

ENEMIES OF PROGRESS (Part 1)

Sylvester Onyemalechi

God is progressive in all he does. He is a God of vision and purpose who starts a project one step at a time, until his plan is accomplished – He is a God of progress, and there is no retrogression in God.

In accordance with His progressive nature, man was created to progress and move forward. Everyone wants to progress. Some progress. Some don't. Some progress, but not to the level they should, due to certain reasons. In this study, we are going to look at some of the reasons why people don't progress as they should.

The purpose of this study is for you to identify the enemies of progress in your life and eliminate them so that you can progress and become what you are destined to be – a great person on the earth.

1. IGNORANCE

Ignorance is want of knowledge. Ignorance is the absence of relevant knowledge. Ignorance is groping in the dark. Ignorance is not an excuse for a crime. It is not an excuse for failure. What you do not know you cannot apply. What you do not know is yours, you cannot claim. What you do not know you have, you cannot fight for it when the enemy is trying to take it or keep from you.

Knowledge breeds productivity. Knowledge brings the best out of you – it produces creativity.

Philem 6

6 That the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.

KJV

Knowledge makes you successful, for it will equip you with the tool of success in your field of endeavor.

Prov 8:12-21

12 "I, wisdom, dwell together with prudence; I possess knowledge and discretion. 13 To fear the LORD is to hate evil; I hate pride and arrogance, evil behavior and perverse speech. 14 Counsel and sound judgment are mine; I have understanding and power. 15 By me kings reign and rulers make laws that are just; 16 by me princes govern, and all nobles who rule on earth. 17 I love those who love me, and those who seek me find me. 18 With me are riches and honor, enduring wealth and prosperity. 19 My fruit is better than fine gold; what I yield surpasses choice silver. 20 I walk in the way of righteousness, along the paths of justice, 21 bestowing wealth on those who love me and making their treasuries full.

NIV

Update your knowledge in your field of endeavor to keep abreast with the latest technology and research findings.

Cultivate the habit of reading books, journals and attending seminars that will help you. Enquire from successful people the secret of their success, and apply it for it will work for you.

If you are a student in a formal school, or an apprenticeship student, settle down and learn very well all you are being taught. Don't shy away from assignments, especially the seemingly difficult ones. Put your eyes down, learn, for any knowledge you acquire cannot be taken from you, and will be useful to you in life.

2. PROCRASTINATION

Procrastination is the habit of delaying action; keep on putting off action to a future time. Procrastination is the thief of time.

Procrastination takes its root from laziness and hinders progress. Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 teaches us to make use of every opportunity we have. Opportunity missed is lost forever.

Eccl 3:1-8

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven: 2 a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, 3 a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build, 4 a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance, 5 a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a time to refrain, 6 a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away, 7 a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak, 8 a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace.

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Procrastination hinders progress, slows down progress, kills ideas, misses opportunities, brings poverty and frustration, and makes laziness to have a stronghold on one.

Destroy procrastination out of your life. Be time and opportunity conscious. Do the right thing at the right time. Always DO IT NOW and don't postpone action.

3. LAZINESS

Laziness is unwillingness to work. A lazy man always gives excuses why he will not work or do what he is supposed to do.

Prov 22:13

13 The sluggard says, "There is a lion outside!" or, "I will be murdered in the streets!"

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He escapes the work he ought to do through procrastination.

Prov 10:4

4 Lazy hands make a man poor, but diligent hands bring wealth.

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Prov 24:30-34

30 I went past the field of the sluggard, past the vineyard of the man who lacks judgment;

31 thorns had come up everywhere, the ground was covered with weeds, and the stone wall was in ruins. 32 I applied my heart to what I observed and learned a lesson from what I saw: 33 A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest-- 34 and poverty will come on you like a bandit and scarcity like an armed man.

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Don't be lazy, God hates lazy people, and warns them in His word.

