

'For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, Nor from the south. But God is the judge: He putteth down one, and setteth up another.' Psalm 75:6-7

As believers trusting God for promotion in the marketplace, it's important that we know that God's kingdom is extremely organized and structured. Just like business organisations, God also has a promotion system with eligibility criteria that anyone seeking promotion from God has to fulfil.

His criteria is not changeable for anyone so unlike people who may change promotion policies to suit people, God does not change His policies or His principles. A question to ask ourselves therefore is what is God's criteria is and what are His principles for promotion.

This series we're doing a study of people God promoted and drawing out the key principles we can learn from them. May the Lord give us understanding as He opens our eyes to how to align with His principles.

## **Marketplace Assignment**

'You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you and I have appointed and placed and purposefully planted you, so that you would go and bear fruit and keep on bearing, and that your fruit will remain and be lasting, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name [as My representative] He may give to you.' John 15:16 AMP

Out of Jacob's 12 sons only Levi was dedicated to full time service to the Lord, but that doesn't mean the other 11 were not meant to represent Him in their respective fields of endeavour. Similarly, today only a few believers will be full time pulpit minsters while the majority will be ministers in the marketplace. This means that everywhere a believer shows up in the marketplace he/she is meant to do so as a representative of Jesus. While we are all His representatives, we don't all have the same assignment and we won't all be promoted the same way.

'... Before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations.' Jeremiah 1:5

'The words of Amos...concerning Israel... ' Amos 1:1

'Then I said, 'Behold, I have come— In the volume of the book it is written of Me— To do Your will, O God.' Hebrews 10:7

Our assignment in the marketplace is the foundation for the promotion that we will receive from God. Both Jeremiah and Amos were prophets, but while Jeremiah was called to nations, Amos was called to Israel. Which means no matter how hard he may have tried, Amos wouldn't have been promoted by God to be a prophet to nations. This is important because when we as believers track our growth we tend to do so by external metrics: what our families, society, peers expect of us. However, the only thing that really matters is what God has already assigned us to and for because the promotion we seek will only be in line with His plans for us.

**Prayer:** Lord open my eyes to see what You've written concerning me. Grant a revelation of my assignment in the marketplace so I don't run someone else's race.

#### **Radical Obedience**

"But Samuel replied, "What is more pleasing to the Lord: your burnt offerings and sacrifices or your obedience to his voice? Listen! Obedience is better than sacrifice, and submission is better than offering the fat of rams. Rebellion is as sinful as witchcraft, and stubbornness as bad as worshiping idols. So because you have rejected the command of the Lord, he has rejected you as king."" 1 Samuel 15:22-23

Obedience is a big deal to God, so much so that it can literally be the difference between life and death. In the context of the marketplace, our obedience determines our promotion, demotion or replacement. We see a clear example of this in Saul. God promoted Saul from obscurity to kingship, but he lost his throne, peace of mind and life due to disobedience.

"So Saul died because he was unfaithful to the Lord. He failed to obey the Lord's command, and he even consulted a medium instead of asking the Lord for guidance. So the Lord killed him and turned the kingdom over to David son of Jesse." 1 Chronicles 10:13-14

The same way Saul's disobedience was costly, our disobedience to God's instructions, guidance and principles will also cost us. It may seem okay at the time especially if there aren't any visible repercussions, but like Saul we may have faced instant spiritual demotion and God may already be on the lookout for our replacement for the assignment.

"There is a path before each person that seems right, but it ends in death." Proverbs 14:12

People generally don't set out looking for destruction, but because there's so much we don't know we must trust in the safety and secure of God's guidance. There are career/business decisions we've taken that seemed to make sense at the time but like Saul disobedience has cost us relationships, peace of mind, funds and much more. But the Bible tells us that the blessing of Lord makes us rich and adds no sorrow to it. Which tells us if we're experiencing sorrow in our career/business then we need to dig deeper to understand what's going on once we are sure we're not in disobedience to God.

**Prayer:** Lord thank You for showing me how foundational obedience is to Your promotion system. Let the spirit of the fear of the Lord rest on me so I do not take any of Your instructions lightly.

