

# The Slight Edge - Stay On Track, Part 12

Sermon Title: **The Slight Edge – Stay on Track, Part 12**

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Speaker: **James Bronner**

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James Bronner: In order to move to a different level in your life, you must do something different.

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Female: And now for 8236, The Slight Edge, Part 12, Stay On Track.

James Bronner: Welcome to Brothers of the Word, because brother, you need the Word. And this is the final message in the series on The Slight Edge that Pastor Nathaniel has been doing over the preceding weeks and he told me that, God told him that I was supposed to deliver the last message in this series. So, I stand before you today to fulfill the Word of the Lord on this day. God also told Pastor what topic I was to speak on from that Slight Edge. So, it is by divine mandate today and not by my own choosing the Words that will come forth. So, that tells me that, it's at least for one person in this place.

So, open your spiritual ears and your spiritual eyes today to receive the Word of the Lord, and this series is truly life changing. But only if you apply it to your life. James Chapter 1, Verses 22 through 25 says, "But be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the Word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."

I'm going to just read that ending part again. It says, "And continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." And this passage is letting you know that we have to do three things to be blessed in this manner: we have to hear the word, number two, you have to act and number three, you have to continue in your acting. All found there in that 25th Verse to receive the reward of the promise given.

The Slight Edge has been pastor's longest running series to date and I believe that God had it that way because it can do the most good in your life out of any series he has done before.

And I believe that's why God had him to carry on so long with it. How many of you in here by show of hands, you want your life to move to a higher level in some area. All right. I think that's about every hand in here. In order to move to a different level in your life, you must do something different. Einstein defined insanity as doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.

Turn to your neighborhood and ask them, "Are you sane today?" Look in the eyes and see if there's any glaze over them. Are you sane? And I believe we are all sane in here today and by that definition, if we want something different in our lives, we must do something different. This message will give you a time-tested, but different way of doing things than how you've been ordinarily operating and that different than most people.

There was funny story about a businessman and he was walking down the street one day, headed to a meeting and he was focused with his briefcase and he walked past this insane asylum as we were talking about.

And this asylum was surrounded by a wooden fence and as he got to the edge and started walking by the fence, he heard the inmates in the yard outside of the building, just hollering over and over, "13, 13, 13." And he was on the way to the meeting. He was thinking about what he had to do and staying focus, and he just heard him repeatedly chanting, "13, 13." And his curiosity just started getting the best of him and he started wondering,

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I wonder why this crazy people are just hollering, "13, 13, 13." I heard about some of the mental conditions where they have a pattern of just doing the same thing over and over and he just kept wondering and he kept hearing, "13, 13, 13."

He said, "Maybe that's why they end that, just keep hollering the same thing." As he kept going beside the fence, he saw a little hole and he said, "I'm on the way to this meeting, but I've got to stop and see what in the world is going on in this insane

asylum.” And he took his eye and bent his head down and stuck his eye in the hole to see and he felt a poke. He said, “Oh, my goodness.” And he heard, “14, 14, 14.” And the moral of that story is, “You got to stay focused and stay on track.”

And then, I speak to you today from the subject of, Stay on Track. And I don't think it's any accident that even as my oldest son, he prayed today. He had no idea what I was talking about today. But one of the first thing he prayed was, “God, help me to stay on track.” He used those very words. It's no accident.

Turn to your neighbor and tell them, “Stay on track.” Turn to the other side and say, “Stay on track.” And I want to tell you today that the best way for you to stay on track is actually, to track your actions, to track your actions.

This last message in the The Slight Edge series will show you how to develop consistency and stay on track in your life. Only 8% of those that set New Year's Resolutions actually achieve those resolutions. The other 92%, they fall off track. They get defocused and their vision gets on something else. So, to get into that 8%, we must do something different than the 92% that get off track. Imagine for a moment, what your kids' performance would be in school, if teachers didn't track grades. If they didn't send home report cards periodically for you to see.

Imagine what your kids would do in school and for homework. Then, imagine on the do's, imagine that the taxes didn't take money out of people's checks, each time, each pay period and just depended on them to just save it up and pay it all in one lump sum at the end of the year. Imagine how many people would have all of that money to pay to IRS. Imagine how people would drive if they didn't have police officers with radar scanning their speed and writing tickets and having the speed cameras and speed traps and lights to catch it.

