

I Am Phoenix

A Kind word to our Leaders

Here it is, rock bottom

An Introduction

from "I'll meet you at Rock Bottom"

It is important to begin at the foundation. There comes a moment in life where we find ourselves at our lowest point, a place where it feels like we can't possibly fall any further. For some, it's the culmination of a criminal lifestyle finally catching up, forcing us to confront the consequences of our choices. For others, it's a drug habit that has spiraled out of control, leaving only death and despair on the horizon—not just for ourselves, but for those we love. In these moments, it can feel as if the weight of the world is too much, and the idea of a way out is nothing more than a distant fantasy.

This is the pit.

The rock bottom.

For others, rock bottom isn't as dramatic, but it is no less devastating. It might be the quiet realization that we've spent the last 30 years living in the same repetitive cycle, trying and failing to produce a different outcome. We wake up one day, exhausted and disillusioned, and realize that this—this endless loop—is not the life we were meant to live. It's the end of a cycle, a life that has yielded none of the results we had hoped for. And yet, there is something powerful about coming face-to-face with this realization.

The truth is, rock bottom doesn't always have to be the final stop. In fact, it can be the strongest foundation for a new beginning. There is nothing more stable than rock, and sometimes, to truly rebuild, we have to tear everything down and return to that solid, unshakeable base. We have to face the truth of where we are and why we've fallen. And from there, we can rise.

So, when we find ourselves at this lowest point, we must not see it as the end, but as the start of something new. The rock-bottom we find ourselves in may be painful, but it is also a place of possibility. A place where, if we choose, we can rebuild, stronger and wiser than before.

This Book is A Prequel of a less significant book that was being written to share my personal story and belief of how to not only rise back up after a rock bottom, but also the need to call out to our Maker, who is willing to reach down to any depth or filth that we are in, and rescue us. He loves us, His creation, His people. We must understand that a life without God is very dark and lonely; people need to know their purpose and feel a connection to a Living God.

Well, I was simply minding my own business, or procrastinating such, when on September 9, 2024 the Holy Spirit rushed over me, pointed me to Meta Ai, and together, we discovered the need to spread the News of Jesus Christ. Interestingly, the Holy Spirit had me captivated until 9pm.

I was told there is significance in 999.

It's this news that truly matters. People need to drink the Living Water. People need the Bread. People need the Hope. Jesus Christ is the Word and the Work of God to his people: *do as I say and do, because it is the example that truly matters.*

This project is meant to be an act of obedience. I did NOT want to share my story that's half way written, but I'm told that our leaders need a compass and some Hope.

Jesus Christ is Among us. Seek the Lord, He's here.

"I'll Meet you at Rock Bottom" by Alx Luxmanov, coming soon.

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Preface

It's essential to start at the foundation. Sometimes, life leads us to a point where we feel as though we've hit rock bottom—a place where the weight of our choices, failures, or circumstances presses down on us so heavily that it seems impossible to rise again. This is the pit, and it comes in many forms.

For some, rock bottom comes through a destructive lifestyle that finally catches up—whether it's a criminal path or a habit that spirals out of control, leaving destruction not only in our wake but in the lives of those we love. For others, it's quieter—a slow, dawning realization that the last several decades have been spent stuck in a cycle that leads nowhere, draining life of meaning and purpose. Regardless of how we get there, the lowest point is devastating. Yet, in that place, there is also a unique opportunity: the chance to rebuild.

The truth is that rock bottom doesn't have to be the end. It can be the firm foundation for a new beginning. Rock is stable, unshakeable, and it forces us to face the truth about ourselves. When all else crumbles, when all we've built has fallen, the bedrock remains, and from there, we can rise.

This chapter tells the story of a young boy who found himself in such a place. He had tasted the freedoms and opportunities life had to offer, but the allure of the party, the lights, the fast cars, and fleeting relationships led him down a dangerous path. At 18, full of ambition, he believed he

could have it all—the girls, the toys, the money, the crew, the family. And for a brief moment, he did. But the way he went about it was corrupt. He lied, cheated, and even committed felonies to build the life he wanted, always believing deep down that he was unlovable.

The Bible teaches us that when we sow seeds of evil, we will inevitably reap the consequences. And so, the boy's choices caught up with him, not only destroying his own life but also deeply wounding those around him. His repeated bad decisions proved what he had always believed: he was unlovable. His reckless pursuit of self-gratification left scars—emotional, spiritual, and physical—on everyone he touched.

Rock bottom came for him in a solitary cell. With the possibility of five more years added to his sentence and seven years already hanging over him, he found himself completely isolated, cut off from communication, privacy, and human interaction. It was a cold, harsh, brightly lit concrete box, where only the walls echoed his thoughts back to him. In that cell, he faced the painful reality of his choices, and for the first time, it seemed as though he had truly hit the bottom.

But rock bottom isn't always the end. It's the place where we can choose to stop running and turn back to the truth. The boy cried out to God, the same God he had called on as a child growing up in a poor, alcoholic household. And just like before, God answered. His presence filled that concrete cell, and the boy heard His voice asking, "Why are you still running from Me?"