1 Thess 5:14

14 And we urge you, brothers, warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone.

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2 Thess 3:6-15

6 In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers, to keep away from every brother who is idle and does not live according to the teaching you received from us. 7 For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, 8 nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. 9 We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to make ourselves a model for you to follow. 10 For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "If a man will not work, he shall not eat." 11 We hear that some among you are idle. They are not busy; they are busybodies. 12 Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat. 13 And as for you, brothers, never tire of doing what is right. 14 If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of him. Do not associate with him, in order that he may feel ashamed. 15 Yet do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother.

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4. FEAR

- Feeling of anxiety: an unpleasant feeling of apprehension or distress caused by the presence or anticipation of danger. E.g. showed no signs of fear.
- Frightening thought: an idea, thought, or other entity that causes feelings of fear. E.g. irrational fears.
- Reverence: awe or reverence, especially toward God.

- Worry: a concern about something that threatens to bring bad news or results (often used in the plural). E.g. Fears for their safe return.
- Chance: chance or likelihood of an undesirable thing happening. E.g. there's no fear that he'll misunderstand.

Fear is feeling arising from what we think. Fear is feeling caused by the nearness or possibility of danger or evil. It is an alarm of an imaginary negative experience. Fear is the anxiety for or about something. To fear is to have an uneasy feeling or anticipation of something. E.g. to fear the worst – be afraid that the worst has happened or will happen.

In this study, we are going to concern ourselves to only three kinds of fear: fear of failure, fear of disappointment or being turned down, and fear of losing (our investments).

a. FEAR OF FAILURE

Is the apprehension about the future in regards to whether one will succeed or fail in pursuit of a particular goal or venture.

It is this fear that hinders people from starting anything or putting an idea to work. It hinders people from starting a business that could bring prosperity. It hinders people from moving to a new and unfamiliar field which promises to bring prosperity.

The fear of failure destroys good ideas, closes an open door for prosperity, and destroys zeal and enthusiasm. It makes one to remain on the same spot – no progress. It destroys lots of opportunities. Fear of failure keeps one locked up in the prison of defeat. Fear is an oppressor. It is the policeman of the devil. When it arrests you, you cannot move beyond that point. Fight your fears. The only thing you have to fear is fear itself. See fear as an enemy, fight and conquer it. Fear your fears, and fear not. Walk by faith.

b. FEAR OF DISAPPOINTMENT OR BEING TURNED DOWN

This kind of fear is dangerous. It hinders one from meeting the right person that can help him or her. It hinders one from employment etc. sometimes what we know about a person can hinder us. It will constitute the basis or foundation upon which our fear is built. You fear if you try, you will be disappointed or turned down. You will say, "Oh, I know him, he will not agree". The truth is that as we walk in faith, anything can happen; people we think will not help always helps. So, don't let what you know hinder you. Walk by faith. Some of our so called accurate information is incorrect. Eliminate fear, and hope for the best and not the worst. God changes people. May be he has changed that person and you didn't know. So try him or her out

Prov 21:1

The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD; he directs it like a watercourse wherever he pleases.

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c. FEAR OF LOSING

The fear of losing is a terrible enemy of progress in that it will not allow you to invest your money into a venture that will yield good profit, or leave the comfort of your job to launch out into a new business or field of endeavor.

No man who fails to conquer this fear will ever achieve anything in life. Faith is risk. And you must be prepared to take risk in order to succeed and achieve your goals.

Do not be afraid of losing your customers if you preach the gospel to them, or implement a new idea that comes into your mind that will help your business.

Eliminate every form of fear. Fear is of the devil.

1 John 4:18

18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

KJV

It has to do with torments. God has not given us a spirit of fear.

2 Tim 1:7

7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

KJV

God says, "Fear not"

Isa 41:10

10 So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

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Isa 41:13

13 For I am the LORD, your God, who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you.

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Isa 43:1

But now, this is what the LORD says-- he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine.

