

## **May 2020 The Things Above**

A few years ago a good friend of mine was leading a Bible study. He said "the Bible tells us to set our minds on the things above or the things of heaven, but can anybody tell me what these things are? Because I want to know."

Out of about 15-20 guys nobody had an answer for this question. This seemed like an important question to answer so I started seeking God for an answer. And he began to teach me.

While writing Cracking Heaven's Code God began to teach me about the things above. His standards for our lives are the things above, and what we are supposed to focus on. But, his standards are different from the world's standards. His standard becomes the high thing which is like true north on a compass. We must constantly be comparing our lives against the true north if we want to navigate successfully.

There have been studies done where people were dropped in the middle of nowhere and asked to navigate their way out. If the people lacked a reference point then they tended to walk in circles because they make biased decisions favoring one side. They think they are walking straight, but without a reference point they make small biased adjustments that cause them to walk in circles. To keep our lives from spinning in circles we need a true north, which is meant to be God's standard.

For a couple of years I have been narrowing this down to a set of questions we can ask ourselves to know if we are on track. But in order to ask the correct questions we need to know the heavenly standard that we are striving for

Before we get into these standards let's discuss the word mindset. We are to set our minds on the things of heaven, or God's standards. The word mindset means to have our minds fixed on. Our default way of thinking is supposed to be focused on the things above.

Circumstances in life may try to divert our attention, but we can redirect our focus back onto God's standards. The goal is for our normal response to the pressures of life to be keeping our minds set or fixed on God's standards. The book of Isaiah says to raise our standard when the enemy comes. When issues come up in life we can fix our mind on the standard instead of our circumstances.

Keeping our minds fixed on God's standards produces fruit. God has promised to take care of us, and when we keep our minds fixed on heaven God has us covered from every angle. Think of it as a circle. God is encircling and covering us from every angle. Our job is to keep our minds fixed on this.

God has given us tools for each area of life to help us keep our minds fixed on the things of heaven. In the Abundant Life Blueprint we call these tools table turners. The table turner is the one thing that matters to help us keep our minds fixed on the things above.

It is important to remember that standards are for feedback. They are not for condemning us. They cue us to make adjustments.

To fix our minds on God's standards means making a very firm decision. To decide means to kill off all other options. We must be unbending about the goal or standard and decide not to tolerate anything less.

But this must be balanced with a gentle graceful approach with ourselves and others when we miss the mark. As a practical example, If our emotions drift away from joy, it doesn't change the standard. It means we give ourselves and others grace and the opportunity to adjust and get back on track. We don't beat ourselves up, we simply adjust and focus on joy again.

We must be unbending in the standards but also give ourselves and others grace by using a gentle approach when we fall short. This is what God does for us. He has very exacting standards and he will not change them for anyone. But when we miss the mark he gives us grace and disciplines us gently so that we learn and adjust. God wants us to get these standards right, because they lead to life. He is faithful to help us but we must be willing to make adjustments and change

We are either growing stronger in our ability to maintain our focus on these standards or we are drifting away.

**Down below are 9 areas of life and their standards...**

### **The Emotional Standard is Joy**

Joy is to be our focus for emotions. It is hard to be sad, fearful, stressed, anxious, bitter, etc when we are full of joy. God has given us his presence and in his presence there is fullness of joy. In Isaiah 61 God promised to give us everlasting joy.

**The Fruit of Joy:** When we have joy we are more present in life which helps us squeeze the most out of the moments we have and love other people better. Having continual joy helps us grow in the positive emotions and when we lack joy it is an indicator that we are focused on the wrong things. Joy gives us amazing feedback. The joy of the Lord is our strength.

### **The Joy Table Turner: The Imagination**

The imagination is our number one tool for increasing joy. The imagination is an ongoing video loop that is either generating incredible joy or fear, stress, worry, anger, insecurity. We must cast down any imaginations that try to exalt themselves against God's standards. This is a practice. Stir in images that create joy on purpose each day.

**The Abundant Life Standard: Forgiving and Giving Grace.**

God is giving us grace that we don't deserve. Because of Jesus he forgives our sin and is now doing continually good for us all the time. We must learn to do the same for others. We all have a tendency to retaliate, avoid people, or give them the silent treatment when they wrong us. But, God has called us to a higher standard of forgiving and giving other people grace just like he has done for us.

**The Fruit:** When we forgive and give grace to others the result is that God's grace flows and we effortlessly make other people great, which beautifies us and makes us great. The other result is that God begins to grow and multiply all the areas of life effortlessly, as God weaves it all together for good.

**Communion is the Table Turner:** Taking daily communion is the Abundant Life table turner. As we take communion we remember that God's wrath was poured out on the body of Jesus so that we have God's cup of blessing. It is a reminder that God gives us grace and is continually working to make us great.

