

The One Decision Manifesto

The Receipts of a Life Built on Purpose

Dr. Jasmine Baker

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The Receipts Behind a Life Built on Purpose

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Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the **King James Version (KJV)** of the Holy Bible.

First Edition

Published in the United States of America

Published by

Dr. Jasmine Baker®

Publisher Information

For books, speaking engagements, media inquiries, educational resources, and additional information, visit:

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Printed in the United States of America.

Dedication

To my children,

Juan, Jadan, and Jade...

You are among the greatest receipts of my life.

Not because you are perfect.

But because together we have grown, learned, persevered, forgiven, celebrated, and continued building through every season life has placed before us.

If this manifesto teaches anything, I hope it teaches you this:

A meaningful life is not built in a single moment.

It is built one decision at a time.

Long before the world sees the evidence, your decisions are quietly shaping your character, your opportunities, your relationships, and your future.

Never underestimate an ordinary day.

Never underestimate a faithful decision.

Never underestimate the quiet work of becoming.

Some of your greatest receipts will never be displayed on a wall.

They will be found in your integrity.

Your courage.

Your compassion.

Your discipline.

Your faith.

The peace that comes from knowing you remained true to who God created you to be.

May you always choose purpose over comfort.

Character over convenience.

Wisdom over applause.

Faith over fear.

And may you never stop asking,

"What can I build next?"

The dream was never to arrive.

The dream was always to keep becoming.

My prayer is that long after I am gone, your lives will continue telling a story of courage, faithfulness, generosity, and purpose.

May your decisions accumulate into a life that points others toward hope.

May your life become a beautiful receipt.

With all my love,

Mom

How To Read This Manifesto

This is not a book to race through.

It is a book to return to.

These pages were not written to motivate you for a weekend or inspire you for a moment. They were written to help you examine the quiet decisions that ultimately shape an entire life.

As you read, resist the temptation to compare your beginning to someone else's receipts.

Receipts are evidence. They only appear after an investment has been made. They tell us what was purchased, what was sacrificed, what was valued, and what was accumulated over time. Every degree, every relationship, every opportunity, every promotion, every retirement, every business, every book, every mile traveled, every lesson learned, and every legacy built began as a decision that looked ordinary in the moment.

You may find yourself celebrating some decisions and grieving others. Both responses are part of the journey. Every life contains moments we would gladly repeat and moments we wish we could rewrite. Yet even our mistakes become teachers when we are willing to learn from them.

This manifesto is not asking whether your life has been perfect.

It is asking a different question:

What are your decisions accumulating?

Read slowly.

Pause often.

Reflect honestly.

Allow these pages to challenge your assumptions, affirm your courage, and expose the places where comfort has quietly replaced conviction.

Most of all, remember that no chapter is about my life alone.

The receipts I share are evidence that decisions compound over time. My hope is that they encourage you to recognize that you are writing the receipt for your own life every single day.

You do not have to change your entire life today.

You only have to make the next right decision.

Then make another.

And another.

One day, you will look back and realize your life became the receipt.

Manifesto Declaration

I believe a life is not built in a moment.

It is built one decision at a time.

I believe people often admire the visible while overlooking the invisible.

They celebrate the retirement but never saw the years of service.

They applaud the degree but never witnessed the late nights, early mornings, sacrifices, and perseverance.

They hold the book in their hands but never see the thousands of words written in solitude.

They celebrate freedom without understanding the discipline that purchased it.

I believe every meaningful life leaves receipts.

Receipts do not lie.

They reveal where our time was invested.

They reveal what we valued.

They reveal what we were willing to sacrifice.

They reveal what we continued long after the excitement faded.

They reveal the quiet decisions that eventually became a visible life.

Looking back, I have learned that the most important decisions rarely felt extraordinary when I made them.

Choosing to serve.

Choosing to learn.

Choosing to lead.

Choosing to stay disciplined.

Choosing to begin again after disappointment.

Choosing to keep building when no one was watching.

None of those decisions made headlines.

Together, they built a life.

I have also learned that every decision creates something.

Some decisions create freedom.

Some create limitation.

Some create opportunity.

Some create regret.

Whether we realize it or not, every decision begins accumulating a future.

Time simply reveals what our decisions have been building all along.

This manifesto is not a celebration of achievement.

It is a testimony to accumulation.

The receipts you will encounter in these pages are not proof that my life was easier, luckier, or more important than anyone else's.

They are evidence that ordinary decisions, made consistently over time, possess extraordinary power.

I have not arrived.

I am still becoming.

I am still learning.

I am still building.

Every goal I have reached has simply become the foundation for the next assignment.

The dream was never to arrive.

The dream was to keep becoming.

My hope is not that you admire my receipts.

My hope is that you begin writing your own with greater intention.

Years from now, your life will tell the story of the decisions you are making today.

Choose wisely.

Choose courageously.

Choose consistently.

Then allow time to do what it has always done.

Let your decisions accumulate.

Let your character mature.

Let your access expand.

Let your life become the receipt.

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Principle I – The Decision



The Moment Direction Becomes More Important Than Comfort

Looking back, I have come to believe that our lives rarely change because of information.

They change because of decisions.

Information can inspire us.

Conversations can encourage us.

Books can challenge us.

But none of those things possess the power to alter the direction of a life until someone decides.

Everything I now call a receipt began as a decision.

Not an outcome.

Not an achievement.

Not recognition.

A decision.

It is interesting how memory works.

When people tell the story of someone else's life, they usually begin with the visible moments.

They remember the retirement ceremony.

The graduation.

The published book.

The successful career.

The business.

The travel.

The influence.

Rarely do they begin where the story actually started.

With a decision that, at the time, seemed almost ordinary.

I have learned that life does not change when the opportunity arrives.

Life changes when the decision is made.

Long before I retired from the military, I made the decision to raise my right hand and serve.

I did not know that one decision would eventually produce educational opportunities, leadership experience, financial stability, lifelong friendships, two decades of personal growth, and ultimately a military retirement.

None of those receipts were visible on the day I enlisted.

I simply made a decision.

Years later, time revealed what that decision had been quietly building.

The same was true when I chose to continue my education.

There were seasons when studying was inconvenient.

Seasons when I was tired.

Seasons when balancing family, work, military responsibilities, and school felt overwhelming.

Comfort suggested I had already done enough.

Direction quietly whispered there was still more inside me.

I have discovered that comfort almost always argues for staying where you are.

