

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT
DANETTE JOY CRAWFORD AND
LIMITLESS THINKING, LIMITLESS LIVING

Danette Crawford provides an in-depth, mind-bending, heartwarming, and soul-stirring account of how God always seeks to embrace us with his compassionate, eternal love. Whatever you did in your past, however you are living in the present, or wherever you imagine to be for a shipwrecked future, this book invites you to see life through a brighter vision. *Limitless Thinking, Limitless Living* reveals the biblical truths about God's unlimited blessings for those who seek him. Jesus said, "Seek first the kingdom of God and all its righteousness and all things will be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33). Therefore, open your mind, heart, and soul, and receive this timely message from Danette Crawford. Take the limits off God. Then follow his lead to remarkable hope and future of an abundant life. It's a new season!

—Kelly Wright

Owner, America's Hope News LLC; former anchor, Fox News Network

Danette Crawford has displayed a life of *Limitless Thinking* and *Limitless Living* by impacting communities all over Hampton Roads and this nation. I've known Danette and have worked closely with her for many years. She doesn't just talk it—she walks it! Danette Crawford and her outreach ministry have played a vital role in not only reducing the crime rate, but also in changing the lives of youth and adults in low-income areas. She has worked closely with the police department, the mayor's office, and other city officials to bring life-altering changes in the most challenging areas of our city. Our police department has even tracked that the crime rate has been lowered significantly in the areas where she works. Danette Crawford has made a tremendous difference right here in Virginia Beach. As you read her book, *Limitless Thinking, Limitless Living*, I believe you will be inspired to walk in a limitless lifestyle that she demonstrates daily.

—William D. Sessoms, Jr.
Mayor, Virginia Beach, VA

In her book, *Limitless Thinking, Limitless Living*, Danette Crawford challenges, inspires, encourages, and instructs us to not settle for anything less than what God has intended for our lives. She makes it abundantly clear that the possibility for a “limitless” existence rests squarely in the reality of God’s own *unlimited* ability! This book is not just a shallow exhortation for the reader to “think positive and think big.” Rather, Danette is calling us back to becoming deeply rooted in the true revelation of God’s unlimited power and ability. In this work, we are being called to become numbered among the Joshua generation, those brave hearts who are seeking to “cross over” the bounds of thinking and living that has been marked by certain limitations, fully enter into all God has planned for His dear children, and cross over and enter a life marked by a kingdom existence where the very notion of limitation doesn’t even exist. Or as Paul wrote, “*Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us*” (Ephesians 3:20 κJV).

—Rev. Phil Cappuccio
Prophet/teacher, Alexandria, VA

Pastor Danette Crawford is a powerhouse in the Kingdom of God! Caring for the downtrodden, she has dedicated her life to encouraging, inspiring, and elevating all those she encounters. Filled with moving testimonies and insightful examples, *Limitless Thinking, Limitless Living* will help you pursue God’s best for your life. As a spiritual covering to Pastor Danette, I know her greatest hope is to see others overcome their struggles and live abundantly. This book is the perfect first step for all of us.

—Pastor Dan Willis
Founder and senior pastor, The Lighthouse Church
of All Nations, Alsip, IL

Once again, Danette Joy Crawford has blessed us with very wise counsel. *Limitless Thinking, Limitless Living* is probably the finest book I have ever read that combines the best of biblical and practical wisdom. It's not theoretical or secondhand advice, but tried and true wisdom that comes from her personal, victorious walk with the Lord. In short, it's a book about the Refiner's divine guidance that will keep its readers spiritually insulated throughout life's fiery trials.

—William F. Cox, Jr., Ph.D.
Professor, Christian Education Programs,
Regent University School of Education

Danette Crawford is an exceptional leader who has used her principles of *Limitless Thinking, Limitless Living* to build a ministry that serves so many in need. She has lived out the principles in her book and that is the best testimony.

—Dr. Ted Baehr
Founder and publisher, *Movieguide*

There will not be a valid excuse left to give up and quit after you read *Limitless Thinking, Limitless Living*, the latest book by Danette Crawford. If you have been struggling with your mission, your purpose, or your focus, let the words of this book inspire and teach you how to grab hold of your vision and see it explode with possibilities. The ancient prophet Habakkuk instructed us to "write the vision and make it plain that we can run with it." Danette's book shows you how to prepare, write, believe, and see it come to pass.