Imagine how people would drive. Well, this is the same way people lives get when there's no tacking nor accountability on your daily habits. Tracking puts your behavior in your sight. When things are out of sight, they're out of mind. Pastor has this daily habit list on his computer desktop. He has on his phone desktop. He has it on his own desk above his computer, in his office. I also have mine on my mirror next on my bed, I have it above my computer in my office.

If you're going to my son's room, you'll see that daily habits posted where those stay in front of eyes. Habakkuk 2:2 says, "To write the vision so that he that reads it may run." And with your own daily habits, you need to be both the writer and the reader and then, you need to run with your own vision. You need to be all three wrapped up into one. The writer, the reader and the runner.

So, to help us stay on track, I'm going to give you three techniques that psychologists and addiction counsel has found successful whether breaking a bad habit or forming a new habit, and these are time tested and things I use in my own life and that I've seen work around me. Number one is, that of tracking as we've been talking about. Number two is accountability.

And number three is rewarding and recovering drug and alcohol addicts. They always know how long they've been clean. You can ask an alcoholic, how long have you been clean? They'll tell you, "I didn't have a drink in three years, two months, one day." They always know the exact number because they have to track it, and they're taught this as a technique. The other thing they have as an accountability partner. So, they know that by yourself, you're likely to go back into the same behavior that you're always been doing, but you need somebody on your side that can keep monitoring on you. Jesus knew it and he sent the disciples on 2 by 2 and the Bible says, "One can put a thousand at flight, but two can put 10,000 to flight."

The third one on rewarding, you have to give yourself something to look forward to keep you motivated because it's not easy to start something new.

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And you can't do it in many different ways. You can have a weekly lunch with the co-worker scheduled and you can say that, "If I do 80% on my program and you don't then, you have to buy my lunch. If this is the other way around, I have to buy you a lunch." Another thing you can do is, figure out what you really like, what you enjoy and you can reward yourself with that after you've done your program for a certain length of time.

One of the things I did with my wife, we became each other's accountability partner. And what we did, we had agreed in our marriage on a certain number of times a week of intimacy and I'm not going to tell you how many that is, But I'd say that's a set of numbers. And what we did to motivate each other, I said, "If I do 80% or more and you don't, then we have to bump up that set time up one for the week and if it's the other way, if you do over 80% and I don't, then we can drop it down." How many of you know that name is stick on my program?

Didn't cost a dime but it was a creative way of finding out what motivated me and it got me to be faithful on what I was supposed to be doing. And whatever she was lacking, I said, "I'm coming to get you babe. I'm coming." She would get right back on it. And with the tracking of this incorporating all three of these techniques, we couldn't find the great solution that accomplish everything in a way that we want it to be.

So, we actually created it not only for ourselves, but for the world to use and it's free of charge at ourvictory.com. And basically on this site, first of all my program that I do personally is there and you can use it as a model, but you can change it up to vary the time and vary the habits that you want in your personal world, and it has checkmarks for each day of the week as you check them off, and it will calculate and track it for you. So, it will give you a percentage total for each day, how you've done? It will give you a percentage total for each habit.

And at the bottom, it will give you a percentage total for the entire week and it will give you a letter grade. So, it'll let you know if you've done A, B or C quality work. So, it'll give you a tracking. Then it incorporates this accountability factor. It has instructions on how you can send a link to your accountability partner. They can view on a daily basis how you're doing. Now, it's different if you're doing something and nobody can see it, but once you open it up to an accountability partner, it makes you more motivated.

You don't want them to see how about you've been doing. Sometimes, when asked by people how you're doing it, I say, "I'm doing all right. Ain't no good with that. They had been with the hoot on what they were supposed to do." But this allows it to be open and accurate and then, you can set up the rewards there to

even specify what will be done with the certain percentage at ourvictory.com.

It also has a separate tab that I use for all of my children and it's called, The Child Habit Tracker and you'll see that the model of what I use for my children to develop them in body, mind, spirit and school work. So, my program for them is there and if they score 80% or more, they get \$20 for the weekend. They've been doing good on it and recently I added two more levels beyond that. So, the other levels pay more, but it's a lot more to them to do. So, you can use that model for your life as well as for the lives of your children and every Christian should have certain daily written habits that they practice in their life as a discipline.

I'll go through five of these even though they are additional ones. Number one is, your prayer time. And this is our source of spiritual power and grows our relationship with our Creator. Number two is, your Bible time. 2nd Timothy 2:15 says, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." And you can use a reading plan. You can study a particular topic at a time or you can just pray for God to lead you and just open up and read wherever you're led to.