Direction invites you toward who you are becoming.

Those voices rarely agree.

There is always a cost to choosing direction.

Sometimes the cost is sleep.

Sometimes it is certainty.

Sometimes it is money.

Sometimes it is popularity.

Sometimes it is the approval of people who preferred the version of you that required less from them.

I know what it feels like to make decisions that other people did not understand.

To choose long-term purpose over short-term comfort.

To invest years in preparation while receiving very little applause.

To keep building when the results were not yet visible.

If I have learned anything, it is this:

The greatest decisions of my life were not emotional.

They were intentional.

I did not wake up one morning with a fully developed vision for the life I live today.

I simply kept asking one question:

What decision moves me closer to the woman I believe I am becoming?

That question became a compass.

Not every decision was perfect.

Some cost me more than I anticipated.

Some required me to begin again.

Some taught me lessons I could not have learned any other way.

Yet even the painful decisions refined my judgment and strengthened my discernment.

They became receipts too.

One of the most expensive decisions I ever made was choosing myself.

There were relationships I genuinely loved.

People I prayed for.

People I invested in.

People I hoped would grow with me.

But there came seasons when remaining in those relationships required me to repeatedly betray my own convictions, diminish my own calling, or accept patterns that no longer reflected the life I was trying to build.

Walking away was never an act of revenge.

It was an act of stewardship.

I finally understood that every "yes" carries the responsibility of deciding what must receive my time, my energy, my attention, and my peace.

Every unnecessary "yes" eventually sends a bill.

Every intentional "no" eventually leaves a receipt.

Years later, I do not regret choosing direction over comfort.

The peace I enjoy today is one of the receipts.

The freedom to continue building is another.

The ability to recognize healthy relationships because I was willing to leave unhealthy ones is another.

I have learned that some of life's greatest rewards are not what you gain.

They are what you no longer have to carry.

If you are waiting until the path feels completely comfortable, you may wait forever.

Most meaningful decisions begin with uncertainty.

They require faith before they produce evidence.

They require courage before they produce confidence.

They require obedience before they produce opportunity.

The receipt always comes later.

That is why so many people underestimate the power of a single decision.

They are evaluating the decision before time has had the opportunity to reveal its value.

As I reflect on the life behind my receipts, I do not see one defining moment.

I see thousands of ordinary decisions that quietly agreed with one another.

Each one pointed in the same direction.

Each one made the next decision a little easier.

Each one accumulated until the life others admire became visible.

The first receipt was never the retirement.

It was the decision.

And every meaningful receipt that followed began exactly the same way.

With the courage to value direction more than comfort.

There were decisions that expanded my opportunities.

Then there were decisions that forever changed the course of my life.

One of those decisions came early in my military career.

Enlisting in the military was the first decision.

But it was not the last.

A few years later, I realized I wanted to make a greater impact than the path I was currently walking would allow. I made the decision to pursue a commission as a Naval Officer.

That decision demanded more of me.

More education.

More leadership.

More responsibility.

More accountability.

It also gave me greater influence, broader opportunities, and a deeper understanding of what it means to lead people rather than simply complete assignments.

Looking back, I understand that becoming a Naval Officer was not merely a career move.

It was another receipt.

It expanded my access.

It changed the trajectory of my military career and prepared me for leadership opportunities that would continue long after I hung up the uniform.

At the time, I could not fully appreciate what that decision would eventually produce.

Time revealed its value.

Not every decision in my life, however, was about advancement.

Some were about survival.

Some were made through tears instead of excitement.

One of the most difficult decisions I have ever faced came when I was diagnosed with ovarian cancer.

In a single season, I was confronted with a reality I never imagined.

The treatment that offered me the greatest opportunity to preserve my life would also mean surrendering the possibility of having more children.

No woman imagines making a decision like that.

There was no perfect answer.

Only a painful choice.

I chose life.

That decision carried grief.

It carried questions.

It carried the quiet mourning of something that would never again be possible.

Yet looking back, I also recognize it as one of the most profound receipts of my life.

It reminds me that courage is not always loud.

Sometimes courage is signing the consent form.

Sometimes courage is accepting a future you did not choose so that you can continue living the purpose you were created to fulfill.

Some receipts are framed on a wall.

Others are written across your heart.

Both tell the truth about the decisions that shaped your life.

Not every decision I made was about building my own future.

Some decisions were about helping someone else rebuild theirs.

Early in my military career, my mother was navigating life after divorce. Divorce doesn't simply end a marriage; it often requires a person to rebuild an entirely new life. Stability must be rediscovered. Confidence must be restored. Hope must be rekindled.

I had a decision to make.

I could remain focused solely on the momentum of my own career, or I could create space to help someone who had always been there for me.

I chose to relocate my mother so we could begin that next season together.

At the time, it didn't feel like a remarkable decision.

It felt like the right one.

Looking back, I understand it differently.

That decision reminded me that purpose is not only measured by what we accomplish for ourselves. Sometimes the greatest

evidence of our character is found in the sacrifices we willingly make for the people we love.

The receipt wasn't a promotion.

It wasn't a certificate.

It wasn't an award.

The receipt was knowing I had the opportunity to help someone I loved to find solid ground again.

Life has taught me that some of the most valuable receipts cannot be framed, displayed, or listed on a résumé.

They are found in the lives we strengthen, the burdens we help carry, and the people who stand a little taller because we chose to stand beside them.

Looking back, I don't see that season as an interruption to my journey.

I see it as part of the woman I was becoming.

Some decisions build careers.

Others build character.

The wisest decisions often do both.

Principle II – The Doubt



The Internal Resistance That Follows Every Meaningful Decision

Looking back, I used to think doubt was a sign that I was making the wrong decision.

Now I understand it differently.

Doubt has accompanied nearly every meaningful decision I have ever made.

It has never been an indication that I should stop.

It has simply been an invitation to decide whether fear or purpose would have the louder voice.

When I look across the receipts of my life, I don't see someone who was unusually confident.

I see someone who kept making decisions while confidence was still catching up.

That is an important distinction.

People often assume confidence comes first.

My life tells a different story.

The decision comes first.

Confidence becomes one of the receipts.

Looking back over my life, I have to smile.

Not because the decisions were easy.

But because I now recognize a familiar pattern.

Every time my life was about to expand, doubt arrived first.

As a young, enlisted Sailor stationed in San Diego, I decided to become a Princess House Crystal Consultant.

It was my first experience owning a business.