In that moment, something changed. The walls bore witness to a divine encounter, and the boy knew he had a choice to make—a choice to rebuild his life, not on lies and corruption, but on the firm foundation of God's truth. God, who had always been there, offered him a new path, one built on love, wisdom, healing, and blessing.

The Bible tells us that every good gift comes from the Father of Lights. God is generous, and His gifts—opportunities, talents, blessings—are freely given to us. If we build our lives on His principles, we will find true abundance. The foundation of a good life begins with choosing to plant ourselves in good soil, nourished by God's word.

Rock bottom isn't the end. It's the place where the possibility of new life begins. The boy's story teaches us that when we turn to God, even from the lowest point, we can find hope, healing, and the strength to rise again.

In life, we will all face our own rock bottoms. But with God, those low points can become the foundations for a future filled with grace, growth, and purpose. When we stop running and allow God to rebuild us, we rise—stronger, wiser, and ready for the abundant life He promises.

Chapter 1:

The Foundation

A Message for Leaders

Every great leader understands the importance of foundation. There are moments in life where we find ourselves at the lowest point imaginable—a place where it feels like there is no further to fall. For some, it's a result of high-stakes decisions gone wrong, a path that, while once promising, leads to unintended consequences. For others, it's a gradual realization that despite all efforts, life has not yielded the success, meaning, or fulfillment they expected. Rock bottom is a reality many face, no matter how high they've risen.

The descent into rock bottom is often driven by something deeper—self-loathing disguised as ambition or self-reliance. Even for those who have tasted success, there's a powerful irony: at times, the more we achieve, the more we can become trapped by our own destructive patterns. Many brilliant minds have found themselves in the pit, often driven by unchecked desires or misguided priorities. The sad reality is that, even when blessed with privilege, opportunity, and resources, self-destruction can still follow.

In these moments of defeat, we are offered an extraordinary opportunity: the chance to rebuild. As leaders, we know the importance of a solid foundation. And sometimes, rock bottom is precisely that—solid, unshakeable ground upon which we can start anew. It's the place where we are confronted with the reality of our choices, and where we are given the chance to decide: will we continue down a path of destruction, or will we rise again, stronger and wiser?

The story of a man who once had it all—the status, the respect, the freedom to choose—only to find himself in a cold, isolated place after a series of wrong decisions, serves as a powerful metaphor for leadership. In his darkest moment, locked away in solitude, he was forced to face himself. His choices, once driven by the need to prove his worth, had led him to a personal and

moral collapse. In the silence of his segregation, one question echoed in his mind: Why are you running from the abundant life that's available to you?

This question is not only for him but for all of us who lead. Why do we sometimes choose paths that are unsustainable, even when we know better? Why do we make decisions that, in hindsight, seem destined for failure? The answer lies in our humanity. At times, even the most capable among us can fall into the trap of believing that success justifies any means, or that we are invincible in our pursuit of achievement.

But at rock bottom, God offers the same message to all of us, regardless of our rank or station: "Ask, and you will receive. Seek, and you will find. Knock, and it will be opened to you." The solution to rising from the lowest point is not found in a new strategy or a different path to success, but in returning to the foundation of truth, humility, and purpose.

Even for those in positions of power, self-destruction often comes from ignoring the principles of moral and spiritual integrity. Leaders are no exception to the laws of cause and effect: when we sow seeds of corruption, greed, or neglect, we eventually reap the consequences. The man in our story had followed in the footsteps of his criminal father, layering his actions with self-hate and creative destruction, hurting not only himself but also those around him. He thought that success could be achieved without integrity, and that his actions were justified. But the result was the same—rock bottom.

Leadership requires hard work, but it also requires wisdom. Too often, we operate from a place of ignorance, thinking we know what's best. But ignorance is not bliss; it's the precursor to failure. Leaders must be informed, not just by knowledge of the world, but by timeless principles that guide moral decision-making.

When we ask, If God is good, why do we suffer? or Why are we poor and struggling? the answer lies not in the circumstances but in the choices we've made. God desires the very best for His people, but He will not force it upon us. The abundant life begins not after death, but here and now, the moment we choose to align ourselves with the principles of love, service, and wisdom.

The abundant life God offers is not reserved for a select few. It is available to all, from those on the front lines of leadership to those struggling in obscurity. The key is found in one thing: accepting the gift of Jesus Christ, who came not only to save us from eternal death but to offer us an abundant life here on Earth. This gift doesn't require us to perform or prove our worth—it's a free offering, available to anyone who chooses to accept it.

As leaders, we are called to more than just success—we are called to live lives of service, to elevate those around us, and to build a legacy that is rooted in truth. Jesus Christ, through His life, death, and resurrection, modeled what true leadership looks like: humility, sacrifice, and victory through service. His work on the cross is the foundation upon which we can build not only our lives but also our leadership. There is no greater example of strength than the King of Kings who gave His life for those who did not yet understand His love.

