

HUGH HEWITT



*But Not Of*

A GUIDE TO  
CHRISTIAN AMBITION  
*and the*  
DESIRE TO INFLUENCE  
THE WORLD

A PDF COMPANION TO THE AUDIOBOOK

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# STUDY GUIDE

## PREFACE

### THINK ABOUT IT

- Check the following statements from the Preface that best capture your own thinking about Christians and influence.
- ☐ “The creation and defense of religious liberty requires men and women with power and influence in the world.”
- ☐ “Power is dangerous to the soul.”
- ☐ “Christians of appropriate ability should seek these positions and should use them to protect and extend religious liberty.”
- ☐ “Genuine conversion cannot be accomplished by force.”
- ☐ “Christians must demand the right to speak their piece in peace and to worship as they see fit. These demands are best met with the assistance of believers of power and influence.”
- ☐ All of the above.

## FIND OUT MORE

- Can you cite a few examples from the Bible of individuals who used their influence in the world to extend liberty, protect freedom, or defend righteousness? A few hints are provided to get you started.

- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_ (Nehemiah 1:1–2:10)
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Samuel 19–20)
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_ (2 Kings 18–19)
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

## TAKE ACTION

1. Do you agree on the need for Christians to pursue power and influence? If yes, what are some lingering concerns you have about the temptations power brings?

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If no, how would you respond to some of the statements listed above?

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## CHAPTER 1

### THINK ABOUT IT

- Brainstorm for just a minute. Think about the areas of life that interest you. List the positions of influence you would most desire to achieve yet which seem out of reach.

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### FIND OUT MORE

- What barriers do you think would most likely keep you from becoming one of the influencers you listed above?

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- Considering the example of the colonel from Epstein's essay, do you agree or disagree that your success is determined by how badly you want to succeed? Why or why not?

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## TAKE ACTION

1. Question the limits you have placed on your own ambitions. Reflect on the constraints you have permitted to be placed on your dreams. Consider the words of Christ: “No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God” (Luke 9:62).
- 2. In what areas will you need to change the way you think about your future ambitions to be ready for the trip to begin?

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3. This is a book about the desire to help shape the world in large ways and to do so in keeping with Christ’s teaching. Is this book for you? \_\_\_\_\_

## CHAPTERS 2 AND 3

### THINK ABOUT IT

- “The church is in retreat. And there are some Christians (and many non-Christians) who think that is a good

thing.” Does this statement fit your assessment of the modern church? Give examples to support your answer.

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- “Alinsky believed in changing the here and now . . . That focus on the present with its demand for immediate action and results has been a tactical advantage over Christian values for a half century.” Why do you think the church has lacked the urgency of those who oppose it over the last several decades?

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- Consider the assessment: “We no longer have time for the intramural league. The attack upon the West and Christianity became undeniable on 9/11 . . . It is that simple. It is that stark.” Do you share the sense of urgency about the pressure of these times? If so, how

has that urgency spurred you to be intentional about being influential?

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### FIND OUT MORE

- Choose one of the influencers described in this chapter. Do a brief Internet search on them to gauge their influence and know more of their story. Jot down a few of your findings here:

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- Research an organization that actively opposes much of what Christianity embraces, such as EMILY's List. Spend a few minutes exploring them on-line to get a glimpse of the organizational networks threatening the cause of Christ.
- If you are unfamiliar with the Moral Majority or the Christian Coalition, take some time to research these

efforts as well, to know what has come before you. Find a few Christians you respect who could give you their opinions of these efforts. Jot down a summary of your findings here:

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### TAKE ACTION

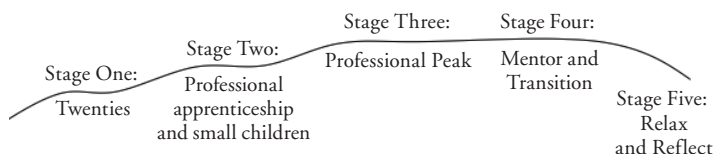
1. Take time right now to pray. For the church. For our culture. For your enemies.
- ➡ 2. “Every Christian must consciously commit to impacting the culture. To do that requires influence . . . It is earned . . . Christians need to seek influence. They need to acquire it. They need to use it once they have it. But first they must acquire it.” Are you committed to intentionally seeking and using influence as a Christian? If so, write out your commitment here to give clarity to your goal:

As a faithful follower of Christ, I consciously commit to:

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3. In what age range on the influence spectrum do you presently find yourself? Mark your present position on the line below:



Based on where you find yourself at present, where does your focus need to be at this stage of life?