I remember wondering whether anyone would actually buy crystal from me.

I didn't know anything about sales.

I simply believed it was worth trying.

Before long, I learned that people were not simply purchasing crystal.

They were buying trust.

They were buying relationships.

They were buying the confidence of someone willing to serve them well.

That lesson would follow me for the rest of my life.

Later, I became a Mary Kay Consultant.

The questions returned.

"Will anyone buy skincare from me?"

Isn't it interesting how doubt rarely creates new questions?

It simply changes the scenery.

The business was different.

The fear was the same.

While stationed in Norfolk, Virginia, another opportunity presented itself.

I made the decision to purchase a restaurant in nearby Virginia Beach.

Owning a restaurant was unlike anything I had ever done.

There were employees depending on me.

Customers expecting excellence.

Bills that arrived whether business was good or slow.

I questioned myself more than once.

Yet the restaurant became another classroom.

It taught me leadership under pressure.

It taught me to solve problems quickly.

It taught me that every business has different products, but successful leadership is built upon the same principles—discipline, service, consistency, and character.

Years later, after relocating to Hawaii, I found myself standing at another unfamiliar doorway.

This time it was a dream called **True Elegance Hawaii**.

A luxury designer gown boutique.

Everything about it felt risky.

The investment.

The inventory.

The market.

Hawaii did business differently than the mainland.

I wondered if women would embrace the concept.

I wondered if I was making an expensive mistake.

Instead, the boutique grew into something far beyond what I imagined.

Brides came.

Prom customers came.

Pageant contestants came.

Women traveled to wear gowns from my collection.

Soon my boutique was asked to sponsor one of the largest pageant organizations in Hawaii.

Standing in that room, surrounded by accomplished people and beautiful gowns, I remember thinking,

"Do I really belong here?"

Life has a way of placing you in rooms your past self could never have imagined.

Not because you suddenly became fearless.

But because one decision kept introducing you to another.

Ironically, while helping women prepare for pageants, I made another decision that terrified me.

I entered my first pageant.

Standing backstage, I wasn't thinking about winning.

I was wondering if I should have stayed home.

Yet I walked across that stage anyway.

Eventually, I competed at Nationals and finished as First Runner-Up.

Not long afterward, I was invited to serve as a Pageant Director for the Hawaiian Islands.

The woman who once questioned whether she belonged on the stage was now preparing other women to step confidently onto one.

Only God could write a story like that.

The pattern continued.

I launched my first STEM Academy for Girls.

My excitement was immediately followed by another question.

"Will parents trust me with their daughters?"

Trust is never given because someone asks for it.

It is earned through consistent decisions.

Years later, I stood before graduate students as their professor.

Again, doubt whispered.

"Will they see you as someone worthy of teaching them?"

Then came ministry.

I accepted invitations to preach, teach, and minister inside Hawaii's women's prison.

Those assignments carried an entirely different weight.

I wasn't simply delivering information.

I was standing before women whose stories were filled with pain, regret, trauma, and hope.

Every time I walked through those prison gates, I prayed that God would allow my words to reach places my education never could.

When I was ordained as a minister, not once but twice, I experienced another form of doubt.

Not because I questioned God's calling.

Because I understood the responsibility that accompanied it.

Ordination was never about recognition.

It was about surrender.

It was another decision that would shape every assignment that followed.

Looking back now, I notice something remarkable.

The businesses changed.

The careers changed.

The titles changed.

The locations changed.

The assignments changed.

But doubt always asked the same question.

"Who do you think you are?"

Today, I finally know the answer.

I am a woman who has learned that doubt may accompany purpose, but it never gets to define it.

I am a woman who understands that courage is not the absence of uncertainty.

Courage is making the decision before certainty arrives.

Every business I built.

Every degree I earned.

Every promotion I accepted.

Every property I purchased.

Every classroom I taught.

Every platform I created.

Every sermon I preached.

Every woman I mentored.

Every stage I walked onto.

Every prison gate I entered.

Every one of them was preceded by doubt.

Not one of them was stopped by it.

Perhaps that is the greatest lesson this principle has taught me.

Doubt is not a stop sign.

It is often a doorway.

Walk through it anyway.

Years from now, no one will remember the conversations you had with fear.

They will only see the life your decisions accumulated.

And that life...

will become the receipt.

Principle III – The Separation



What Leaves When Growth Begins

Looking back, I have learned that every meaningful decision eventually requires a separation.

No one talks much about that part.

We celebrate beginnings.

We applaud promotions.

We congratulate graduations.

We admire success.

Very few people stop to consider what had to be left behind for those moments to become possible.

Yet every receipt has a cost.

Sometimes the cost is time.

Sometimes it is comfort.

Sometimes it is certainty.

Sometimes it is familiarity.

And sometimes...

it is people.

When I was younger, I believed growth was about adding more to my life.

More education.

More opportunities.

More experiences.

More success.

The older I have become, the more I realize that growth is just as much about subtraction as it is addition.

Every new season quietly asks the same question.

What can no longer go where you are going?

That question has followed me throughout my entire life.

Military life introduced me to separation long before I understood its purpose.

Every set of orders meant leaving something behind.

Friends became family.

Communities became home.

Then it was time to pack again.

At first, every move felt like an interruption.

Looking back, I understand they were preparing me to trust God more than geography.

Some places are meant to shape you.

They were never meant to keep you.

The same was true in business.

I started businesses.

I sold businesses.

I closed chapters I had worked hard to build.

At the time, those decisions felt permanent.

Now I see them differently.

Every business prepared me for the next assignment.

The restaurant taught me leadership.

The boutique taught me vision.

Writing taught me influence.

Teaching taught me multiplication.

None of those seasons were wasted.

They simply completed their assignment.

Relationships taught me an even deeper lesson.

For many years, I believed loyalty meant staying.

I now understand that loyalty without wisdom eventually becomes bondage.

There were relationships I cherished.

People I genuinely loved.

People I prayed for.

People I hoped would walk beside me for the rest of my life.

Life unfolded differently.

Some relationships simply reached the end of their season.

Others slowly became places where I was expected to shrink instead of grow.

I found myself carrying responsibilities that were never mine to carry.

Making excuses for behavior that should have required accountability.

Protecting peace that was continually being disrupted.

One of the hardest lessons I have ever learned is that love and access are not the same thing.

You can love someone deeply...

and still recognize they no longer have access to every part of your life.

That realization did not make me less compassionate.