—Garth and Tina Coonce
Founders, TCT Ministries

Danette Crawford's book, *Limitless Thinking, Limitless Living*, is a must-read for anyone who desires to make a difference in the lives of those around them. It will also challenge you to believe beyond the ordinary and take radical steps of faith to reach your full potential. Life's opportunities never end, and her book and life will inspire you to make the most of the opportunities that God is putting in front of you.

Danette has been a personal friend of mine for many years. I have known Danette since the early days of my salvation as a teenager when I went into a little Pentecostal church where she was the youth pastor. She has always been a true champion of the faith. Regardless of what she has faced in life, her love for God and for His people has stayed consistent. No matter what season of life I have found myself in or that she herself has been in, she has always been a woman of great faith, character, and consistency. Danette is a living example of how faith can cause change in our lives and in the lives around us. It is because of her faith and obedience that she has impacted millions of lives through books, television, and compassion outreaches. It is my honor and privilege to endorse Danette's latest book, *Limitless Thinking, Limitless Living*.

—Pastor Paula White-Cain

Evangelist and senior pastor, New Destiny Christian Center,
Orlando, FL

Danette Crawford is a leader with a passion to “walk in the call” on her life and “seize the land” God has called her to take. She wants that for you, too! I love *Limitless Thinking, Limitless Living* because it is filled with the promises of God for those who love Him. Danette has done the legwork for us, pointing out the potential pitfalls and encouraging the paths to favor and provision. Read this book with a pencil in hand so you can underline all that God speaks to your heart as you learn to think and walk in the limitless promises of God.

—Terry Meeuwsen

Co-host, *The 700 Club*; founder, Orphan's Promise

Danette Crawford's new book, *Limitless Thinking, Limitless Living*, will challenge you to get out of your comfort zone and reach for your potential zone! It will show you, through practical Biblical steps, how to cross over to the next level in every area of your life. Whatever perceived limitations have been in your life, get ready to have victory over them. Your mindset will change and your launch forward will be successful as you learn how to think big, ask big, expect big, and receive BIG!

—Pastor Tony Suarez

Executive vice president, National Hispanic Christian
Leadership Conference

I read every book Danette Crawford writes! Her life is proof God rewards those who are obedient and hungry. *Limitless Thinking, Limitless Living* will show you how to dream BIG, while sitting at the feet of the Holy Spirit. Danette is passionate about unlocking your unlimited future, with an unlimited God. Read this book and run into your future!

—Dr. Mike Smalley

President, Worldreach Ministries

Limitless Thinking, Limitless Living will be a great encouragement and provide insight to anyone seeking God's direction for their life. We tend to think too small, limiting what we can accomplish in our lifetime even though we have been given the Holy Spirit as our Helper. The journey of walking with God is what every believer can experience. We all have a purpose in being here. I recommend *Limitless Thinking, Limitless Living* for your spiritual growth.

—Dr. Bob Rodgers

Senior pastor, Evangel World Prayer Center, Louisville, KY

LIMITLESS THINKING

THINK BIG, ASK BIG,
EXPECT BIG, AND RECEIVE BIG!

LIMITLESS LIVING

DANETTE J. CRAWFORD



WHITAKER
HOUSE

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Limitless Thinking, Limitless Living **Think Big, Ask Big, Expect Big, and Receive Big!**

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CONTENTS

Foreword.....	11
Introduction: Get Ready for the Crossover!.....	13

PART I: PREPARE TO CROSS OVER

1. Getting Ready—A Personal Process.....	23
2. Commanded to Take the Land	35
3. Think Big	47
4. Ask and Expect Big.....	59
5. Faith and Favor to Ask Big	69

PART II: OVERCOME PERCEIVED LIMITATIONS

6. “I’m Not Qualified”	83
7. “My Resources Aren’t Sufficient”	97

8. “I’m All Alone in This”	107
9. “I’m Not Anointed”	121

PART III: OVERCOME SELF-IMPOSED LIMITATIONS

10. Lack of Commitment	135
11. Distractedness	145
12. A Defeatist Mind-set	157
13. Ungodly Living	169
14. Unwholesome Speech	179
15. Following the Crowd	189
16. Impatience	199

PART IV: DISCOVER TRUE LIMITLESS LIVING

17. Components of Consecrated Living	209
18. Love Without Limit	217
19. The Holy Spirit—Cornerstone of Limitless Living	227
20. Lead Others into the Land	237
Conclusion: Once You’ve Crossed Over	251
About the Author	255

FOREWORD

This inspiring, well-researched book by my good friend and confident, Danette Crawford, is the blueprint we have all been searching for throughout our lives.

