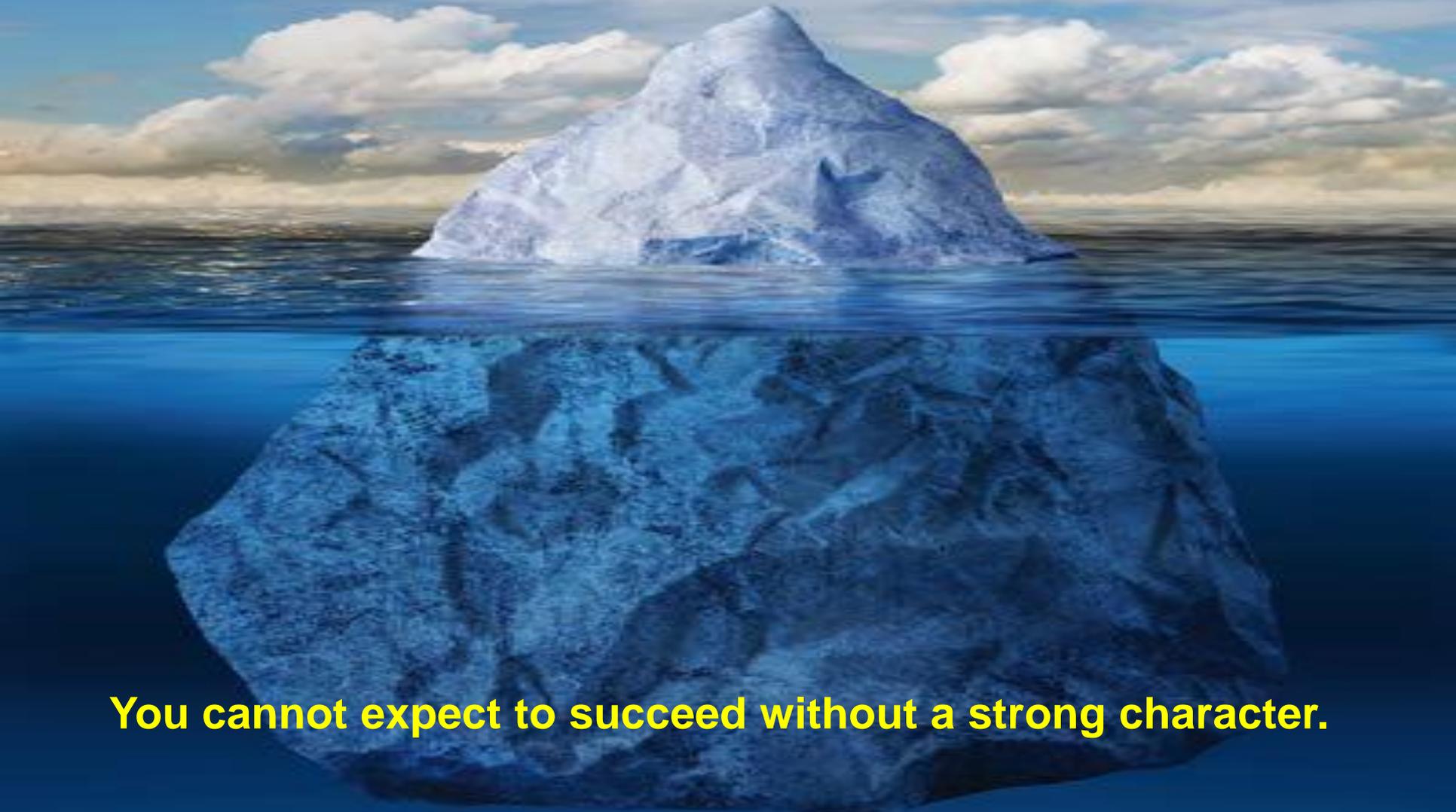


Why Your Character Counts

People are like icebergs.

There's much more to them than meets the eye.



You cannot expect to succeed without a strong character.

Why Your Character Counts

- 1. Character Communicates Consistency**
- 2. Character Communicates Choices**
- 3. Character Communicates Influence**

Acts 20:17-38

From Miletus, Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders of the church.¹⁸ When they arrived, he said to them: “You know how I lived the whole time I was with you, from the first day I came into the province of Asia.¹⁹ I served the Lord with great humility and with tears and in the midst of severe testing by the plots of my Jewish opponents. ²⁰ You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to house. ²¹ I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus.

22 “And now, compelled by the Spirit, I am going to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there. 23 I only know that in every city the Holy Spirit warns me that prison and hardships are facing me.24 However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God’s grace. 25 “Now I know that none of you among whom I have gone about preaching the kingdom will ever see me again. 26 Therefore, I declare to you today that I am innocent of the blood of any of you.

27 For I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God. 28 Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. 29 I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. 30 Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. 31 So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears.

32 “Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. 33 I have not coveted anyone’s silver or gold or clothing. 34 You yourselves know that these hands of mine have supplied my own needs and the needs of my companions. 35 In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’ ”

36 When Paul had finished speaking, he knelt down with all of them and prayed. 37 They all wept as they embraced him and kissed him. 38 What grieved them most was his statement that they would never see his face again. Then they accompanied him to the ship.

Paul's Life An Open Book

- **Paul spent 3 years in Ephesus to preach the gospel & build the church, the longest period in his missionary endeavours.**
- **His farewell speech revealed his heart, values & character.**
- **He spoke to the church elders believing they in turn would positively influence the church.**

1. Character Communicates Consistency

Acts 20:18-21

You know how I lived the whole time I was with you, from the first day I came into the province of Asia. I served the Lord with great humility and with tears and in the midst of severe testing by the plots of my Jewish opponents. You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to house. I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus.





- **Paul served with great humility (v 19).**
- **He served with tears (v 19).**
- **He served in the midst of severe testing (v 19).**
- **Rain or shine, Paul was determined to run the race and complete the task God gave him.**

- **Your action speaks louder than what your words.
Inconsistent character brings confusion to others.**

**What people say,
what people do, and
what people say they do
are entirely different things.**

Margaret Mead

2. Character Communicates Choices

Acts 20:22-24

**“And now, compelled by the Spirit,
I am going to Jerusalem, not knowing
what will happen to me there. I only know that in every city
the Holy Spirit warns me that prison and hardships are
facing me. However, I consider my life worth nothing to
me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task
the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the
good news of God’s grace.**





- **It takes character to weather life's storms.**
- **At the same time, adversity develops character.**

“Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experience of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, vision cleared, ambition inspired and success achieved.”

Hellen Keller

➤ **How God builds your character in times of adversity**

2 Cor 12:8-10

Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away. Each time he said, “My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness.” So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me. That’s why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

3. Character Communicates Influence

Acts 20:26-28

“Now I know that none of you among whom I have gone about preaching the kingdom will ever see me again.

Therefore, I declare to you today that I am innocent of the blood of any of you. For I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God. Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

- Paul influenced the elders of Ephesus not by his title or by position but by his life.**

Acts 20:32 Msg

Now I'm turning you over to God, our marvelous God whose gracious Word can make you into what he wants you to be and give you everything you could possibly need in this community of holy friends.