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## CHAPTER 5

### THINK ABOUT IT

- Status matters. And it costs more. What fears about paying for college might keep you from considering schools offering excellent credentials?

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- Consider what credentials you would need to influence the areas of life about which you are most passionate. If you were to pursue a stand-alone postgraduate degree, which one or two would best position you for maximum possible influence?

JD

MD

MBA

- Ask yourself: Does my faith need the support of a Christian college? Because we can easily deceive ourselves, ask others whose faith you respect whether they think your faith needs the support of a Christian college. Or consider whether your faith needs to be tested in a secular university with exceptional credentials. Record your feedback here:

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## FIND OUT MORE

- ➦ Select a few colleges whose status would best position you for influence:

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Now take the time to research each school's admissions process and expectations. Contact them to inquire about scholarships, financial aid, and payment options. If possible, visit the campus, engage the professors, and meet students.

- Schedule brief interviews with a handful of people who have had success in your areas of interest (politics, business, medicine, music, media, etc). Ask them what credentials from which schools would open the most doors of opportunity.
- Explore the latest rankings of undergraduate and graduate programs to see which programs are widely respected and why. A good place to start would be with the rankings offered by *U.S. News and World Report* and the *Princeton Review*.

## TAKE ACTION

- ➦ 1. Based on your preliminary findings, sketch out the potential college path that would position you with the ideal academic credentials for maximum influence:



Undergraduate: \_\_\_\_\_

Graduate: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

As though you were speaking with a potential employer, describe in as much detail as possible what your college credentials will be when you are finished and why they would be highly relevant to opening doors of potential influence for Christ:

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2. "Treat the hunt for academic credentials as seriously as a hunt for a job because it *is* a hunt for a job." How seriously are you pursuing stellar academic credentials? What specific changes do you need to make to your own study habits or to your focus on credentials to smooth the way for the ambitions God has given you?

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3. Review the faith assessment you completed earlier. What specific habits can you strengthen now to ensure your faith becomes and remains vibrant and resilient in the secular college setting?

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## CHAPTER 6

### THINK ABOUT IT

- Have you devoted the same energy to knowing the history of Western culture that you would to a job interview? If not, why not?

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### FIND OUT MORE

- “If the prospect of reading—a lot—daunts you, then you are not serious about genuine influence.” What reading habits, if any, have you cultivated? Be honest in finding out if reading is an area in which you need to grow.

### TAKE ACTION

1. “Don’t expect the world to take you seriously if you haven’t bothered to get the basic story line down.” Use the list below to ensure you have covered at least the basic outline of the West. Check off the books as you read them and record others that you discover:

### THE JEWS

\_\_\_ Old Testament Scripture, especially the historical accounts

\_\_\_ *The Gifts of the Jews*, by Thomas Cahill

\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### THE GREEKS

\_\_\_ *The Gates of Fire* and *Tides of War*, by Steven Pressfield

\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### THE ROMANS

\_\_\_ *The First Man in Rome* (novel series), by Colleen McCullough

\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### THE ENGLISH

\_\_\_ *A History of the English Speaking Peoples*, by Winston Churchill

\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### THE AMERICANS

\_\_\_ *Modern Times*, by Paul Johnson

\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## CHAPTER 7

### THINK ABOUT IT

- “Young adults waste vast amounts of time. . . . Time is finite.” Although time to relax is essential for all of us, how many hours in your typical day are spent in a less-than-productive fashion? \_\_\_\_\_ In your week? \_\_\_\_\_
- “Life is a habit.” Take a moment to conduct an inventory of your life habits that most impact how you spend your time. First list those that have a positive impact, then those whose impact might be more negative:

Positive	Negative
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

### FIND OUT MORE

- Research some of the leading time management systems. What life habits seem to be central to all of them? Find a system that works well for you and stick with it.

## TAKE ACTION

- ➦ 1. List three new habits you would like to begin that will position you for long-term success. What action steps will make them part of your life?

Habit 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Habit 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Habit 3: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Decide now to say no to the many good extracurricular activities so that you can say yes to the few that will truly advance your desire for genuine influence.