# **Trustworthy Or Fickle?**

"If you are faithful in little things, you will be faithful in large ones. But if you are dishonest in little things, you won't be honest with greater responsibilities. And if you are untrustworthy about worldly wealth, who will trust you with the true riches of heaven?" Luke 16:10-11

One of the most sought after traits in a leader is trustworthiness. It's the ability to be relied on as honest or truthful. One of the most critical things sought after in senior leadership is trustworthiness. There are many skilled people, but not many are trustworthy. There are many who want to be "seen to be doing" but not many will do what needs to be done when they think no one is looking. But one thing we must always remember is that God is watching even when no one else is looking.

"Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people."

Colossians 3:23

God doesn't promote anyone to a level of significance whose character is untested. He knows that work will not always feel good and we will not always get the recognition and reward we desire for people at the time we believe we deserved it. However when we remain faithful and diligent at our place of assignment, we are positioning ourselves for God's lifting.

"And if you are not faithful with other people's things, why should you be trusted with things of your own?" Luke 16:12

Can we be trusted by our subordinates, colleagues, leaders, clients etc to consistently put in our very best all the time? Or is our output determined by our emotions or what we believe we will gain? God isn't mocked and He won't take us beyond the level of our demonstrated faithfulness.

**Prayer:** Lord I repent of the times I have intentionally put in less than my best. I ask for grace to be found trustworthy in every area, regardless of who is or isn't watching or what benefits I believe I will get. Most importantly Lord please help me where I have gaps because I want to be counted as one of those You can rely on as Your representative in the marketplace.

## The Lifting Power Of Humility

"So humble yourselves under the mighty power of God, and at the right time he will lift you up in honor." 1 Peter 5:6

People see the actions we take and based on that determine if we are humble or not. But true humility is a state of heart not just actions. It's possible to appear humble, while having a proud heart. A proud or humble heart determines if God will promote or resist us.

"But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."

James 4:6

Why and how we want to be promoted will help us identify if we have pride in our heart. Is it for more recognition or to be seen to be better than others? Is it to gain the respect and applause of people in our sector? Or is it genuinely to see the kingdom of God expanded knowing that the more influential we are the more we can push His agenda? Are we verbally trusting God for promotion but depending on people in our hearts? Remember, God isn't mocked He already sees our heart and knows what's really driving us and who we're really depending on.

"But remember me when it is well with you, and please show kindness to me; make mention of me to Pharaoh, and get me out of this house." Genesis 40:14

"So Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, "It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace... Now therefore, let Pharaoh select a discerning and wise man, and set him over the land of Egypt."

Genesis 41:16.33

Whenever we try and "help" God in promotion, we end up with less than his very best for us. At every stage of our lives God is working something out in us to prepare us spiritually and in character for the lifting He's planned for us. Joseph had been looking for a way to get out of prison and return to Israel and had asked Pharaoh's butler to put in a good word for him. When the opportunity presented itself for him to come face to face with pharaoh, Joseph could have used it to "sell" himself, especially as he had the solution to the problem. But by this point he had come to a total dependence on God and he received a lifting he could never have imagined or planned for.

This role was always in God's plan for Joseph (Gen 37:5-11) but he needed to be prepared for it. Our dreams of greatness aren't invalid, but true humility is in dependence on God to lead us on His path for our greatness, while pride is in creating our own path and expecting God to bless it.

**Prayer:** Lord search me and show me where there's pride in my heart. Help me to be humble in spirit and dependent on Your lifting. Help me align to all that You've created and prepared me for.

## Kingdom mindset

"And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" Luke 2:49

There's nothing wrong with wanting to be promoted, but sometimes it helps to pause and reflect on a simple but deep question, "what will God's kingdom gain from my promotion?" God is very intentional about His agenda and those who will align with His mandate. Do we honestly think about this as we seek His face for lifting or are we focused on ourselves alone?

