

PAUL'S LIFE LESSONS

The Life Audit

*A Personal Guide to Living Fully, Loving Deeply &
Investing Wisely*

PURPOSE

MARRIAGE

INVESTING

WHAT'S INSIDE

Your Guide at a Glance

01 Live Like You Were Dying

How a cancer diagnosis revealed 35 life changes — and a framework for intentional living.

02 Make Her Number One

Practical steps for putting your marriage first — even when business pulls you in every direction.

03 Paul's Investment Learnings

Hard-won lessons from 40+ years of investing — risk, due diligence, and avoiding costly mistakes.



Your Personal Life Audit

Interactive worksheets: reflection questions, self-assessments, and action plans you can fill in.

Before You Begin

"At the age of 57, I was diagnosed with neck cancer and told I might only have three years to live. That changed everything."

— PAUL

I began mentoring other men informally over 30 years ago, thinking I might take a more formal approach when I was much older and wiser. But cancer had other plans — and in many ways, it was the greatest gift I've ever received.

This guide distills three of my most important lessons into something you can work through at your own pace. It's not meant to sit on a shelf. **It's meant to be written in, wrestled with, and revisited quarterly.**

You'll find my stories and principles alongside reflection questions, self-assessments, and concrete action steps. My goal is transparency — sharing areas of struggle as well as areas that have worked well. What I've learned the hard way and what I've been gifted to know.

My hope is that this guide encourages you to make a few course corrections — so you're moving toward the man God is calling you to be.

Print this out. Grab a pen. Be honest with yourself. Let's go.

Live Like You Were Dying

What would you change if you only had three years left?

The Dreaded Call

On December 7, 2013, Paul received a phone call that would redefine his life. His doctor delivered the news: "You have cancer and you may only have three years to live."

His mind immediately went to the things he hadn't done but still wanted to do — seeing his kids get married, meeting his grandkids, the life he still had left in him.

"And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them."

Romans 8:28

Within fifteen minutes, Paul's mind shifted from fear to faith. He felt that God was not done with him. Drawing on the experience of his wife Kathy's own cancer battle, they engaged a prayer network of hundreds — and witnessed miracle after miracle.

The Beauty of Cancer

Cancer gave Paul the opportunity to change. As a lifelong goal-setter, he found that most goals simply rolled over year after year. But contemplating three years left changed his approach entirely.

Through ninety days of prayer and journaling, God revealed **thirty-five changes** Paul wanted to make in his life. That number shocked him. He had always lived intentionally — surely there couldn't be that many. But God's voice, amplified by prayer from family and friends, was unmistakable.

KEY INSIGHT

Whether you have three years or thirty years left, living with urgency produces changes worth making at any stage. The three-year mark is simply a motivator to make real progress.

A Fresh Perspective on Goal Setting

Paul began **grading himself quarterly** on each goal — tracking whether his grade improved or declined over time. He asked: *What specific areas are moving? Which ones should I let go of?*

For the first five years he reviewed his list of 35 changes every month, then once a quarter after that.

"We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation."

Romans 5:3-5

Live Life Now

Psalm 1 paints the picture of "trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit in each season." To be that tree, you must have deep roots, be strong, and be anchored in the Lord.

Most of us live like we'll die of old age — even though we know today could be our last. In reality, most of us die unexpectedly. The question is: **"If I can't control when I die, what do I need to do differently today to finish the race well?"**

Personal Life Audit: Purpose

1 If you were told you had only three years to live, what is the *first thing* that comes to mind that you'd want to change or do?

2 Are you living life the way you *truly* want to live it? Rate yourself honestly.

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Absolutely

3 Write down 5 changes you would make in your life starting today. Be specific.

4 What is one goal that keeps showing up year after year that you haven't accomplished? What's actually holding you back?

5 Am I investing my time, talent, and resources exactly how God and I desire? Where is the biggest gap?

Make Her Number One

Your marriage is more meaningful than any deal you'll ever close.

"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her."

Ephesians 5:25 NIV

Is it your goal in marriage to make your wife feel like she is number one? Following your relationship with God, does your wife know — without a doubt — that she has first place in your life?

As you become more successful in your business or career, the world will build you up and even make you feel like a superstar. But when everything revolves around you, it causes division rather than the oneness God desires.

Be Her Superhero

If you could love your wife as much as you love yourself, you might have a perfect marriage. That's our calling — a **superhero kind of love** that goes to great lengths.

Just as you pursued her before marriage, devote that much time, energy, and thought into pursuing her again. Rekindle the love. Fan the flame. Challenge yourself to do something *daily* to pursue your wife.

FROM DOUG FIELDS — 7 WAYS TO BE HER HERO

If you chase anything else at the expense of your wife, it will be like chasing after the wind. Her happiness is far more important than any work achievement. Stop chasing the wind and start chasing her.

Submit Mutually & Respectfully

In marriage, you have to decide when to win and when to concede. If both partners fight to "win at all costs," it will destroy the marriage.