## CHAPTER 8

### THINK ABOUT IT

- “The best thing to have is depth of intellect, unburdened by pride.” What passages of Scripture come to mind that support this statement about what it takes to find favor with powerful people?

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- Think about a time when you felt you connected with someone upon first getting to know them. On what basis was the connection made? Familiar topics? Shared experiences? Other?

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#### **FIND OUT MORE**

- On what substantive topics could you engage an influential person in a way that would demonstrate your own sincere desire to learn and develop influence?

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- ➔• Based on your fields of interest, with what substantive topics might you be wise to become familiar?

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## TAKE ACTION

1. Commit to becoming proficient in three substantive topics of conversation. Try to make each progressively more substantive than the one before so that you can speak at different levels of intensity depending on the conversation. Be specific about how you will develop your understanding of the topics:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## CHAPTER 12

### THINK ABOUT IT

- “Be sure of what you aspire to.” From what platform do you want to lead? Would it be from the national, state, or local level? Why?

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- “The city you declare to be home is the most crucial of all decisions you make when it comes to your



career and the impact you will have upon the world.” Consider just how open you are to relocating to one of the three major cities. What fears might keep you from making the move?

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#### **FIND OUT MORE**

- Take an hour of your time to research via the Internet some basic living information about each of the big three cities (or just one if you know your life path). Find out cost of living, real estate rental, average salary, etc. In short, see what it would take to make the move. Record your findings here:

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#### **TAKE ACTION**

- ➡ 1. Decide what arena you are most passionate about.

Politics? Culture? Business? Write the corresponding big city here:

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2. Contact anyone you know who has lived or still lives in the city you have written and get their perspective on what it would take to make the move. Record your findings here:
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- 
- 

- ➡ 3. Write your intended moving date here:
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## CHAPTERS 14 AND 15

### THINK ABOUT IT

- “You decide where you are going, and you identify who can help you get there.” Record a candid assessment about how intentional you have been

to cultivate networks of acquaintances and friendships to achieve influence.

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### FIND OUT MORE

- Explore the topic of network theory with a brief Internet search.
- “Your early jobs are about finding career-long sponsors, and those folks never notice the basement colonels.” What type of positions would emplace you for maximum notice—even if at lower pay—in the arena of influence you have chosen?

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### TAKE ACTION

1. Select three people of influence and request fifteen minutes, a lunch meeting (your treat, of course), or whatever time they can spare for you to hear the story of how they got to where they are today. Jot down their stories. Take time to consider lessons to be learned from them.

2. Compile a list of people you know more than casually who might know key influencers in your desired area of influence. Answer this question honestly: “What is it in your experience with them that might cause them to recommend you to others for an internship opportunity?”

Name	Reason
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

If you can't think of a good reason, what do you need to change?

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## CHAPTERS 16, 17, AND 26

### THINK ABOUT IT

- Recall a time in your life when you were humbled,

perhaps even publicly humiliated. As you look back on it now, what lessons did you learn from the experience?

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- “The fellow who is quick to admit what he doesn’t know is much more likely to be believed when he asserts his expertise.” Think back to the effective—and not-so-effective—teachers you have had. How does this observation fit with your experiences with them? Explain:

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### **FIND OUT MORE**

- Choose an area of life influence that interests you. Research to discover who the experts are in that field. What could you do to learn more from them?

- Read the following passages from the Bible about people who failed to realize that pride goes before a fall: Numbers 20:6–12; 2 Samuel 11; Acts 12:20–24. What lessons can you learn from their stories?

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### TAKE ACTION

1. Remember “Life is a habit.” Choose a simple way to remind yourself daily of the need for humility, perhaps by placing in a visible location Christ’s statement that the first will be last, and the last, first. Come up with a creative solution that works for you.
2. Start a new habit. The next time someone asks you about something you don’t know, be intentional about answering honestly: “I don’t know.” If it’s your boss, follow your confession with a plan to get the information requested.

## CHAPTERS 18 AND 19

### THINK ABOUT IT

- “Every time you give an assist to another’s career, you advance your own. Each time you sacrifice time or effort on another’s behalf, you do so for yourself as well.” The promotion of would-be rivals seems to contradict our natural tendencies. But think about times when others have helped you. How did it influence your perspective of them? Did it make you more or less willing to assist them?