It made me a better steward.

Because every "yes" is also a "no."

Every time we say yes to one relationship, one commitment, one assignment, we are saying no to something else.

Eventually I realized that protecting my peace was not selfish.

Protecting my purpose was not pride.

Healthy boundaries were not rejection.

They were stewardship.

One of the most painful separations of my life came through the ending of my marriage.

No one walks down the aisle expecting to walk away one day.

You build dreams together.

You build memories together.

You raise children together.

You imagine growing old together.

When that future changes, there is a grief that words can never fully explain.

For a long time, I wondered if the ending represented failure.

Time taught me something different.

Not every ending is evidence that you failed.

Some endings are evidence that a season has completed its assignment.

Healing did not happen because time magically erased the pain.

Healing happened because I made another decision.

I decided that disappointment would not define me.

I decided that bitterness would not become my companion.

I decided that my future deserved more attention than my regret.

That decision became one of the most valuable receipts of my life.

Looking back now, I can honestly say there are relationships I released that I once believed I could never live without.

Today, I live with more peace than I knew was possible.

Not because those separations were easy.

But because they created room for a healthier future.

Sometimes we think separation is punishment.

Often, it is preparation.

Sometimes we think God is taking something from us.

Years later, we realize He was making room for something we could not have received while our hands were still full.

That has been true throughout my life.

Every goodbye created space for another hello.

Every closed door redirected my steps.

Every ending prepared me for another beginning.

Looking back, I no longer ask,

"Why did this leave my life?"

Instead, I ask,

"What was this separation preparing me to receive?"

That question has transformed the way I understand loss.

Because the life I enjoy today was not built only by the decisions I made to begin.

It was also built by the decisions I had the courage to release.

Some receipts document what you gained.

Others document what you finally stopped paying for.

Some receipts celebrate what entered your life.

Others quietly honor what had to leave so your life could continue growing.

Both tell the truth.

Both reveal wisdom.

Both are evidence that becoming always requires separation.

Looking back, I no longer fear letting go.

I have learned that every meaningful future requires open hands.

You cannot receive what tomorrow is offering if you are still clinging to yesterday.

Some of the greatest receipts of my life were not found in what I held onto.

They were found in what I finally had the courage to release.

Principle IV – The Discipline



What Must Continue When Excitement Disappears

Looking back, I have learned that decisions are memorable.

Discipline is forgettable.

No one congratulates you for waking up early for the hundredth time.

No one applauds another night spent studying.

No one notices another chapter written, another workout completed, another dollar saved, another prayer whispered, or another small decision to remain faithful.

Yet those ordinary moments become the architecture of an extraordinary life.

If Principle I taught me to decide...

and Principle II taught me to keep moving through doubt...

and Principle III taught me what I needed to release...

then Principle IV taught me how to remain.

Remain committed.

Remain teachable.

Remain faithful.

Remain in motion.

The greatest receipts in my life were not produced by one remarkable day.

They were produced by thousands of ordinary ones.

People often ask how I retired from the military after twenty years.

The answer isn't found in one promotion.

It is found in twenty years of showing up.

Twenty years of learning.

Twenty years of accepting assignments.

Twenty years of leading people.

Twenty years of continuing even when the assignment was difficult.

Military retirement wasn't a single accomplishment.

It was twenty years of discipline accumulated into one receipt.

The same is true of my federal career.

People see a second retirement before the age of fifty.

What they don't see are the years of leadership, responsibility, difficult decisions, and quiet consistency that made that moment possible.

The retirement ceremony was simply the public announcement.

The receipt had been written long before anyone applauded it.

Education taught me the same lesson.

An MBA is not earned in a classroom.

A Master of Arts in Management is not earned during graduation.

A doctorate is not earned the day someone calls you "Doctor."

Those moments simply recognize years of discipline that no one else witnessed.

I remember studying after long days.

Writing papers when I was tired.

Conducting research when quitting would have been easier.

There were seasons when the finish line felt distant.

I kept moving anyway.

Discipline taught me that progress is often invisible until enough time has passed for people to mistake consistency for talent.

Writing has been no different.

People sometimes ask me how I have written so many books.

There isn't a secret.

I simply kept writing.

One page.

One chapter.

One manuscript.

Then another.

Some books flowed easily.

Others required me to wrestle with every paragraph.

The discipline remained the same.

Keep writing.

Eventually, blank pages became published books.

Then something interesting happened.

The books began organizing themselves into series.

Before I wrote an entire series, I often designed every book cover first.

Some people might think that was backward.

For me, it was intentional.

I needed to see where I was going.

Those covers reminded me that the journey had a destination.

Every time I finished another manuscript, I wasn't just completing a book.

I was moving one step closer to the vision I had already committed myself to.

The covers became promises.

Promises that I intended to keep.

The same practice found its way into my travels.

Long before I boarded certain ships or visited certain countries, they existed as photographs on vision boards.

I collected images of destinations I wanted to experience, loyalty milestones I hoped to achieve, and places that stretched my imagination.

Those pictures were never fantasies.

They were reminders.

Every image quietly asked me the same question.

"Does today's decision move you closer to tomorrow's vision?"

If the answer was yes, I continued.

If the answer was no, I reconsidered.

Years later, those photographs became memories.

The countries became passport stamps.

The ships became voyages.

The goals became receipts.

I have learned that vision gives discipline direction.

Without vision, discipline becomes routine.

Without discipline, vision becomes fantasy.

Together, they become momentum.

Discipline has shaped more than my career.

It has shaped my character.

There were days I chose prayer over panic.

Forgiveness over bitterness.

Learning over excuses.

Preparation over procrastination.

Saving over spending.

Growth over comfort.

Those choices rarely made headlines.

They quietly became habits.

Those habits quietly became character.

Character quietly became a life.

Looking back now, I realize discipline is one of God's greatest gifts.

It allows ordinary people to build extraordinary lives one faithful day at a time.

It reminds us that today's unseen faithfulness is never wasted.

It is simply accumulating.

Most people want the receipt.

Very few people want the repetition that produces it.

Yet repetition is where transformation lives.

One faithful day becomes another.

One consistent decision becomes another.

One small act of obedience becomes another.

Eventually, years pass.

You look behind you instead of ahead.

And you realize that what felt ordinary while you were living it became extraordinary because you refused to stop.

That is the quiet miracle of discipline.

It never asks you to be spectacular.

It simply asks you to be faithful again today.