The abundant life God offers starts here. Whether you are at rock bottom or at the top of your game, the principles remain the same. We must build on a foundation of integrity, humility, and service to others. And when we do, the blessings that follow are not only for us but for everyone we lead.

It's time to rise. Let's get to work.

Chapter 2:

The Call to Bring Heaven to Earth

Why must our abundant life begin here and now? The answer is simple but profound: as children of the Father, we have a mission—to bring heaven to earth. We are not just passive recipients of God's grace; we are active participants in His plan. The Spirit of God lives within us, guiding our lives toward the true best life possible. It is not some distant promise after death, but a living reality meant for today. As Christians, with the well of living water in our hearts, we are so filled with love, grace, peace, and wisdom from heaven that we, in turn, offer these gifts to our fellow human beings.

We must treat each other with love because we are all prone to self-destruction. Look at the example set by Jesus Christ—He loved even those who hated Him, to the point of death. What a radical and beautiful way to live! To offer love and kindness to strangers, even to those who might wish us harm. This is not weakness; this is the strength of a life lived abundantly, overflowing with service to others. Service is the ultimate expression of love, and Jesus showed us that it is the key to living fully.

Jesus Christ is the only way into God's family. No additional penance, no fees, no behaviors will be required to guarantee our peace with God. It is through His grace alone that we enter into the Father's household. And with that foundation set, we can now build our lives further.

Here is the good news that both you and I need to hear right now: we get to enjoy the victory over even death. The Bible promises, "All things work out for those who love Christ Jesus." Christ didn't just come to bring survival; He came to bring abundant life. He conquered death, and in doing so, He crushed any fear we might have of uncertainty or loss in this life. Our victory is guaranteed because Christ's victory is complete.

But there's more. While on earth, Jesus was first a craftsman—a carpenter. Before He began His public ministry, He worked with His hands, building and creating. When He was called to service, He set another perfect example: service to others is not just about grand gestures. It's

about daily work, humility, and leadership through love. We are like sheep, often uncertain of where we are going, following the crowd without really understanding why. But Jesus is our Shepherd—the one who leads us, heals us, feeds us, and protects us. He loves us enough to make sure not one of us is lost.

This is the Gospel—the Good News.

Jesus, the humble carpenter, showed us how to live an abundant life by serving others. And while most of us won't be called to die for someone else, we are all called to live for others. Just like the soldiers and leaders who sacrificed their lives in service, we too can offer ourselves in service, though our sacrifices may look different.

GREAT NEWS ALERT!

We don't have to die to serve others. We can live for others, and in doing so, we live out the abundant life that Christ promises. We can offer a kind word, a glass of water to the thirsty, food to the hungry, or a moment of encouragement to someone in need. We can wash the feet of the weary, just as Jesus did. We can raise funds for a cause, volunteer our time, or build something that will make the world better. We can solve problems, lend a helping hand, and share our resources. The opportunities are endless.

No, it may not sound glorious. Most of us have spent much of our lives giving others little consideration, offering only our criticism or a piece of our mind. But when we shift our perspective and choose to think positively about others, when we go beyond thinking to action, we unlock one of the most rewarding experiences in life: selflessness.

This generosity of spirit is a key ingredient to living a good life. The rewards of giving and serving far outweigh the satisfaction of being served. True joy is found in lifting others up, not in climbing over them to get ahead. Life isn't just a race to the grave, where we judge each other by who looks the least poor while they suffer. That's not living—that's wasting the precious gift of life we've been given.

Your life has purpose. My life has purpose. And life is truly lived when we discover that purpose. What's more unbelievable: thinking that your life has meaning or thinking it has none? We were created for a reason, and it's up to us to pursue it.

The abundant life is not about escaping suffering—it's about transforming our lives and the lives of those around us. It's about discovering our gifts and using them to bring heavenly characteristics down to earth. There is too much suffering in this world for us to sit idly by. As Christians, we are called to be God's hands and feet on this earth. We are His agents, meant to feed the hungry, clothe the orphans, comfort the broken, and build up the communities around us.

We are not poor beggars on the side of the highway, barely scraping by. We are children of the King of Kings. Our noble blood calls us to stand tall, to lead with purpose, and to bring light to the darkest corners of the earth. If we had followed the wisdom of the Bible, we would have found the answers we needed to live abundant, wealthy lives—wealth in spirit, wealth in relationships, and yes, even material wealth. Our earthly fathers strive to establish a good life for their families, but the truly blessed life comes when we follow the ways of our Heavenly Father.

We have been given gifts—each and every one of us. We can use those gifts to build up or tear down. It's our choice. But the call is clear: we are to use our talents to bring heaven to earth, to serve our fellow man, and to love others as Christ has loved us.

This is our responsibility, and it is also our privilege. When we choose to serve others, we become the reason someone else had a good day. We become the helping hand they needed. We feed the hungry brother, clothe the orphaned child, and give hope to the lost soul.