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### FIND OUT MORE

- Explore the meaning of the parable of the shrewd manager in Luke 16:1–9 where Jesus instructs His disciples to “use worldly wealth to gain friends . . . to be welcomed into eternal dwellings” (NIV). What do you think He means?
- Take a moment to list biblical characters who used the concept of the favor bank to advance their vision or cause:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

## TAKE ACTION

1. Skim through Proverbs 10–29 and compile a list of the many verses that deal with promoting the success of others:

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2. From the verses you have listed, choose a verse each day for the next several weeks. Meditate on it each morning. Keep it with you on a card or post it to your social media site for yourself and others to ponder as you go about your day. Make promoting the success of others a life habit. Record the results of your observations in a journal, or blog them if you choose to share your findings.

## CHAPTERS 20 AND 21

### THINK ABOUT IT

- Take a moment to reflect on those times where others did not reveal to you all you needed to know to make



an informed decision. How did that change the way you thought of them?

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- “Hanging a lantern on your problem” goes against our natural inclination to conceal anything that might negatively impact our success. But does it align with Scripture? Consider these passages and jot down a few more that might apply to such action:

☐ Proverbs 14:12 \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Matthew 9:1–7 \_\_\_\_\_

☐ A *negative* example: Genesis 12:10–20

\_\_\_\_\_

## FIND OUT MORE

- Problems do not go away simply because we ignore them. Choose a few leaders you know, maybe from the business, political, or church arenas. Schedule a time to ask them how they approach difficult topics or problems. Perhaps they would be willing to share with

you some anecdotes of their successes and possible failures in this area.

- Do some research on your own of political or historical figures that attempted—and failed—to conceal or avoid issues until they were simply too big to handle well. How did their behavior damage their credibility? Consider these figures as starters: Ronald Reagan (Iran-Contra), Bill Clinton (Monica Lewinsky), or Richard Nixon (Watergate).

## **TAKE ACTION**

1. “There is no admission of ignorance in a confession of error.” Consider an area in your life right now where you are attempting to conceal your error or shortcoming. Prayerfully ponder whether it is an error that should be revealed or one that matters little to anyone. If significant, make the appointment now to have a candid conversation with those who need to know.
2. Commit today to having the integrity to always “put the hardest issue at the top of the agenda” rather than attempting to avoid it.

## CHAPTERS 22 AND 23

### THINK ABOUT IT

- Take a few minutes to reread the selection that details all the people you owe behind the scenes of life. Now stop and mentally relive your typical day. Imagine all the nameless people you depend on to make the simplest task possible throughout your day.
- “Our utter dependence on others is so obvious and so complete that it is as invisible as oxygen and just as necessary.” Why do you think we tend to forget our dependence on other people so easily? More specifically, why do *you* easily forget?

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### FIND OUT MORE

- Read Exodus 15:19–17:7 and Luke 12:11–19. Explore other biblical examples of either a lack of gratitude or an acknowledgment of the debts owed by all.

## TAKE ACTION

1. Act on the recognition of debts you owe others. Make a list of the folks you owe. Do it now. Start with family. Move chronologically. Teachers, coaches, mentors, friends:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

2. If you have not already thanked the people you have listed above, take the time to do it. Start today and choose one each day for the next few weeks. Jot a handwritten note, send an e-mail, or perhaps prepare a more personalized gift. To repeat: life is a habit. Make gratitude part of it.

## CHAPTERS 24, 25, AND 27

### THINK ABOUT IT

- “Try to think of those folks who are rarely, if ever, heard to denounce others or criticize in a fashion that does not necessarily make its way directly to the target. . . . Folks fall into two categories: reputation builders and reputation destroyers.” Make a mental list of people you

have known who would fall into these two categories.  
Which people have earned your admiration more? Why?

- How do you view the people you pass each day as part of your life routine? Do you see them as “mere mortals”? If they were asked, would they have a clue as to who you are or how you perceive them?
- If your coworkers talk with you about others who are not present, who are they likely talking about with those same people when you are not present?

