



Man Up • Session 2: Stretch Yourself

Midweek Men's Bible Study

Pastor Dale Campbell

Man Up • Session Two: Stretch Yourself

I. Review of Session One

A. Two lessons from session one

1. We are created in the image and likeness of God to have dominion and subdue things on the earth.
2. After the fall in Genesis, Satan works to keep man from becoming what God created him to be.
 - a. Inferiority – the condition of seeing yourself lower or lesser in quality than others.
 - b. Inferiority causes us to withdraw and live in the shadows.

B. Satan the great oppressor

1. Acts 10:38 NKJV

“...how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were **oppressed** by the devil, for God was with Him.”

- a. **Oppressed** = to exercise harsh control over
 - To exercise dominion over
 - To burden or weigh down
 - Cambridge – to govern people in an unfair and cruel way and prevent them from having opportunities and freedom.

b. Pastor's Note:

Satan's objective is to burden and weigh you down to prevent you from every taking advantage of the opportunities that have been given to you – so you never reach full potential in God's best for your life.



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THE FIRST STEP FORWARD OUT OF SATAN'S OPPRESSION IS REALIZATION:

First – Realize that God created you to excel and go forward in life.

Second – Identify and realize what strategies that Satan is using to continue to keep you oppressed.

Personal: I had to realize that God wanted my life to go forward and excel. I also had to recognize INFERIORITY as a device that Satan was using against me to keep me oppressed.

II. Step Two - Stretch Yourself

A. What does it mean to stretch yourself?

1. Stepping out of your comfort zone.

- Growth doesn't occur in your comfort zone.
- Real growth occurs when I do something that challenges me.
- Real growth means I must be willing to risk the failure.

B. People in the Bible who had to stretch themselves.

1. Moses

- Gen 3:11 NKJV** "But Moses said to God, "Who *am* I that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?"

GNT "But Moses said to God, 'I am nobody. How can I go to the king and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?'"

2. Gideon

- Judges 6:15 NKJV** "So he said to Him, 'O my Lord, how can I save Israel? Indeed my clan *is* the weakest in Manasseh, and I *am* the least in my father's house.'"

Most of the people called upon by the Lord had to stretch themselves out of their comfort zones before they could experience their destiny.



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C. Pastor's personal experiences

1. Becoming the minister of music at Parkway Ministries.
2. Building spreadsheets and reports at Delta Airlines

D. How do I begin to stretch myself?

1. Start with something small, do not overstretch.

a. Identify some simple ways that you can begin to break out of your comfort zone.

- *If you are uncomfortable speaking to people, force yourself to enter a room and speak to at least 2 people. Don't wait to be spoken to.*
- *If you have issues looking people in the, force yourself to make eye contact with those you will meet this week.*
- *Check your body language - how to do you enter a room?*
 - *Do you hang your head down – looking at the floor?*
 - *Do you disengage with the conversation around you?*
 - *Do you sit in the back of the room intentionally?*
 - *Do you do everything possible to blend into the shadows without being noticed?*

2. Submit to leaders or mentors who will stretch you.

- a. Pastor's employer example
- b. People who will stretch you are not the most comfortable people to be around.
- c. Don't confuse constructive criticism with destructive criticism
 - **Destructive criticism** = negative feedback that harms, undermines, or personally attacks the person. *It is not connected to helping the person move forward or to improve themselves.*



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- **Constructive criticism** = honest and valid feedback. It is offered with the intent of helping the individual to improve their work in some way in order to achieve a positive outcome.

NOTE: All forms of criticism may be uncomfortable. Be sure to identify the motive behind the criticism.

THOSE WHO REJECT an accurate assessment of their work and refuse to grow the counsel and advice of qualified mentors will LIMIT THEMSELVES.

WHEN SEARCHING FOR A MENTOR, be sure to choose someone who will STRETCH YOU!

3. Discussion

- Discuss some of the ways you have stretched yourself.**
- Discuss some of the ways you have been stretched by others.**
- Who is the person in your life that has stretched you the most?**

NOTES:
