

Thinking with Excellence

5 April 2008

(2 Peter 1:5) But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge,

(2 Peter 1:6) to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness,

(2 Peter 1:7) to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.

Right thinking will result in right methods and behavior.

You need to start changing the way you think inside out.

7 Stages of Spiritual Development

1. **Virtue**
2. **Knowledge**
3. **Self-control**
4. **Perseverance**
5. **Godliness**
6. **Brotherly kindness**
7. **Love**

Let's look into only "Virtue" for this sermon.

"**Virtue**" is mentioned 70 times in the Bible. "Virtue" in *Greek* means "*Arete*", that means excellence.

Foolishness and laziness is severely condemned.

"**Excellence**" means to exceed a given standard that is ordinary, average, terrible or unworthy.

1.1. Excellence is to be superior in QUALITY.

"Quality never happens by chance, it is always the result of high intention." - **William Foster**

The call of God is always a call to excellence, never a call to mediocrity.

Everything that is worth doing it well, it is worth doing it with excellence.

If you want to do something well, do it with one strike, not with second strike all the time.

Your promotion and success will come only when you deliver excellence work. Not about you being nice or well manner.

Details determine destiny. Hence do not let compromise come into you and destroy you. Compromise will develop and spread. Disorder invites even more disorder.

1.2 Excellence is to obtain greater in QUANTITY.

(John 15:16) You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.

God calls us not only to be faithful but also to be fruitful.

It takes real hard work and mindset to raise the productivity of your life.

Nothing is free in life even if it comes to your salvation. It may be free to accept Jesus Christ, but it cost God everything – His only Son. (Read John 3:16)

You must be willing to pay the price for success.

(Psalms 126:5) Those who sow in tears Shall reap in joy.

(Psalms 126:6) He who continually goes forth weeping, Bearing seed for sowing, Shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, Bringing his sheaves with him.

Price to pay is ...

a) Demand on your HEART.

(Proverbs 4:23) Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life.

“Issue” means Geographical Boundaries.

If you have a dream, your heart will be called to pursuit it.

Over-comers are people with excellence thinking. It is their attitude that makes the difference with others.

Life is going to shovel dirt on you, all kinds of dirt. The key to getting out is to shake it off and take a step up. Every trouble to you can be a stepping stone to you. Never stop and give up.

b) Demand in your TIME.

You got the pay the price of time.

Time can be defined as the occurrence of events. That is “Time Management”. If you can manage the events in your life well, you will have good Time Management.

People who work hard are usually successful.

Time is the only valuable thing you have that cannot be replaced.

c) Demand on your MONEY.

It may cost nothing to dream but acting on your dream can be pricey.

How you manage your financial will determine how much God can bless you back.

(Luke 16:11) Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, how will you commit to your trust the true riches?

1.3. Excellence is to TRANSCEND your job description.

(Matthew 5:41) And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two.

Do more than what is asked of you.

Go beyond the call of duty that everything you do will be out of love.

Love only begins after the demands of duty have been met. You can only love when you have finished the duty assigned to you, then you move on to do the extra.

(Romans 13:8) Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law.

Notice the order...

“Owe no one anything” – the negative requirement... then

“Love one another” – the positive requirement comes only after the negative.

You first clear what you need to do then you can start doing things out of love.

1.4 Excellence is to OUTDO yourself each time.

Christians have this mindset that when they are Christian, God will give special favor to them. But it does not really work that way in life.

On the other hand, if you are Christian, God expects you to do more than you did before! Because you have all sorts of resources you did not have before – Prayer, Bible, Wisdom, Holy Spirit, etc. So you should be more productive than you used to be.

(Ephesians 6:5) Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ;

(Ephesians 6:6) not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart,

That means you should not be doing the job only when someone is looking at you. You do it unto the Lord that whatever good you do, you will receive the same from the God.

“Right thinking will lead to right behavior or methods.”

Excellence is not the same as extremism. Demanding to be a perfectionist is being an extremist.

10 Contrasts in our Life

Thinking with Excellence

1. ~~Law~~ Liberty

Make people want to do it instead of being a “must” to do it.

(Galatians 5:14) For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

2. ~~Systems~~ Service

Do not do everything by system. Be genuinely meeting the needs of the people.

(Matthew 20:25) But Jesus called them to Himself and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them.

(Matthew 20:26) Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant.

(Matthew 20:27) And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave—

(Matthew 20:28) just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

Focus on serving.

3. ~~Self-centered~~ Spirit-centered

(Zechariah 4:6) So he answered and said to me: "This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' Says the Lord of hosts.

God is not looking for perfect people but for willing people.

4. ~~Legalism~~ Love

People respond to love. Because they know they can find acceptance in you.

You need to show people that you love them.

5. ~~Fear~~ Faith

(2 Timothy 1:6) Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.

(2 Timothy 1:7) For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

6. ~~Control~~ Care/Concern

Be sincerely caring.

When your friend is sick and cannot make it for an appointment, do not make him feel that it is his fault. Instead show care and concern by asking how he is.

7. ~~Duty~~ Devotion (love)

Do your work wholeheartedly.

(Exodus 17:12) But Moses' hands became heavy; so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it. And Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.

Duty takes you to what you need to finish. Devotion will take you another mile after you finished.

8. ~~Getting~~ Giving

Your attitude should be always giving. Not about getting.

(2 Corinthians 9:6) But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.

(2 Corinthians 9:7) So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.

Not about what you gain when you serve but what you can give when you serve.

9. ~~Explanation~~ Example

(John 13:14) If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.

(John 13:15) For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.

Conclusion...

10. Bondage Breakthrough

When you have the above 9 other points, you will see a breakthrough and no more in bondage.

Right thinking will cause you to do things from a difference perspective. That is how you become a person of excellence.

Sermon taken from [**http://www.bryanchung.sg**](http://www.bryanchung.sg)