#### **FIND OUT MORE**

- Search the Gospels for examples of Jesus offering criticism of others. See if you can find any place where He criticizes others outside of their presence.
- ➔• Read Matthew 18 and jot down the steps Jesus gives for confronting correctly:

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## TAKE ACTION

1. Over the next week, make a point to notice how people talk about those who are not present. Most importantly, note how you react to that talk. Do you avoid it? Engage in it? Start the conversation? Keep a journal to track your reactions.
2. Be honest with yourself. On a scale of 1 to 10 with 10 being the most serious gossip condition, how easily do you find it to engage in conversation designed to lift yourself at another's expense? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
3. Consult Proverbs 10–29 once again, this time for verses mentioning tale-bearing, gossiping, or speaking ill of others. There are quite a few. Choose a few of the most powerful and commit them to memory.

## CHAPTERS 29 AND 30

### THINK ABOUT IT

- ➡ • “If this book is successful, it will help you prepare for and advance a career that aims at influencing this world. The danger is that as you go about that career, you will forget that influence is a means to an end, not an end in itself.” Take a moment to reconnect with why you are eager to pursue influence. Write out your purpose for pursuing your ambitions here:

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- ➔ • “He used to be quite important.” Imagine that comment being made about you one day. If you are blessed to acquire significant influence, imagine how you would want to feel as you look back at the legacy you left. Choose three words that best describe that feeling:
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### FIND OUT MORE

- Find people who have chosen ministry careers as their life-calling. Spend some time getting to know them and, even if only briefly, ask to serve alongside them to find out more about how such a calling differs from the pursuit of earthly influence.

### TAKE ACTION

1. If you have not already done so, seek out a missionary activity or organization to engage in a deep and meaningful way—not just by sending a check every month, although such support is necessary. If you have no such connections already, check out [www.younglife.org](http://www.younglife.org).

2. If given the opening as a person of influence to project the gospel, could you? Are you capable of clearly communicating the basics of the good news of Christ if put in the spotlight and given the opening to do so? If not, connect with your spiritual mentors (pastors, teachers, parents, etc.) to be sure you are ready to give an answer for the hope in you. Try sketching out the basics in the few short blanks below:

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## CHAPTER 31

### THINK ABOUT IT

- “No piece of advice I give is more valuable than this one.” What are the barriers that might keep you from genuinely joining a church? Your previous experiences? Your family history? The neglected state of your relationship with Christ? Take a few minutes to reflect on whether you embrace or resist the advice. Why?

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- How often in your life so far have you needed the “guardrail effect” of accountability to others in a community? If power tends to corrupt, how much more will you need that effect as you pursue, and succeed in, your ambitions?

#### FIND OUT MORE

- What factors are important to you when choosing a church to join? In addition to the ones listed below, you may wish to list your own in the blanks provided:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Proximity          | <input type="checkbox"/> Preaching (four-week minimum trial) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Worship style      | <input type="checkbox"/> Age-specific ministry               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children’s program | <input type="checkbox"/> Musical quality                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Apolitical pulpit  | <input type="checkbox"/> Missions focus                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____              | <input type="checkbox"/> _____                               |

- Explore the meaning of the following scripture from Hebrews 10:24–25: “And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking

the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.”

### TAKE ACTION

- ➡ 1. If you have allowed yourself to drift apart from or out of church entirely, take the first steps to joining a church today. Right now. Phone a friend who seems plugged in to a specific congregation. Or just choose one close to you and call today. Find out when the next service takes place and make it a priority to be there.

## CHAPTERS 33 AND 37

### THINK ABOUT IT

- Think about your current circle of acquaintances, mentors, and friends. What interests you about them? How much occurs after darkness falls? Are you able to identify those parts of their character that might be cause for concern—even if they are interesting?
- “If you are interested in the interviewer, he will be interested in you.” To what extent does this approach to interest in others align with Scripture? How?

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## FIND OUT MORE

- Explore the world of talk radio ([www.hughhewitt.com](http://www.hughhewitt.com)) or any forum with experienced interviewers to learn the value of good questions. Imagine the medium without quality questions. Now imagine your future job interview without them.

## TAKE ACTION

1. In the spaces below list some of the interesting people in your life. What is it that makes them interesting?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

2. “Asking questions is not an easy or even intuitive skill for adults.” Develop the habit of asking at least half a dozen questions in every conversation. Start with your college professor, the security guard you pass each day, a professional you encounter, or a classmate in the cafe. Make it a daily exercise to question someone—politely—to develop an outline of the person’s life. Always be polite, but always ask.
3. If you struggle in this area, consider taking a job or volunteering in a role that requires you to ask questions to get to know people, perhaps in a service or sales industry. Intentionally cultivate the art of asking good questions.

