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# MAXIMIZE YOUR *Life*

6 Choices to the Good Life.

# Table of Contents

Introduction .....	1
Obstacles Or Barriers .....	3
Choose To Win .....	5
Choose Faith .....	7
Choose To Believe In You .....	8
Choose To Remember .....	10
Choose Your Weapon .....	11
Choose Your Words.....	13

# Introduction

## Ephesians 5:15-16 (TLB)

*15-16 So be careful how you act; these are difficult days. Don't be fools; be wise: make the most of every opportunity you have for doing good. If you crush it in the now, it will lead to your next. – Sam Collier*

I came across a quote a gentleman by the name of Sam Collier. He says, “If you crush it in the now, it will lead to the next.” I love that statement because, the way I see it, your now will lead to your next. I see that we are given moments, but we don't always consider them seriously. So, we don't maximize them. Many of us think, my moment is when I get on this stage. My moment is when I get the job that I want. My moment is when everybody's looking. I get enough Facebook likes or enough Instagram followers: That's my moment. But I want to submit to you today that, whatever moment you're in right now, that's your moment. If you are working a job that you don't like or are in a situation that you're not happy about, guess what? That's your moment, and how you handle it will determine whether the next one shows up.



I run into many people that can't wait to get a new job or a new husband. I'm sorry. We always think the next thing will be better. Well, guess what shows up in the next thing? You. If you're not better, the next thing will be the same as the current one. So, ask what God is doing in your now as he prepares you

for your next because, if you don't handle your now correctly, your next may never show up. I call this maximizing the moment. Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 4:17, “For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison.” God is preparing us for a greater weight of glory. So whatever moment you are in is the moment of preparation. Maybe your moment entails

going through marriage problems. Maybe your moment entails struggling in school. Maybe your moment entails having a job that you hate. It's a moment, a bleep on the radar, but this little bleep can determine the rest of your life.



# Obstacles or Barriers

Paul talks about afflictions. We consider afflictions to be giants. Giants are those things in our lives that we don't like, that we're waiting on God to move us on from. Giants can be sickness. Your giant can be your lack of education. Your giant can be anything and everything that keeps you from moving into what God has in store for you. Giants create big shadows. They stand in the way of something. Your giant is standing in the way of your destiny, your joy, your peace. And what I've learned about giants is this: Your giant's ability to move or not to move is based on how you see.

In Numbers 13, when God told the 12 spies through Moses to go and spy out the land, they did so and said, "God this is exactly the way you said it is, a land flowing with milk and honey." But 10 of the spies said, "Nah, nah, we can't overcome the giants in the land." There were two others who came back: Joshua and Caleb. And they said, "Nah, we are well able to do what God said we could do." What was the difference? They saw the same things, went to the same places, and served the same God, but their perspectives about what they were facing were different. Challenges could either be obstacles or barriers.

An obstacle is something that you have to go around or over, something that hinders progress. A barrier is something that stops progress. When I see my giant as a barrier, it stops me. Some of you view your pasts as your barriers. So, you can't get past them. Instead of getting around them, you're stuck, and you say, "I can't get past this." Some of you are facing obstacles, but you've made them seem like barriers and, thus, can't get past your mistakes.



Many of us are facing things right now that we've made so big and large that we think, I can never get past this. I can never overcome this.

God said, "If you trust me, I'm going to not only take you around it and over it, but I'm also going to take you through it. The very thing that you thought would stop you is an obstacle that I've allowed to be in place, not so that you can see how great you are, but so that you can know how great I am."

I've found that successful people have the ability to take what unsuccessful people see as barriers and make them simple obstacles to success. You may say, "I tried



this. I did that. It didn't work. I tried that idea. It didn't work." Listen, God gave you this idea. God gave you this vision. So, what you should do is keep grinding. You should keep seeking because there's a way over this thing. This thing is not the end of you. It's a part of your story. Overcoming this giant will make it easier to overcome the next one. There will be lessons from this fight that you will take into your next fight. That's why it's so important to maximize

every moment: Your moments today will prepare you for your moments tomorrow. Each moment is defined by choices. The choices we make today will determine the future we live tomorrow.

When facing your giants, you must make six key choices in order to walk in the victory that God has for you: choose to win, choose faith, choose to believe in you, choose to remember, choose your weapon, and choose your words. If you are going to get unstuck, you must make the right choices. The choices you made yesterday created the reality you live in today. It's time to change your choices.

# Choose to Win

One of my favorite Bible stories is that of David and Goliath. David was anointed king but continued to serve as a shepherd. He had to go back to the sheep because God didn't give him the kingdom right away.

God had to prepare him for the kingdom. So there David was with the sheep one day when his father came to him and said, "Hey, your brothers have been away fighting the war. Go take them something to eat."