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Isa 43:5

5 Do not be afraid, for I am with you; I will bring your children from the east and gather you from the west.
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The righteous are as bold as a lion; therefore be bold. Boldly pursue your dreams and goals. I challenge you to move forward regardless of what you think is out there. Forget the unknown, reach out in faith, and the God of faith will see you through and give you success in Jesus name. Amen.

5. NEGATIVISM

Negativism is habitual skepticism: a strong tendency to be pessimistic, to assess situations in the worst light, or to be unreasonably skeptical about generally accepted beliefs

Negativism is the mental attitude that expresses the absence of any positive character. A negative person sees only the wrong side to things. He always expects the worst to happen. He always concentrates his mind on the possibility of failure, oppositions and obstacles.

The negative thoughts outweigh the positive thoughts. Anyone who must make it must be positive. You must believe, *“Everything is possible for him who believes”* (Mk. 9:23); *“I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me”* (Phil. 4:13).

Negativism is tied-up to unbelief. Negative thoughts breed unbelief. Anyone who is negative cannot walk by faith. And one who cannot walk by faith can achieve anything.

Negative thoughts attract negative results. Send out positive thoughts, and you will attract positive results.

Prov 23:7

7 For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee.
KJV

Prov 27:19

19 As water reflects a face, so a man's heart reflects the man.
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What you think is what you are going to see and experience. Believe and keep believing and God will make your face to shine.

Change your mental attitude. Eliminate the negative mental habit, and develop a positive mental and optimistic attitude.

6. WORRY

To worry is to be troubled; to give oneself no peace of mind; to cause anxiety or discomfort to oneself.

You can die of worry. It's not a cancer. It's not caused by a virus. If you're afflicted by it, no doctor in his right mind would say you are physically ill. Nonetheless, evidence shows that worry can cause death through a wide range of physical disorders.

Worry hinders God from helping us or answering our prayers, for it is the opposite of faith. And without faith, it is impossible to please God.

Heb 11:6

6 And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

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Worry will keep one from moving forward. It will keep one from having the breakthrough one needs in the sense that it will hinder God from giving aid.

Praise + Poise (Relaxation) + Prayer = peace is the formula for overcoming worry.

Phil 4:4-8

4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! 5 Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. 6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. 8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable-if anything is excellent or praiseworthy-think about such things.

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7. DISCOURAGEMENT

Discouragement is loss of optimism: feelings of lost motivation, confidence, or optimism.

Discouragement means loss of courage to pursue a goal, implement an idea, and hold on during a tough time. Discouragement is an instrument of the devil to keep people on the same spot, unable to move forward and progress.

Discouragement can be so deadly that it can destroy the health of its victim. It brings despair and depression and psychiatric problems.

The Holy Spirit is the comforter of every believer to help in overcoming discouragement.

John 14:16

16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever

KJV

Encourage yourself always with this scripture.

Isa 43:1-5

But now, this is what the LORD says--he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine. 2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. 3 For I am the LORD, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior; I give Egypt for your ransom, Cush and Seba in your stead. 4 Since you are precious and honored in my sight, and because I love you, I will give men in exchange for you, and people in exchange for your life. 5 Do not be afraid, for I am with you; I will bring your children from the east and gather you from the west.

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Isa 44:10-13

10 Who shapes a god and casts an idol, which can profit him nothing? 11 He and his kind will be put to shame; craftsmen are nothing but men. Let them all come together and take their stand; they will be brought down to terror and infamy. 12 The blacksmith takes a tool and works with it in the coals; he shapes an idol with hammers, he forges it with the might of his arm. He gets hungry and loses his strength; he drinks no water and grows faint. 13 The carpenter measures with a line and makes an outline with a marker; he roughs it out with chisels and marks it with compasses. He shapes it in the form of man, of man in all his glory, that it may dwell in a shrine.

