

Ambition

- Good word for wanting to better ourselves, or
- An excuse for covetousness and pride of life.
- Often depends on the goal and outcome.
- *But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. 1Tim. 6:9-10*
- Ambitions for worldly things often bring the exact opposite of what we were thinking.

Ambition for Spiritual Goals

- Always wholesome – Bring more than expected
- *Happy is the man who **finds wisdom**, And the man who **gains understanding**; 14 For **her proceeds are better than the profits of silver**, And **her gain than fine gold**. 15 She is more precious than rubies, And all the things you may desire cannot compare with her. 16 Length of days is in her right hand, In her left hand **riches and honor**. 17 Her ways are ways of pleasantness, And **all her paths are peace**. 18 She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her, And happy are all who retain her. Pr. 3:13-18*

Ambition for Success / Prosperity

- *Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. 8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Josh. 1:8-9*

Steps to Spiritual Success & Prosperity

- Like links in a chain or steps leading upward.
- be **strong** and **very courageous**
- **that** you may **observe to do according to all**
- **do not turn** from it to the right hand or the left
- **that** you may **prosper wherever you go**
- shall **not depart from your mouth**
- **but** you shall **meditate in it day and night**
- **that** you may **observe to do according to all**
that is written in it
- **For** then you will **make your way prosperous**
- **and** then **you will have good success**
- The only change for the Christian: **Gospel**

Spiritual Ambition-Preparing Our Heart

- *But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith **virtue**, 2Pet. 1:5*
- ***seek first** the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Mt. 6:33*
- *If anyone desires to come after Me, let him **deny himself**, and **take up his cross**, and **follow Me**. Mt 16:24*

Assess What is Possible

- According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder **I have laid the foundation**, and **another builds on it**. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. 11 For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if anyone builds on this foundation **with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw**, 13 each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. 1Cor. 3:10-14
- Each Christian a stone. Some gold, silver, precious
- Others a stone of wood, hay, or straw.

Assess What is Possible

- By our choices and efforts we determine the quality of stone we become.
- *But in a great house there are not only **vessels of gold and silver**, but also of **wood and clay**, some for honor and some for dishonor. 21*
*Therefore **if anyone cleanses himself from the latter**, he will be **a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work.** 2Tim. 2:20-22*
- We have the power and the right to change our essence from clay, wood, hay or straw to gold, silver, or precious stone.
- What are we now?

Poised for Greatness

- For **by grace** you have been saved **through faith**, and that **not of yourselves**; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast. 10 For **we are His workmanship**, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which **God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.** Eph. 2:8-10
- Jesus' death covered the terrible imperfections.
- God gave this grace to all disciples, so that is not the deciding factor.
- It is our own efforts that make the difference!
When we walk in the good works He prepared beforehand, become gold, silver precious stones.

- In the parable of the talents, Jesus spoke of disciples trading and making gain.
- In the parable of ten virgins the wise were prepared for greatness, but the foolish were unprepared. (Mt. 25:1-30).
- *I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Phil. 3:14*
- To reach that goal, like all others seeking to win the race, Paul “*buffeted his body and brought it into submission.*” (1Cor 9:24ff).

Nothing Can Bring Greater Benefits

- spiritual greatness towers far above any other pursuit.
- kingdom of heaven offers greater opportunities.
- *Seeing all these things are to be dissolved, what manner of people ought you to be? ” 2Pet. 3:11*
- Earthly goals: no matter how great our success
- we will still leave as naked as we entered, for we brought nothing in, can't take anything out. 2Pet. 3:11; Job 1:21; 1Tim. 6: 7
- Jesus promised far greater honor/glory than we could find no matter how lofty a material goal.

The Glory of This Goal

- *And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon, that when you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home. Le 16:9-10*
- *the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: Mt 25:34*
- *sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. 43 It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. 44 It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. 1Cor. 15:42-44*

Where Do We Start?

- Peter's seven step plan brings an abundantly supplied entrance into the eternal kingdom.
- Jesus' Sermon on the Mount creating a foundation allowing us to build on a rock no storm or flood can move.
- Paul spoke of putting off the old man and putting on the new
- presenting our bodies a living sacrifice
- Transforming ourselves into vessels of mercy and glory. (Mt. 5-8; Eph. 4;17ff; Col. 3: 1-14ff; Rom. 12:1ff; 9:23).

How do we Know how Close we are?

- *At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?*
- Jesus did not reply: “There is no such position.” Instead He gave the path:
- *Truly I say to you, unless you turn and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Mt.18:1-5*
- All our efforts lead to this destination. All that is in the gospel leads to “*a heart of a little child*”
- Is this our quest? Are we striving to understand

- What is it about a little child that led Jesus to bring one into the midst of His disciples and tell them that both entrance into and greatness in the kingdom could only be found in the heart of that little child?
- This is a parable with a mystery well worth the time to unravel and understand.

Since we all once were Little Children

- Something was lost as we become adults.
- At one time everything needed for greatness was within us.
- Only need to reconnect and rekindle them.
- Some emotions in little children are more wholesome and better suited to growth and development in the kingdom of heaven than what we now possess as adults.
- Jesus revealed the first step to being great is to seek what we had as a child that we have lost as an adult.

The Answer to What we Lost

- *Lord, my heart is not haughty, Nor my eyes lofty. Neither do I concern myself with great matters, Nor with things too profound for me. 2 Surely I have calmed and quieted my soul, Like a weaned child with his mother; Like a weaned child is my soul within me.”*
- If we have all these qualities we are on the path to greatness.
- We will look more closely at these qualities next week.