Danette is not only a relevant author, but also an international evangelist, speaker, and a TV host with an encouraging message of hope. She is the founder and president of Danette Crawford Ministries, which aims to spread the gospel around the globe with its media endeavors. This powerful, anointed, positive, successful, and energetic lady is also president of Joy Ministries Evangelistic Association, an “outreach” arm that organizes inner-city work with over twenty different compassion programs. Danette has written this book out of her amazing

experiences and demonstrates how she has been able to accomplish an abundance of winning success in her life.

The insights contained in this book can change your circumstances and guide you through the process of finding *Limitless Thinking* and obtaining the *Limitless Living* we all desire.

I am a result of the principles applied in this book! I have been healed of multiple myeloma cancer. I am now happily married and continue to have a successful career as a touring Christian recording artist.

Is there something missing in your life? Are you just letting life happen to you? Maybe you have given up hope on your dreams. Do you know what God really thinks of you, wants for you, and has provided for you? Do you know why you're not experiencing it?

Await no longer—your answers are here! Don't put this book down, my friend. You will find the answers to these questions and many more as you travel through the incredible journey of *Limitless Thinking, Limitless Living*.

—Carman Domenic Licciardello
Carman World Outreach

INTRODUCTION: GET READY FOR THE CROSSOVER!

At Joy Ministries, our staff meets every Monday for an extended session of corporate prayer, during which we join together to seek the Lord's blessing and direction for the week ahead. I love these sessions, during which the Lord often speaks to me in life-changing ways. When I'm on the road, I deeply regret having to miss staff prayer. It's a time of glorious visitation from the Lord and it offers a chance to bond, unify, and strengthen ourselves as a ministry staff.

At one particular prayer session, God said to me, "Moses is dead." That statement really shook me. I immediately knew in my spirit that

someone was going to die. I had no idea who, how, or when, but it was clear God was informing me of someone's impending death.

I remained with my staff for about two hours, until our prayer time concluded. By the end of the session, I had received a few more details regarding God's statement, yet I still didn't know who was going to die or when. Each time God speaks to us in a manner that is vague, I believe He wants us to seek His face continually, until He shares with us the full details of His instructions and reveals the complete meaning of the things He has spoken to us. In this case, all I knew was God was telling me I needed to get ready to lead at a whole different level. God showed me, during those two hours, that I had been poured into, trained, and equipped. And now it was time for me to step forward and lead at a higher level.

Several months later, the assistant pastor of my first church went home to be with the Lord. She was a great woman of God and the Lord had used her mightily to start the church I had attended for many years—the church where I was first trained for ministry. As soon as I heard she had gone to be with the Lord, I knew this was what the Lord had been speaking about the day He'd said to me, "Moses is dead."

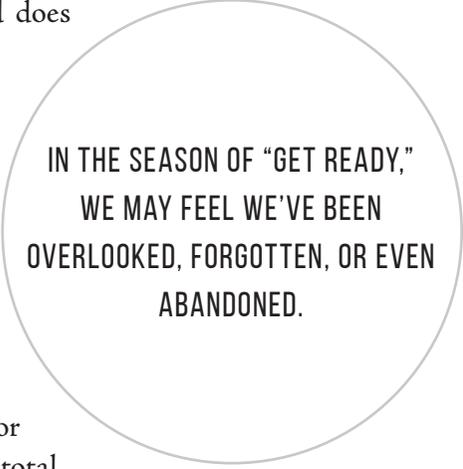
What I didn't know was that several major national leaders would also die over the next several years. As I heard about one great leader after another who had gone to be with the Lord, God kept whispering in my ear, "This is what I was speaking to you about." These were the leaders who had trained, equipped, and led the people of my generation. God was saying, "They have completed their course; now, you, and all the people of this generation, *get ready!*"

THE SEASON OF "GET READY"

Many of us are in the season of "get ready." Usually, when God tells us, "Get ready," it doesn't mean something big is going to happen in the next twenty-four hours. It doesn't necessarily mean something is going to happen in the next six months either. It means only that we must submit to God and embrace the season of "get ready," or we won't *be*

ready when the time God has appointed does arrive.

In the season of “get ready,” we may feel we’ve been overlooked, forgotten, or even abandoned. I want to encourage you today: you haven’t been overlooked; actually, you have been chosen—and that’s why God is getting you ready. He’s getting you ready for your crossover. He’s getting you ready for your “suddenly.” He’s getting you ready for your promotion, your new season, your total turnaround. If you don’t go through the process of getting ready, you won’t be ready when your “suddenly” does arrive. *Suddenly*, you’ll be called out of the season of “get ready” and summoned into your season of blessing and promotion. *Suddenly*, you will be ushered into the next level. Being fully ready is an important key.



IN THE SEASON OF “GET READY,”
WE MAY FEEL WE’VE BEEN
OVERLOOKED, FORGOTTEN, OR EVEN
ABANDONED.

The book of Joshua opens with God commanding Joshua to get ready to cross the Jordan River and claim the land He was about to give to His people, the Israelites.

After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses’ aide: “Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them—to the Israelites.”

(Joshua 1:1–2)

Whenever God is about to give you something—whenever God is about to bless you, promote you, or exalt you—you must get *ready* for it.

SEASONS OF LIFE

We often think of seasons as a certain time of year, such as the spring, a rainy season, or the Christmas season. But a season can also be a time “characterized by a particular circumstance or feature.”

God plans and permits various seasons in our lives so we may develop our character and grow our faith, ever advancing in our walk with Him. There are seasons of flourishing and seasons of failure. There are seasons of growth and seasons of gathering the fruits of that growth. And each season is intended to fully prepare and equip us for the season that will follow it.

I can say without a doubt that God has ordained the length and timing of each season of my life. I may kick and scream, I may complain and whine, about a season I don't like, but none of that will bring the unpleasant season to an end any quicker. On the contrary, I've found that those types of negative reactions actually prolong the duration of unpleasant seasons. The children of Israel spent forty years whining and complaining as they wandered around in the wilderness, waiting to reach the Promised Land. And we may catch ourselves doing the same thing if we aren't careful.

The Israelites' season of crossing over into the Promised Land should have only taken eleven days. But as a group, they were stubborn, self-centered, and unfocused. Thus, their whining continued and most of them died in the wilderness without ever reaching the Promised Land. When we maintain a good attitude, when we focus on our blessings instead of our problems, we can praise our way through any unpleasant season and be ready for the next one.

SEASONS ARE PERSONAL

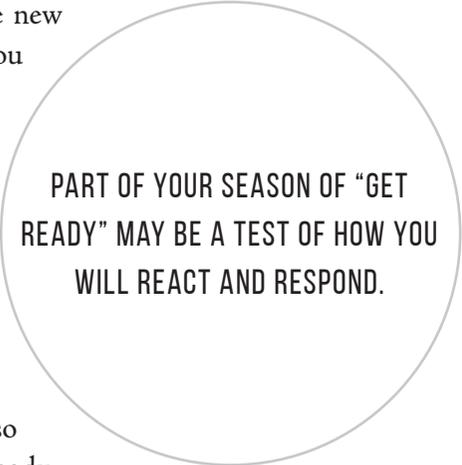
In the season of "get ready," God wants to do a great work within us. This desired work varies according to each person's needs and the assignment God has in mind. We should never compare our own season of preparation with someone else's. We never know what that person may have gone through in order to prepare for the place where God has promoted him. It may seem to us that he just popped up overnight, but we are likely clueless about all the preparations he has endured and the price he has paid to attain that promotion.

Have you ever known someone who seemed to zip straight to the top? Maybe you worked hard for ten years, hoping for a promotion, only

to watch as the new “kid on the block” landed that very position in an instant. Don’t worry—and especially don’t get in the middle of God’s business. Keep your heart right and your mouth shut as you remember that all promotion comes from the Lord, who raises up one, but brings down another. (See Psalm 75:6–7.)

SEASONS ARE STRATEGIC

Part of your season of “get ready” may be a test of how you will react and respond to the new kid on the block getting the position you desired. God’s eye is ever upon us and He cares greatly about the way we react to others’ blessings and promotions. A bad attitude and an envious heart could be the very things that disqualify us for a promotion. Such a heart attitude, when discovered, might suggest we aren’t as “ready” as we thought we were.



PART OF YOUR SEASON OF “GET READY” MAY BE A TEST OF HOW YOU WILL REACT AND RESPOND.

