

# NEW BENCHMARKS!



## Questions to be answered...

What are Benchmarks?

Why are they Important?

Why does acknowledging them help us to move forward and progress with momentum?

## Benchmark:

a standard or point of reference against which things may be compared or assessed.

## Types of Benchmarks:

- skills learned (riding a bike, driving a car)
- accomplishments
- graduations
- breakthroughs/overcoming obstacles
- revelations/self-discovery
- personal victories

Can you think of any other benchmarks not mentioned above?

**YOU CAN'T SPELL CHALLENGE WITHOUT CHANGE**

# ENEMIES OF GROWTH

What are some enemies of growth you can think of?

*Let your eyes look straight ahead, fix your gaze directly before you. Make level paths for your feet and take only ways that are firm. Do not swerve to the right or to the left, keep your foot from evil. Proverbs 4:25-27*

## COMPARISON LENSES

These lenses shape the world you see and has you constantly comparing yourself good and bad with those around you. We were never meant to compare ourselves with others, yet it seems to be our default setting. We need to take these lenses off to see the world clearly. If we want to measure ourselves against anything it should be our own achievements.

Have you recognized times in your life when you have the comparison lenses on?

What steps can you take to remove these lenses?

## PRIDE + EGO

When you compare yourself to others it goes in one of two directions. The first direction we are going to talk about is when you are comparing yourself with someone who is not as good as you at some things. This feeds your pride and can lead to having an inflated ego. Just like the raisins, that see themselves as grapes, you see yourself as better than the other person and in God's eyes you are equal. No one is better than any other person. This road leads to many negative outcomes, like thinking your better than everyone else, not taking other's feedback or advice believing you are above it or being boastful about your accomplishments.

In what ways have you seen comparison turn into pride in your life?

# LOW SELF ESTEEM

The other way that comparison can go is low self esteem or a distorted self image. When we compare ourselves with others who we perceive to be better than we are then we see ourselves as less than. Instead of a beautiful lit candle we see ourselves as an unlit piece of wax all grey and faded. Once again, our view of ourselves is inaccurate, but this time in the opposite direction. This can result in us feeling unworthy and we may even say no to things because we do not think we are of the caliber to complete them.

When has comparison led to low self esteem or a distorted self image in your life?

How does comparison impact growth?

We try to be like other people.

We don't appreciate or acknowledge our growth.

We say words like "I'M NOT GOOD ENOUGH!"

We look too far in the future, having expectations that are not achievable.

We may feel like we don't need to grow because we are farther along than others.

How else might comparison impact growth?

# FEAR

How does Fear impact growth?

Fear keeps us from trying.

Fear of not continuing to grow.

Fear of moving backwards.

Feel like we are hitting a wall.

We say words like "I'LL NEVER..."

How else might fear impact growth?

## F-E-A-R has two meanings:

1. Forget Everything And Run
2. Face Everything And Rise

## The Choice is Yours !

Sometimes we are afraid that we will go backwards and slide into old patterns. Going back is a choice. You see when you've learned something new and established that new benchmark, that new level. You can't unlearn it, you can't undo the past you are now held to a higher standard based on that new benchmark. This also means you do not need to be afraid as long as you choose to keep moving forward instead of backward.

How can you stay focused on moving forward instead of going back?

I don't mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection. But I press on to possess that perfection for which Christ Jesus first possessed me. No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us. Let all who are spiritually mature agree on these things. If you disagree on some point, I believe God will make it plain to you. But we must hold on to the progress we have already made.

Philippians 3:12-16

# Acknowledge your Benchmarks

Reflection: See how far you have already come.

Appreciate: Celebrate your small successes.

Use your current victory as your starting point for all future victories

I am in competition with no one. I run my own race. I have no desire to play the game of being better than anyone, in any shape or form. I just aim to improve, to be better than I was before. That's me and I'm Free!

## Activation

### **ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR GROWTH**

When we focus on where we want to be it is easy to miss the amazing progress we have already made.

In the past year, what benchmarks have been established in your life?

What areas of growth have you experienced that you can use to move you forward in other areas?

Write out all the benchmarks you have established this past year.

How can you acknowledge that growth so you won't be tempted to go backwards in fear or comparison?

# 3 Keys to Remember

- 01 COMPARE YOURSELF TO NO ONE BUT YOURSELF. WHEN YOU FOCUS ON YOUR OWN PROGRESS AND GROWTH, YOU WILL BE ENCOURAGED TO KEEP MOVING FORWARD.
- 02 EVERYTHING YOU HAVE ACHIEVED OR LEARNED IS A SOLID FOUNDATION FOR FUTURE GROWTH.
- 03 BENCHMARKS ARE IMPORTANT TO ACKNOWLEDGE, THEY HELP YOU GAUGE YOUR GROWTH AND CREATE MOMENTUM TO KEEP MOVING FORWARD ONE STEP AT A TIME.

Where you are looking is where you will go!

Success is endless. It ends when you feel you achieved it. It's intensity increases and tastes even sweeter when you compete for a fresh challenge to achieve. When you achieved a benchmark set by yourself.