Looking back across the receipts of my life, I no longer believe discipline is about perfection.

It is about persistence.

It is the quiet decision to continue building long after excitement has disappeared.

Because time rewards consistency.

And consistency...

always leaves a receipt.

Principle V – The Revelation



What Becomes Visible with Distance and Time

Looking back, I have come to believe that distance is one of life's greatest teachers.

There are lessons you cannot learn while you are living them.

There are prayers you cannot understand while you are praying them.

There are decisions you cannot appreciate while you are making them.

Some things only become clear after enough time has passed for you to look behind you instead of standing in the middle of them.

That is the gift of revelation.

Not new information.

New perspective.

When I was younger, I wanted answers immediately.

I wanted to know whether I was making the right decision.

Whether I was on the right path.

Whether the sacrifice would be worth it.

Whether the door I was walking through would actually lead somewhere meaningful.

Life rarely answered those questions when I wanted it to.

Instead, it gave me something far more valuable.

It gave me time.

Time has a remarkable way of connecting dots that once appeared unrelated.

Looking back now, I can see that nothing was isolated.

Every season prepared me for another season.

Every assignment introduced me to another assignment.

Every receipt made the next receipt possible.

The military did more than provide a career.

It developed discipline.

Leadership.

Resilience.

Adaptability.

Those qualities followed me into every business I would later own.

My businesses did more than create income.

They taught me entrepreneurship.

Customer service.

Problem-solving.

Financial stewardship.

Those lessons later helped me build platforms, publish books, and think differently about opportunity.

My education did more than give me degrees.

It taught me how to think.

How to research.

How to ask better questions.

How to solve complex problems.

Those skills became invaluable as I wrote, taught, coached, and developed leaders.

The classroom never really ended.

It simply changed locations.

Even my disappointments became teachers.

At the time, I could only see the pain.

Looking back, I see the preparation.

Some disappointments humbled me.

Others redirected me.

Some revealed weaknesses I needed to confront.

Others revealed strengths I never knew I possessed.

I would never volunteer to repeat those seasons.

But I would never surrender what they taught me.

One of the greatest revelations of my life has been realizing that God wastes nothing.

Not the victories.

Not the failures.

Not the waiting.

Not the detours.

Not the heartbreak.

Not the unanswered questions.

Everything became part of the education.

Everything became part of the formation.

Everything became part of the receipt.

That realization has given me tremendous peace.

It allows me to stop asking,

"Why did this happen?"

and begin asking,

"What is this preparing me to understand?"

Those are very different questions.

One searches for blame.

The other searches for wisdom.

Wisdom has become one of the receipts I value most.

Not because I have all the answers.

But because I have lived long enough to recognize patterns.

I have learned that what initially feels like rejection often becomes redirection.

What feels like delay often becomes preparation.

What feels like loss often creates capacity.

What feels like an ending often protects a beginning you cannot yet see.

There were moments in my life when I thought I had fallen behind.

Now I smile at those memories.

I wasn't behind.

I was becoming.

That may be the greatest revelation of all.

Life is not a race against other people.

It is a lifelong process of becoming the person your decisions are quietly shaping.

People often ask me what accomplishment I am most proud of.

The older I become, the harder that question is to answer.

Because I no longer measure my life by accomplishments alone.

I measure it by transformation.

The woman who enlisted in the military could never have imagined the woman writing these pages.

Not because one extraordinary event changed everything.

But because thousands of ordinary decisions slowly transformed her.

That transformation is the receipt.

As I look across the landscape of my life, I no longer see disconnected memories.

I see a beautiful thread woven through every season.

I see God preparing me before I knew what I would need.

I see opportunities arriving after I had developed the capacity to steward them.

I see prayers answered in ways I never would have requested because I could not yet imagine what He was building.

Perhaps that is why I have become so comfortable with not knowing everything.

Experience has taught me that understanding usually arrives after obedience.

Revelation rarely comes before the journey.

It comes because of it.

Looking back, I have learned that life can only be understood in reverse.

But it must always be lived moving forward.

That realization has changed the way I face tomorrow.

I no longer demand immediate answers.

I simply make the next faithful decision.

Because one day...

time will reveal what today's decision was quietly building.

And when it does...

another receipt will appear.

Principle VI – The Elevation



What Access Creates When Compounded Over Years

Looking back, I have learned that elevation is one of the most misunderstood words in our culture.

Many people think elevation is about status.

A title.

A promotion.

Recognition.

Influence.

Success.

I have come to see it differently.

Elevation is access.

It is access to rooms you once could not enter.

Access to conversations you once could not join.

Access to opportunities you once could not imagine.

Access to perspectives that permanently change the way you see the world.

Most people notice the access.

Very few people notice the accumulation that created it.

Nothing about my life changed overnight.

Every opportunity that expanded my world was connected to a decision I had made years earlier.

Joining the military gave me access to experiences that would shape the rest of my life.

Accepting a commission as a Naval Officer expanded my leadership, my influence, and my understanding of responsibility.

Choosing to continue my education gave me access to opportunities that would have remained closed had I been satisfied with what I already knew.

Each decision quietly opened another door.

That has been the pattern of my life.

One door opened another.

One room introduced me to another room.

One assignment prepared me for another assignment.

Looking back, I realize I was never chasing titles.

I was building capacity.

Capacity always creates access.

When I became an author, I didn't simply publish books.

Writing gave me access to readers I would never have met otherwise.

It gave me the privilege of sitting beside someone during one of the most difficult seasons of their life without ever being physically present.

Words have a remarkable way of traveling where we cannot.

The podcast expanded that access even further.

A microphone became a classroom.

Conversations reached listeners across cities, states, and countries.

The mobile app created another doorway.

Technology allowed teaching to continue long after the recording ended.

Every platform became another invitation to serve.

Not because I was seeking a larger audience.

Because every decision had quietly increased my capacity to carry greater responsibility.

Travel has taught me the same lesson.

There was a time when boarding a cruise ship felt like a dream.

Today, travel has become part of the life I intentionally built.

Airline status.

Hotel loyalty.

Cruise loyalty.

Passport stamps.

Beautiful destinations.

To someone looking from the outside, those may appear to be rewards.

I see something different.

I see receipts.

Each journey reminds me that freedom is rarely accidental.

It is accumulated.

The freedom to travel was built through years of disciplined financial decisions.

The freedom to choose my schedule was built through years of faithful work.

