

# The Gospel of Better

## Principle

1. “Better” is a very encouraging and energizing word, thought and objective!
2. Except in very rare cases, genes are not so malformed and powerful that Better cannot overcome them.
3. Better, if we know and use the great wisdom of the ages, is easy – far easier than the otherwise inevitable consequences of Worse.
4. Everyone faces Practical Impossibilities in life – challenges that are theoretically possible, but cannot in practice be accomplished or done on an on-going basis. Better offers the hope to confront and overcome these “impossibilities.”

## Summary Thought

There are tools and keys to Better – tools and keys developed, used and communicated to and for us over many years by some very wise people. These keys, while not secret, are great motivators versus the despair resulting from a focus on “right.”

That genes (and handicaps) are very powerful cannot be reasonably denied, but we are not inalterably destined and doomed by our genes – Better is the greater force that can meld and mold our genes!

The essence and distillation of Better math is simply that while  $2 + 2$  logically equals 4 it does not in many (important for us to know) practical and real-life ways. Better is in the end easier than Worse!

Any attempt at a meaningful Better will be challenged early on with the reality of Practical Impossibilities – we must find a way to overcome these very real obstacles. Without this ability the concept of Better is simply that, a wish and dream not an achievable reality.

But the great Principles of Better show that the otherwise Practical Impossibilities *are* possible.

## Principle

5. To get Better we must change (repent).

Humility is the attitude that, when acted on, will lead to a repentance to Better.

6. It is crucial to consider the potential negatives (“Nots”) to Better early in any Better effort because, otherwise, all good and positive efforts will likely be lost by failing to recognize and mitigate the critical potential pitfalls – the Nots to Better.

7. The support offered by appropriate disciplines makes harder and bigger easier and smaller and in the end sustainable.

8. The building blocks of Better are our units of time – how we use our time largely defines any success in Better.

## Summary Thought

A (the?) foundational key promise of the *Bible* is the inevitable connection and consequence of:

Humility □ Repentance □ Grace

Or to look at it another way:

Attitude □ Action □ Help

Grace is a bold promise on Jesus’ part that can only be proven if tried.

Anything of real long-term value must:

- Be broad in nature NOT overly narrow and focused.
- Have the goal of *being* Better NOT the all-too-common emphasis of *doing* or *looking* Better – substance (NOT mere form) must be the key focus.
- Be three-dimensional, considering and affecting the eternal, NOT one- or two-dimensional, only focused on today or tomorrow.

The all-too-often maligned thought of “disciplines” (Ugh!), when they are appropriately identified and used, is that disciplines are great friends to be sought and embraced rather than enemies to be avoided at-all-costs!

The big questions with this most valuable of all gifts are:

- What are we going to barter our time for?
- Ultimately, will we have anything meaningful to show for our time spent?
- Can a little investment of time result in less wasted and therefore more and Better time available for other important uses?

## Principle

9. Better Practices is the Principle that while Better is elusive as a strictly mental “exercise” it can often be seen in others and adapted, where appropriate, for our benefit.

10. In any effort to Better, it matters far less how fast we are going than the direction we are headed. This is the important time-tested Better Principle of Continuous Improvement.

11. To be successful we need to be realistic about the odds of what we attempt and the expected benefits to be derived from these efforts.

12. The Principle of Tipping Points is simply that more effort has to be exerted than benefits achieved, until reaching the place (the “summit” – the tipping point) where there is a reversal such that the benefits become greater than the on-going costs.

## Summary Thought

Mistakes are inevitable, necessary and useful to future Betters. That said, the Better mistakes and lessons are those of others – those we can observe and either learn from (positive lessons) or avoid (mistakes) to our benefit. This is the Principle of Better Practices.

We are either going forward or backward – getting Better or Worse. Better is a direction, the next “baby” step. Better is easy, but it never ends. This is the great Principle of Continuous Improvement. Better sometimes comes through “bursts,” but most often it will be accomplished through many small and often mundane steps.

While there can be overlooked and missed potential in counter-intuitive Betters, *most of the time* logical and intuitive is Better – the odds are generally close to the way they appear and we would be wise to play them that way most of the time.

While seldom achievable initially in any effort of Better, with an increasing discipline, the Tipping Point is the point at which we will realize a new upward and improved trend! At this important point we find the benefits becoming increasingly greater than the on-going costs of “doing” the Better.

## Principle

13. The Principles of Transference, Synergy and Momentum, as they relate to Better, are that success and victory in one (even seemingly unrelated) area makes other Betters easier.

14. The Principle of Transition is that points and times of significant life changes provide the greatest chances to Better or Worse.

15. Great Expectations are the critical catalyst to Initiative – the “spark” required to initiate and maintain a trajectory to Better!

## Summary Thought

*Transference* is the Principle that Betters generally operate in much the same manner for the various potential Betters of life – we can easily adapt (transfer) what we have learned in one Better to other areas of life.

*Synergy* as applied to Better is the Principle that Betters work in harmony to create an outcome that is in some way of more value than the total of the individual Betters themselves:  $1 + 1 = 3, 10, 30$  or maybe even more!

*Momentum* is the Principle that when “moving” in the direction of Better this current trajectory aids Better to more easily continue this positive direction of movement.

Times of transitions are potential pitfalls to Better, they can cause us to leave Better and languish in mediocrity or even worse. Yet, far from inevitably “losing ground” and having to recoup what is lost, most points of transition offer the possibility of almost immediate great gains as we exit the “auto pilot” in which we may have been operating.

Great expectations are the basis for any great Better. But to be accomplished, the expectations must be followed by action (proper initiative).

Initiative is a risk, but being inactive and passive is far more often a greater threat!