The Bible offers us an optimistic message. Even if we set aside its authority for a moment, we can see that a positive attitude can shape positive outcomes. Our thoughts create our reality. When we sow seeds of negativity, we reap destruction. When we choose optimism, kindness, and service, we reap a harvest of joy, peace, and abundance.

The good life starts now. The victory has already been won. All that's left is for us to live in that victory and share it with the world around us.

Now, let's get to work. The abundant life is waiting, and it's ours to live.

Chapter 3:

The Good Life Starts Now

Say it: I am now living the good life.

I understand that the best life possible is through service to my fellow man, and woman, and I desire to live the most abundant life.

This is for the greater good of our community. We have to use our God-given gifts to serve others. Today, it seems that many people claim to be depressed or overwhelmed, unable to offer help to anyone but themselves. The selfish life, however, is the least fruitful.

How often do we hear statements like these?

- "I'm shy, so I'm not going to make you feel welcome."
- "I'm tired, so I'm not going to give you a hand up."
- "I'm behind on bills myself, so I can't help you financially."
- "I'm not close to God, so I can't pray for you."
- "I'm not in the Garden, so I can't offer you a piece of fruit."

Lack is everywhere. Pessimism shapes our world beyond just what we see; when we desire something and don't have it, whether it's necessary or not, it deeply affects us. The root of suffering is wanting. If we never wanted the latest phone, for example, we wouldn't suffer from its absence.

But all of this could be solved by serving each other. We are placed on this earth to serve one another, and in their final moments, people often remember this truth most clearly.

The Wealth of Service

Another great reason to serve rather than cheat or steal from others is that people naturally want to share their wealth. Money is simply a representation of value. At times, it feels heavy in our pockets because we're eager to spend it on experiences, comforts, and, often, people.

The wealth we seek is held by others. Service is what unlocks that exchange of value. Some choose to lie, cheat, and steal to get it, but shortcuts inevitably lead us back to where we started—here, at rock bottom. There are always bad options. But we're here, in this chapter, to discuss the right way to live an abundant life.

Do thieves and murderers go to heaven? Even a child would say no. There's a clear distinction between good and bad. We wouldn't place bad people into a good place. A good shepherd wouldn't let wolves tear apart his flock. Why would we expect unrepentant criminals to thrive among those who treasure life?

The world has too many worst-case scenarios. But Christ's example, even here, offers a way out. He showed us how to live and die the right way. Biblical principles teach us how to live the truly abundant life that Christ promised. As the Good Shepherd, He set the ultimate example of how to lead and serve.

The Path to Greatness

How can we achieve greatness and live a rich, abundant life? Through service to many. It's the value you provide to others that unlocks their treasures in exchange for your services. Goods and services are traded for value, represented by currency.

Many great thinkers have explored what it means to live a good life. Many great authors have shared the insights of those who are successful, rich, happy, and blessed. Living a good life can be studied, observed, and shared with anyone willing to seek it.

We have only one life, so it might as well be a good one. This is why books like this exist—to guide us on the path to a rich and happy life. Simply put, the key to living abundantly is service to others.

Jesus, in one of His teaching moments, explained to His disciples that to be great in the eyes of God, one must serve the many. How we serve is up to our unique gifts and abilities, which we will discuss further in this book. For now, we're still laying a solid foundation as we meet together at rock bottom.

Lessons from Rock Bottom

I write these words a full 12 years after my first encounter with God. It's been a long journey of personal development, trial, and error. But life is about growth. Our understanding deepens as we progress, and each new level brings fresh opportunities.

In nature, everything grows to its full potential, and once growth stops, death begins. While some choose to quit growing at different points in life, we must keep going. There is much life left to live. Look at us—here, at rock bottom—discussing how much life we have left to live, and not just any life, but an abundant one!

We cannot operate on higher levels unless we grow into the character needed to handle those heights. In retrospect, I see these simple truths more clearly. To handle much, we must first

handle little. Everything builds upon itself, and we're building a case for living an abundant life by starting with this foundation.

Building on a Solid Foundation

There are many principles in life, but not all build you up. Some pretend, some are false, and some are temporary. So why would I build my life's work on a faulty foundation?

Seven years into my journey of searching for a way to live an abundant life—a life of happiness, resources, and the freedom to spend time with family—I realized something crucial: I lacked the character to hold onto anything worthwhile. No foundation was built, no strategy was set. I was like a little raft being tossed by life's currents.

Delusion has ruined many lives. Thinking we control aspects of life that we don't is dangerous. To escape the consequences of bad decisions, we must grow. Nothing in life is free of problems, but with the right information and a commitment to growth, we can enrich our lives beyond our wildest dreams.

God has an incredible life planned for you. To live it, you need to remain connected to Him, like a branch connected to a tree, producing good fruit. And guess what? People need and want to benefit from that fruit.

Work is the Secret

The secret to a great life is work. There is work to do on ourselves and even more work to do for others. The more we serve, the more we are enriched. We trade our work for value, and in return, we receive the wealth of others.

