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## Introduction

God has called us to do something amazing in the world, He doesn't want us to live lives of mediocrity, so let's get out of our bubbles!

Hope You are Blessed!

## The Bubble

I want to start with a story that took place during my sophomore year of college.

I was on my way to do some grocery shopping and was bringing some of my buddies with me. The mood was fairly light-hearted, I had lofi bumping on the car speaker, and everyone was making good conversation.

And then everything turned serious, very quickly.

One of my friends started lamenting about his experience at school. He began opening up and unpacking how rough it had been for him since starting college. Granted, he said this wasn't only the school's fault. A combination of us being in the middle of covid and life circumstances made it very tricky to live the typical college experience.

He then critiqued our school's culture and ended up saying something which I had never heard before.

Duke is such a *bubble*

This was the first time I heard anything like it. A *bubble*?

## The University Bubble

I understood what he was getting at though. When I thought about it later I could see all the places where this description fit:

- Duke is a bubble from society Your society while you're within the walls is made up of exclusively young adults and students. As we know the world is not mostly young adults and students.
- Duke is a bubble from many struggles Although students do have their own burdens, it's a vast misrepresentation of the hardships faced by people just over the campus walls

- Duke is a bubble away from reality.

This last point I saw exemplified clearly on my walk to class one day. I was a far ways off and saw a squirrel a few steps ahead of me, sleeping gently in the grass by a tree. I was like "wow, I've never seen a squirrel sleeping before!". As I got closer, however, I realized it wasn't sleeping, but that it was dead. I felt a bit of pity, "oh no, what a bummer" and then I continued on my way to class. On the way back from class, less than two hours later, I saw that the squirrel was gone.

Two things could have happened:

1. A student who was running out of money on their meal plan came and ate it
2. A custodian came and cleaned it up

Either way, I found this as a striking analogy to how the university tried to remove, or better yet hide any sign of pain or friction.

- You don't have to worry about food, it's a 2-minute walk away
- Don't have to worry about exercise, the gym is right here
- Don't worry about anything, it's right here

And it's like this at many universities. Students become comfortable living within the bubble and never think about what might be outside of it.

What could be outside the walls when I interact with the community or people not deemed part of my society

What would happen if I involved myself in a group of people that don't think and act like me?

But within the bubble, there is no struggle, no difficulty. Many of us live in this kind of bubble. It doesn't have to be the bubble of college.

## We're comfortable

What we see is that many of us have become satisfied with living within our bubbles. We have a certain way of life and never seek to challenge ourselves or venture outside the bubble.

This is dangerous because in **many** instances in life, we will not see improvement until we get uncomfortable. We will not grow if we stay within our bubbles.

Your health is a good analogy. It's not until you make yourself uncomfortable and stop eating the double cheeseburger filled with barbecue sauce and saw dust from McDonald's that you'll start seeing improvements in your health.

Or exercise. It's not until you put your muscles under stress and *discomfort* that you'll see your muscles growing larger.

In many areas of our lives, we will not see any improvements unless we make ourselves uncomfortable.

## Ways we are comfortable

I want to give some specific examples that may help someone here today relate more to this message:

- Although you feel lazy at times, it's not until you make yourself uncomfortable by turning off your phone or youtube that you'll see more work getting done and you get more sleep
- Although you are shy, it is not until you make yourself uncomfortable and force yourself to talk to people that you'll see yourself developing friendships
- Although you have no game, it's not until you make yourself uncomfortable and ask a pretty girl out that you'll get a girlfriend.
- Although you are nonconfrontational, it's not until you make yourself uncomfortable by having a difficult conversation with a friend or loved one that you'll see that relationship grow
- Although you can be so hard-headed at times, it's not until you make yourself uncomfortable by humbling yourself to forgive people that you'll see your relationships begin to repair
- Although you're a follower, it's not until you make yourself uncomfortable and say NO, my faith does not permit me to do this, or I don't believe this is the right thing to do it's not till you're able to say that that will people stop taking advantage of you.

Listen to these points. I hope someone today can see where they may be living in a bubble.

## Stop making excuses

Have you been comfortable with your shyness? Have you been comfortable just being unconfidential? Being hard-headed, lazy, or a follower?