While taking food to his brothers, David saw the giant Goliath hurling insults at Israel. Goliath was cursing (the Bible actually uses this word) and everybody was afraid because he was a nine-foot-tall giant. They said, "Oh, he's too big."



If you know the history of Israel and the Philistines, you will recognize that Philistine was part of the land of Canaan that God had promised the children of Israel. The Philistines were a resilient group. Israel would fight against them and gain some victory, but not full victory. And so here the children of Israel were again, fighting the Philistine army. What they failed to see was that they weren't fighting the giant in their strength; they were fighting it in God's strength.





Israel was backed by the promises of God but was still afraid of the giant. God is speaking to us right now. He says, “I told you that you would overcome this thing. I promised you that you would come out of this thing. I said, ‘We’re going to go to the other side.’ Why are you so focused on the giant instead of my words? If the giant is in your way, and I tell you that you’re going to go to a certain place, guess what? That giants got to go. But the giant can only go if you agree with me and not with the giant.”

So, David walked up and said, “Hey, do y’all hear this? He’s cursing us. Is anybody going to do anything?” But nobody did anything. The boy, who had to be 13 or 14 years old, walked up to the King.

He said, “King Saul, let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine. God is going to give us the victory over this giant.” Although Saul saw that David was young and inexperienced, he noticed something else in the boy that he couldn’t dismiss. There was a confidence in him. David said, “You don’t know who I am. Let me inform you: I watch my daddy’s sheep. I had a bear and a lion come against me one day, and I was able to take them out. So, this uncircumcised Philistine is going down.”

Remember the word “uncircumcised.” It was significant because it meant that Goliath was not a part of God’s covenant. Circumcision was a sign of the covenant. David was saying, “Listen, this dude is not even on God’s side. We’ve got God on our side. We’re in a covenant with God Almighty. He can talk and bark all he wants, but he doesn’t have Jehovah Jireh with him. He doesn’t have Jehovah Nissi. He doesn’t have Jehovah Shalom with him. So why are we listening to him? Why are you listening to people that don’t even know God?”

I could ask you similar questions: Why are you stuck on what your third-grade teacher said? Why are you stuck on what people said about you on social media? They don’t know your God. Why are you letting them define you? God has placed your giant before you, but you’ve got to make a choice. You’ve got to make a choice to win.

# Choose Faith

I love a statement by Gary Vaynerchuk in his book *Crushing It*. He says, “Being unafraid of making mistakes makes everything easy. For me, not worrying about what people think frees you to do things, and doing things allows you to win or learn from your loss— which means you win either way.” Hear me. The first choice you’ve got to make is this: “I’m no longer going to be afraid to try, I’m no longer going to be afraid to step out.” And these steps should be light steps, not foolish ones. It’s like taking a step in a direction. I learned this from author Joyce Meyer: You take a step in a direction, see if the peace of God and the hand of God are there, then take another step. When you sense that God is in what you’re doing, you take another step. This means you don’t just go off and quit your job. That’s called foolishness. While you’ve got a job, take some steps because it’s harder to take a step-in peace when you don’t have a paycheck coming in. So, take responsible steps. While you’re working, God will begin to show you what direction to go in. When I choose faith, I choose to move forward even in the face of fear.



# Choose to Believe in You

Believe in God, who believes in you. When David began to talk to Saul about the fact that he would fight Goliath since no one else would, Saul said, “You’re not able to go out against this Philistine and fight. You are only a young man. And he’s been a warrior from his youth.”

But David said, “Nah, I know what you think, but I know what God showed me about me. Although you’re the King, I’m not defined by what you think about me. I’m defined by the Creator who made me. Therefore, I’m going to believe in what God has done inside of me. I’m going to choose to believe in what God has placed in me even if you don’t believe in it. What I love about God is this: You don’t have to believe in my vision. You don’t have to believe in my dream. I have to believe in what God put inside of me. And if you don’t believe in it, that’s okay. One day you’re going to see the hand of God in my life. And you’ll be like, ‘Oh, that boy knew what he was talking about the whole time.’”

I remember I was working at a company and God was dealing with me on the subject of being in full-time ministry. I began speaking to some of my friends and telling them that God was calling me to full-time ministry. You know what? People hear that all the time. I hear it all the time. I said, “No, no, no, no, no. God’s called me to full-time ministry now.”



The people who didn’t know Jesus said, “Man, that’s crazy.” But the thing that got me was that the people who did know Jesus didn’t believe it either.

“I get all of that wisdom and everything. But he’s calling me to full-time ministry.” When God opened the door for me to get my first job in ministry, people said that was crazy. I said, “Just watch.” When they said that didn’t make any sense, I said,



“Just watch God.” Now, 16 years later, I’m still working in full-time ministry. The very thing that they thought was crazy about and said I couldn’t do; God did for me. If I had listened to all the voices around me, I would never have done what God told me to, and I would still be doing the very thing that I hated doing daily. That’s why you’ve got to choose to believe in you.