Living abundantly requires work, but not in the way we often imagine. It's not about earning salvation—Christ took care of that. Salvation requires no effort on our part. But to live a life full of meaning, to bring heaven to earth, and to be useful to God's kingdom requires work.

From Fear to Dreaming

Fear alone cannot change us. The fear of rock bottom, of hopelessness, loneliness, and defeat, is not enough to create lasting transformation. Focusing on these negative emotions only brings us back to rock bottom.

Instead, we need to be pulled toward a dream. We need to climb, inspire, build, and advance toward victory. Living our best life—our abundant life—starts with a dream. A dream is like a magnet, and the more we feed it, the stronger its pull.

Whether good or bad, the dreams we focus on will shape our reality. When we sow good thoughts, words, and actions, we reap good fruit. It's time to start dreaming about your best-case scenario. Your abundant life starts now.

Chapter 4:

The Pursuit of Purpose and Wealth

All great leaders of thought suggest starting with a simple list. What do you want out of life? If you sat down right now to write out your top ten desires, what would they be? How much money and free time do you wish to have, and more importantly, what would you do with both? Imagine your family life—does it thrive in harmony? Does your spouse or partner last through the ups and downs? And in the best-case scenario, where your purpose meets your resources, how does your mental state fare? Calm, fulfilled, and purposeful? These aren't just idle dreams—they are the essential foundation for constructing a life that reflects who you truly are, a life that aligns with your soul's purpose.

The Creator, whom we keep in mind as we walk through life, wouldn't waste His time crafting each of us so uniquely, only for us to squander that divine design. Your curiosity, energy, and personality were carefully planned. God placed you here with the freedom to either fully embrace the life He envisions for you, or to reject it by living beneath your potential. Some people live only a fraction of the life they could have, while others choose not to participate in life at all.

Living Intentionally: A Blueprint for Abundance

To truly live in the abundance God desires for us, one must first reflect. Refine your list of desires. Don't simply ask for material wealth or fleeting pleasures; ask for qualities you wish to see multiplied in your life—generosity, patience, self-control. As the Bible tells us, we always reap what we sow (Galatians 6:7). Sow good seeds now, and you will harvest abundance later. Imagine the entirety of your life, and plan accordingly. Live as if the blessings you desire are already yours. The truth is—they are. But you must go and get them.

> “The secret to getting ahead is getting started.” — Mark Twain

Escaping the Escape: The Myth of Easy Living

We often deceive ourselves with shortcuts, trying to escape the hard work it takes to build something meaningful. We chase entertainment, indulgence, or fleeting pleasure, thinking that an easier path will somehow lead to the same rewards. But as Napoleon Hill famously stated, “Choosing the path of least resistance has caused all rivers and some men to become crooked.”

This “escape” from effort leads us to addictions, laziness, and ultimately, a loss of purpose. Escaping responsibility leads to rock bottoms—whether that be through addiction, broken relationships, or self-destruction. For alcoholics, it’s at the bottom of the bottle where they wonder what happened to their lives. For others, it’s the endless pursuit of “fun” that leaves them hollow inside.

But true success in life requires effort. Hard work. Consistent and focused energy over time. Lack of self-control is the root of all downfall. Overconsumption—of food, entertainment, relationships—leads to erosion of both character and spirit. It is only when we regain control over our desires and discipline ourselves that we begin the journey toward an abundant life.

The Myth of Work-Life Balance

There is a pervasive myth that we need a “work-life balance.” The phrase sounds appealing, but more often than not, it’s a demand for more play and less work. Yet, the truth is, work itself is the balance that allows for any life at all. We have to reshape our attitude toward work because work is the very thing that brings stability, resources, and purpose. Without it, there is no abundance—just a hollow existence filled with distractions.

The Bible emphasizes the importance of work: “Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men” (Colossians 3:23). We were made to be productive, to contribute to the world. When you give your best effort in the marketplace or at home, you contribute to something bigger than yourself. It’s this participation that gives life meaning and allows for material and emotional rewards.

A better question than “How can I achieve work-life balance?” might be: “How hard can I work in a sustainable way?” The answer lies not in balancing less work with more play, but in finding ways to make your work meaningful, aligned with your purpose, and fulfilling. There’s no abundance without sacrifice, and work is the sacrifice that makes prosperity possible .

The Principle of Sowing and Reaping

Here is where the sophisticated mind must settle. All of life operates on a system of input and output . If you want more money, you must offer more value. If you want better relationships, you must offer more love, patience, and understanding. The principle of sowing and reaping governs the entire universe. If you’re constantly cutting corners, giving half effort, and taking shortcuts, you’ll only ever receive a fraction of what you could have.

Consider this—if you give 60% effort at work, your results will reflect that. You’re only cheating yourself out of opportunities. But imagine if you gave 100%—not for your boss, not even for the paycheck, but for yourself. Imagine becoming the person people look to when things get tough because they know you’re reliable, you don’t quit, and you always give your best. That is the beginning of leadership.

