

Do Less Be More: Living from the Word and Being Led by the Spirit

Grace That Sets the Tempo of Our Lives

Introduction: A Word for the Overwhelmed

Church, before we talk about doing anything, I want to say this clearly:

If you are overwhelmed, exhausted, or worn down, this message is not here to judge you — it is here to give you hope.

Many people are not struggling because they don't love God.

They are struggling because they are tired of trying to live the Christian life **in their own strength**.

And grace does not arrive with a raised finger.

Grace arrives with an open hand.

This week the Lord pressed a question into my heart:

“Who is setting the tempo of your life?”

Is it people? Pressure? Expectations? Fear?

Because pace reveals authority.

And then a simple phrase came out of me — not planned, not polished:

“Do less and be more.”

Not do less because nothing matters —

but do less because **grace** matters.

Big Idea

When we live from the Word of God and are led by the Spirit of God, we can **do less out of striving** and **be more rooted in grace**, and our lives become more impactful — not less.

Theological Framework (Academic but Simple, Set Early)

Let's establish a biblical order that will guide everything else:

The Word of God establishes truth and identity.
The Spirit of God brings conviction and direction.
Our works are the fruit, not the foundation.

When this order is reversed:

- faith becomes exhausting,
- obedience becomes heavy,
- and God can feel distant.

But when this order is restored, grace becomes oxygen again.

1) Live From the Word: Grace Begins With Revelation, Not Pressure

Scripture

- **Psalm 119:105** — “Your word is a lamp for my feet, and a light for my path.”
- **Romans 10:17** — “Faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.”
- **Matthew 4:4** — “Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.”

Unpacking

Biblically, the Word of God is not merely moral instruction; it is **revelation**. It reveals who God is, who we are, and how reality works. Faith doesn't begin with effort — it begins with **hearing**.

In Scripture, the Word:

- creates (Genesis 1),
- reveals (Psalm 19),
- establishes covenant identity (Exodus 20),
- anchors Jesus in temptation (Matthew 4).

So the Word doesn't merely tell you what to do; it shapes **who you are** before it guides **what you do**.

Pastoral Outlook

Many of us are overwhelmed because we are trying to live **ahead of God**, instead of **from God**.

We're reacting instead of resting. Striving instead of listening.

Illustration (Everyday)

Think of **Google Maps vs road signs**.

Road signs tell you where you are. Google Maps tells you where you're going.

Circumstances are road signs. The Word of God is the map. If you only read the signs, you'll keep reacting. If you follow the map, you'll walk with intention.

Application

Ask gently:

- *What has been shaping my pace lately?*
- *Have I been hearing God's Word, or just the noise of urgency?*

Grace Practice: Start your day not with "What must I do?" but:

"What has God already said?"

2) Be Led by the Spirit: Grace Convicts — It Does Not Condemn

This point is critical for overwhelmed people:

Grace gives hope. It does not crush.

Scripture

- **Romans 8:1** — "There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."
- **John 16:8** — "When He [the Holy Spirit] comes, He will convict..."
- **Revelation 12:10** — "The accuser... who accuses them day and night..."
- **2 Corinthians 7:10** — "Godly sorrow brings repentance... and leaves no regret."

Unpacking

The New Testament distinguishes between:

- **Condemnation** (*katakrima*) — a final, crushing verdict,
- **Conviction** (*elenchō*) — a loving exposure meant to lead to change.

Condemnation attacks identity. Conviction restores relationship.

The Wasp vs Honey Bee (Illustration, Carefully Framed)

Let me use an image to show the difference between accusation and conviction.

A **wasp** can sting again and again. It attacks relentlessly, leaves ongoing pain, and produces nothing of value. This mirrors the enemy's work as the accuser — "day and night."

That voice that keeps saying:

- "You'll never change."
 - "God is disappointed."
 - "You've messed up too many times."
- That is not God.

A **honey bee**, however, stings once — it gets your attention, it's momentary, and it produces honey. In the same way, **God's conviction is not harassment**. It is a loving interruption to bring healing and change.