The freedom to keep learning from different cultures and experiences was built because I decided long ago that I wanted to design a life, not simply react to one.

Perhaps that is why travel has become one of my greatest teachers.

Every destination reminds me how much larger God's world is than my own experience.

Every culture teaches humility.

Every conversation broadens perspective.

Every journey stretches gratitude.

Elevation is not only about where you go.

It is about how you grow.

Looking back, I also recognize that access carries responsibility.

Every room is not yours to occupy.

Every opportunity is not yours to accept.

Every invitation is not your assignment.

One of the greatest forms of maturity is learning that just because a door opens does not mean you are called to walk through it.

Discernment becomes increasingly valuable as access increases.

The higher you climb, the more carefully you must choose.

That has become one of the most important receipts of my life.

The older I become, the less interested I am in impressing people.

I am far more interested in stewarding what has been entrusted to me.

Titles eventually fade.

Recognition comes and goes.

Status changes.

Platforms evolve.

Character remains.

I have learned that access is never the destination.

It is the opportunity to serve at a greater level.

When I look across the receipts of my life, I no longer measure wealth by possessions alone.

I measure it by options.

The option to keep learning.

The option to keep writing.

The option to spend time with my children and grandchildren.

The option to encourage someone through a book, a podcast, a classroom, or a conversation.

The option to continue exploring God's creation.

The option to ask, even now,

"What can I build next?"

That question has never left me.

People sometimes assume elevation produces satisfaction.

For me, elevation has produced possibility.

The dream was never to arrive.

The dream was to keep becoming.

Every receipt I have accumulated has simply become the foundation for another decision.

That may be the greatest surprise of all.

Elevation is not the finish line.

It is another starting line.

Because every new level of access asks the same question that every other season has asked:

What will you do with what has now been entrusted to you?

Looking back, I know the answer that has guided my life from the beginning.

I will make another decision.

I will steward it well.

And years from now...

it too will become another receipt.

Principle VII – The Return



Who and What Reappears When Your Life Changes

Looking back, I have learned that life has a remarkable memory.

Just when you think a chapter has closed forever, something from your past has a way of returning.

Sometimes it is a person.

Sometimes it is an opportunity.

Sometimes it is a dream you thought had expired.

Sometimes it is a younger version of yourself that finally makes sense.

When I was younger, I believed life always moved in straight lines.

Graduate.

Get the job.

Build the career.

Retire.

Move on.

Life has never unfolded that neatly.

Instead, it has moved in circles.

Not circles that keep us trapped.

Circles that allow us to see familiar things with wiser eyes.

One of the greatest surprises of my life has been discovering that what leaves is not always gone forever.

Sometimes it returns differently.

Sometimes people who once overlooked you return with respect they did not previously have.

Sometimes opportunities reappear because you have finally developed the capacity to steward them.

Sometimes dreams return after years of waiting because you have become the person they always required.

Time changes everything.

Including us.

I have experienced seasons when people walked away.

I have also experienced seasons when people unexpectedly returned.

Not because I pursued them.

Because life had changed us both.

Some returned with apologies.

Some returned with admiration.

Some returned seeking wisdom.

Others simply returned as reminders of how much time—and growth—had passed.

Those moments taught me something I could never have learned while I was trying to hold onto people.

Not everyone who leaves is meant to return.

And not everyone who returns is meant to stay.

Discernment matters just as much in reunion as it does in separation.

Growth changes relationships.

Sometimes beautifully.

Sometimes painfully.

The same is true of opportunities.

There were assignments I once prayed for that seemed to pass me by.

Years later, similar opportunities appeared again.

The difference was no longer the opportunity.

The difference was me.

I had grown.

I had matured.

I had developed the discipline, wisdom, and perspective that were missing during the first season.

Looking back, I realize that timing has protected me more than it has disappointed me.

There were dreams I wanted too early.

Platforms I was not yet prepared to steward.

Responsibilities that would have overwhelmed the woman I was becoming.

Delay was never denial.

Often, it was development.

I have also watched pieces of my own life return in unexpected ways.

The leadership lessons from the military returned in business.

The business lessons returned in writing.

The writing returned in teaching.

Teaching returned in coaching.

Coaching returned in ministry.

Nothing was wasted.

The receipts kept building upon one another until I could no longer tell where one chapter ended and another began.

Everything became connected.

Perhaps the most beautiful return has been perspective itself.

The older I become, the more compassion I have for the younger woman I used to be.

I smile at her ambition.

I understand her fears.

I appreciate her determination.

She was trying to figure out life one decision at a time.

She didn't know what I know now.

She couldn't see the receipts that were quietly accumulating.

If I could sit across from that younger version of myself today, I would not tell her that life would become easy.

It wouldn't.

I would not tell her she would avoid disappointment.

She wouldn't.

I would simply tell her this:

"Keep making the next faithful decision."

"One day, you will understand why none of it was wasted."

That may be the greatest return of all.

Wisdom.

Not the kind that comes from reading another book.

The kind that comes from living long enough to connect the dots.

The kind that allows you to replace regret with gratitude.

The kind that teaches you to stop asking,

"Why did this happen to me?"

and begin asking,

"How did this prepare me?"

Looking back, I no longer believe life is simply about moving forward.

I believe it is also about recognizing what returns with greater meaning.

Dreams return.

Hope returns.

Joy returns.

Peace returns.

Purpose returns.

Even confidence returns.

Not because life becomes perfect.

Because experience teaches you that God has been faithful before.

And if He has been faithful before...

He will be faithful again.

That is one of the greatest receipts I possess.

Not another degree.

Not another title.

Not another accomplishment.

The quiet confidence that comes from looking behind me and seeing that every season—even the painful ones—was carrying me somewhere I could not yet see.

Life has a beautiful way of bringing things back to you.

Not so you can live yesterday again.

But so you can appreciate today with the wisdom yesterday provided.

That is the gift of return.

It reminds us that while we cannot relive our past...

we can finally understand it.

And understanding...

is one of life's most valuable receipts.

Principle VIII – The Reality



What Remains When the Applause Fades

Looking back, I have learned that every life eventually arrives at a place where appearances no longer matter as much as reality.

There was a time when accomplishments felt like destinations.

The next promotion.

The next degree.

The next business.

The next book.

The next opportunity.

The next milestone.

I don't regret pursuing any of them.

Many of those decisions became beautiful receipts.

But somewhere along the journey, I realized something that changed the way I measured success.

Eventually, the applause fades.