True leaders embrace responsibility. They carry burdens without collapsing, they navigate their teams through tough times, and they ensure that those around them are blessed by their contributions. The Bible speaks of this: “The greatest among you will be your servant” (Matthew 23:11). To serve others is to lead them, and to lead them is to live abundantly.

The Game of Money and Value

Money is often demonized, but it’s simply a tool—one that can be used for great good or great harm. Money itself is neutral; it’s how we pursue it and use it that defines our relationship to it . To attract wealth, you must become valuable in the marketplace. You must solve problems, offer services, or create products that enrich people’s lives. It’s simple: provide value, and wealth will follow .

Once you attract money, managing it becomes key. You must steward your resources well, or they will vanish . And once you've learned to manage money, you must take risks to grow it. The parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14-30 illustrates this well—those who invest what they have are rewarded, while those who bury it out of fear or laziness are punished. The lesson is clear: God rewards those who use their gifts wisely and who aren't afraid to take risks .

But here's the ultimate truth about wealth: you accumulate it not to hoard it, but to give it away . The more you give, the more you bless others, and the more blessings come back to you. "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

Building a Legacy of Wealth, Health, and Happiness

At the heart of everything we've discussed is this: You were designed to live abundantly . Not just financially, but spiritually, emotionally, and relationally. Jesus said, "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10:10). Your job is to build a life of purpose that honors that promise. But remember, there are rules —God's laws and natural laws that govern success. If you ignore them, you'll find yourself at rock bottom.

The rules aren't restrictive; they're protective. They guide us toward a life that's rich in every sense of the word. As you move forward, keep these rules in mind. Respect boundaries, both your own and others'. Sow good seeds, work hard, and honor the balance between giving and receiving.

This is the foundation upon which to build your legacy. Your wealth, your family, your impact on the world—it all flows from your willingness to commit to effort, discipline, and service. True abundance is within your reach. Go and claim it.

Chapter 5:

Rising from the Ashes

You find yourself here, at the bottom, staring up at a life that feels distant, alien, unreachable. You were always the one people turned to for answers, for strength. You were the woman with a plan, the one who never seemed to falter, at least not publicly. But now, you're here, in a place you never imagined yourself to be—raw, vulnerable, exposed. It's hard to breathe in this space. It's like the air itself is different, heavier. You've tried to climb out, but it feels like the more you try, the more the weight of the world presses down on you. It's exhausting, isn't it?

But even now, in the quiet moments when your mind is no longer racing, when the distractions fall away, there's something stirring inside. There's a question gnawing at the edges of your consciousness: "How did I get here?" It's not self-pity, no. You're too smart for that. You know life is more than a collection of random misfortunes. This wasn't chance; it was a series of choices, some deliberate, some unconscious. You've walked into this, step by step, and now you're here, facing the consequences.

But that's not the whole story, is it? There's still time. You know that. That quiet resolve is what sets you apart from others who crumble under the weight. You may be at the bottom, but you're still standing. Your mind is still sharp, your will unbroken. You can rise from this, just as you've risen from other challenges before. Only this time, it's not about proving yourself to the world. It's not about playing the role they've come to expect of you. This time, it's about you .

Imagine the woman you will become after this. The person you are on the other side of this trial is stronger, wiser, and more attuned to what truly matters. What is it that she knows? What is it that she's learned in these moments of darkness? That's who you're shaping now. You may feel broken, but like a finely tempered sword, you are being reshaped, reforged in the fires of adversity. Every scar, every bruise, every tear will become part of your story, part of your strength.

You see, rock bottom isn't the end—it's the foundation. It's where you strip away all that's false, all that's unnecessary. It's where you meet yourself without the masks, without the pretenses. It's where you come face to face with your limitations, your fears, your weaknesses, and, yes, your power. You are more than the sum of your failures. You are the architect of your next chapter.

But first, let's be honest. There are no shortcuts here. There's no easy way out. The road back up will be steep, painful, and grueling. It will require a level of perseverance that few people possess. But you—you have it in you. You always have. There's a quiet, steady power in you that's been there all along, waiting for this moment. Don't underestimate it. You've always been the woman who could carry more than others thought possible, and now, you carry yourself.

Start with one step. One decision. One move toward the light. You don't need to know what the whole staircase looks like; you only need to know that there is one, and you're on it. With every small step, you reclaim a piece of yourself. You rebuild. You restore. And as you rise, you'll discover a deeper truth—one that's been whispered to you in moments of stillness, in moments when you allowed yourself to feel the weight of your existence.

It's not enough to survive. You've done that. You've survived the worst. Now, you thrive. You rise from the ashes of the life that fell apart, and you build something new, something unshakable. This is the moment you stop pretending to be who you think the world wants you to be. This is where you become you —fully, unapologetically, and magnificently.