You're not seeing any growth in those areas **precisely** because you are staying in that bubble.

You will see amazing developments in your life the moment you stop complaining about the way things are, the moment you stop wishing that your life would be different. The moment you stop making excuses and step out of your comfort zone and do something different, do something uncomfortable.

The moment you get out of your bubble.

If you're feeling something right now, frustration with the way you live your life, that's conviction. God is telling you it's time for you to stop living your life in a bubble, it's time for you to grow into the strong person he designed you to be.

## Take your faith out of the bubble

We not only keep ourselves in a bubble to stop developing, we often keep God in a bubble as well.

We've been okay with allowing God to influence us in certain areas of our lives. We only follow God in places that are most convenient for us. We'll follow God while we're at church, but when we're with our friends we'll act as if we never knew God.

When you're in a tight spot and see no way out you'll allow God into your life, but when you're angry at someone you'll forget all about God and forgiveness.

God doesn't want to be a God you follow only in certain moments of your life. He doesn't want to just be your God while you're at church, He wants to influence every area of your life.

Are you preventing Him from coming into some parts of your life because you don't want to change the things you know need changing?

Spiritual growth is uncomfortable. You have to confront your own bad behaviors and admit that the things which seemingly bring you the most joy are also draining your spiritual life.

You have to admit that the friends you've been hanging with have been influencing you negatively. You have to admit that that relationship you're in is taking you away from God. You have to admit that you're not growing spiritually because you're afraid of losing something you believe gives you joy in life.

I have good news though. Two pieces of good news.

## 1 God wants to give you more

The things in your life that you're hiding from God don't compare to what He wants to give you. When we finally surrender and say "God, I just want you!" We open the Lord up to giving us what we actually need. We often fall into this foolish idea that we know what we need in life more than God does.

### Jeremiah 17:9 (NKJV)

9 "The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?"

Your heart will lie to you. You think you want something that will drain your life away. God however knows your heart, He knows what will give you the most joy.

**Psalm 16:11 (NKJV)**

11 You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Who better to give you joy in your life than God who created your heart to experience joy in the first place?

When we allow God to affect us in every part of our life, we open Him up to giving us joy that can't be matched because He knows what will make us happy!

This looks like:

- being intentional about your relationship with God by praying and reading your bible daily.
- Spending less time with friends that have been leading you down the wrong path.
- Reaching out to people from church outside of the time you're within these walls to get advice or help support them in their walk with God.

All of these things may make you uncomfortable but leads us to growth. And we can be confident knowing this second part

**2 God will help us get comfortable being uncomfortable**

The full title of this sermon is "The bubble: Being Comfortable Being Uncomfortable".

Does anyone know what an oxymoron is? As an example, saying something is both hot and cold is an oxymoron, a stove cannot be both hot and cold at the same time. It shouldn't be possible for a teapot to be both hot and cold in the same way I say we can be comfortable being uncomfortable.

But God can do that. He can give you the confidence necessary to not be afraid of uncomfortable situations.

**2 Timothy 1:7 (NKJV)**

7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

God does not give us fear, but discipline. It takes discipline to do something constructive that you are uncomfortable with. It takes discipline to get up in the morning when you'd rather waste time in your comfortable bed.

God is offering us the strength to go through those uncomfortable situations to help build our character and impact others.

It's normal to feel uncomfortable doing something you know will better yourself or others. You're not weird for admitting it, you're human.

There is a particular story of Jesus that shows us this.

This passage describes the moments leading up to Jesus' crucifixion.

**Matthew 26:36-42 (NKJV)**

36 Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, "Sit here while I go and pray over there." 37 And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed. 38 Then He said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me."

39 He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will."

40 Then He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "What! Could you not watch with Me one hour? 41 Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

42 Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done."

Jesus was not comfortable going to the cross. He was about to face the worst kind of discomfort possible: to be tortured and die for the sins of humanity.

Jesus had two options: Either go through the physical, emotional, and spiritual torture or be in heaven without you.

Faced with this very difficult choice He chose to step as far outside His bubble as He needed to just to be in heaven with you one day. For your sake.

We need to get to the point where we can say

**I would rather follow God and be uncomfortable than continue living my life without Him.**

We need to strive to say that God is more important than having anything else in life.

