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**WORKSHOP**

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**ACHIEVING ACADEMIC  
EXCELLENCE IN OUR  
CHOSEN COURSES AND CAREER**

# INTRODUCTION

*Rom 12:11. Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord.*

*Daniel 6:3. Now Daniel so distinguished himself among the administrators and the satraps by his exceptional qualities that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom.*

*Daniel 1:20. In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom.*

Times over and over, God has always expressed His desire for excellence for His children. One of the attributes of the new creation in the life of a disciple is the spirit of excellence; the continuous attitude of demonstrating excellence in an endeavour. Jesus presented us as the light of the world, a city set on a hill that cannot be hid (*Mat 5:14-16*). It implies Jesus would like to show case excellence as a testimony to what God, the source of all wisdom can make of His children. Excellence is defined as the quality of being outstanding or extremely good in an engagement or character; it is a culture or lifestyle of performing well above mediocrity or average. Excellence connotes a continuous experience of distinguishing fineness and quality in each assignment or character of life. Many young people are satisfied with mediocrity while some think they are destined to swim in failures and struggles. We shall together look into God's word to see His promise, plan, and purpose and victory in experiencing excellence in our academics, career and all our given endeavours. Because God does nothing short of excellence himself. Therefore, we should always be striving to be excellent too. Being excellent at what we do will point back to the one who gave us the ability to do our work. It will bring glory to God, as well as show those around us the love of Christ.

We would like to discuss this topic under these highlights and use some patriarchs of faith.

## **1. THE ESSENCE OF OUR ACADEMICS/TRAINING/CAREER AND WHY DOES GOD WANT US TO EXCEL**

a. It is a preparation to build a platform for Christ to express His life through us: He recreated us so we can showcase Jesus in His excellent nature even in our academics. Moses was schooled in the tongues of Egypt so he can face Pharaoh in the future; even though anointed, he needed to be excellent to talk to pharaoh. Moses recorded the words of the LORD from Genesis to Deuteronomy, ensuring that all that God spoke was not lost. It takes an excellent spirit to achieve this. His training in Egypt was a very fundamental preparation for divine assignment. Other examples of such men are Paul and Luke the physician. We need to take our academics/training seriously, it might be God's preparation for something eternal.

b. Not for Mammon but for the Glory of Jesus – *Col 1:16, Col 3:17*: Our traditions and society teach us that we go to school to get good job and make money and live well. God is not giving us excellence academics because of what to eat. There is more to life than food and raiment. God is preparing us for a life that transcends animalistic focus (just what to eat, drink and put on) into a life that executes a divine assignment on earth. See *Jer 1:10-14*.

c. God wants us to excel in order to be a solution to help heal the decaying world *Rom 8:18*. Businesses, industry, marketplace is in darkness and is eagerly expecting change from children of light. But they must be Carrier of Jesus life who are anointed in the heart and excellent in the head.

d. God desires our life to be excellent because our Master is excellent: *Luke 2:52*. Our LORD Jesus is Excellent in all his dealings.

e. Great witnesses (*Heb 13:1-2*). We have great witnesses in the scriptures who were excellent in their training: Daniel, Joseph, Moses, Esther, Aholiab, Bezaleel, Samuel, Zelophehad daughters, etc. Thus, I also can be excellent

## **2. PURSUING, ADVANCING, AND FLOURISHING : HOW CAN WE PURSUE GODLY EXCELLENCE IN ACADEMICS AND CAREER**

### **A. The Fundamental experience**

**i. New Birth:** Moses was born amidst conflict and was called a proper child. Joseph was born into the family of covenant. So also was Esther and Jesus. There is truly the seed that wins, the seed that excels. This is the foundation of true and sustainable excellence. Hamman's wife noted this to Modeccai when she said " if this man be of the seed of Jews... you cannot conquer him" *Esther 4:21*.

**ii. A Renewed Mind:** (*Rom 12:2-3, Phil 4:13*). We need to believe the word of the LORD and have correct mind-set that it is the will of God for me to excel and the excellence is for Him and not for self. All old thinking of impossibility should be done away with

**iii. Diligence is key:** Doggedness and never giving up spirit is key to excellence. *Pro. 22:29*. You cannot carry Jesus and be passive and lazy. Jesus is a hard worker like His Father; *John 5:17*. Paul is a hard worker, but by grace (*1 Cor 15:10*). Laziness and giving up is not the spirit of Christ. Don't accept any course to be too difficult for you. Don't limit the capacity God has given you. A genius is said to have only used 6% of the brain. A lot of discovery and innovation the world is making were released from God of all wisdom. It is just that his Children are lazy to go and gather from our Father. This must change now