It amazes me how God loves us so much that He prepares us and gets us ready, no matter how much junk or baggage we need to work through. If we will only let Him, He will use our hardships and challenges to prepare us for the high places He has in store for us. God is always getting us ready for our next season. Always remember, whatever you are going through today, it’s only temporary. Soon enough, the season of “get ready” shall pass and you will stand victorious on the other side.

GET READY...FOR WHAT?

God commanded Joshua and the children of Israel to get ready and then He showed them what it was they were getting ready for. He wanted them to get ready for something *big!*

Here is what He said to Joshua:

I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses. Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the great river, the Euphrates—all the Hittite country—to the Mediterranean Sea in the west. No one will be able to stand against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you. Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their ancestors to give them. (Joshua 1:3–6)

God was asking Joshua to think big. He was trying to get him to think outside the box, to reach far beyond the confines of his comfort zone. God described the land He had in store for the Israelites as extensive. In other words, He was saying, “I have *big stuff* in store for you.”

We seem to have an easier time believing God has “big things” planned for other people than to imagine He has big things and bountiful blessings for us. Why is that? Usually, it’s a result of our limited thinking. When we have limited thinking, we live with self-imposed confines on the capabilities of ourselves, of God, and of others. We limit God. We limit ourselves. We limit our own potential.

In Joshua 1:3–6, God challenged Joshua’s thinking because He wanted him—and the people he would lead—to live without limits. God wants us to live without limits, too. He wants us to take our own land and possess all of the promises He has in store for us. In order for us to do that, we must get ready and be prepared. A major part of the process of getting ready is developing what I call “limitless thinking.” Only when we have limitless thinking can we qualify for limitless living.

The purpose of this book is to expand your thinking, enlarge your vision, and increase your expectations of what God can and *will* do in you, through you, and for you. There’s a life of limitless power and potential just waiting to be unleashed within you, if you’ll only learn to think the way God does and live the way He asks us to.

All around, we encounter limits. Some of them are physical, others are mental; some of them are imposed by other people and society, others are imposed by our own thinking and behavior. By the power of

the Holy Spirit, we can push past these limits and overcome all obstacles to the glorious life of limitless potential God has planned for us. Are you ready to cross over to the next level? Get ready—your life without limits is about to begin!



PART I:

PREPARE TO CROSS OVER

1

GETTING READY— A PERSONAL PROCESS

I've learned an important key to being ready as I continually await the next season that God has for me. I say "continually" because as soon as one season changes, God is already preparing us and getting us ready for the *next* season. This is a process that will continue until we get to heaven. God takes us from glory to glory, from level to level. (See 2 Corinthians 3:18.) It's a limitless process, so don't limit God and don't limit yourself.

When we finally reach the next level or the next season, we shouldn't camp out there and retire just because we feel fulfilled, content, or even exhausted. Yes, we should enjoy the new season and embrace the new

level. But we haven't seen anything yet! There's still a lot more that God has for us.

We must not "retire" before we've fulfilled our God-given potential, which is only as big as our thinking. "Reach for the moon and at least land on the stars," as Bishop John Gimenez used to say to me. When I was going through various trials in ministry, he would say, "Oh, Danettie, you are just going through your necessities." Those "necessaries" weren't fun. Trials and tribulations rarely are. But they were a necessary part of my getting ready for all that God had ahead for me.

Maybe today, you are going through your "necessaries." If so, rejoice! You are being made ready for all that the Lord has ahead for you.

BE READY WHEN GOD NEEDS YOU

God spoke to the prophet Jeremiah with these words of exhortation: "*Get yourself ready! Stand up and say to them whatever I command you. Do not be terrified by them, or I will terrify you before them*" (Jeremiah 1:17). Once, when I read that verse, the Holy Spirit said to me, "Too many people spend all their time trying to get others ready and, as a result, they themselves are not ready when I need them."

Did you know that God has need of you? He sure does! He has exciting projects planned for you. Ephesians 2:10 says, "*For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works,*

which God prepared in advance for us to do." And no one else can do those works like you can.

As a minister, I am equipped and able to reach certain people who otherwise wouldn't hear the gospel or receive the help and guidance they need. You, too, have the ability and the skills to assist, serve, and otherwise help certain people whom I could never reach for the Lord.