Scripture That Interprets the Illustration

Godly sorrow leads somewhere: repentance, salvation, freedom — and “no regret.” So if a voice leaves you stuck in endless shame, spiralling, hopeless — that's accusation, not conviction.

Pastoral Outlook

God's conviction:

- is **momentary**, not constant,
- **specific**, not vague,
- and leads you **toward hope**, not into despair.

If the pain never ends, the voice never relents, and the message never leads to freedom — it is not from God.

Application

Ask:

- *Is this voice leading me to repentance and peace?*
- *Or is it keeping me stuck in shame and fear?*

Grace Practice: When conviction comes, respond — but don't rehearse it endlessly. Repentance is a doorway, not a prison.

3) Do Less: Less Striving, Not Less Obedience

Scripture

- **Matthew 11:28–30** — “Come to Me, all who are weary... My yoke is easy...”
- **John 5:19** — “The Son can do nothing by Himself... only what He sees His Father doing.”
- **Proverbs 16:3** — “Commit to the Lord whatever you do...”

Unpacking

Jesus models what we might call **selective obedience** — not selective morality, but selective activity.

He did not respond to every demand, heal every person, or meet every expectation — because He was **led**, not driven.

His authority flowed from alignment, not availability.

Pastoral Preaching Turn

Not every opportunity is an assignment. Not every need is yours to meet. Not every good thing is God's thing for you.

Some of us are exhausted because we are carrying what God never assigned.

Grace does not mean doing nothing.

Grace means doing **only what God is asking**, and trusting Him with the rest.

Illustration (Practical)

Picture an overloaded bakkie: it still moves, but it consumes more fuel, damages the engine, and becomes unsafe over time. Some believers aren't ineffective because they lack faith — they're ineffective because they're carrying weight God never assigned.

Application

Ask:

- *What am I doing out of fear instead of faith?*
- *Where is God inviting me to let go?*

Grace Practice: This week, step back from one self-imposed burden and ask:

"Lord, did You ask me to carry this?"

4) Be More: Abiding, Not Performing

Scripture

- **John 15:4–5** — "Remain in Me... and you will bear much fruit."
- **2 Corinthians 3:18** — "We are being transformed... as we behold..."
- **Colossians 2:6–7** — "Continue to live your lives in Him, rooted..."

Unpacking

In Johannine theology, fruitfulness is not commanded as a stress-response; it's assumed as the natural result of abiding. The command is not "produce fruit" but "remain."

Pastoral Outlook

Factories produce by force. Trees produce by staying rooted. Grace does not ask you to try harder — it invites you to stay closer.

Illustration (Hopeful)

A tree doesn't wake up anxious about fruit. It focuses on roots, water, and sunlight. Fruit is the outcome, not the obsession.

Application

Ask:

- *Am I prioritising being with God, or just doing for God?*
- *Is my private devotion sustaining my public service?*

Grace Practice: Protect unhurried time with God — especially when life feels busiest.

5) Spirit-Led Works: Fruit, Not Forcing

Scripture

- **Romans 8:14** — “Those who are led by the Spirit... are children of God.”
- **Galatians 5:25** — “Keep in step with the Spirit.”
- **Zechariah 4:6** — “Not by might... but by My Spirit.”

Unpacking

The Spirit doesn't merely empower activity — He initiates it. Spirit-led works are marked by peace rather than pressure, clarity rather than confusion, and fruit rather than fatigue.

Illustration (Immediate and Relatable)

There's a difference between **pushing a car** and **driving it**. Both involve movement — only one involves power. Many believers are pushing ministries that were meant to be steered by the Spirit.

Application

Ask:

- *Is this driven by peace or pressure?*
- *Do I sense the Spirit's prompting, or my own panic?*

Grace Practice: Before acting, pray simply:

“Holy Spirit, are You initiating this — or am I?”

Conclusion: Grace Is an Invitation, Not a Threat

This is not a call to disengage. It is a call to realign — to let the Word set our foundation, the Spirit set our direction, and grace set our tempo.

Grace does not chase you like a wasp.

Grace invites you like a Shepherd.

Scripture

- **Psalms 23:2–3** — “He leads me beside still waters... He restores my soul.”
- **Zechariah 4:6** — “Not by might... but by My Spirit