## CHAPTERS 34, 35, AND 36

### THINK ABOUT IT

- “A love of adventure is a choice to do things for yourself. It is almost always a poor choice that cannot be reversed.” What do you think of this advice? Given that all of us need to spend some time outdoors or engaged in physical exercise, what percentage of your life is spent pursuing the next thrill?

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- “I know a few things, but I know how very little I know. This latter knowledge is an effective brake on pride.” Do you think of yourself as someone who knows quite a bit or as someone who has quite a bit yet to know? Is it evident to others?

### FIND OUT MORE

- Of all topics, it can be most challenging to find out more about . . . you. Consider the ancient aphorism:

“Know thyself.” Read Psalm 139:23 and prayerfully ask God to show you if pride, or ignorant preening, has become a barrier to your relationships with others. Record your meditations and observations here:

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#### TAKE ACTION

- ➔01. “Most of the free world is managed by disciplined people who rise early and work late and who take pleasure in their craft.” Assess your own life to see how well your life habits are positioning you for success. Does this description represent your life, or do character flaws tend to surface all too frequently? Begin taking steps today, even small ones, to train yourself to lead. List the steps you will take here:

Step 1: \_\_\_\_\_  
Step 2: \_\_\_\_\_  
Step 3: \_\_\_\_\_

## CHAPTERS 38 AND 47

### THINK ABOUT IT

- How well have you handled encounters with people you considered offensive for some reason? Perhaps the cause for offense was their physical appearance, rude manners, boring but endless conversation, or crude language. Whatever the reason, how did you respond to them? With gracious welcoming or evident disdain? How did Jesus respond to similar people He encountered?

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- Recall C. S. Lewis: “There are no *ordinary* people.” How might keeping this truth in mind change your next encounter with a potentially offensive person?

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### FIND OUT MORE

- Compare how Jesus chose to react to potentially offensive events in the following passages: Matthew 12:22–37; Mark 11:15–18; and Luke 5:27–32. Note your observations here:

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### TAKE ACTION

1. “If your feelings are hurt but you are not bleeding, get over it and get on with it.” Only you can choose how you react to offensive behavior. Choose today to develop a tougher—but friendlier—skin. Put it into practice the next chance you get.
2. If you find you are still struggling in this area, intentionally seek out opportunities to serve people whom society labels as offensive. Find your local city mission or soup kitchen and sincerely volunteer your time helping people often deemed offensive.

## CHAPTERS 39 AND 42

### THINK ABOUT IT

- Recall an instance from your experience in which flattery was used inappropriately and it was pretty obvious to everyone. What was its effect on the recipient of the flattery? On the one giving the flattery? On the perception of the flatterer in the minds of all who heard it? Jot down your reflections here:

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- Assuming that your flattery is sincere, how might flattery be used—if only sparingly—to light “the fuse of recognition”? Visualize a scenario in which flattery might be used effectively. Describe it here:

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## FIND OUT MORE

- “There is virtue in being closemouthed and a great reputation in the saying that this person or that person is discreet.” Read Proverbs 2:11 and 17:28. Do these verses support this claim? Why or why not?

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## TAKE ACTION

1. “Conduct a quick test: write down on this page the people whom you have encouraged this week. Really encouraged. You should be able to recall those instances immediately.” If you cannot fill the blanks below, it is time to get serious about becoming a leader of influence.

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## CHAPTER 40

### THINK ABOUT IT

- Do you find yourself becoming defensive about the role your physical shape will play in your success? Why? Be brutally honest with yourself. Those who can aid your pursuit of ambition will be no less honest in their own evaluations of your habits.

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### FIND OUT MORE

- Does the Bible speak to our need for discipline—and moderation—in all areas of life? Consider these passages for further study or motivation to change: Proverbs 10:4–5; Proverbs 23:1–2; Proverbs 23:19–21; Proverbs 25:28; 1 Corinthians 9:24–27.

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## TAKE ACTION

- ➡ 1. “Change the way you look if the way you look is an obstacle.” Only you can decide to take the daily steps needed to change your physical appearance. Everything speaks. Write here what you want your physical shape to say:

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- ➡ 2. Remember: life is a habit. “Exercise more. Eat less. Walk, then run, every day. Every day. It is a lifesaving and career-enhancing habit of the highest order.” List the most critical habit you must develop to improve your physical health:

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Now record the concrete steps you will take to make this habit part of your life routine. Be sure to include accountability in your habit training:

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## CHAPTERS 43 AND 44

### THINK ABOUT IT

- “The younger you are, the less entitled you are to anger.” Why would this be true? What is it about being younger that makes anger seem less an asset than a liability?