God has prepared you, created you, and called you to do specific things for Him



GOD HAS PREPARED YOU,
CREATED YOU, AND CALLED YOU
TO DO SPECIFIC THINGS FOR HIM NO
ONE ELSE CAN DO.

no one else can do. There are works He has prepared in advance for you to do, so you'd better be ready.

GET YOURSELF READY

We moms have plenty of experience getting ready—getting ourselves ready, of course, but maybe even more so getting others ready. We have to get everyone else in the household ready for school every morning, for soccer practice on Saturday, for church on Sunday. But until Mom's ready, no one can go anywhere. As a mom, you must get yourself ready first before getting your kids ready. If you try to get the kids ready first, you will never have time to get yourself ready. And again, if Momma's not ready, nobody's going anywhere.

As much as we would like to help others get ready—as much as we'd like to get our loved ones “ready” for what God has for them—the truth is, everyone must prepare himself for doing the work of the kingdom. If you spend all your time trying to get your spouse ready to fulfill God's call on his or her life, you yourself will never be ready to answer God's call on your own life. You must get yourself ready. Don't spend all your focus readying someone else. Focus on Jesus as you work on getting yourself ready to fulfill His call on your life.

STEPS TO GETTING READY

SET HEALTHY BOUNDARIES

One key to remaining focused on getting yourself ready is to establish firm boundaries. Allow the Lord to build strong, healthy boundaries in your life so you can stay focused on your relationship with Him and the work He has called you to do.

Sometimes, the most compelling inspiration for those we might be trying to help get ready is for them to see us running hard after God. We can't shake it into them, we can't beat it into them, and we can't even preach it into them if they don't want to receive it. But when we live it out for them to see, the Holy Spirit can use our lives, and His power

that's released through our prayer times, to prompt a total turnaround in the lives of others. Yes, God is the God of the total turnaround.

SIT AT THE FEET OF JESUS

Getting ready means coming to the place where you are supposed to be. When you are running hard after God and His purposes for your life, you have to sit more than ever. Sounds paradoxical, doesn't it? Yet running and sitting go together.

What do I mean? The harder we are running after God and His will for our lives, the more we need to sit at His feet in prayer. Sometimes, when we are running hard, we rush right past the place of sitting. And that's how we end up tripping and falling. In order to get ourselves ready, we must sit at God's feet daily. As we spend time in His presence, we hear His marching orders, allow Him to deal with our hearts and attitudes, and respond to His "*still small voice*" (1 Kings 19:12 KJV).

We see the importance of sitting at Jesus's feet in the following passage from Luke's gospel:

As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!"

"Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."
(Luke 10:38–42)

Sometimes, we get caught up in the idea of taking action—and not the kind of action God has in mind. Jesus told Martha that Mary's kind of action—sitting at His feet—was the most important kind. It seems that our natural tendency is to be out of balance. We either have too

much action or we don't have enough. Or we have too much of the wrong type of action.

Martha had plenty of "action" going on, but it wasn't the right kind. Sitting at the Lord's feet in prayer is the most important action. Listening to the Lord's voice as we abide in His presence is the most important action. We should do this type of "action" daily. For it's at His feet that we receive our marching orders for the rest of our day, our week, and, ultimately, our entire lives.

TAKE ACTION

Once we've sat at the feet of Jesus long enough to know His will for us, we are ready to take action. The Word of God tells us "*faith without works is dead*" (James 2:20 KJV). In other words, having faith is good as long as we have the action that goes along with it. "*Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*" (Romans 10:17 NKJV). When God speaks to us with a revelatory word, faith rises up within us. It's up to us to respond in faith by taking the necessary action.

Sometimes—probably most of the time, in fact—the action God demands will take us far outside our comfort zones. But I have learned that if we don't leave our comfort zones, we will never penetrate or enter into our potential zones.

BE IN THE RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME

We see faith in action vividly portrayed in the life of Esther, someone who dedicated herself to getting ready. When she went to the palace to compete for the hand of King Xerxes, with the ulterior motive of saving her people, the Jews, from destruction, no one was permitted to go with her. She had to go alone, after deciding for herself to accept the weighty risks involved. She didn't understand everything; she didn't have a contract guaranteeing her safety or success when she left her comfort zone, the home where she had been raised by her cousin Mordecai. She had to take the required action, by faith, in order to position herself correctly for the ultimate preservation of her people.