"Turn my eyes away from vanity [all those worldly, meaningless things that distract—let Your priorities be mine], And restore me [with renewed energy] in Your ways."Psalms 119:37 AMP

"Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth." Colossians 3:2

When our minds are locked into the additional things we will get from a promotion then we have a self mindset. When our minds focus on what God will get from lifting us, then we open our minds to alignment with His priorities. There's nothing wrong with wanting nice things, our Father in heaven delights in giving them to us. However whatever we have that is not submitted to the Lord can become a snare to us.

"Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here am I. Send me!" Isaiah 6:8

God is looking for people who will represent Him in the marketplace at various levels of social, political and economic influence so that His agenda will be fulfilled. But if we don't truly have His goals in mind then our desire for promotion won't align with God's need for representation.

**Prayer:** Lord thank You for reminding me that You delight in giving me good things. Keep my eyes from distractions and let Your priorities be mine so I can consistently represent You at all levels in the marketplace.

## A Generous Spirit

"I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing." Genesis 12:2

When we ask the Lord to promote us one of the things we must be mindful of is that the higher we go in our businesses/careers, the wider our spheres of influence. This means that our willingness to be vessel for the expression of God's generosity in our areas of influence is a critical factor God will pay attention to, not just in money, but also in time, gifts, resources that we have access to.

"And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others." 2 Corinthians 9:8

"...In the same way, he will provide and increase your resources and then produce a great harvest of generosity in you. Yes, you will be enriched in every way so that you can always be generous. And when we take your gifts to those who need them, they will thank God." 2 Cor 9:10-11

As believers in the marketplace we are meant to be channels of blessings not reservoirs that keep everything for ourselves. God's system is that we are blessed to bless others with what He has blessed us with. This means that as we rise in levels of wealth and influence, so must our levels of generosity. Whenever God wants to express His generosity to someone, He does it through a vessel that has made him/herself available. And as we give we do so knowing that it doesn't deplete our resources in any way. Rather, consistently giving generously and cheerfully makes us candidates for God's continuous enrichment, because He can trust us to give.

God has no issue putting wealth in our hands, the challenge arises when it's time for us to give of what we've received. But when we understand that there's nothing we have that God didn't give us in the first place, it helps shape how we view being a channel of blessing to others.

**Prayer:** Lord thank You for helping me realise that everything I have belongs to You and that You've created me to be a channel of Your blessing to others. Increase my capacity for generosity as You promote me so that more and more people will always give You glory

#### **Boldness**

"When the godly are in authority, the people rejoice. But when the wicked are in power, they groan." Proverbs 29:2

The reason people rejoice when the godly are in authority is because they instil systems and structures that bring alignment to God's principles. However this won't always be easy as the systems embedded in the marketplace are contrary to God's principles by default. Boldness then becomes very key when we seek God's promotion.

"Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: "Whom shall I send, And who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here am I! Send me." Isaiah 6:8

"But even if he doesn't, we want to make it clear to you, Your Majesty, that we will never serve your gods or worship the gold statue you have set up." Daniel 3:18

There will be times in our journey of promotion when we need to take a stand for God that will not be popular. Like the Hebrew boys who had to take a stand against Nebuchadnezzar, there may be an expectation in our sector/company to behave in a particular way we know isn't acceptable to God. God is watching to see how we respond in those situations to determine how far we can go. Do we immediately compromise or are we okay to be seen as the exception knowing we're in our place of assignment and that God is the ultimate rewarder? When He asks who will represent Him in a sector, can we boldly say "Here am I! Send me"?

"And now, O Lord, hear their threats, and give us, your servants, great boldness in preaching your word."

Acts 4:29

We are the Bible most of our colleagues, customers, associates etc will read, so we need boldness to consistently live in a way that reflects who Jesus is to those around us. If at the level we are today we're not able to do this, then perhaps our immediate prayer should be for God to grant us boldness so regardless of the level or the audience we will always represent Jesus well.

**Prayer:** Lord grant me great boldness to always take a stand for You regardless of the opinions of people or contrary systems. Let my boldness increase with Your lifting and my focus be on pleasing You alone at all times.

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