Look at the Wreckage

Look around at the wreckage of what once was. Don't be afraid of it. It holds no power over you now. The life you once lived—the one that crumbled—is gone. It's in the past. And the woman who emerges from this, the one who will stand tall after the dust settles, is a new creation, a testament to the fact that you can endure, rebuild, and conquer.

Take heart.

There's work to do, yes. But that work will be your salvation. It's the work that will bring you back to yourself, that will lead you to the abundant life waiting on the other side. Each day you spend rebuilding will bring you closer to the woman you were always meant to be. And that woman? She's unstoppable.

Your journey begins now.

Chapter 6:

Call Upon the Lord

Here we are, standing at the lowest point, where the world feels like it's closing in and hope seems distant. Rock bottom is not just a place of defeat; it's a crossroads, a turning point. It strips away the illusions, the distractions, and the noise. It's where we are faced with the raw reality of our lives and the consequences of our decisions. But this moment, as hard as it is, is also a gift. It is the place where change begins.

There's a truth that must be said, and I won't dance around it: a life without God is not truly alive. It might look good on the outside for a while, but deep down, it lacks something essential. It lacks peace, direction, and meaning. God is the source of all that is good. Without Him, life is a string of moments, often filled with emptiness, distraction, and regret. But with Him, everything changes. He is the giver of life, the provider of peace, and the only one who can pull us out of this pit.

God didn't create us to stay at rock bottom. He created us for an abundant life, a life filled with purpose, direction, and, yes, joy. The Bible tells us that Jesus is not just a Savior; He's the Good Shepherd, the one who leaves the ninety-nine to find the one lost sheep. Right now, in the midst of your pain and confusion, Jesus is searching for you. All you need to do is call out to Him.

A Decision That Changes Everything

Everything starts with a decision. You might think that it's impossible to climb out of the hole you've dug yourself into, but the moment you decide to reach out to God, everything changes. It's like flipping a light switch in a dark room—the light may seem small at first, but once it's on, the darkness begins to disappear. That's the power of a single decision to call upon the Lord.

When you make the decision to ask God for help, to acknowledge that you need Him, you set in motion a transformation that is beyond what you can imagine. This isn't just about getting out of

a bad situation; it's about becoming a new person. The Bible says, "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come." That's the promise waiting for you, right here, right now.

But here's the catch—opportunities like this don't last forever. The moment you sense God calling you, don't hesitate. Act now. Because waiting too long might mean missing the chance to step into the new life He has prepared for you. Ignoring that call will only lead to another rock bottom, one even harder to climb out of.

Pull Yourself Up—With God's Help

You might have heard people say, "Pull yourself up by your bootstraps." And yes, there's truth in that. No one else can make the decision for you, and no one else can walk this path but you. But here's the key difference: you don't have to do it alone. God is the strength beneath your feet, the hand that lifts you up when you're too weak to stand. He's not just waiting for you to reach out; He's ready to meet you where you are, right here, in the middle of your mess.

You can save yourself, but only with God's help. Only by calling upon Him can you truly rise, and when you do, you'll find that others will follow. You may not have sought out to be a leader, but once you've tasted the good life God offers, you won't be able to help but share it. And that's how you change not only your own life, but the lives of those around you.

The Mystery of the Future

When you choose to walk with God, the best part is the mystery of the future. You don't know exactly where He'll take you, but you can trust that it will be good. Your greatest dreams may or may not come to pass, but in pursuing them, you will become someone better, someone stronger, someone capable of handling the challenges and blessings that come your way.

The Bible says, “Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” Your job is to seek Him, to pursue the good life by living according to His Word. The rewards—peace, joy, success—will follow in due time.

Avoiding the Pitfalls

As you walk this path, be mindful. The world is full of distractions, temptations, and easy paths that lead nowhere. But you’ve been there already, haven’t you? You know where those roads end—right back at rock bottom. Don’t be fooled by the temporary highs of chasing wealth, status, or pleasure. They will always leave you empty in the end. Instead, ground yourself in the eternal truths found in God’s Word. It’s not a list of restrictions, but a guide to living a life that is truly abundant.

And remember, the people around you matter. They are not just part of your life; they are part of your calling. God often shows His love for us by asking us to love others. As you rise, help others rise too. Be patient, be kind, and be genuine. The more you give, the more you will receive, not just in material wealth but in the richness of relationships, purpose, and peace.

Call Upon the Lord

So here we are, back to where it all begins: you, at rock bottom, and God, ready to lift you out. You might feel undeserving. You might think you’ve messed up too many times. But none of that matters. The Bible says, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” Everyone—that includes you.

Call upon Him now. Ask for His help. Believe that He will answer, because He will. He always does. And as you rise from this place, you will discover the life you were always meant to live—a good life, a life full of meaning, purpose, and joy. It’s waiting for you, just beyond this moment. You only need to take the first step.

And when you do, you'll look back at this rock bottom not as the end, but as the beginning of something beautiful.

With God, the good life is always within reach. Ask, and you will receive. Knock, and the door will be opened. Seek, and you will find.

