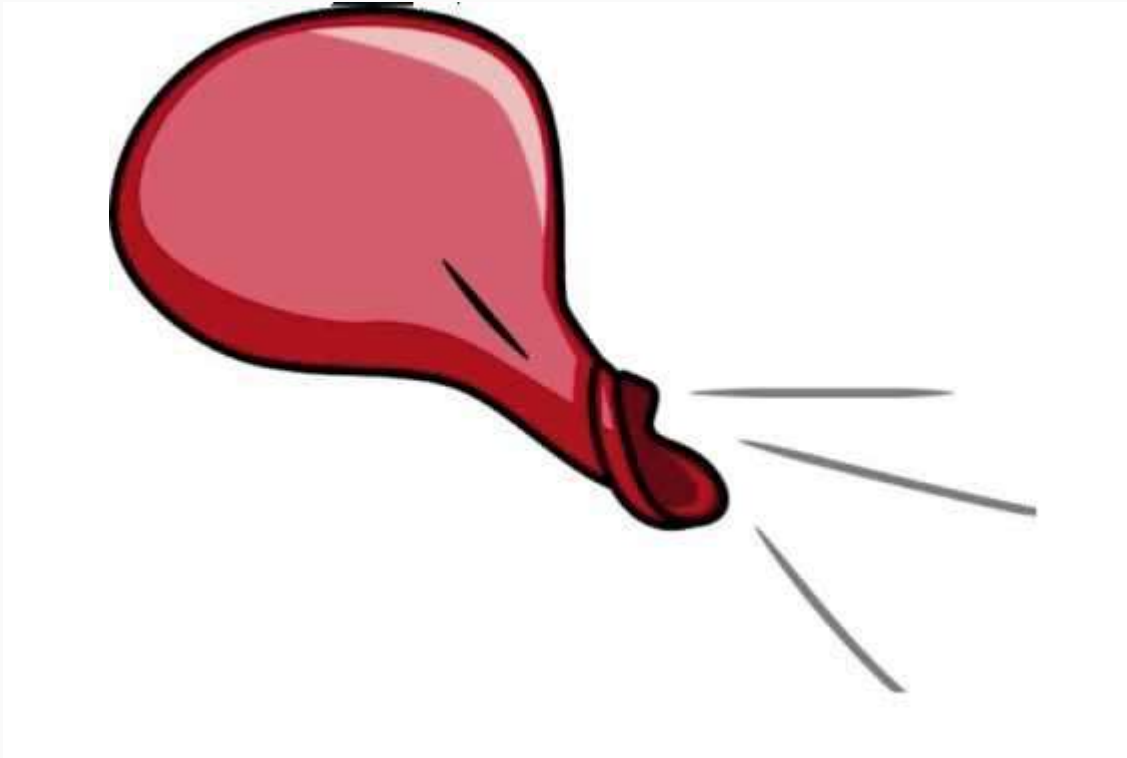


Focused Zeal



“Zeal without knowledge is not good; a person who moves too quickly may go the wrong way.”

Proverbs 19:2 (NLT)

“Zeal” is one of those rare words that expresses its meaning as soon as it’s said. Can’t you just feel the energy as it rolls off of your tongue?! It’s also special because, like a knife, it can be either hurtful or helpful depending on how it’s used.

Zeal – Full of energy, power and potentially dangerous when unbridled.

A kid trying to tie a balloon comes to mind. Having filled it to the point when it's ready to burst, he's left no room to tie it. He struggles and, oops! It slips out and goes zipping all around the room. Fun! Until it happens again and again. If you live your life this way the proverb will inevitably come true. Zealously zipping, you'll eventually run out of gas on a trip to nowhere.

Reflect: **When have I enthusiastically jumped into something without planning sufficiently?**

On the other hand, imagine where you'd end up if your zeal was precisely targeted for release at the right time. Like a rocket, you'd reach some far-off destination where no one has been before. Wow!

How do the scientists who plan a space mission do it? Starting with a clear goal, they make preparations. Fearing their own limitations, they seek advice from the best and brightest in their fields. They tirelessly strip away unnecessary burdens that would weigh the ship down. They prepare! But not endlessly. (What good is it to plan and plan but do nothing?) Once sufficiently prepared, they launch. Massive energy erupts, channeled perfectly to propel the craft at great speeds directly to its uncharted destination. Amazing!

Consider: **Failing to plan is planning to fail. Planning excessively is also planning to fail.**

God's wisdom to advance your Mission is the same.

① Set a Goal – Make it God sized!

"I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us." The Apostle Paul (Philippians 3:14)

② Make Preparations – Create a plan.

"But don't begin until you count the cost. For who would begin construction of a building without first calculating the cost to see if there is enough money to finish it?" Jesus Christ (Luke 14:28)

③ Seek Advice – Form a Team of wise godly counsel.

"Plans succeed through good counsel; don't go to war without wise advice." (Proverbs 20:18)

④ Strip off Unnecessary Burdens – Travel Light.

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us." (Hebrews 12:1)

⑤ Launch – Zealously serve!

"He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us." The Apostle Paul (2 Corinthians 1:4)

Imagine: My focused zeal yielding bountiful kingdom fruit.

How will you direct your zeal? How will you use it to propel your Mission into unreached places where it will produce bountiful kingdom fruit?

Yes, you serve a zealous God... and he loves a bit of spontaneity! Yet, Jesus instructs us to do a bit of planning and preparation. Clearly a

touch of pragmatism is also in his character. Seek the beautiful balance between these.

If you tend to be spontaneous, find a means to slow yourself. Think of the ineffectiveness of your zeal cast haphazardly around. If you are risk averse, couple with another who spurs you on... be powerful together! What a terrible thing it would be for your zeal to gather dust.

Follow God's wisdom because advancing your Mission calls for...

Focused Zeal!

Go off the grid and ask these questions:

Coach's Questions

- What is a God sized goal to advance my Mission?
- Who can I recruit to help me make plans to accomplish this and ensure I'm not missing something?
- What am I holding on to that needs to be released for me to move forward?

Spirit Talk

Post this where you will see it regularly.

"Run with focused Zeal."

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us."

Hebrews 12:1 (NLT)



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~ DAN B.

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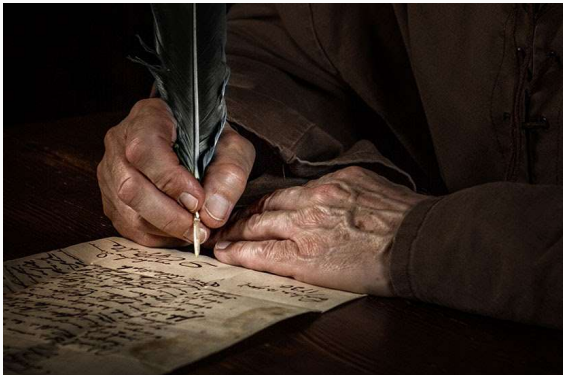
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