# Choose to Remember

When you're in a fight for your destiny, health, or family, you've got to choose to remember. You have to remember the last time God delivered you, the last time you felt like this, the last time you thought there was no way out. You've got to remember the last thing that God did for you. That's why it's important to journal



when you're walking through difficult seasons. Journaling allows you to chronicle what you're experiencing so that you will have something to remember it by.

I remember looking at a journal that I had years ago. And I remember reading a bit that said, "God, I don't know how you're going to fix this. I don't know how I'm going to come out of this." Now, I look at that journal, and I laugh. Not only did I come through 10 years ago, but I've also got journal after journal chronicling how I came through challenges again and again over the past 10 years.

You've got to choose to remember. When David was facing the giant, Goliath, he said, "Wait a minute. I remember that I faced the lion and I faced the bear and God delivered me. The same God that delivered me there is the same God that's with me now. And he's going to put this uncircumcised Philistine into my hands." Just like David did, you've got to remember who has your back.

# Choose Your Weapon

David was getting ready to go out and fight Goliath, but King Saul wanted him to use his armor. So, Saul outfitted David in the King's armor: a bronze helmet to protect this head, a coat of mail to protect the chest. Afterward, David strapped on Saul's sword and then discovered that he could not move because he was not used to the restrictions of the weighty armor. David said, "I'm not used to these things. How can I attack an enemy when I can't even walk?" So, he removed every bit of Saul's armor and chose to fight just like he'd fought the lion and the bear.

Everybody thinks that you should undertake a task the way they did it. And if you don't do it like they did it, they say you're doing it wrong. They tell you that you have to go this way or that way, you have to go to this school or company, or you've got to handle it this way. Your response should be "Listen, that may be the way that you got through, but that's not the way He's taking me there. So, I'm going to choose my weapon. And my weapon is me: my authenticity, my personality, my gifts, and my abilities.

God is offering a million ways out of your situation. Let me say this again: God is offering a million ways out of your situation. When somebody says you've got to be a certain way to get what God has for you, stop. Principles transfer, but you don't need to be that person. You can



learn from their principles, but you don't have to fight the way they fight. When you choose your weapon, comparison dies. When you choose to be you, to lead the way God has called you, you are no longer comparing yourself to your neighbor. You're not in this to see who can do it the best. You know why? Because they can't do it like you. They weren't created the way you were. They don't have your "this." They don't have your "that."

When mentoring others, most people try to turn them into mini-mes. God didn't ask anybody to take on someone else's image. He said, "You are created in my

image and my likeness.” So, while somebody’s mentoring you, you should make sure they’re not trying to turn you into them. My goal when I mentor you is to make you the best version of yourself. You are enough. You are enough. And when you find out who you really are, you will succeed without breaking a sweat. You are a designer’s original. Nobody has been created like you, talks like you, thinks like you, or is like you. When you fall in love with you, you are untouchable, and nobody can compete with you or compare to you. As a matter of fact, every time you try to compare yourself to somebody else, you demean who God is because you’re saying, “God, you made a mistake with me.” However, God says you are enough because I say you are enough. Your authenticity is your weapon.

# Choose Your Words

One true statement I have heard over the years is that whether you say you can or you can't, you're right. That's because whatever comes out of your mouth is the fruit that you will eat over the course of your life. You may say, "I'm not smart enough. Yeah. I don't have their mix of gifts. I'm not as talented as them." But listen: every single one of us has enough talent to do what we were created to do. Every single one of us has enough gifts and ability to do the very things that God breathed life into us for. So, when you stop looking at other people and letting them define your life, you will be more fulfilled. Choose to say about yourself what the Father says about you. You are fearfully and wonderfully made. That's what God says about you.



David said to the Philistine who was talking to him, "You come against me with a sword and a spear and a javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord."

And you may say to those who seek to hurt you, "You come against me with this puny little rumor; this puny little bit of gossip; this puny little

thought about what I've done in the past. You come against me with my lack of education or my lack of 'this' or my lack of 'that.' You can say, "I am who God says I am. God is fighting on my behalf."

God will catapult you over those with master's degree and the PhDs. When you choose to speak God's word over your situation, He can take you from stuck to



unstuck. From failure to flourishing. Your words have power and, when you use them in conjunction with God's word, you will experience God's help.

## Things to Remember

- ✓ If you crush it in the now, it will lead to your next.
- ✓ Your moments today prepare you for your opportunities tomorrow.
- ✓ The choices we make today determine the future we will live tomorrow.