The ceremony ends.

The guests go home.

The diploma is framed.

The promotion becomes another job.

The award is placed on a shelf.

The excitement settles into ordinary life.

Then one question quietly remains.

Who have you become?

That question has become more important to me than anything I have ever accomplished.

Because accomplishments can introduce you to people.

Character determines whether they trust you enough to stay.

Titles may open doors.

Integrity determines what happens once you walk through them.

Influence may give you a microphone.

Wisdom determines what you say when everyone is listening.

Looking back, I no longer believe success is measured by what people know about you.

I believe it is measured by what remains after everything impressive has been removed.

If every degree disappeared tomorrow...

I would still be a learner.

If every title disappeared tomorrow...

I would still be a leader.

If every book disappeared tomorrow...

I would still be a writer.

If every platform disappeared tomorrow...

I would still have something worth saying.

Those identities were never created by recognition.

Recognition simply revealed what had already been cultivated.

That realization brought tremendous freedom.

It freed me from needing constant validation.

It freed me from comparing my journey with someone else's.

It freed me from believing that my value increased every time I achieved another goal.

My value was never found in the receipt.

The receipt simply reflected decisions that had already shaped my life.

One of the greatest realities I have discovered is that peace is one of the highest forms of wealth.

There was a season when I believed wealth was measured by income.

Today, I measure it differently.

Peace is wealth.

Freedom is wealth.

Time is wealth.

Good health, when we have it, is wealth.

Meaningful relationships are wealth.

Being able to look in the mirror with integrity is wealth.

Being trusted is wealth.

Having adult children who have become responsible, capable people is wealth.

Holding my granddaughter and realizing that my decisions have reached another generation—that is wealth.

Knowing I can spend my days writing, teaching, traveling, encouraging others, and continuing to build what I believe God has entrusted to me...

That is wealth.

Those are receipts no bank can calculate.

Looking back, I also recognize that life is far more fragile than I understood when I was younger.

Cancer taught me that.

Loss taught me that.

Disappointment taught me that.

Watching seasons end taught me that.

None of us are promised unlimited tomorrows.

That realization has not made me fearful.

It has made me intentional.

I no longer postpone joy waiting for the perfect season.

I no longer delay meaningful conversations because life feels busy.

I no longer assume there will always be another opportunity.

Reality has taught me that today is significant.

Today's decision matters.

Today's words matter.

Today's relationships matter.

Because today's ordinary moments eventually become tomorrow's memories.

Perhaps that is why I continue asking myself the same question I have asked for years.

What's next?

People sometimes misunderstand that question.

They assume it means I am never satisfied.

That isn't true.

I am deeply grateful.

I simply believe gratitude and growth can exist together.

I can appreciate everything God has done while remaining excited about everything He has yet to do.

The dream was never to arrive.

The dream was to keep becoming.

That has always been my nature.

Not because I am chasing more.

Because I believe life is an invitation to continue growing until our final breath.

Looking back across every receipt my life has accumulated, I have reached one simple conclusion.

Success was never the goal.

Purpose was.

The degrees were never the goal.

Preparation was.

The businesses were never the goal.

Stewardship was.

The books were never the goal.

Transformation was.

The travels were never the goal.

Perspective was.

Even the receipts themselves were never the goal.

They are simply evidence that a life was lived intentionally.

If someone were to ask me what remains after the applause fades, my answer would not be a résumé.

It would not be a list of accomplishments.

It would not be titles or recognition.

What remains...

is the woman my decisions created.

That is the only achievement no one can take away.

As I close this manifesto, I find myself returning to where it all began.

One decision.

Not one perfect decision.

Not one extraordinary decision.

Simply the next faithful decision.

Because that is how every meaningful life is built.

One decision becomes another.

One ordinary day becomes another.

One receipt becomes another.

Years pass.

Perspective grows.

Purpose deepens.

And one day, you look behind you and realize something beautiful.

The life you were praying for...

was quietly being built while you were faithfully making one decision at a time.

Closing Reflection



When I began writing this manifesto, I thought I was writing about decisions.

Somewhere along the journey, I realized I was really writing about time.

Time has a way of revealing what we could never see while we were living it.

It reveals whether our priorities were aligned with our purpose.

It reveals whether our habits reflected our values.

It reveals whether our decisions were building the life we hoped to live.

Most of all, time reveals our receipts.

As I have reflected on the seasons of my own life, I have smiled more than I have cried.

Not because every season was easy.

Far from it.

There were chapters I would never choose to relive.

There were losses that forever changed me.

There were disappointments that took years to understand.

There were prayers that seemed to echo into silence.

Yet somehow, when I step back and look at the whole picture instead of one painful chapter, I see something beautiful.

I see a faithful God.

I see a young woman who kept saying yes before she understood where those decisions would lead.

I see mistakes that became teachers.

I see setbacks that became preparation.

I see detours that protected me from destinations that were never meant for me.

Most of all, I see grace.

Grace that met me when I doubted.

Grace that sustained me when I was tired.

Grace that carried me through heartbreak.

Grace that reminded me that my worth was never determined by my accomplishments.

If these pages have accomplished anything, I hope they have done more than tell my story.

I hope they have caused you to pause long enough to consider your own.

Perhaps your receipts are still invisible.

Perhaps you are in the middle of building something no one else can yet see.

Perhaps today's discipline feels unnoticed.

Perhaps today's sacrifice feels unfair.

Perhaps today's decision feels insignificant.

Don't underestimate today.

Many years from now, today's ordinary decision may become one of the most extraordinary receipts of your life.

Long after people forget what you owned...

they will remember who you were.

Long after the titles have changed...

your character will remain.

Long after the applause has faded...

your decisions will still be speaking.

That is the power of a life built intentionally.

Not perfection.

Not popularity.

Not performance.

One faithful decision.

Repeated over time.

Until your life becomes the evidence.

That is my prayer for you.

May your receipts tell a beautiful story.

May your decisions create freedom.

May your discipline produce peace.

May your courage outgrow your fear.

And may the life you are quietly building today one day become the evidence that purpose was worth every decision you made along the way.

Epilogue



The Decision to Keep Building

People occasionally ask me if I have finally reached the life I dreamed about.

I usually smile before I answer.

Because the truth is...

the dream kept changing.

Not because I was dissatisfied.

Because every fulfilled dream expanded my imagination.

Every receipt became the foundation for another decision.

Every completed assignment introduced another possibility.

