



### **“What’s the best advice you’ve ever received?”**

There’s a TON of good advice I’ve received over the years that’s been of tremendous help in all sorts of situations in life - and ministry! I shared just a few examples during the sermon the day we celebrated my 25 years in ministry. (If you missed that day, you can listen online. It’s the 8-11-19 message.)

The “funny” below will introduce one bit of advice that I didn’t mention:

A minister dies and is waiting in line at the Pearly Gates. Ahead of him is a guy dressed in sunglasses, a loud shirt, leather jacket, and jeans.

Saint Peter says to this guy, "Who are you, so that I may know whether to admit you to the Kingdom of Heaven?"

The guy replies, "I'm Joe McGrady, taxi driver, of Noo Yawk City."

Saint Peter consults his copy of “The Book of Life.” He smiles and says to the taxi driver, "Take this silken robe and golden staff and enter the Kingdom of Heaven." The taxi driver goes into Heaven with his robe and staff, and it's the minister's turn.

He stands erect and booms out, "I am Joseph Snow, pastor of Saint Mary's for the last 43 years."

Saint Peter consults his copy. He says to the minister, "Take this cotton robe and wooden staff and enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

"Just a minute!" says the minister. "That man was a taxi driver, and he gets a silken robe and golden staff. How can this be?"

"Up here, we work by results," says Saint Peter. "While you preached, people slept. While he drove, people prayed."

That IS funny - because it is sometimes all-too-accurate! But Peter’s comment: “Up here we work by results,” is totally wrong. “Results” is the way success is often determined in this world. (And doesn’t it seem that past results don’t matter, even if they were top-notch! “What have you done THIS week?!” seems to be the criteria.

One of the bits of advice that has been an immense help in ministry came from one of those old ministers who has since entered the Pearly Gates (And, it doesn’t matter what kind of robe he got - it could’ve even been a baseball jersey!) He told me:

*“Never forget this: ‘Results’ is NOT your responsibility. That’s God’s responsibility - and His only! Your responsibility is simply to keep planting the seeds (of the Gospel). It’s God’s job to bring the results! When you get discouraged, because you aren’t seeing results, remember that’s not your job! Only God can make the ‘seeds’ sprout and grow - and He knows the absolute best time for that to happen. (And sometimes, that won’t be even in your lifetime.)*

That’s not just great advice for pastors, but for every Christian. Our job as disciples of Jesus is to be faithful in planting the seeds of the Gospel in the lives of the people around us and praying for them. Starting, of course, with your family. And when you don’t see the results, remember those results are God’s job - and only His - so just keep planting and praying!

Thanks for asking,  
Pastor David

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