

Group Resource

## Sermon Notes – Sunday, November 3, 2013

Series: Living in Godly Success!

Message: Pay it forward!

Scripture: 1 Timothy 6:17-19

- I. Over the last 6 weeks, we have had the benefit of studying several successful men and women of God in the Bible: Joseph, David, Nehemiah, Solomon, Daniel, and Esther. In each of their lives, they paid their successes forward by not only accomplishing things for themselves but by making a significant impact to the world around them.
- II. The Apostle Paul was another individual who was quite successful. Beyond his earthly achievements of being a Hebrew of Hebrews, God enabled Paul to play a major role in the building up of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century Church.
- III. The Apostle Paul provides his protégée, Timothy, with insight on how to live in this world but not OF this world. **We must beware that success does not cause us to worship and serve the things God created instead of the Creator himself.**
  - a. A proper perspective about success recognizes this truth: ***1TIMOTHY 6:7 For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it.***
  - b. One commentator said that “True contentment comes from godliness in the heart, not wealth in the hand.” A person who depends on material things for peace and assurance will never be satisfied, for material things have a way of losing their appeal.
- IV. We close the Living in Godly Success series with this principle: **We are called to be a faithful steward of the resources that are manifested through our success and leverage those resources to make a kingdom impact.** We must recognize that God gives and God expects.
- V. God gives
  - a. *God promises that He will give to us what we need to accomplish the goals that he has helped us set. **2Cor 9:8 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.***
  - b. We have great hope by knowing that all our successes are in his hands. *In 1 Tim 6:17b the Apostle Paul instructs Timothy to command those who are rich in this present world to “put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.”*
  - c. We can be assured that **God gives us a secure place of hope.**
    - i. Hope is a confident expectation of what is to come. We will find it difficult to succeed without hope. However, the strength of our hope is based upon the object of our hope. We can have hope that we will succeed in our endeavors but in whom are we placing our hope? Is it in our own abilities or is it in God’s ability to use us as His vessel of glory.
  - d. We can be assured that **God lavishes on His people all their needs so that their Godly purposes can be achieved**
    - i. God wants us to enjoy the successes that He provides. For example, God wants us to enjoy healthy families, bustling careers, etc.
    - ii. We get sidetracked with success when we make the enjoyment of success to be God’s primary purpose for our existence. The enjoyment of our successes is a benefit of living a life that glorifies God.
    - iii. We have to find joy in doing the will of God even when God’s will is difficult and requires something from us.

VI. God expects

- a. God expects us to utilize our successes in a legitimate way. Legitimacy is not measured from a self-centered perspective but from a Godly and eternal perspective.
- b. 1 - God expects that our successes never replace Him as God
  - i. *To paraphrase 1 Timothy 6:17: Command those who have achieved success not to make their success their God, or to boast in all of their successes as if it is by their own strength they have achieved them.*
  - ii. Once commentator wrote "If success makes a person proud, then he understands neither himself nor his success." We are never called to place our hope in our successes or to be arrogant about what we have achieved.
- c. 2 - God expects us to use our successes wisely
  - i. God instructed Abraham to leverage his success. God blessed Abraham in order that Abraham would be a blessing unto others. *GENESIS 12:2 And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.*
- d. In 1 Timothy 6:18, the Apostle Paul articulates four ways to use our successes wisely.
- e. **"To do good"**

*"How can I use my successes in a way that maximizes its impact to a lost world?"*

  - i. The way that we maximize our impact is to allow God's priorities to be our priorities.
  - ii. Success will always attract people with needs, however, it is impossible to meet everyone's needs with our limited resources. The temptation is to reason that since we can't meet everyone's needs, we shouldn't meet anyone's needs.
  - iii. God challenges us to use our success, wealth, and resources beyond the creation of a life of personal luxury. 1 Peter 4:10 instructs us to "use whatever gift [we] have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."
- f. **"To be rich in good deeds"**

*"What does my success allow me to do for others that I wouldn't be able to do otherwise?"*

  - i. The late Adrian Rogers said, "You cannot obey God without your obedience spilling out in a blessing to all those around you."
  - ii. Success frees us up to be able to do for others what they couldn't do on their own. In Genesis, Joseph's success in Egypt allowed him to save the lives of his family and a nation.
- g. **"To be generous"**

*"Do I have access to resources manifested through my success that I can share with others?"*

  - i. Godly success was never meant to be hoarded to ourselves. In the parable of the talents, Jesus rebuked the man who received a bag of gold but only hid his master's money. Jesus expected him to be generous with what had been provided to him. Following God's example, believers should be generous in their dealings with others, especially with the resources that are manifested through our successes. In 1 John 3, we are commanded that *"<sup>17</sup> If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person?<sup>18</sup> Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth."*
- h. **Be one who is "willing to share"**

*"Am I willing to give away any blessing so that God's purposes may be advanced?"*

  - i. There should never be a blessing in our lives so great that we are not willing to give it away should God ask for it from us.
  - ii. Without a willingness to share, our generosity is done without joy and we rob ourselves of the blessing of being used in God's plans.

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- 1) Share a word of encouragement to someone else in the group on how God is equipping them for success.
- 2) As you reflect back on last weekend's sermon, what one principle or insight stands out as being particularly helpful, insightful or difficult to grasp? Were you challenged in any area of your personal walk with God?
- 3) **Read** 2 Corinthians 9:8. What is God's promise in this verse? How does this promise change your perspective?
- 4) Do you agree with the statement that "God wants us to enjoy the successes that He provides?" Why or why not? What is required to keep our enjoyment of success in balance?
- 5) What does it mean that "God expects you to use your successes wisely?" How can you differentiate between legitimate/illegitimate uses of success? What are some of the warning signs of when you are utilizing success in the wrong way?
- 6) Name one success or resource that God has given to you that you can use for the kingdom of God. How can you use your success in a way that maximizes its impact to a lost world? Does this success allow you to do things for others that you wouldn't be able to do otherwise? Do you have access to resources manifested through your success that you can share with others? Are you willing to give away any part of this success so that God's purposes may be advanced?
- 7) How has the series on **Living in Godly Success** affected your perspective on the road to success? Which principle has had the most impact on your life?

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## Principles for Living in Godly Success

“Godly success is to continually delight in God so that every area of our lives reflects whom God created us to be, and that in every pursuit, Christ’s power is at work within us to achieve the goals that God has helped us set.”

1. Find fulfillment by delighting in God and recognizing the Godly purposes for your life.
2. Focus on aligning your endeavors with God’s purpose for your life. Your aims must be God’s aims.
3. Seek after Godly wisdom and assess the fruitfulness of your actions.
4. Continually learn and heed instruction from wise counselors. Remember that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of all wisdom.
5. Gain insight and perspective from your forerunners without feeling compelled to compare yourself based upon their calling.
6. Boldly pursue Godly endeavors with integrity, passion, and Godly ambition.
7. Recognize that your identity and worth is based upon your Godly identity and not in the accumulation of things or success.
8. Be grateful for God’s ability to enable you to thrive in any environment; acknowledging that your success is not based on the absence of obstacles but the everlasting presence of the Lord with you through the obstacles.
9. By faith, rely on the Christ’s power in every pursuit as God hones your skills and talents for His glory.
10. Allow God to use your failures and disappointments as opportunities to grow and reach your full potential.
11. Be a faithful steward of the resources that are manifested through your success and leverage those resources to make a kingdom impact.
12. In every successful endeavor, give thanks to God