That is how life has unfolded for me.

I have retired twice.

I have earned the degrees I once only dreamed about.

I have written books that now sit in the hands of readers I may never meet.

I have taught in classrooms.

Preached in prisons.

Led organizations.

Built businesses.

Raised three remarkable children into adulthood.

Welcomed the joy of becoming a grandmother.

Traveled to places that once existed only as pictures on a vision board.

Collected passport stamps, memories, friendships, and experiences that have forever changed the way I see the world.

Those are beautiful receipts.

I am grateful for every one of them.

But if I have learned anything, it is this:

Receipts are not retirement from purpose.

They are reminders of God's faithfulness.

Every receipt simply asks another question.

What will you build next?

That question still wakes me up in the morning.

Not because I am chasing success.

Because I still believe there are lives to encourage.

Books to write.

Conversations to have.

Places to explore.

Leaders to develop.

Dreams to pursue.

Lessons to learn.

Assignments to steward.

At this stage of my life, I am no longer interested in proving anything.

I simply want to be faithful with whatever time I have been given.

If tomorrow brings another opportunity, I will receive it with gratitude.

If tomorrow brings another challenge, I will meet it with the confidence that previous receipts have already taught me that God is faithful.

If tomorrow requires another difficult decision...

I know where difficult decisions lead.

They become receipts.

This manifesto ends where every meaningful life begins.

With one decision.

Not yesterday's decision.

Not the decision that changed my life decades ago.

Today's decision.

Because while I cannot rewrite my past...

I can continue building my future.

And so can you.

Years from now, someone will look at the life you have built and admire the receipts.

They will see the freedom.

The peace.

The wisdom.

The relationships.

The influence.

The opportunities.

The legacy.

They will not see the thousands of ordinary decisions that quietly built them.

But you will.

You will remember the mornings you chose discipline.

The evenings you chose growth.

The conversations you had the courage to have.

The relationships you had the wisdom to release.

The dreams you refused to abandon.

The hope you continued to carry.

The next faithful step you kept taking, even when no one else understood.

That is how extraordinary lives are built.

Not all at once.

One decision at a time.

So tomorrow morning when the opportunity arrives to make another choice...

Choose courage.

Choose wisdom.

Choose discipline.

Choose peace.

Choose purpose.

Then trust time to do what it has always done.

Let your decisions accumulate.

Let your life become the receipt.

And when that receipt is finally read...

May it tell the story of a life that was built on purpose.

Your Receipt Inventory



Before you close this book, pause long enough to consider the receipts your own life is quietly producing.

- What decision has changed the direction of your life the most?
- Which decision required the greatest courage?
- Which decision taught you the greatest lesson?
- What sacrifice eventually became one of your greatest receipts?
- What discipline has quietly shaped who you are today?
- What relationship became one of your greatest blessings?
- What relationship did you have the wisdom to release?
- What opportunity are you most grateful you said "yes" to?
- What opportunity are you grateful you declined?
- What habit has been accumulating the life you now live?
- What dream are you still building?
- What future receipt are your decisions writing today?

There are no perfect lives.

Only accumulated decisions.

One day, someone will admire the life you have built.

They will see the receipts.

Only you will know the decisions that quietly produced them.

Choose wisely.

Tomorrow's receipt is being written today.

A Final Manifesto



Build anyway.

Decide anyway.

Learn anyway.

Lead anyway.

Love anyway.

Forgive anyway.

Leave anyway.

Heal anyway.

Grow anyway.

Save anyway.

Invest anyway.

Write anyway.

Serve anyway.

Pray anyway.

Begin again anyway.

The world will remember the receipts.

God will remember the faithfulness.

And you...

will remember the decisions.

One day you will look behind you instead of ahead.

You will see that nothing faithful was ever wasted.

Every ordinary day became part of an extraordinary life.

Every decision became another receipt.

Keep building.

Author Bio



Dr. Jasmine Baker is a prophetic teacher, author, and spiritual leader whose life testimony reflects God's power to transform pain into purpose. After serving over twenty years in the United States military and later retiring from federal government service, Jasmine answered God's call to step fully into her divine assignment—helping women navigate seasons of darkness, healing, and renewal with bold faith and unwavering hope.

Her life is a living illustration of God's faithfulness. Emerging from her own dark night of the soul, Jasmine now ministers from a place of wholeness, identity, and restored joy. She carries a unique grace to speak to the brokenhearted, the searching, and the women who feel God tugging them into deeper relationship.

Jasmine is a mother, grandmother, mentor, and bridge-builder. She is the proud mother of Juan (and his wife Gabrielle), Jadan, and Jade; future mother-in-love to Riley; and grandmother to her beautiful granddaughter, Luna. Her family, faith, and personal healing journey shape the heart behind her writing.

When she's not teaching or writing, Jasmine enjoys quiet moments with God, ocean views, traveling, and living boldly in the life and light God designed for her.

Other Books by Dr. Jasmine Baker



The Legacy Series

- STEWARD — *Faithfully Managing Everything God Entrusts to You*
- MULTIPLY — *What God Grows Through You*
- INHERIT — *What Remains After You're Gone*

The Warning Series

- You Agreed to Die — *The Warning Before the Call*
- When the Oil Is Contaminated — *The Warning After the Call*
- When the Fire Goes Out — *The Warning During the Assignment*
- When Success Becomes Dangerous
- When God Is Silent — *Learning the Language of Silence*

The Formation Series

- *The Soul Cannot Be Automated*
- *Stop Exhausting God's People*
- *The Algebra of Heaven*

- *Battle Tested*
- *Formed Before Sent*

The ACCESS Series

- *Doors*
- *Windows*
- *Gates*
- *Keys*
- *Houses*

The Discernment Series

- *Lost in Translation*
- *The Age of "God Said"*
- *When the Oil Is Contaminated*

Christian Foundations Series

- *Prayer 101*
- *Discipleship 101*
- *The Triune God 101*
- *Prophets 101*
- *Evangelism*

Integration Series

- *P.S. I Love You*
- *P.S. Beyond the Letter*
- *P.S. My Safe Place*

Business Blueprint Series

A twelve-book leadership and business development collection designed to help readers build organizations with wisdom, strategy, and integrity.

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- *Marked for Greatness*
- *Defining Moments*
- *Don't Get Bitter, Get Better*
- *Getting a Doctorate Degree*
- *The One Decision Manifesto*

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"Building lives of purpose, one decision at a time."