



We're starting the next part of our **Stronger Series: Perform Excellently**. As we've journeyed through each of this year's themes, they are helping us get stronger by strengthening what matters most. When we apply and work on the different aspects of God's Word in our life, we'll see the fruit of it. Like anything in life, we need to prepare and practice before the day of performance. The ability to perform excellently is a result of preparation, hard work, dedication and diligence. Like in the natural, fruit in life is never instant; you can't plant a seed today and get a lemon tree tomorrow. While God can do anything, He operates through the principle of seed, time and harvest. The Bible shows us that God looks at what we are doing to determine whether more can be given to us; that's why performing excellently is important!

How are you performing with what's in your hands currently? Is there an area of the 5 F's where you need to improve?

To perform excellently in life is about having an excellent spirit on the inside. To help us unpack this theme, we're going to look at some great men in the bible who had the ability to perform excellently.

Read 1 Chronicles 12:1-2, 8, 14-15, 18, 22, 33, 38

This scripture talks about David's mighty men, the qualities and the characteristics that they had. These men were highly skilled, and they moved from King Saul because the anointing to lead the nation and bring about God's plan and purpose had moved from him to David. So what can we learn from them?

1. They came with something to offer.

They were armed with bows and brought this to the frontline. God has armed you with something, with gifting, skills and the ability to make a difference in your world. You might need to train that ability, but it's in you!

Where and how are you making a difference in your community, family, workplace etc.?

2. They were highly skilled to take down the enemy

These men weren't just partly skilled; the word says that they were skilled in the left and the right - they could use their bows in both hands. They could hit the mark, bring breakthrough, and take down an enemy. In life, we will have spiritual battles (see Ephesians 6:12), so it's important that we get skilled in the fight; skilled in sharing our faith, skilled in prayer and intercession and skilled in our gifting. If we're going to perform excellently, this means stepping into the characteristics of these great spiritual warriors of the past and starting seeing cities and communities change by the power of Christ at work in us.

What practical things are you doing to grow in either your faith, your prayer life or your gifting?

The Church needs to stand up and shine with a message of life, hope, and possibility in God. There are so many voices right now shouting for your attention but as Christians, we need to keep our hearts committed to the cause and the purpose of Christ for our lives.

What things can we do to keep our hearts and eyes fixed on Christ?



We're on a journey to get stronger, to strengthen what matters most, progressing through the eight topics we've studied so far to the point of being able to perform excellently. One of the components of performing excellently is turning up; it's about bringing the very best of what you have to the need in front of you.

Read Colossians 3:23-24

The Bible encourages us that whatever we're doing, we should do it with excellence as if we're serving Jesus himself. This means giving our full heart, energy and gift. Excelling is about becoming brilliant at the gift that God has put on the inside of you so that humanity would benefit and would glorify Him. We'll all have moments in life where we don't hit the mark or where we might fail, but what's important is that we give the best that we can and not just our leftovers. Excellence starts in the heart: the performance on the outside is a result of the performance on the inside. To get up and perform excellently across the five F's in life, faith, family, finances, fitness and future, you have to make a decision that you will give the best you can in all seasons, regardless of how you might feel. God watches our faithfulness in the little things; He watches our heart, mouth, thought-life, the shortcuts we take, the action we do. He wants us to progress and get stronger in life.

Read a few different translations of the above verse in Colossians? What words stick out to you that help you understand better what it means to 'work for the Lord'? What does that look like in your life?

Read 1 Chronicles 12:1-2, 8, 14-15, 18, 22, 33, 38

The men in this story were some of David's 'mighty men'; they were highly skilled in their gift and able to perform excellently. We can learn a few characteristics from David's men:

1. They had courage

Courage isn't a feeling; it's a principle. These men chose to activate their courage in the moment of battle because they had a conviction about who and what they were serving. When we are faced with a moment where we don't feel like doing something, we must come back to principle and our conviction. The stronger the conviction we have on the inside, the more courageous we will be.

How do you encourage yourself when you don't want to do something that you know you should be doing? Can you give an example of a time when you stood on your conviction?

2. They were trained for war and knew how to operate their equipment

These men trained for the moment of battle and became skilled with their gifts. If we are to perform excellently, we must be committed to training and strengthening our gifting. Church provides an incredible place to train your gift, bringing opportunities to contribute, grow and develop your gift. Performing excellently is about becoming great at what we do. When the disciples argued about who was the greatest (see Matthew 18:1-4; Mark 9:33-36; Luke 9:46-47), Jesus encouraged them that the way to greatness was to be humble and serve others, to use your gift to serve God and serve humanity.

What gifts are on your life? How are you training yourself and growing stronger in them in this season?