

## **Congratulatory address**

### **By Pastor Moses Yoon (UBF General Director)**

My keynote message is taken from 1 Timothy 4:15. "Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress."

Congratulations on your (James, Curtis, Josh, Erick, Andrew and Peter) graduation of the Emerging Leaders Cohort, ELC Charlie Team. You have successfully completed the course with excellent grades. In the midst of your own busy schedule with work, ministry, and family, you have been faithful to the decision you made at the beginning of this course, and you finally reap the harvest of this education. Your co-workers and family members must have prayed a lot for you and shared the burden of your studies. I believe God will surely bless their and your prayers and sacrifice.

Even though you are graduating today, learning as a leader does not stop today. Learning doesn't stop after you finish any higher leadership course. We, as spiritual shepherds of God's flock, must continue to learn throughout our lives. Education is our moral and spiritual duty because it is only through continued learning that we can remain useful in God's work. Our thoughts and our knowledge affect our community and our ministry. Our learning will determine not only our future, but also that of our community and the world.

In 1 Timothy 4:15, the Apostle Paul urges his spiritual son Timothy, "Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress." Timothy was a young pastor in the Ephesian church. Others could have easily looked down on him because he was young. As a young leader serving the church, Timothy had to continue to make a spiritual progress and set an example for the believers in his speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity (1Tim 4:12).

There are many talented and capable people in our ministries. In the past, a leader was one who knew everything, who excelled in all things, and who was more spiritually mature than others. Yet these days, it is impossible for a leader to be outstanding in every aspect. But if we do not excel, how can we exercise leadership over our community? The secret is to continue to make spiritual progress. When we make mistakes, we should repent and do our best to improve. When we fail, we should confess and pray to the Lord that he may help us grow. When we have a humble and honest attitude, we can struggle to make a progress in our speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity. Then God will give us spiritual authority and our co-workers will not look down on us, but respect us. The goal of our spiritual struggle is to learn Jesus. The goal of our progress is to become like Jesus. If we are determined to grow like Jesus, God will surely bless us as leaders in our community.

Paul urges Timothy to make spiritual progress by being diligent and giving himself wholly to these matters. To give oneself wholly means to make every effort with all one's physical and spiritual strength. As relatively young leaders in our UBF church, you should also

give yourselves fully to learning and growing throughout your lives. A famous sage in ancient China once said, "I do not want my young son to receive a special education for talented children. I want him to learn with a steadfast mind and attitude throughout his life." A large tree is a product of constant growth from a small tree over a long period of time. Likewise, a large spiritual tree is the result of continued study and learning.

Paul continues in 1 Timothy 4:16, "Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers." As spiritual leaders, we must keep close watch over our lives and the doctrine we teach. If we want to save ourselves and our hearers, we should keep ourselves from the world's secular influence. Maintaining a good relationship with other ELC leaders is one of the best ways to encourage one another and keep ourselves from worldly influence. I pray that God may help each of us to have boundless desire to learn and grow together as spiritual giants in this generation.

Taking this opportunity, I also want to express special thanks to our teachers, instructors, and all the supporting staff for making today's graduation possible. My prayer is that God may continue to strengthen staff members of our leadership education team to help young leaders in our church grow to become excellent shepherds in our generation.

Thank you and congratulations again!

***P. Moses Yoon***

***2021.6.26.***