

WHAT DOES GOD CONSIDER A “SUCCESS”?

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"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!"

-Matthew 25:21

Success in our world is normally described in terms of **SELF-FULFILLMENT**.

In God's world in which we are created to participate in life together, success is to immerse my life in an **ORGANIC** relationship with God through **JESUS CHRIST**.

1. NEVER UNDERESTIMATE OUR HUMAN CAPACITY FOR SELF-DELUSION.

Proverbs 14:12; 16:25 There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.

John 5:39 You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, 40 yet you refuse to come to me to have life.

“We have met the enemy and he is us.”

-Pogo comic strip

“Man is nothing else but what he makes of himself.”

-Jean-Paul Sartre

“Man is the only animal for whom his own existence is a problem which he has to solve. Man’s main task in life is to give birth to himself.”

-Sociologist, Psychologist Erich Fromm

“Self-trust is the first secret of success, the belief that if you are here the authorities of the universe put you here, and for cause, or with some task strictly appointed you in your constitution, and so as long as you work at that you are well and successful.”

-Emerson

“The modern self is characterized by such things as freedom and autonomy, by strong will, and by the presumptions that the self is self-created by (one’s self) will operating freely in the construction. The self is assumed to be strong, capable, and above all coherent...It is heavily indebted to reason or at least reasonableness...(Unfortunately)...most secular psychology encourages a detrimental self-worship.”

-Psychologist Paul Vitz

2. GO FOR THE GOLD: SUCCESS IN GOD'S KINGDOM

a. Understand the way God's Kingdom

OPERATES

Jesus began to teach them, saying:

3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

5 Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

7 Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

9 Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.

10 Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. 12 Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven...

-Matthew 5:2-12

b. PLUG IN, **TURN ON**, **TURN IN**.

John 15:1 Jesus said, “I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. 2 He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.

3 You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. 4 Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. 5 I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

6 If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. 7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. 8 This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.”

c. DEVELOP A LIFE-LONG RESUME BEST DESCRIBED AS LOVE .

John 15:9 "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. 10 If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. 11 I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

12 My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.

d. THE GUARANTEED
PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS .

Matthew 6:33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.