Mordecai had a cousin named Hadassah, whom he had brought up because she had neither father nor mother. This young woman, who was also known as Esther, had a lovely figure and was beautiful. Mordecai had taken her as his own daughter when her father and mother died. When the king's order and edict had been proclaimed, many young women were brought to the citadel of Susa and put under the care of Hegai. Esther also was taken to the king's palace and entrusted to Hegai, who had charge of the harem.

(Esther 2:7–8)

King Xerxes put out a search for beautiful young virgins. (See Esther 2:4.) And Esther qualified. I'm sure her candidacy for queen came as a huge surprise for Esther, an orphan who had been through her share of grief and despair from the loss of both her parents. I imagine this new window of opportunity was quite intimidating for her. Just think about it: someone you have never met gathers you up with a bunch of other girls you don't know and takes you all to a place where you have never been. I like adventure, but all that would have even been too much for me as a young woman. Yet I believe there was something inside Esther that told her she was supposed to take a huge step of faith. And that "something" was the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

Guided by the Holy Spirit, Esther proceeded to the palace. By force of character, she caught the eye of Hegai, who was in charge of the harem.

She pleased him and won his favor. Immediately he provided her with her beauty treatments and special food. He assigned to her seven female attendants selected from the king's palace and moved her and her attendants into the best place in the harem.

(Esther 2:9)

Esther went for it, all right. She took the required action to get herself ready for her royal destiny. And because her action took her to the right place, at the right time, and among the right people, she immediately experienced favor in the midst of her circumstances.

When we get ourselves to the place where we are supposed to be, God puts us in the best position possible. When we are in the right place, at the right time, and get ourselves ready, we receive God's best. We set ourselves up for the Lord's blessings. Just get where you are supposed to go and be who you are supposed to be.

SUBMIT TO THE "BEAUTY TREATMENTS"

Before a young woman's turn came to go in to King Xerxes, she had to complete twelve months of beauty treatments prescribed for the women, six months with oil of myrrh and six with perfumes and cosmetics.
(Esther 2:12)

Esther wasn't ready until she had completed her regimen of beauty treatments. Yes, Esther positioned herself in the right place by taking the required action, then she took the next step of getting herself ready by submitting to the prescribed beauty treatments.

Part of getting ourselves ready to fulfill God's purposes is submitting to and receiving our "beauty treatments" in the Spirit. As we sit at the Lord's feet daily, we are saturated in the oil of His presence. In the presence of the Lord, we are changed. Our hearts, our attitudes, and even our very countenances transform as we sit in the glorious presence of the Lord.

I believe in doing all we can do with what we are given to work with on the outside. I thank the Lord for makeup—foundation, eyeliner, blush, and mascara. But it's the inside that causes the outside to glow with the glorious presence of the Lord. True beauty really does come from the inside out. When the Lord heals us of bitterness, hurt, and other negative emotions and scars, our outward appearance will reflect the inner newness we feel.

We humans are triune beings: we are spirits, we have a soul, and we inhabit a natural body. Since we really are spirit beings, our spiritual state causes even our natural, external appearance to change. I always say, "Sin makes us ugly, but the presence of the Lord makes us beautiful."

SURROUND YOURSELF WITH THE RIGHT PEOPLE

When the turn came for Esther (the young woman Mordecai had adopted, the daughter of his uncle Abihail) to go to the king, she asked for nothing other than what Hegai, the king's eunuch who was in charge of the harem, suggested. And Esther won the favor of everyone who saw her. (Esther 2:15)

Not only do we have to be in the right place at the right time, but we must be in the presence of the right people. Esther succeeded in her quest not only because she was in the right place at the right time, but also because she was among the right people.

When we position ourselves in the right place, at the right time, with the right people, all we have to do is be seen. Favor is just waiting for us to be seen in the right place at the right time with the right people. Esther met all three of these conditions and she blew the competition away. Even so, she acted with humility; she wasn't out to "get all she could." She wasn't focused on herself. She simply wanted whatever it was that Hegai said the king would desire for her. As we listen to what the Holy Spirit says our heavenly Father wants for us, we will succeed and proceed to the next season. When the favor of God is upon our lives, we can't help but be successful.

There were some "wrong people" in the palace when Esther arrived, but the king was not aware of it until the righteous lifestyle of Esther and her cousin Mordecai exposed those people who had manipulated their way into the king's palace.