As we'll see in this next passage, Jesus was not alone during this trial.

**Luke 22:43-44 (NKJV)**

43 Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. 44 And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

Jesus was in anguish, but God was there to comfort Him.

God will not only ask you to do something difficult, something that will make you uncomfortable: he will be the one to strengthen you to go through the discomfort.

When all your friends desert you over a decision you made, just like the disciples deserted Jesus in the passage, God will be strengthening you.

When you know you need to have a difficult conversation with someone, he'll help you through the discomfort

When you know you need to take care of your body better, he'll give you the spirit of discipline to help push you through

When you know you need to take your faith more seriously and start growing your relationship with God, He will give you the faith and discipline necessary.

This does not mean it will be easy. What it does mean is that everything that is necessary, everything that God calls us to do, He will enable us to get through the discomfort of.

Our job is to make the decision to go through it and let God deal with the consequences.

## Practicals

So far we've mainly talked about how we need to get outside our comfort zones so I want to give some practicals on how to get outside your comfort zone. "How do you push yourself outside your bubble?"

Some of you may be surprised, but in high school, I was a very shy person. I didn't enjoy talking to people at all. It wasn't until the summer after my junior year that I had my conversion experience and wanted to live my life for God. That conversion required that I make a lot of uncomfortable changes to my life. So these are some things I did and actually continue to do today.

### **Tell yourself not to be a coward**

The first technique I used was saying "Don't be a coward".

I don't know why, but that helped me a ton. Just saying "Don't be a wuss" or "Don't be a coward" gave me the push to do a lot of things.

Believe it or not, saying "Don't be a coward" is biblical!

In 2 Tim 1:7, "fear" is often translated as "coward"

## **2 Tim 1:7 (CEV)**

7 God's Spirit doesn't make cowards out of us. The Spirit gives us power, love, and self-control.

So, when I wasn't comfortable speaking to people or needed to have a difficult conversation, I would say "don't be a coward" and that would push me!

If you want to frame it as more of a positive you could say, "be a man or woman of God" I suppose. It doesn't have the same ring but certainly can help.

## **3 2 1 GO**

This next tip is something I use pretty frequently. Sometimes we just don't want to do something uncomfortable. It could be laziness, but for some reason, we just do not want to do something we know would be in our best interest to do.

Every time I feel this way about something I say:

3...2....1... GO!

And when I say go, I go do it. It's shockingly effective. Next time you don't want to get out of bed, turn off youtube, or do your homework, count down saying 3, 2, 1, GO and when you say Go, go do it!

## **Remember The Sacrifice**

Lastly, and most importantly, I want you to remember the sacrifice that Christ made for you.

It's Jesus, who not only loves you more than anyone in this world but also knows and wants the best for you, it's this person that asks you to stand up for Him.

Christ sacrificed everything for you, and all He asks you to do is be willing, be open, to stepping out of your bubble and stand for Him.

You can have a difficult conversation knowing that God when through the most difficult pain for you

You can allow God to transform every part of your life knowing that He chose to give up his life for you.

You can say NO to temptation, say NO to that boy who keeps pressuring you, you can so NO to those friends who keep trying to drag you down to sin. You can say NO anything keeping you from God because you remember Christ said NO to the comforts of heaven in order to give you life, to give you the fullest life imaginable.



## Appeal

In review.

1. Tell yourself **don't be a coward**
2. Use the 3 2 1 Go Method
3. Remember the sacrifice Christ made out of love for you

I want all of you to think about where you need to get out of our bubble. Where have you been satisfied with mediocrity in your life? What parts of your life have you tried to keep hidden from God in fear that He might take them away? God is not interested in having part of you, He wants all of you.

For some of us, it may be evangelism. We've been too comfortable only talking about God with people from church and need to step out of our bubbles and bring Christ to someone.

For some of us, it may be a boy or girl. You know they're only going to cause you to sin and destroy your relationship with God. You may have to have a difficult conversation and say it's not working out because your relationship with God is more important than with them.

Whatever it is, identify it then commit today to step out of your comfort zone so that you can see improvements in your life.

As you do this, it will be difficult at first, but will likely become easier. As you stand up for God more often you exercise muscles called confidence, boldness, and discipline.

Get out of your bubble and grow