

# Do Hard Things

## Preview

You are made for more! You are called not to simply survive in this world, but to lead overcoming, world-changing lives.

- What is the biblical view of success? What are some ways the Bible challenges us to push against the status quo and live beyond what is ordinary?

## Praise

- We give glory to God who gives us His all! Jesus did not give some of Himself at Calvary; He gave according to the abundance of His grace and power. Jesus has never done anything halfway. He didn't halfway heal the blind, and He didn't halfway make the lame walk. He didn't halfway save us, and He didn't halfway forgive us. We are blessed to serve a God who always gives us His very best.

## Parable

- Tell everyone to reach as high as they can with their right hand. Next, tell them to reach it "just a little bit higher." (Most people will stretch a bit more.)
- We oftentimes don't know what our best is. If we would have truly given our best the first time, we wouldn't have been able to reach any higher. We don't just do this with raising our hand; there are probably lots of times we have settled for doing less than what we could have accomplished.
- Have you ever said, "I did my best" (on a test, job, or activity) when you know that you didn't? Why did you say that? We've all done it, but why do we settle for less than we're capable of?

## Present

While there have always been those in society who believe that young people can't do anything well, God certainly doesn't agree with them. He makes it incredibly plain for us in 1 Timothy 4:12 (NKJV): "Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love,

in spirit, in faith, in purity."

We are charged by God in every area of our lives to live as an example. Don't give someone an excuse to say that you're too young to make a difference. Don't give someone an excuse to say your generation is no good. Be an example!

We must be examples by what we say and what we do. We must demonstrate how to have the right attitude and how to love others. We've got to be examples by living holy and pure. It is not a competition, but the Bible tells us as young people to show the believers how it is done.

Yet success in the kingdom of God is more than that. We must make the most of the abilities and opportunities God gives us. Jesus related this in the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30). Those who received five talents and two talents made the most of what they had, but the man with one talent put in no effort. The man with two talents was never expected to do all that the man with five talents could do, but he was expected to do his part. Likewise, we are supposed to optimize the abilities and opportunities God places in front of us so we can make an impact for His kingdom.

This means you will have to prepare for opportunities you don't have yet. You work hard to be ready when God calls you. It may mean reading the Bible, studying, and praying even though you've never been given a chance to preach. It may mean working hard learning how to do graphic design and work with computers even though you're not yet part of your church's media team. It may mean practicing music when you don't yet have a place to sing or play. Whatever it means for you, make sure you're growing what God has placed inside of you. It's much better to be prepared for an opportunity that you don't have than to have an opportunity for which you are not prepared!

Finally, God calls us to not be lazy in any area of our lives. In fact, the Bible says to do all things "heartily, as to the Lord" (Colossians 3:23). You are a representative of Jesus no matter where you go. Don't be late turning in homework.

Study hard and work hard. Even when it doesn't seem like it's for God, make sure that you are representing Him well. Could it be that your math class could be providing you with the skills that will one day allow you, as an architect, to design a church? Could it be that your English class is giving you the skills you need to write a book? Treat your education as an opportunity to represent Jesus and develop the abilities He has put inside of you.

## Practice

1. List some specific talents, abilities, and interests you have.
2. Write down ways these things can be used to further the kingdom of God.
3. What are some ways you can further develop and fine-tune these skills?

## Pray

Thank You, God, for the talents and abilities You have put inside of us. Help us to develop them and use those talents for Your glory and Your kingdom. Give us a desire and vision to do great things for You and help us to prepare today for the incredible things You have planned for us tomorrow.

## Plus

What are some ways your P7 club can further impact your school and community right now? Brainstorm some service and outreach ideas. Are there talents within the members of your club that can be used to bring glory to God? If so, make a plan and use them!