**iv. Continuous guidance (Discipleship) and learning from others:** God has made us guardians and guides to make the path of excellence better. Moses was helped by Egyptian lecturers, and later disciplined by Jethro. Paul was trained by Gamaliel and later disciple by Barnabas. Esther was disciplined by Modeccai and later trained by Chamberlain. God will arrange competent hands to enhance your skill and godly lives to train your life. The combinations helps a sustainable excellent life

**v. Internship and voluntary service:** part of what builds competence is voluntary service in putting your earning to work in an operational environment. Joseph skill was first put to test in Potiphar's house. That was the place of his industrial attachment. He served Potiphar well without collecting money. Little did he know he will handle the economy of a whole nation in a few years to come. Identify voluntary service places to learn more even during the holiday. God is preparing you for a great future

**vi. Expanding horizon and skill beyond your comfort zone:** as you study through school, take interest to learn a little of other areas of discipline that is not your core in addition to building competence in your core areas. For instance an engineering student should learn economics, finance and human capital management. An art and commerce students should learn computing, programming and data analytics. Every student should learn basic finance, macro economics, data analytics and effective communication skills. Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, mighty in words in deeds (communication skills, economics, and projects management). *Acts 7:22*.

### **3. CHOOSING A FULFILLING CAREER/COURSE OF STUDY:**

Our Career choice is very important on the path of excellence. We need divine guidance as well as personal assessment in choosing the right career. Sometimes, our career path are chosen by someone else, other times, circumstances forced us to change the path. Nonetheless, how we handle the career we find ourselves matters more than the career itself. So, attitude for winning is more important than the career itself. Here are some pieces of advice in choosing a career path:

**i. Remember the big picture (Purpose) :** *Rev 4:12, col 3:17, Rom 8:18*,

**ii. Self-analysis and discovery:** *Heb 11:32*. Discover the gift of God in you, discover your

abilities, discover your passion, and discover the vision of God.

iii. **Pray to know the mind of the LORD:** *Prov 3:5-7, Matthew 7:7*

iv. **Seek godly counsel from experienced disciples and godly elders**

#### **4. ENEMIES OF EXCELLENCE:**

**A. Sin:** *Isaiah 14:12.* Pride was the root of Lucifer's fall from excellence. Every rebellion against God will bring a man down. Samson fell from excellence because of sin. So also, Saul and everyone who allowed sins. We must stay away from sin; it kills, it does not respect age, level or colour.

**B. Pleasure and distractions:** worldly distractions can make us mediocre. Technology, entertainment, social media, television, cinema are tools that can become serious distractions. How much time you spend on this today may define your future. Don't live for technology, it was made to serve you when you need it. Don't live for technology gadgets, it is foolishness.

**C. Wrong Mind-set:** "I cannot do more than my father's mentality", impossibility mentality: *Luke 1:37.* When we limit what God can do, nothing will change our situations. Our natural mind can be pessimistic, but we must switch to the mind of Christ. See a pessimistic mind in *Prov 26:13, Prov 22:13.*

**D. Wrong friends** rather than great class mates (*Heb. 12:1-2, 1 Cor 15:33*).

**E. Laziness.** *Prov 6:3 -13*

**F. Being Satisfied** with one off success: *Phil 3:14 -16*

**5. MOVING AGAINST YOUR AVERAGE:** *Isaiah 60:1-4, Luke 15*

**A. Repentance and Restitution** where needs be

**B. Start again,** it is not too late to kindle the fire of excellence

**C. Pray and Invoke heavens help.** There is a place for Mercy: *Heb 4:12.*

**D. Put aside your success/failure of yesterday,** go a for the next distinction today. Don't be satisfied with average, you have the seed of excellence: *Daniel 5:12.*

#### **6. QUESTIONS WE STRUGGLE WITH:**

A. What if I am in a wrong course/ career? *Psalms 25:9.*

B. What if I am not doing well in the course/ career I have chosen? *Prov 11:14.*

C. What if I finish well but I do not get job on time? *Eccl 3:1, Heb 13:5.*

D. Will my career be lucrative? *Prov 4:18.*

E. What if I have tried all and I still fail: *Prov 24:16.*

#### **CONCLUSION**

Excellence is an advancing rope; what was excellent yesterday is normal today. To remain excellent is to keep moving and doing well. Excellence is an attitude and not a single event. It permeates everywhere even beyond career. It affects marriage, ministry, social and spiritual. Those who belong to Christ and have crucified self carry the new creation life which is an excellent seed. You have no reason not to excel. God has placed something in your life that will budge and shine the glory of the LORD. You must not allow yourself to be pushed to the back. Deuteronomy 28:13 - 15 is a declaration that will continually follow you. The whole world is waiting for the excellence in you; Jesus himself is waiting to showcase his redeemed son and daughter to the world. We must not misrepresent the LORD; we must excel. Pursue excellence with all your heart and mind and it is the place your Master sits; He is glorified when you excel.

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