I don't care which of these three messages you use. The point is, to have a daily discipline of staying in His Words. The life journal reading plan is the one I'm personally use and you can find it at [lifejournal.cc](http://lifejournal.cc).

The third habit that all Christian should have is, a personal development reading plan and time. People will often ask me, "What's the best investment that I can make with my money?" And I'll tell them, the best thing that'll beat any monetary investment, is investing in your own self. If you raise your own value, more resources will come into your world. How much value do you add to your workplace? How much value do you add in the Kingdom of God?

And you've all heard about non-elderly people who have died and nobody knew after weeks that they were dead. And I'll tell you, if you're adding value into your space.

That if you're dead for one day, somebody ought to be missing you, somebody ought to recognize you.

And I read one story about a Croatian woman who had made herself a cup of tea and she'd sat down in front of her black and white TV, got all comfortable to just enjoy her TV shows and she died right there with a tea in front of this black and white TV. And because she wasn't adding value around her environment, they didn't find this lady to 42 years later. 42 years and needless to say, her TV was cut off quick because she wasn't paying the bills, but she sat down, they came in, they busted the door down and she was still sitting in front of this TV with the teacup sitting there after 42 years.

You need to start with books that are about the things that you're struggling with the most. So, if you're having money problems, you'll need to read some of Dave Ramsey's book on finance. My wife was recently struggling with some sinus issues. So, I got her a book and she was reading on sinus care. When I was dealing with one of my son's grades, I read the book called, "How to Motivate Boys?"

If you're having relationship issues and your communication is off, read on communication. Whatever area when you look at your life it says, "This area will make the most difference if changed." That's the first area you need to focus on with this personal development reading and I do the same thing on my kid's program. I look and say, "What will make the most difference in their life right now?" And that's the book that I will assign to them to do next. And I'll also look at their destiny and their gifts and talents and where they're headed and I focus to books in those areas.

The number four habit you need is exercise. The medical field has found that exercise is the number one life extending thing that you can do besides not smoking. One of the latest studies found that those getting at least two and a half hours of moderate activity a week could anticipate to live nearly six extra years. It also found that in particular, black women, if they were to engage in one hour of vigorous activity like, jogging or swimming, that they would extend their lives by 11 hours. Now, that's 11 to 1 on the payback return on your time. I don't know

if any other thing in life that you can do that will pay you back for your time, 11 to 1.

And when I was 39 years old and was about to turn 40, I had about six months left. I set a personal goal to be in the best shape of my life. And I used this firmly, I've got my plan together and I posted it up on my wall, a tracking chart. And I began working out three days a week and I stuck with this schedule. My wife will tell you, I didn't even have a trainer, and using this, each workout, I increased one rep and two reps and I just stayed diligent on it for these months. And by that time, me turning 40 in six months, I increased my bench press 100 pounds and I was in the best shape of my life from even above high school or college just by tracking and staying focused.

The fifth habit you need is, relationship building. Relationships with our spouses, children and friends, they provide more happiness than anything on earth besides God. With this being the case, we need to spend time to build them. I spend time every week to date my wife and I spend time most nights to eat dinner with my kids at the dinner table. I invest time with them to play sports with them. We also pray and study God's Word together as a family, and these are five areas that I've just gone through on my daily habit list along with some others that are also all of these are on pastor's lists and you can customize them for your own list, but this should be in the lives of every Christian.

And when people hear these things, they'll often say, "I don't have time to read. I don't have time to go out and date or the exercise or do these things." But yet, I had the same people talking about a juicy TV show and what happened on TV last night. And one thing I've learned about people, people will do what they want to do and they take time for what they want to make time for. Everybody has the same 24 hours on a day. God didn't give anybody extra time in a day.

So, given that fact, you have to replace things that don't add value to your life with those that do. Thing like TV, social media, internet browsing, talking to people who aren't adding value to your life, et cetera. All these areas, we can reduce to get extra time out for areas that improve our life. And as this concludes The Slight Edge series, I want to say, don't take these principles lightly. These changes in your life using the Slight

Edge are literally a matter of life and death with no exaggeration. Changing your eating may have an extra five years on your life. It's a matter of life and death, exercising can make the difference in you living 74 years or 80 years.

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The choice between life and death. This is literally life and death, fulfillment versus disappointment, happiness versus sorrow, prosperity versus lack, health versus infirmity. Spending time praying with your children can make the difference in your daughter having to go through two and three abortions or your son choosing to smoke pot or not. It can make the difference spending time daily in your world can make the difference and God's wisdom in your heart, God in your life or the fleshly desires regarding your life.