Leave your business skills at the office. Negotiating, maneuvering, and arguing your point are comfortable in the boardroom — but destructive at home. Treat her like the equal partner she is. Apologize even when you believe you're right.

"Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ."

Ephesians 5:21

Invest in Her Emotional Currency

Investing in your wife involves humility, love, and selflessness. One of the greatest investments?

Listening well.

- Turn off your phone
- Turn off the TV
- Look her in the eyes when she's speaking
- Ask questions
- Offer encouraging feedback
- Listen more than you speak

Live in Oneness

God's design for marriage is oneness. Constantly ask yourself: *Is what I'm doing moving us toward oneness or division?*

Something that has helped Paul keep this perspective is **journaling what he loves about his wife** — writing down what he appreciates so he never loses sight of how important she is. When he shares those things, he's assuring her of the value she brings to his life.

Marriage Health Check

1 Does your wife *know* she is number one in your life? How would she rate you if asked?

She'd say no 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Absolutely

2 When was the last time you pursued your wife the way you did when you were dating? What did that look like?

3 Are you bringing your "business mode" home? Think of a recent argument — were you trying to win, or trying to understand?

4 Write down 3 things you love and appreciate about your wife right now.

5 Choose one "deposit" you will make into your marriage this week. Be specific — when will you do it?

Bonus: Ask your wife to tell you one thing that would make her feel more valued this week. Write her answer here and act on it.

Paul's Investment Learnings

Hard-won wisdom from 40+ years of building and protecting wealth.

The lure of a great return — if you're not careful or disciplined — will make you do things that don't make sense. Paul has documented every lesson as it happened, and for years, his team never made an investment without reviewing the list.

You Cannot Have Return Without Risk

Every investment involves some degree of risk. Before committing, analyze and attempt to qualify and quantify the potential risk. Key areas to evaluate:

THE SPONSOR TEST

Before doing business with someone new, review at least one of their previous investment transactions. A character assessment is essential. Know their reputation, values, history, and track record. Personal assurances should never carry the day.

Stay on Top of the Details

- **Never be a passive investor.** Be prepared to do whatever it takes to minimize loss. Investors who add value protect their capital.
- **Don't throw good money after bad.** When a deal isn't working, evaluate additional capital as if it were a brand-new investment — not a rescue mission.
- **If the return is too good to be true, it probably is.**

Private Investments

- PE and VC are best accessed through **funds** — diversification, access to successful managers, and less time monitoring.
- Individual deals require sufficient due diligence. Above a certain amount, **site inspection is mandatory**.
- Never invest in something you don't understand — even if past performance looks great.
- The experience of the CEO managing the investment is a positive factor, but **does not guarantee success**.

Due Diligence Framework

Site Inspections: Visit the offices, meet the team, audit what they're doing. Observe culture and people at different levels. For real estate, tour the site and the neighborhood.

Character Assessment: Invest with people who have high integrity, solid character, and manage their personal life with the right values. Avoid brokers when possible — work directly with the person structuring and managing the deal.

Trust Your Gut: Don't rely solely on third-party due diligence. When something doesn't seem right, pay attention.

"The plans of the diligent lead surely to abundance, but everyone who is hasty comes only to poverty."

Proverbs 21:5

Black Swan Events

National disasters, pandemics, war, terrorism — these are events you cannot underwrite. Investing with awareness that black swans happen will keep you committed to **diversifying** and help you feel better about a 5% maximum position size in any single investment.

Investment Health Check

1 What is the most expensive investment lesson you've learned? What would you do differently?

2 Are you currently a passive investor in anything? What would it look like to get more involved?

3 Rate your current due diligence process before making an investment.

Minimal (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) (8) (9) (10) Thorough

Due Diligence Checklist — Use this before your next investment:

- Reviewed sponsor's previous transaction
- Character assessment completed
- Sponsor has positive history in this asset class
- Site inspection completed (if applicable)
- I understand how the investment works
- I understand how money is made
- I understand the risks involved
- Position is $\leq 5\%$ of portfolio
- Exit strategy defined upfront
- Working directly with deal sponsor (no broker)
- Return seems realistic (not "too good to be true")
- My gut says this is right

ONGOING TOOL

Quarterly Life Audit Tracker

Grade yourself A–F each quarter. Paul reviewed his 35 changes monthly for 5 years, then quarterly. Track your trajectory — not perfection.

| AREA OF FOCUS | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | NOTES |
|---------------------------------|----|----|----|----|-------|
| Living with urgency & intention | | | | | |
| Daily pursuit of my wife | | | | | |
| Listening well at home | | | | | |
| Leaving "business mode" at work | | | | | |
| Investment due diligence | | | | | |
| Diversification discipline | | | | | |
| Time with God (prayer, Word) | | | | | |
| <i>Your own:</i> | | | | | |
| <i>Your own:</i> | | | | | |
| <i>Your own:</i> | | | | | |

Ready to Go Deeper?

Paul offers one-on-one mentoring in life, business, and investing — drawing on 40+ years of experience. Visit the site to learn more and sign up for updates.

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