

(Read the verses stated in the text below at each point)

Many years ago when my sons were small, I taught them how to become better. I told them getting to be the best is not the real goal because there is always a “better” one in the world. The goal is to get you to reach a higher level. In this way, you always can reach at a point for celebration, and at the same time having a higher goal to aim for. Let’s examine the book of Proverbs on verses about how to achieve of “reaching to a higher level”.

1.) Work diligently

The fundamental criteria for getting better is to work hard. I always told my sons to “try your best”. Proverbs 14:23a states “All hard work brings a profit”. Proverbs 10:4-5 and 12:11 also support this point. Proverbs 6:6-11 even uses ants as an example where they work hard for their food.

2) Always tentative and have a plan

Always pay attention. Regardless where you are and what you are doing, there is always something that can be harmful or an obstacle to you. Proverbs 22:3 states “A prudent man sees danger and takes refuge, but the simple keep going and suffer for it.” You need to learn to see what is ahead. There is another situation that warrant your attention. It is when you think you are well situated and successful. Proverbs 27:23-24 states “Be sure you know the condition of your flocks, give careful attention to your herds; for riches do not endure forever, and a crown is not secure for all generations.” Finally, you need to have a plan. Even ants have a plan as you read Proverbs 6:6-11 earlier. In Luke 14:28-32, Jesus gave two examples. The examples are about have you estimated your ability and the cost of implementing your plan.

3) Humble and willing to correct yourself

Proverbs 13:1 states “A wise son heeds his father’s instruction, but a mocker does not listen to rebuke.” In the OT time, father is often the source of advice for young man because the father has more knowledge and experience. This theory applies today that we shall take advice from all those that have more experience. Proverbs 9:9; 11:2; 12:15 and 15:31-32

give similar points that those are willing to accept advice and rebuke will become wiser.

4) Constant improvement and look forward

II Corinthians 4:16 states “Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.” Philippians 3:13-14 tells us forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead. We have to constantly learn and improve, and at the same time don’t let the past success or failure hinder you going forward.

The above key points apply to all aspects of our daily life including spiritual life. It is not just our occupations and family matters need to get to a higher level, but also our spiritual growth.

Famous scientist Michael Faraday who contributed to the study of electromagnetism and electrochemistry had offered a great deal to our society in terms of physics. Most people have heard the concept of Faraday cage. He was born in a poor family. He had limited elementary education and he educated himself. At age 14, he started working in the society. He worked hard and read a lot of books. In his middle age, he done some significant works but he was not in the higher class since England has a very clear class society at that time. He was humble and kept learning and improving his works even he was assigned as an assistant. Mr. Faraday was a devoted Christian. He was involved in the church at the same time doing his scientific works. He served at his local church as deacon and elder. He is a good example of someone that is always try to reach at a higher level in both his profession and spiritual life.