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BUILDING YOUR COMMITMENT (PART 1)

A Must Read!

Many people have commitment issues in various areas of their lives. Some people find it even difficult to commit to marriages and relationships. Some find it difficult to commit to the decisions and stay true to their values. Let us see how we can build our commitment to strong levels.

1. Do not follow your feelings.

Feelings come and go but your decision should remain. Do not let your feelings determine what you do and not do. Successful people are those who do things disregarding their feelings. If you commit to do something, let not what you feel at the present moment affect what you have committed yourself to doing.

Look at this scripture... *1 Timothy 1:11 (KJV)* According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust. Do you see that Paul is saying the gospel has been committed to his trust? So even if he wakes up feeling upset about something, because of commitment he still had to preach it. All servants of God have a commitment to preach the gospel and to help God's people and it doesn't matter how they feel. Sometimes I wake up tired on a Sunday morning or upset about something but commitment will tell me to do the task ahead of me...I don't tell the church today I can't preach, counsel people or pray for them because I woke up upset about something.

So if you want to build commitment in life ignore your feelings and go for what you have decided to do. Those in marriages will understand that it's not every day that you wake up with feelings for your spouse. Sometimes there will be zero feelings but you are guided by a decision you made to commit to the relationship. The reason many people change lovers like diapers is because they are led by their feelings...When they don't feel it, they drop it but love is not only a feeling, it is a decision to commit. Feelings are deceptive, though we need them, they are not to be followed.

I jog every morning. I have decided that I should go jogging before I do anything with my day. The problem is most times I wake up without a feeling to jog such that if I am to follow my feelings there will be no jogging that day but I force myself to go. Do you see that if you don't have the ability to force yourself to what you have decided you have a weak commitment and that will affect you. Force yourself to pray, force yourself to tithe, force yourself not to drink or smoke then

later you will see yourself getting results from your commitment. The reason most people can't be trusted with leadership especially of the things of God is because their feelings affect their output. If you anger them today, if they had committed to do something for the church, they will stop. Their feelings have become their boss. Most pastors are busy trying to keep some people happy so that they can bring in their tithes. They can attend services; they are careful to rebuke them for fear of angering them. If you are such person who only does things because you are happy, you are a great hypocrite waiting to fail every commitment test in life. We need people who will serve God despite how they feel. If it means serving God with tears on your cheeks so be it (*Nehemiah 2:1-5*). Pastors are not sent to your life to make you happy but to guide you.

2. Circumstances

One man of God had decided to help a certain young man. He wanted to help him with his financial situation and help him through college. When he got where the young man was, the behavior the young man exhibited really affected him and he decided not to help him. Before he left, he also started feeling sorry for the boy and he decided to want to help him again. When he went back to the boy, he found him misbehaving again and the man vowed he will not help him, he continued with his back and forth until he decided to help the boy at last. Moral of the story is If you have decided to help someone, don't let circumstances affect your commitment to do so. The behavior of the person you want to help should not be a factor. Whatever circumstance you find him/her in should not affect your decision to help...that is called commitment. Look at how God is committed to us even when some of us aren't willing to obey him, but He is committed to what he should do for us as our God and creator...

Matthew 5:45 (KJV) That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on _the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. He is committed to do good to people despite their evil. He gives them his sun and his rain. Build your commitment to high levels if you want to succeed in this life.... will continue tomorrow

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BUILDING YOUR COMMITMENT (PART 2)

Scripture Reference: David (1 Samuel 30:6), Mordecai (Esther 8)

After this series, if you are a teachable person, you will never have commitment issues again. Without commitment it will be very difficult for you to be important in any faculty of life. Uncommitted people are very frustrating to work with hence I have undertaken to write this short series on commitment. We continue from where we left off yesterday....

3. Rewards.

Rewards are very important factors in commitment. A reward is something that is given to you in exchange for doing a required behavior. Rewards will always motivate people to commit...for example companies reward hardworking employees with either promotion or more money to motivate them to commit to the company. Even parents reward their children for doing certain things right and that motivates them to commit. In any field, all good behavior is rewarded. Even saying thank you is a reward enough to motivate someone. All these rewards are what we call **EXTERNAL REWARDS**. ...meaning they are given to you by other people. It is up to them to reward you or not....

However, for you to be effective and influential in life you need to know how TO REWARD YOURSELF....I will call this **INTERNAL REWARD**. Most committed people are those who are able to reward themselves. Even if no one says thank you to them, even if they are not paid to do anything, their level of commitment doesn't change. Such people are very few in the world but they are the happiest people. Their happiness is not drawn from what people are going to say about what they do. These people draw satisfaction not from other people but from within themselves. They have since stopped doing things for human approval but for their own satisfaction. I will give an example....

Our ministry is more than seven years old already. We started in a very difficult way seven years ago. No one thought it would amount to anything. I don't remember any positive words from anyone. If anything, most people never took it seriously...to them it was one of those things that would start and die. Imagine such negativity around you. No nice words from anyone. Those who had nice words were sarcastic ones. I learnt how to turn sarcasm into a reward. I had to learn how to reward myself from within. Your inner man must know how to reward you, that's what we call inner satisfaction. That is what has kept me in ministry for all the years. It wasn't money because

money was never there and even now but my commitment never changed. It wasn't about results because results weren't that good. 50 people in seven years isn't a good result, right? It translates to seven people a year. That isn't a good return to encourage someone to commit to the project at all. But I challenge you in this, my commitment levels instead of decreasing it rather increased.

