

3 Keys to Strengthen Yourself in the Lord

David's life shows us that the ability to strengthen and minister to ourselves is a vital skill that we must learn if we are going to develop the character to fulfill our potential as kings and priests.

It is impossible for anyone to reach his ultimate destiny in life without learning to minister to himself. We can best appreciate the significance of this ability by understanding the nature of the role to which we are called.

When Scripture says *"we shall reign on the earth"* (Rev. 5:10), the implication is that every one of us has a destiny to stand in a position where we influence people around us. Each of us will have a different size and kind of sphere of influence, but we are all called as leaders in society. We are not called to "rule over others" in the sense of domination.

In God's kingdom, the power of rule is the divine enabling to serve others more effectively. And just as kings are to provide protection and prosperity for their citizens, so those who serve well in God's kingdom will offer safety and blessing to all who come under their influence.

Here are three keys to strengthen yourself in the Lord:

1. Take initiative. Perhaps the first quality that distinguishes a leader is initiative. God knew David would succeed as a leader because he took the initiative to seek Him in the secret place. This is the same quality of maturity that He is looking for in us.

To experience the positive peer pressure and momentum of a move of God in a corporate group is wonderful. But those who seek God's face and pursue His destiny for their lives when

nobody is around, are the people who possess the initiative required to strengthen themselves. If they learn to sustain their initiative to seek God by strengthening themselves in testing, they will be the people who will experience the personal breakthroughs that release a corporate blessing to those around them.

2. Pursue longevity. God wants us to learn how to strengthen ourselves through Him because developing our skills will promote spiritual longevity. We need longevity because our destiny and potential cannot be attained in a few years; they extend to the end of our lifetime here on earth.

For this reason, I like to tell the students in our School of Supernatural Ministry, "Anyone can burn for God for a year. Come back in twenty years, take me out to coffee, and tell me you're still burning." Then I spend much of the school year teaching them the tools I've learned for strengthening myself.

It's obvious that the students possess enough initiative to pay the price to come to school. But without discovering and using tools to minister to themselves, they won't, I'm convinced, be able to sustain the desire that brought them initially. Sadly, I know too many Christian leaders who lack this ability, and as a result are suffering from burnout or moral failure.

3. Past the Test of Lonely Seasons. Now, let me be clear that learning to strengthen ourselves does not mean that we develop an independent lifestyle. Our lifestyle as believers is always focused on serving, loving, and leaning on the body of Christ.

But for the sake of becoming mature and growing in favor so that we can bless those around us, God brings moments into our lives when we have to stand alone in difficulty and testing. God will even blind the eyes and deafen the ears of our closest friends in those moments so we can learn to minister to ourselves.

We must recognize this because I know a lot of believers who fall into bitterness, thinking their friends are failing them in a hard time. Understanding God's priority to teach us this lesson helps us to avoid that trap.

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