



PREPARING FOR YOUR PROMOTION

Prayer Focus: Ask the Lord to help every participant 1) understand the importance of the preparation seasons that come before promotion, and 2) learn how to strengthen themselves in the Lord during those times.

FELLOWSHIP, WELCOME, AND INTRODUCTIONS (20-30 MINUTES—FOR THE FIRST MEETING)

Welcome everyone as they walk in. If it is a small group environment, as the host or leader, be intentional about connecting with each person as they come to the meeting space. If it is a church class environment, it is still recommended that the leader connects with each participant. However, there will be less pressure for the participants to feel connected immediately in a traditional class setting versus a more intimate small group environment.

In the small group, serve refreshments and facilitate fellowship between group members. In a class setting, talk with the attendees and ensure that they receive all of their necessary materials (the workbook and a copy of *Strengthen Yourself in the Lord*).

Introduce yourself and allow participants to briefly introduce themselves as well. This should work fine for both small group and class environments. In a small group, you can go around the room and have each person introduce him or herself, one at a time. In a classroom setting, establish some type of flow and then have each person give a quick introduction (name, interesting factoid, etc.).

Discuss the schedule for the meetings. Provide participants an overview of what the next eight weeks will look like. If you plan to do any type of social activities, you might want to advertise this at the start, noting that while the curriculum runs for eight weeks, there will be a ninth meeting dedicated to fellowship and some type of fun activity. However, you might come up with this idea later on in the actual study.

Distribute materials to each participant. Briefly orient the participants to the book and workbook, explaining the 15–20 minute time commitment for each day. Encourage each person to engage fully in this journey—they will get out of it only as much as they invest. The purpose for the daily reinforcement activities is *not* to add busy work to their lives. This is actually a way to cultivate a habit of Bible study and daily time pursuing God's Presence, starting with just 15–20 minutes. Morning, evening, afternoon—*when* does not matter. The key is making the decision to engage.

OPENING PRAYER

WORSHIP (15 MINUTES—OPTIONAL FOR FIRST MEETING)

If a group chooses to do a worship segment, often they decide to begin on the second week. It usually takes an introductory meeting for everyone to become acquainted with one another and comfortable with their surroundings before they open up in worship.

On the other hand, if the group members are already comfortable with one another and they are ready to launch right into a time of worship, they should definitely go for it!

PRAYER/MINISTRY TIME (5–15 MINUTES)

VIDEO/TEACHING (20 MINUTES)

SCRIPTURE

*Now David was greatly distressed, for the people spoke of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and his daughters. **But David strengthened himself in the Lord his God** (SAMUEL 30:6).*

SUMMARY

To fulfill your destiny in God, you need to learn the practical yet powerful steps to strengthening yourself in the Lord. This is how King David persevered through

his long season of process. Even though David was anointed by the prophet Samuel and received a significant promise—to be king—ultimately, there was a great span of time between his promise received (at his anointing) and promised fulfilled (when he finally becomes king). Even though there were countless opportunities for David to give up, he persevered. When absolutely everyone turned against him, from mentor-turned-enemy King Saul to his previously devoted mighty men, he made a destiny-defining choice that ultimately positioned him to step into his greatest hour of promotion: David strengthened himself in the Lord.

During these eight powerful sessions, Pastor Bill Johnson will share keys from the life of David and from his own journey with God that will keep you spiritually strong through difficult times. The goal is not simply to strengthen yourself so that your circumstances can improve and you can step into divine promotion. That's step one. Your life of breakthrough is meant to change the world around you. God created you to be a divine change-agent in your sphere of influence. Get ready to discover practical secrets to release the strength, power, and joy of God's kingdom *in your life* and *to your world*.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (25–30 MINUTES)

1. There were many years between David's anointing (promise received) and David stepping into his destiny (promise fulfilled).

Why do you think it's *very important* for there to be time in between promise received and promise fulfilled?

2. What does it mean that God cannot put something heavy on a weak foundation?
3. How does strengthening yourself in the Lord position you to fulfill your divine destiny and not give up during times of pressure?
4. In this study, we will address the topic of promotion frequently.

Discuss what you think promotion means and explore why you think that, biblically, promotion is very important to God.

5. It is possible for your most significant breakthroughs and destiny-defining promotions to come during/after seasons of tremendous difficulty. (Consider the life of David.)

To keep yourself strong, why do you think it's so important *not* to: 1) blame God when things don't work out the way you thought they would, or 2) move into shame or guilt, blaming yourself?

6. Based on 1 Kings 10:9 (the statement made about Solomon), what is the end result of personal promotion? Why do you think it's so important to maintain this perspective?
7. Have participants share personal stories (as they feel comfortable) of times in their lives when they experienced significant opposition and difficulty—where immediately after the difficulty, they entered into seasons of promotion and breakthrough. During these difficult times, how did they specifically:
 - a. Strengthen themselves in the Lord
 - b. Persevere
 - c. Learn from their mistakes
 - d. Arrive at promotion and breakthrough

ACTIVATION: LEARN TO RECOGNIZE YOUR AREA OF PROMOTION

All of us are being summoned into new areas of promotion, as God is all about taking us from *glory to glory*.

Today, you are going to learn how to identify these areas with greater clarity so you can more effectively cooperate with the Holy Spirit as He leads you into new places of advancement and breakthrough. (Take 15–20 minutes, as time permits.)

1. Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to show you what areas in your life He wants to promote. (It could be

anything from growing in your spiritual life, to advancing in your job, to improving a specific relationship, to fulfilling a dream or desire you have, to following through on a career ambition.) *There could be multiple areas.*

2. Don't overwhelm yourself if many areas of promotion come to your mind during this exercise. Focus on a select few—*one* is probably most advisable.
3. Ask the Lord, *What area do You want me to focus on in this next season?* Even though there might be a few, it's best to start somewhere. Most likely, the Lord will highlight something to you.
4. Write this area of promotion down. Commit to praying over it during the course of the eight-week curriculum (and beyond).

Ask if there are group members who would like to share what the Holy Spirit said to them about new areas of promotion. Have 2-3 people share.

Goal: The goal of this exercise is to remove the barriers of what you think promotion means. It's not just about making more money or securing a new title at your job; at its core, promotion is about you stepping into the divine destiny that God has planned for you! The purpose of these sessions is to help you become a person who is fit for supernatural promotion.

This will only come as you learn how to strengthen yourself in the Lord!

PLANS FOR THE NEXT WEEK (2 MINUTES)

Point out Day 1 through Day 5 in the workbook. Encourage everyone to participate fully in this daily journey in order to get the most out of it.

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Week 1



VIDEO LISTENING GUIDE

Two things that cripple the people of God:

1. Bitterness (or resentment).
2. Disappointment.

David functioned as a:

1. King.
2. Priest.
3. Prophet.

Your tests prove the grace of God that is on your life.

How to get positioned to minister strength to yourself: Become un-offendable.

Two areas to avoid in order to strengthen yourself in the Lord:

1. Don't blame God.
2. Don't move into shame or guilt.

The purpose of promotion:

1. God acknowledging the grace that's functioning in us.
2. God positions us in a place where the people around us will benefit from our promotion.