If you can do things more for who you become than what you get then you have mastered the principle. People who do things to get are always smaller than those who do things to become. The biggest reward is of you becoming somebody you never were than getting few 'thank you (s) from people. Do not do things for money or fame alone (both are external rewards) ...allow these to be mere bonuses for a bigger thing which is 'becoming a person you never were'. Pursue growth more than money.... Money that comes before growth can destroy you. Africa is full of very small people with huge amounts of money and power hence all the problems. My brother, my sister, if you can't reward yourself you will die a slave of people. You will hunt for their approval and appreciation daily and in most cases not find it. You will lock yourself in your house to cry thinking you have done wrong because they said nothing about what you thought you did well. Sometimes you preach and even your pastor didn't even say well done to you. Sometimes you cook your best meal and your hubby doesn't notice or even say thank you. What will you do? Stop doing good because people's reward didn't come? If there is no one to reward you, reward yourself. If people give you their reward, take it as a bonus but be prepared to move forward with or without it. When you do this, you will be powerful. Those who think they can use their rewards to make you will then lose their power over you. You will be your own self-made king.

Sometimes God will cause people to forget to reward you so that you grow. You grow faster if you grow from within. Those who grow from outside are those who grow by human support. Such growth isn't real, when tested it doesn't stay. Real growth is growth is growth that happens from within you...were you know how to encourage yourself and reward yourself with no one supporting you. Some had a privilege of going to church with support from parents and family, somewhere even surrendered to church every morning by their parents but for some of us it wasn't so. I had no support of going to church, my family didn't approve in those first days. It was a punishable offense to go to church but in most cases real growth happens to such people who do things with minimum to no human support than those who people reward for doing things.

Your spouse being your choice, your commitment to her/him has nothing to do with human approval or support. Some want their families to say "wow" when they get married. Unfortunately, your family may not see what you see in her/him so don't base your commitment on their reward... I see I can't finish today...let us talk about **RESULTS** tomorrow, how most people's commitment was affected by the RESULTS they achieved.

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BUILDING YOUR COMMITMENT (PART 3)

In yesterday's episode we discussed about REWARDS as a factor in commitment. If you are a leader, don't be mean with rewards because if you don't reward your people their commitment dwindles. Do not withhold to appreciate. If any good has been done, say thank you for it...Today as promised yesterday we move on to something else that affects commitment...

4. Results

Your commitment level is directly linked to the results that you produce. Negative results have an impact on your commitment. Many people had to quit because of the results they produced. Many people quitted even university because the results of their first semester came out bad and that affected their commitment. Even in business or even in ministry many people have quitted because of poor results.

However, successful people are people who hang on despite negative results. If you can't handle the pressure of negative results then you will not achieve anything meaningful in life. Very few things start with a big boom. Such things will not stay for long, it's like paper fire that can easily go down on its own. You don't control the output but you control the input. The output is a consequence of the input...so results are consequences of effort put over time.

Let us look at the ministry of Jesus in *Mathew 4:17-22*. If you read these passages of scripture you will see what most people never saw. Jesus was preaching in Galilee alone. People probably ignoring him. He was moving from person to person without anyone following him until he came to Simon and Andrew, then to John and James. These were his first disciples. He didn't start with multitudes. Many of us want to see a huge group of people coming to our cell groups but that's not how Jesus started. He started alone, moving alone along the banks of the sea preaching.... the results weren't good, until his first two converts Simon and Andrew, then John and James. These results weren't that good for someone who is God himself in flesh. Jesus could have easily gotten disappointed and frustrated. He would have asked God, where are the MULTITUDES that you sent me for? But Jesus knew better that sometimes results are to be ignored and focus only on the vision and trusting God. Yes, some would reject his message, some would chase him away, just like what they are doing to you Mr/Mrs Cell Group Leaders but do not lose hope, that's what the Lord himself went through.

When I read this, I got very encouraged that Jesus did not start his ministry with a big crusade. He started alone, doing what we call one on one. If you follow the model of Jesus, you can do anything. It is easy to start a cell group, only don't look at the results but look at your effort.... God is faithful before you know it slowly but surely your results will begin to match your effort. If you look now later in *Mathew 4:25 (KJV)* and there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judaea, and from beyond. Now the crowds are coming but he didn't start with them.... Imagine if he had quitted like most of us. Manage your life in the same manner, even your business, profits are coming, keep doing the right thing even if it takes years, profits are on their way.

I spoke about my ministerial journey yesterday...If I was one to look at the results, I would have long quitted. I will be honest with you that most times I would be very frustrated, angry and discouraged because of the results but my commitment never changed. I would preach to seven people like I am preaching to thousands...I lost many members because they weren't seeing the RESULTS, they wanted but that didn't affect my commitment. If anything, I changed gears to higher levels of commitment. I know one day crowds will come; it might be 20 years from now I don't care...He who called me is faithful. Never allow results to steal your commitment.... they may not see you or recognize you, do not worry keep doing the right thing, there is an eye that is seeing you which is not a human eye.

Never expect good results at the beginning. In fact, ignore the results and keep investing in whatever it is that you are doing. Negative results are there to screen and separate those who would be successful and those who will not. Most people turned back when they saw their yield (results) not matching their efforts. Like right now as I am committing to writing the **Daily Bread** every morning, I am not naive, I know only a quarter of us read through it, some have already complained of it being too long etc and some suggested it should come weekly rather than daily but look, I will not be deterred by today's results, just wait and see in the coming few years how many people will be looking for such information to buy it not to get it just for free. My commitment is not based on the success of today, I am seeing fifty (50) years to come, I am looking at when I am no longer here on this earth, there will be a generation that will come looking for the truth, that's the people I am writing to. The secret is when results aren't good, let not your commitment go down.

Psalms 42:11 (NIV) Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.

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