

Excellence: Maturity & Overcoming Challenges

Intro:

- Maturity in the simplest term is growth!

Phil 3:12-15 –

12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

- *Amplified Version Phil 3:15 – All of us who are mature [pursuing spiritual perfection] should have this attitude. And if in any respect you have a different attitude, that too God will make clear to you.*

- Paul recognized with all his accomplishments he still had room to reach – to grow.
- Your effectiveness in ministry is connected in your willingness to grow.
- If you want to be an effective leader, you must cultivate maturity.
- Comfort zones are a beautiful place, but nothing grows there. Maturity knows when to step out of the box and soar into greater potential.
- “In any given moment we have 2 options: to step forward into growth or step back into safety.” – Abram Maslow
- “God’s perspective of our full capacity is well beyond what we perceive.” – Tom Toney – Found of Kuest Student Leadership

Areas to Grow In as a Mature Leader:

1. Skills – Don't be afraid to learn something new and advance your abilities.

- Recognize your shortcomings and take the steps to improve.
- **“Growth is connected to hard work.”**
– Tom Toney
- Have honest conversations with leadership. Accept critique and constructive criticism in areas where you can improve with humility.
- Be willing to grow the skills you have - further education, training, research etc.
- Surround yourself with amazing people to achieve amazing results.
- Do not measure your skills, abilities, and gifts based on the accomplishments of other ministries.
 - The church needs what you have to offer.

- “For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.” 2 Cor 10:12
- “Let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.” - Gal 6:4

2. Motivation – Be able to challenge yourself to achieving goals.

- Be a visionary, strategist, planner and then have the determination to follow thru!
- Be Passionate! Be Consistent! Be Committed!

- Your motivation is a pattern for those following you. Not only are you motivating yourself but teaching your followers how to be faith leaders.
- Your motivation is what will put your skills in action.

3. Attitude - Excellence is an attitude!

- Your attitude towards ministry, people, God, community, and church will determine your effectiveness!
- Fostering resentment, grudges, and frustrations will taint your attitude and hinder your influence. Do not gossip about wrong treatment within ministry. *DO NOT VENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA!
- Operate in the Spirit, not Self.
 - Walk in the Spirit, be led by the Spirit, produce the Fruit of the Spirit.

- Your talents do not diminish the anointing.
- My position is submission.
 - God gives the promotion, and I serve in the His Kingdom.
 - If your attitude is centered on working for recognition [a title] then you're in the wrong Kingdom.
 - Culture claims impressing the world is the currency of success, but God instructs us to seek his approval by self-denial.
 - Church culture finds identity in labels, and without a title you wonder if your labor matters.
 - When your heart is for the harvest then your labor will not be in vain.
 - Give me a towel – not a title!

- Jesus denied a title, picked up a towel, and taught his disciples humility by washing their feet.
- 1 Peter 5:6 – Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.

Overcoming Challenges: Internal challenges

1. Overcoming Burn-out!

- A lack of motivation can lead to burnout.
 - Questions to ask regarding burnout:
 - Have you taken upon yourself extra responsibilities than what you can handle?
 - Do you feel that you're the only one that can fulfill that task or job?

- Are you refreshing yourself by having your own quiet time with the Lord?
 - Are your own personal devotions consistent and helpful?
 - Do you feel disconnected to your team?
 - Do you feel unappreciated?
- Keep ministry in the right order.
 - God, family, and then ministry.
 - God and ministry are not one.
 - *Tell story - Thanks Daddy for coming to visit us today*
 - Don't quit but re-evaluate your purpose in working for the Lord.

- If your cup is empty then you cannot pour into others. Get filled up!
 - Rotate serving to allow times of receiving and refreshing.
 - **Pray things through!**
 - This is spiritual warfare – you are not fighting against flesh and blood but against the attacks from the enemy.
 - **Delegate tasks** – you don't have to control it all.
 - **Gain inspiration from thriving ministries.**
 - Seminars, conferences, and virtual training sessions.
3. **Getting past your past.**
- “Forgetting those things we are behind”
– **Your past cannot be changed but your future can be!**

- You may have regrets and issues in the past that prohibit certain positions such as pastor, deacon, etc. but 90% of ministry is done outside of the pulpit.
 - If God could change the woman at the well to a woman with a witness, Saul the persecutor to Paul the preacher, Moses the murderer to Moses the freedom leader... just imagine what God could do with your story.
 - **There is a place for you in the Kingdom.** All the gospel is sharing what Jesus has done for you!
4. **Conquering your insecurities.**
- How far are you willing to get off the ground? How much are you willing to surround to God?
 - Fear of failure will keep you grounded on the runway of purpose.

- God wants to get you beyond yourself – beyond what you can imagine possible – beyond relying on yourself and relying on God!
- It's not what I can accomplish or what I can't; its about what God can accomplish with my surrender.
- God has not given you a spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind – 2 Tim 1:7
- **External challenges in ministry** - Lack of finances, lack of volunteers, carnal Christians, insufficient space, small community, lack of vision in leadership.
- All of these challenges if let unaddressed will keep your ministry inside the box, inside the church walls and fail to fly into the purpose God has for your ministry.

*Illustrate getting out of the box. Maturity recognizes that it's time to fly higher!

Conclusion:

Let me leave you with this verse.

- 1 Corinthians 15:58 – Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, ALWAYS ABOUNDING in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know your labor is not in vain in the Lord.
- Always Abounding – giving yourself fully, not holding back, always doing your best and more than is needed.

Keep your goals set high, your energy focused, and your attitude centered on Christ!