You're reading 10 pages of an empowering book a day, can make the difference in you being the employee or you being the manager or owning your own business within three years. Your children doing the school work on this Slight Edge, on time can make the difference in them not going to college, dropping out or them going on full scholarship and changing the future of your progeny for generations to come. The choice is in your hand. One day at a time, one decision at a time.

This is not a one-time choice. You have to make this choice every day and every hour of the day. When your alarm clock goes off early in the morning, you have the choice to make. "Do I sleep for extra 30 minutes or do I want to have a healthy fit body and get up and exercise?" Every meal that you sit down and eat, when you look at the plate, you have to ask yourself, "Will I satisfy my taste buds with this meal or do I want to minimize sickness in my body?"

Every time you window shop, you have to ask yourself, "Do I buy something nice to wear now or do I want to grow my money to be comfortable in the future." Ask yourself, "Do I truly love God more than sleep? Do I truly love Him more than money? Then why will I put these things above spending time with them?" Matthew 6, 22 says, "The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light."

Light causes plants to grow, whatever you put your eye on, your eye is what you focus with, that thing will grow. If you put your eye on watching sports, your knowledge of what players and teams are doing will grow. If you put your eye on watching reality TV, your knowledge of what drama is going on in the world will increase, but if you put your eye on reading wisdom, your wisdom will grow. If you put your eye on writings goals and looking at them, your achievement in life will grow. If you put your eye on your marriage, your relationship will grow.

If you put your eye on God, your spirit will grow. What is your eye on today? What is your eye on? Where is your light shining in your life? You've all seen guys have worked out in the gym and they focus on the upper body. They got these huge upper body, but little bit of legs. If you follow them to the gym and look at their routine, I can guarantee you, their eye and focus is on building their upper body.

The average parent in the U.S. spent less than six minutes of quality time with their children a day. It's no wonder our church is not growing in character and love and in school achievement. If you put five identical plants in a room and only shine sunlight on one, that one will outgrow the other four. So, ask yourself right now, "What do I want to grow in my life?"

I believe it's one reason God chose Paul to set up the early churches and the write two-thirds of the New Testament because he kept his eye on the prize. His eye was so on the prize and the passion of Christ burned in his heart so much that he didn't have time to spend on marriage. He said, "It's better to be like me." He had to spend all of his energy, all of his focus on doing the Lord's work and it enveloped him so much. His eye was so on the prize that jail couldn't stop him they locked him up. Sickness couldn't stop him when infirmity hit his body. He was beaten three times and he got up and said, "That stick is not going to stop me."

And it really gripped me when I looked at Acts 14:19 and I'd never seen this before, Paul was stoned and left for dead, but God raised him up. And when I did the research, the very next day in Acts 14:19, he got up from being left for dead with stones thrown over and walked over 20 miles to a town to go and preach the Word of God because his eyes was on the prize. He

didn't let death at his door stopping from doing the calling of God.

God recognized that quality in him, even before he was on his side. When his eye was on killing the Christians, even those in the early church who would be one with the Holy Spirit, tongue talking, doing miracles, even they were scared of Saul because they saw his eyes on the prize.

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And they said, "Paul got his eyes on us and we got this spirit, but he got his eyes on it." When Paul put his eyes on you, he didn't turn away. God saw this focus in his eye and he ended showing him a different light on the road to Damascus, that blinded him in. When his eyes was healed, they saw and focused on a different light, that light of Jesus. God has given you eyes to see with, but He's given you the power, the free will to focus and the truth where that light shines in your life.

I want to leave you with the story. In a small village, there was old wise man up rose the young whippersnapper that did like the old wiseman's reputation and he said, "I'd known more this old man his ways and thoughts. So, I got the new stuff." And he came up in front of the people and challenged the old man and he said, "Old man, I've got a bird behind my back. Can you tell me whether this bird is dead or alive?"

The old man looked at him, studied the situation and his wisdom and he said, "Young man, if I tell you that the bird is dead, you'll open your hands and let him fly away. But If I tell you that the bird is alive, you'll crush him in your hands and say that, 'No, he's dead.'" And he said, "The choice is in your hands."

And I leave you today saying, the choice is in your hands. The choice on whether you choose life or death, in every area of your life, the choice of where you focus your vision, what you'll grow in your life.

James Bronner: Thank you for joining Brothers of the Word, because brother, you need the Word.

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