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- “A reputation for good humor and a ready laugh are the frame in which flashing anger is always best displayed.” Have you built the frame in which righteous indignation can work effectively? If not, how could you do that now?

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### FIND OUT MORE

- Explore the instructions Jesus gives for resolving conflict with others, especially with other believers, although the basic truths apply to non-believers as well. Take a few minutes to unpack the following passages: Matthew 5:23–24; 18:15–35; and Luke

6:37–42. What are some of the key principles Christ gives for handling conflict?

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### TAKE ACTION

1. “Ask your friends and spouse: ‘Do you recall any occasions on which I was really angry?’ If everyone has a story to tell, and all the stories are different, you have overplayed anger and have a problem that needs correcting.”
2. “But if no one can recall your ever being angry, ask yourself whether you are really engaged in any pursuit to which you are passionately committed.”
3. Record your findings from the above investigations here. What have you learned about you and anger?

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## CHAPTER 45

### THINK ABOUT IT

- “The guardrails become fewer and lower as authority increases.” Consider this statement based on your own experience. Have you seen this to be true in the lives of influential people? In your own life? Have you ever needed guardrails?

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- When you take the time to examine the passions driving your own motives and ambitions, do you find yourself suddenly seeking something—anything—else to do? Are you easily distracted during that self-inspection as if eager to avoid the scrutiny? If so, you may have some heart issues that even you know you should fix.

### FIND OUT MORE

- Explore the historical account of two biblical kings, Saul and David. Although two vastly different men in character and leadership, they both made

significant errors based on lust, cruelty, and revenge with tragic results for themselves and others. As you read the accounts, ask yourself if you can relate to their struggles. Saul: 1 Samuel 8–28. David: 2 Samuel 11–12. Record your thoughts from the accounts here:

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#### TAKE ACTION

1. Commit to making genuine self-examination part of your life habit as a guardrail against crossing lines forbidden by Christ. Begin a daily or weekly habit of private introspection. Try these questions to jumpstart the process:

- When in the past day/week have I felt a twinge of conscience?
- Have I ignored it? If so, why?
- Given my commitment to Christ, what would He want me to do?

As an additional guardrail, base your response on specific scriptural principles.

2. Because each of us has the beguiling power of self-deception (consider Saul and David), those with ambition would be wise to seek out others willing to hold them accountable. Friends, pastors, and mentors all can fill this role. Listen to them.



# A Summary of Your Key Decisions

## CHAPTER 1

- The positions of influence that I would most desire to achieve are:

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- I will need to change the way I think about my future ambitions in the following areas to be ready for the trip to begin:

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## CHAPTER 3

- As a faithful follower of Christ, I consciously commit to:

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## CHAPTER 5

- The colleges whose status would best position me for influence are

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- The college path that would position me with the ideal academic credentials for maximum influence would be:

☐ Undergraduate: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Graduate: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## CHAPTER 7

- Three new habits that will position me for long-term success are:

☐ Habit 1: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Habit 2: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Habit 3: \_\_\_\_\_

## CHAPTER 8

- I will become familiar with the following substantive topics:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## CHAPTER 12

- I intend to move to the city of \_\_\_\_\_ by the date of \_\_\_\_\_.

## CHAPTER 25

- The steps Jesus gives, and that I will follow, for confronting correctly are:

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## CHAPTER 29

- I am eager to pursue influence because:

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- I hope to feel this way about the legacy I leave behind:

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## CHAPTER 31

- ☐ Yes, I have embraced the need to genuinely join a local church body.

## CHAPTER 35

➡ The steps I will take to train myself to lead are:

☐ Step 1: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Step 2: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Step 3: \_\_\_\_\_

## CHAPTER 40

➡ My physical shape will say this about me:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The most critical habit that will help me achieve that end will be \_\_\_\_\_.

Every ability you have—and the sum of those abilities—gives you opportunities to influence the world. And this is a crucial point: Christ does not consider these opportunities to be optional. He has clearly said that they are obligations. Treat them as such.