

REACHING OUR POTENTIAL

Int.

1. Aim: To discuss some things we must all do to do our best.
2. Ecl. 9:10 "Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest."
3. Col. 3:23 "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;"
 - a. God expects us to do our best to use ourselves in his service
 - b. Individually - and as a Congregation we are to do our best.
4. We can all do better and do more for the cause of Christ. Are you willing to try to improve? Here are some suggestions that will help us to reach our potential.
 - a. Word Potential means - what is possible, what we are capable of becoming
 - b. Other words to express the idea - latent, dormant, passive
 - c. Here are some suggestions for reaching our potential!!

Discussion

I. **INCREASED ENTHUSIASM is essential to reach our POTENTIAL.**

- A. Scriptures teach us to be enthused.
 1. Gal. 4:17-18 "They zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them. But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you."
 2. Tit. 2:14. "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." ["eager to do good" - TCNT]
 3. Zeal = to have warmth of feeling for or against:

B. Why should we have zeal and enthusiasm?

1. Zeal is a deep commitment to the work of the Lord.
2. Caleb is an example of a man who possessed zeal.
 - a. He said to the People: "And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it." Num. 13:30
 - b. The 10 spies were afraid and hesitated, saying we are as grasshoppers and the enemy as giants.
 - c. Faith overcomes fear in a zealous heart.
3. With enthusiasm and zeal we will have a sense of urgency and like Caleb will say let us go to work at once, for we are able to do it.
4. Jesus said: "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work." John 9:4
5. We need to be "redeeming the time, because the days are evil." Eph. 5:16
6. Zeal and enthusiasm is contagious. It will encourage and motivate others. In Heb. 10:24 we read: "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:"

C. How do I develop zeal?

1. Some think it is inherited like black hair or blue eyes. But it is not inherited.
2. It is developed by us individually.

3. To develop zeal a person must:
 - a. Gain interest -- we must have an interest in Christ and his church
 - b. Knowledge -- then we must acquire knowledge of Christ and his church and his people
 - c. Trust -- real faith trusts God and his Word
4. The word "Enthusiasm" is derived from two Greek words "En" and "Theos" = meaning "God within you"
 - a. Enthusiasm works like yeast in bread.
 - b. Enthusiasm is a combination of energy and emotion.
5. When you are enthusiastic about something your mind becomes alert, your body is ready to work, and you are receptive to doing whatever needs to be done to accomplish the task.

D. The Bible teaches us to be Enthused over Soul Winning!

1. Prov. 11:30 "The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise."
2. Daniel 12:3 "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."
3. Great Commission - Mk. 16:15-16
4. Too many get a greater thrill out of winning a game than winning a soul.
5. The first converts were enthused about teaching others. In Acts 8:4 we read "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word."

E. We should be enthusiastic about the worship services

1. Ps. 122:1 "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."
2. Matt. 6:33 "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."
3. Heb. 10:25. "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."
4. Personal matters must not interfere with worship to God.

F. To reach our full potential we must have enthusiasm or zeal!!

II. TO REACH OUR POTENTIAL THERE MUST BE SPIRITUAL GROWTH

- A. The inner man must increase - 2 Cor. 4:16 "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." [Perish = decay, destroy ~ Renewed = renovate]
- B. How do we accomplish this growth?
 1. More prayer and less complaint - 1Ths. 5:17 " Pray without ceasing."
 2. More Bible Study and less of other things.
 - a. Many read the paper every day!!
 - b. What about Daily Bible reading ???
 - c. Bible Reading is profitable!!!
 3. More work for the Lord and less civic and social efforts that interfere

4. More admission of sins and less excuse for them
 - a. 1 John 1:9 "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
 - b. James 5:16. "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."
 - c. Confess - means we admit not excuse or try to ignore
5. More faithful attendance at all services and less consideration for personal pleasures and profits - Mt. 16:26
6. More love for God and less love for self
7. More love for our fellowman

III. WE MUST SET GOALS TO REACH OUR POTENTIAL

- A. Attendance goals are set to help us
 1. We can reach higher and higher goals if we try
 2. We need to have just as many in our Bible classes as we do for our worship services
 3. Set realistic goals for Bible Study Sun. Morning, Morning Worship, Evening Worship, Wednesday night Bible Study.
- B. Budgets are set to help us reach our potentials in financial matters. Set a budget that is reachable and helping us to grow and do more. One that will challenge us to give liberally.

- C. Goals are not an end, but the means to an end.
1. Motto - Smokey the Bear "Only you can prevent forest fires"
 2. Application - "Only you can help us reach our goals"
- D. Reach forth - do better Phil. 3:13 "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,"
1. Not apprehended -- to make it - to possess
 2. One thing - forget the past -- mistakes or accomplishments
 3. Reach forth to the future - stretch forward

IV. WE MUST THINK BIG. to reach our potential !

- A. The great commission was BIG THINKING !! Mk. 16:15-16
1. All the word not just 1/4 or 1/2 or certain sections
 2. Every creature not just some Big Order !!!
- B. It requires:
1. **BIG EYES** to behold the possibilities
 - a. Prov. 29:18. "Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he."
 - b. John 4:35 "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and [then] cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest."
 - c. Look around and see the lost souls and the possibilities of teaching them.

2. BIG EARS

- a. To hear the Macedonian calls
- b. Acts 16:9 "And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us."
- c. Listen for opportunities for open doors to reach people.

3. BIG HEARTS

- a. So we can feel deeply the needs of others
- b. Matt. 9:36-38 "But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. 37. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly [is] plenteous, but the labourers [are] few; 38. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest."
- c. A big heart that desires to help. Compassion shows a good heart that is touched with the lost people and their need for the gospel.

4. BIG HANDS

- a. Strong enough to take hold of the task before us
- b. Heb. 12:12-13 "Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; 13. And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed."
- c. God has no hands to do the work except our hands.
- d. The gospel has been left to earthen vessels - us = 2 Cor. 4:7

5. **BIG SHOULDERS**

- a. To bear the burdens of others
- b. Gal. 6:2 "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."
- c. Help each other live the Christian life.

6. **BIG MINDS** undisturbed by little problems

- a. Gal. 6:9 "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."
- b. Weary
- c. Faint -- quit, get tired --- negative -- God Forbid

CONCLUSION

1. To reach our potential
 - a. we must have an unwavering faith in God and what he has commanded.
 - b. We will be active participants
 - c. We will not be discouraged by indifference, persecution, or lack of expected results.
2. Let us set our sails toward the port of Eternal Glory. Let us ride in the boat of unchangeable Truth. Let us be driven by the wind of God's grace.
3. Ecl. 9:10 "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest."
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