**Purpose: God has a unique plan for each of us.**

God has a unique plan for each of us that combines our gifts, talents, and experiences into something that is unique to us. We find this plan by seeking him.

**The Fruit of Purpose:** When we find and move forward with our purpose it causes us to have purpose and meaning for each day. Our purpose brings out the best in us and accelerates our growth. Our purpose will also be a blessing to a lot of people.

**The Purpose Table Turner: Prayer and Scribing**

To find our purpose we must be in communication with God, and prayer is one of the top ways. Scribing the Bible is another way to seek God's purpose. To scribe simply hand copy passages of the Bible. Ten to fifteen minutes per day scribing the Bible and then reading out loud what we write does wonders for finding our purpose.

**Health: Our bodies are the temple of God.**

Our bodies are not our own. They were bought with Jesus' sacrifice, and they are now the temple of God, and he lives in us. We must seek to honor God with our temples by keeping it pure, healthy, fit, and nourished.

**The Fruit of Health:** When we seek to honor God with our bodies God grace helps our bodies continually improve in the way they feel, look, and perform as health flows from the inside out.

**The Health Table Turner: A Song in Our Heart**

When David had the temple in the Old Testament he instituted continual praise and worship. Our bodies should be praising God all day. This changes our internal environment. Health is a frequency or vibration.

### **Family Standard: Bring Out the Best In Them**

God put treasure in each of us. Every day we can help to bring it out by praising, challenging, and inspiring them each day.

**The Fruit of Family:** When we focus on bringing out the best in our family it creates an amazing sense of connection and the home becomes a joyful place as everyone finds the treasure of God in them, finds their purpose, and contributes to the family.

### **The Family Table Turner: Cherishing**

Love puts up with people but to cherish is to be continually on our mind. To cherish our family is to constantly look for opportunities to be a blessing by protecting them from pain and giving them the desires of their heart.

### **Financial Standard: Stewarding the finances and resources God entrusts to us.**

God graces us with resources and finances. He entrusts them to us, and we get to partner with him to multiply them. He wants us to be good stewards with what he has entrusted to us. To be a good steward is to continually manage what he has given us for optimal results.

**The Fruit of Stewardship:** When we are good stewards God's grace abounds so that we have enough for every need, fulfill our purpose, take care of our family, and are a blessing to a lot of people. Our income, profitability, savings, investments, and giving all grow continually.

### **The Financial Table Turner: Partnership**

Our most important partner is God. As we seek him about our finances we will guide us how to steward our finances. The other important principle is to be in agreement with our spouses and any business partners. Getting into agreement creates better stewardship.

### **Order: God is helping us be positioned correctly.**

Life is constantly changing. Things do not stay fixed, but God is constantly trying to help us get our lives and everything around us positioned correctly.

**The Fruit of Order:** When things are positioned correctly grace flows and everything becomes easier. There is more space which also results in more time.

### **The Order Table Turner: Submission to Authority**

When we submit our lives first to God and then to the leaders and those in authority over us it keeps us positioned correctly. To submit is to honor people with our words and to obey what they tell us willingly. We might not always agree with people in leadership but we can still honor

them. We must submit to God, to spouses, to parents, to bosses, to governmental leaders, and to anyone who God has placed over us.

**Time: Focus on God's plan for our life.**

God will show us where to focus in life. Are we focusing on what God tells us is important and working on his plan rather than our own? Anything on God's plan will have lasting impact.

**The Fruit of Time:** When we focus on the correct things God expands our time and helps us squeeze the most out of what we have. The result is that we can get our work done in 1-2 hours per day, which leaves plenty of time for fun and being a blessing to others.

**The Time Table Turner: Rest**

When we stay calm and at rest mentally it expands our time. Anytime we are frantic and hurried time is stolen.

**Community Standard: Align With the Light**

God has transferred us into his kingdom. To live in God's kingdom means we are aligned with the light. To align with the light means we are moving toward God rather than away from him. It also means that we understand that other people's perspectives and gifts can help bring each of us into the light even more. Run into community rather than isolating.

**The Fruit of Community:** When a community of people are aligned with the light the community grows rapidly and the community becomes self-sustaining from within.

**The Community Table Turner: Connection**

In a community everything is connected. Make it a goal to connect with people which will open opportunities to help those in need and to combine your gift with theirs to create something better than what can happen in isolation.

**9 Questions**

Based on these standards here is a list of 9 questions to ask ourselves every night so that we can stay on track and keep our minds fixed on the things above.

1. How was my joy today?
2. Did I walk in forgiveness and give other people grace?
3. Did I seek hard after God's plan for me today?
4. Did I honor my body as God's temple today?
5. Did I bring out the best in my family today?
6. Did I steward my finances and resources well today?
7. Did I follow God's leading today?
8. Did I make progress on God's plan for my life today?
9. Was my life aligned with God's kingdom today by living in the light?