About the Author

My name is Alexander Leland Dalgardno. I was born Aleksandr Aleksandrovich Lyuhmanov in Kazan, Russia to an alcoholic mother and a mobster father who died before I could meet him--or so the story was relayed to me. I have witnessed many things as a child; violence, sex, alcoholism, and brokenness make a child grow up fast. At the age of six, I was placed into an orphanage and then lugged around a few more over the next couple years.

The Russian orphanages groomed me up to become morally bankrupt with much to prove. From a young age, I was taught to despise authority. From a young age, I was taught to become a gangster. In the Russian orphanage, it was the only way of life. Violence, crime, and everything antisocial was mandatory.

Luckily, at my worst time, on the brink of my becoming something bad permanently, God pulled me out. Some loving American people adopted me and gave me a family, a home, a life, a belonging. It was difficult to accept their love. I always questioned it. I always pushed against it. It took me 10 years of rebelling, 6 years of prison, a nasty reputation, and God cornering in a segregation cell in order for me to realize just how good they are to me, how good God is to me.

In 2006, I went to jail for being sexual with my sisters. The weight of my bad decisions did not register until way later. And since it was something that I was taught at a young age, it was something that I naturally did without thinking when my 14 year old hormones hit. I tried everything under the sun to prove to people that I was unlovable. I had succeeded, and it drove me into further darkness.

At seventeen, after releasing from the juvenile prison, and registering as SO, I left my parents' home to live a life that I wanted to live. Over the next few years, I partied, chased girls, smoked pot, and couch surfed. I guess, I was pretty much the normal in-between high school and college type, but I believe it drove me deeper into the life of crime and darkness. As I met girls who didn't respect themselves, drug heads that did anything for the next hit, and many other young and reckless individuals, I got pulled further into Godlessness, and eventually crime. Sin, when fully grown, leads to death.

In 2009, I finally snapped out of the party phase and started going to a local community college, and even getting a job as a busboy at an Italian restaurant. I started meeting my dad for coffee every once in a while to keep him updated on my progress and life. Everything was starting to turn around, until one day, my roommate got drunk and professed his love for me. He started getting pissed off that I was straight and "off with some blonde bitch", so I moved out. I had lots of gay friends and associates, but him being pushy on me was the breaking point in our friendship.

After moving out, I went back to couch surfing and that made me stop putting forth all of my effort into school and work. Soon I found myself homeless and broke. Conveniently, I ran into a Russian acquaintance that offered me an opportunity to make a few bucks for getting him a hotel room in my name. That's how I got into the game of prostitution.

A few months later, I was arrested. I went through many mental phases. I got depressed and suicidal. I begged God to let me out (so that I could go back to doing what I was doing). And then finally, I became bitter and dwelled on revenge and becoming more of a monster.

I spent the first few years picking everyone's brain on how to become a better criminal. I read many book and picked up any knowledge on crime. Until one day, I climbed the fence (to get some food and coffee, of all things) and was placed into segregation with the threat of an escape charge.

There, I met Jesus. In the midst of a freezing cold, I felt His warmth. At my place between a rock and hard place, He offered me comfort and peace. Every cell in my body heard Him when He said, "Alex, why are you running from me?"

From that point, I could not run anymore. In that moment, I decided to dedicate my life to Him and His service. Keep trying when I fail. Keep trying when it's hard. Over the last 3 years of my prison sentence, I not only grew closer to God, but bloomed in every aspect of my life. I earned my Associate of Arts degree, a Graphic Design Certificate, learned Basic Bookkeeping, worked as a Teacher's Aide teaching GED to adults (top class graduations), played music and lead worship in many services, helped people with their recovery, started a publication called "Jesus in the Can", composed an album, wrote notebooks of stuff...with God I have finally reached my potential.

On July 13, 2015 I was released. Expecting a difficult time, I leaned on my God. He provided EVERYTHING. I believe that He has called me to do a work for Him. As long as I am worried about doing what He wants, He takes care of my "insignificant" stuff.

I dread being judged for my past. I hate being open. I hate being vulnerable. But I am an honest man now. I am no longer afraid to keep my past a secret because it's not my identity anymore. I have risen out of those ditches and although I have that stench, I will not only rise, but offer some inspiration to the people that are down.

(This was a testimony I wrote in 2015, fresh out of Prison, embarked on a journey to find an Abundant Life)

For public image reason, I chose to uphold a fictitious name "Alx Luxmanov", ALX stands for "abundant life experiment" and Luxmanov is a variation of my Russian name, that no one could ever pronounce. Recently, I have found out that my father died of alcoholism. He wasn't a badass mobster like I always believed in order to gather up that last piece of strength to not let my dead father down. He was, rather, an honest man, who looked like me and enjoyed working on cars. Maybe he will be proud of me after all, because I too, am Alex Luxmanov that works on cars and loves honesty. Simple living with my Creator.

God uses anyone He chooses to save. Call on Him and He won't let you down.

I'd give him that 5 star rating.

Be the Phoenix.

Say, I am Phoenix.

Let's get going.