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Isa 44:18-19

18 They know nothing, they understand nothing; their eyes are plastered over so they cannot see, and their minds closed so they cannot understand. 19 No one stops to think, no one has the knowledge or understanding to say, "Half of it I used for fuel; I even baked bread over its coals, I roasted meat and I ate. Shall I make a detestable thing from what is left? Shall I bow down to a block of wood?"

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Cast off the spirit of heaviness and discouragement and put on the garment of praise after you have presented the matter to our father in heaven in prayer, and discouragement will flee from you. Never be discouraged by what you see, always believe you can make it, and that the "downfall of a man is not the end of his life" believe "the problem can be solved", "there must be a way out", there must be an other way I can make it work' say to yourself when there is a failure or setback, "I can't give up", "I will try it again, I am sure I will get this time around:, I must study and research to improve and see that I do it better next time".

Cast off discouragement and develop a winning attitude. Do not allow circumstances to determine your mood. Do not allow adverse circumstances to destroy your potentials and dream. Go forward! You will make it in Jesus name.

(To be continued in the next edition)

SUCCESS TIT-BITS

TITBITS FOR WORKING TOGETHER

1. **Be driven by love, vision and the desire to see the kingdom of God expand in relating and working with others.**
2. **You will not succeed in life unless you are connected to people.**
3. **Apart from God and your vision, the next thing is people who will help you succeed. Helpers (people) come before money.**
4. **If you are not accessible you cannot relate with others well enough to succeed with them.**
5. **Your dream is connected to people.**
6. **Just as others need what you contain, so you need what others contain.**
7. **Goals and dreams last longer than rejection, injury and pain. Therefore be willing to endure pain to create and enjoy an eternity of gain through working with others. Do not be scared of hurts, they won't kill you. Be motivated and driven by the assignment.**
8. **Fill your heart with love for your team mates. Let your heart reach to them in prayer daily to the Almighty God, and your relationship with them will be fantastic and richly rewarding.**
9. **Close your ears to gossips about your team mate's personal life and what people say they said.**
10. **Be willing to help your team mates recover from their weaknesses and failures, remembering that you too do fail at times, and still pursuing perfection.**
11. **Keep your eyes on the assignment and not on the leadership position.**
12. **Do not be envious of another. Just play your part, and you will celebrate the success as a team. Knowing that your labor of love is not in vain, keep your hands on the plough and work with all your might until the work is done.**

WISDOM FOR ASSOCIATION

1. **No individual has sufficient experience, education, talents, skills and knowledge to ensure the accumulation of a great fortune without the cooperation of other people.**
2. **We were created to be a blessing to someone. We were born again in Christ to be a blessing to someone. Be a blessing everyday.**
3. **Be a giving friend and not a taking friend.**

4. A true friend can hurt you from time to time. It is normal.
5. Sincerity is a necessary ingredient in relationships.
6. You cannot trust the one you don't love. You cannot obey the one you don't love. Obedience and trust are the proofs of love.
7. It takes commitment from all concerned in a relationship to make it work.
8. Anyone who wants to sleep with you before marriage does not fear God, and is not worthy to marry you.
9. Jealousy is an invitation and open door to distrust.
10. Your thoughts towards your partner determine how you relate with him or her. Watch what you think.

RENEWING THE MIND

1. Wisdom teaches that a biased mind will not allow you to see the good in a thing.
2. Never learn about a thing with a pre-conceived notion or belief about that thing. Always empty out the former for you to see well.
3. Mental preparation for any venture is more important than financial and material preparation.
4. The mind is where the battles of life takes place.
5. He who controls your mind, controls your life, whatever dominates your mind, directs the course of your words and actions.
6. A man's life is the product of his thoughts.
7. There is a strong connection between the state of your mind per time and your health. Your thought can give you health and it can destroy it.
8. Success in life is tied to the use of the mind.
9. When you fail to recognize your personal limitations, you become blind to the gifts hidden in those around you.
10. Your perspective to life is a function of your mind.