We read of two such individuals in the following passage:

During the time Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate, Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's officers who guarded the doorway, became angry and conspired to assassinate King Xerxes. But Mordecai found out about the plot and told Queen Esther, who in turn reported it to the king, giving credit to Mordecai. (Esther 2:21–22)

Just as God exposed the ill-intentioned people to the king, He wants to expose “wrong people” in our lives, too—those who would harm us or derail us from fulfilling our God-given purpose. Once He has done so, we need to distance ourselves from those who stand opposed to the Lord’s purposes and instead surround ourselves with the right people. One major way we prepare ourselves for the next level is by having the right people around us—faithful followers of the Lord Jesus Christ who have our best interests at heart and prize the ways of God above the ways of man.

FIND FAVOR WITH GOD

Now the King was attracted to Esther more than to any of the other women, and she won his favor and approval more than any of the other virgins. So he set a royal crown on her head and made her queen instead of Vashti. (Esther 2:17)

We can’t run and hide. We have to be seen in order for the favor of the Lord to be extended to us. When the Father sees we are faithfully committed to getting to where we are supposed to be, having the heart we are supposed to have, and responding in obedience when the King calls upon us, even when it seems inconvenient, His favor will be all over us, propelling us to the next level. And when we have the favor of God, we can’t help but have the favor of man. God has favor waiting for us; all we have to do is show up—in the right place, at the right time, with the right people.

The favor of God never ceases to amaze me. My ministry, an overtly Christian organization, has received generous checks in the mail from professed atheists. We receive donations from business people who aren’t believers. When the favor of God is upon us, we can’t help but have the favor of man.



**GOD HAS FAVOR WAITING FOR US;
ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS SHOW UP.**

Recently, I received a letter with a \$5,000 check enclosed. The letter read, “Although I’m an atheist and I don’t believe in God, I appreciate all the work you do for the community, so I’m enclosing a \$5,000 check.” I shouted with joy, “Well, You go ahead, God!” The donor went on to explain that he saw the fruit of what my ministry was doing and that was his reason for supporting us. He said, in essence, “Government-sponsored programs don’t work, yet I’m forced to support them with my tax dollars. But I have seen and heard about the results of Joy Ministries, so I want to give back to an organization that’s truly making a difference in the community.”

When you have nonbelievers sending you money for your Christian ministry, that’s nothing but the favor of God. This type of miracle has happened over and over again in my ministry. Why? Because we’re doing what God has told us to do, in the place He has told us to do it. As we are in the right place, at the right time, doing the right thing, God puts His favor on all our efforts.

The psalmist prayed, “*May the favor of the Lord our God rest on us; establish the work of our hands for us—yes, establish the work of our hands*” (Psalm 90:17). God establishes the work of our hands for us when we have His favor resting upon us. The king was attracted to Esther’s obedience and the King of Kings is attracted to *our* obedience. Yes, obedience attracts the favor of the King.

God’s stamp of approval will get you everywhere you need to go. You simply get yourself ready. Esther had to focus on herself. She had to go to the palace by herself. She couldn’t worry about everyone else. If she did, she would have missed her destiny in the Lord.

LIVE RIGHTEOUSLY

When the report about the assassination plot of Bigthana and Teresh against King Xerxes “*was investigated and found to be true, the two officials were hanged on a gallows. All this was recorded in the book of the annals in the presence of the king*” (Esther 2:23).

Mordecai's act of righteousness was recorded in the king's book. It was recorded, but not yet rewarded. You may have done righteous things year after year, day after day, during your season of "get ready." Those acts of righteousness—whether done on the job, for your family, in your other relationships, or elsewhere—were recorded by the Lord at the time you performed them. They were immediately recorded, but it's possible they have yet to be rewarded.

Good news—reward day is approaching! God tests us to make sure we aren't in it for the reward. And once we have passed the time test, God rewards what He has previously recorded. So, if you've been waiting, get ready for your rewards in the form of promotion and crossover.

GET READY FOR THE CROSSOVER

Whenever it's time to cross over to a new level, God always supernaturally parts the waters so we may reach the other side, as He did for Moses and the children of Israel during the Exodus from Egypt. Our God is bigger than any body of water; He is stronger than any obstacle or challenge that would try to prevent us from crossing over into our season of blessing.

Stay encouraged. You are about to cross over to the place of limitless thinking and limitless living, if you'll submit to the process of getting ready.