

ESSENTIALS OF A SUCCESSFUL CHRISTIAN LIFE

Joshua 1:5-8; Philippians 4:13; John 16:24; 15:7; Psalm 37:4

(Not entirely original with me)

Introduction: A Christian can prosper and can have whatever he/she goes after. His/her work can be blessed, prayers answered, his/her heart can be happy, his/her family can be cared for and his/her business can be successful. This is the plain promise of the Word of God.

What does it mean to be a successful Christian? First of all a Christian should be HAPPY. A long-faced Christian is one who isn't happy in the Lord, one who has no joy, and is a very poor sign board for the Lord. If one can't be happy, then he/she surely cannot recommend the Lord Jesus. A Christian ought to be happy and one is not a successful Christian if he/she is bowed down with sorrows, burdens and care.

So, do YOU get your prayers answered? Do you get what you really need? Prayer is more than asking, it is more than just adoration, its is not only talking to God, it is actually getting things from God. Prayer is going to God and getting what you need. You are not a successful Christian if day by day you need things and cannot get them.

If you are to be a successful Christian, you must be a Soul-Winning Christian. If you are the right kind of a Christian, your Christianity is successful and somebody will want what you have. You will be able to lead someone else to the Lord. A really successful Christian would have to be a soul winner. Jesus said, "***...follow me and I will make you fishers of men...***" If you truly walk after the Lord Jesus, you will be a soul winner.

A successful Christian will have a job for God and will do that job well. "***...There are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit...for to one is given by the spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same spirit...***"

New Testament Christianity does not include seat-warming Christians. These are the people whose Christianity consists of going to church, singing when everyone else does, sits down when everyone else sits, puts a couple of dollars in the offering plate. These are not prosperous Christians, they are "dead-beats." They pull the Church down. God has a job for YOU. Not everyone can be the Captain, but everyone has a job. There is a job for YOU to do for the Lord. You are not a successful Christian if you do not have something to do for the Lord.

A prosperous Christian would have happiness in his/her heart, would get his/her prayers answered, would win souls and would have a job to do for the Lord. **DO YOU QUALIFY?** How do you go about becoming a successful Christian?

I. A WORKING KNOWLEDGE OF THE BIBLE IS ESSENTIAL

No Christian can be a good Christian without the Bible. Many people have a "sort of:" Bible indigestion. They have been in Sunday School for years, they have heard hundreds of sermons, they have attended Church week in and week out, month in and month out, and YET, they cannot quote ten verses in the Bible. They have done all of this hearing, but they have not digested a bit of it. They don't mean business for the Lord. They are not sincere, they haven't taken the Gospel to heart, they won't have any prayers answered, and no one will ever have any confidence in them and they will never win a single soul.

Anyone can have a working knowledge. They main reason so many do not know the bible is that they don't even read it. The reason they don't read it is because they are not even remotely interested in it. By reading only 30 minutes a day, a person can read the Bible completely through in a year and no Christian should go a whole year without reading his/her Bible clear through.

Anyone can learn some of the Bible and have a working knowledge of it IF they will only read it. A person has to know some of the promises to have happiness. One cannot understand this world and its sorrows unless he/she has a knowledge of the word of God.

At times one may feel his/her work is in vain and may not see any outward manifestation, but he/she has Jesus' promise that He is with you, BUT one must know what Jesus says, before one can be happy, contented and victorious.

One cannot be a successful Christian unless he/she knows by heart certain parts of the Bible. One cannot live a life pleasing to God unless he/she knows the Bible well enough to know what kind of life pleases God and one cannot win souls without the Word of God. If YOU haven't ever won anybody to Jesus, try to witness using the Bible!

II. A DAILY PRAYER LIFE IS ESSENTIAL

A person cannot be a prosperous Christian without daily meeting with the Lord. He/she must ask daily for forgiveness. *"...For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses..."*

A Christian is already saved, but needs daily cleansing, therefore a daily confession of one's sins, a daily wiping out and having renewed confidence and fellowship with God. One needs to pray for forgiveness.

One needs to place his/her burdens upon the shoulders of the Lord. Everyday take your cares and burdens and lay them on Jesus and trust Him with them. *"...If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him..."* Ask God for wisdom and do what you have to do that day.

III. DEFINITE CHRISTIAN TRAINING AND PREPARATION IS NECESSARY

Every Christian needs training and in the great commission, the Lord said *"...Go and make disciples..."* and that is getting people saved and baptized and then Jesus said, *"...teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you..."* People need teaching in how to live right. The disciples came to Jesus one time and asked *"...Lord, teach us to pray..."* No Christian will be a successful Christian who does not take some definite training.

"...Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth..." Most Christian workers of today are not really approved of God. Teachers and leaders of Churches should take some special training about their department, their age group, they need to know how to teach to hold class interest, how to get across the main points of the lesson, and how can one do this unless he/she is taught?

Many Christians do not read good literature, and many will not attend Study Courses or seminars offered by the Church through the year. They will sit year in and year out and hear someone preach but it goes in one ear and out the other. They come to Sunday School without ever studying their lesson. They don't read printed sermons, they don't read Church material, they don't even take their Bibles and check up on what their pastor preaches on.

Many Christians are not studying to be good workmen for Christ, therefore they are failures, no souls won, no interest in their Church. Much of what the preacher says will be out of their minds by the time they walk to the back door.

One cannot be a good teacher for God without work, preparation and training. Many don't want to do any studying, they don't want to take any time, they don't want it to cost them anything, yet they say they want to teach for they want to be recognized as a "leader," they want to hold a leadership position. It takes WORK to be

any good for the Lord. It takes work to be a good carpenter and it takes work to be a good brick layer and it takes work to be a good farmer. One has to KNOW how to work at it...

Many think that they can teach God's wo0rd without the study of it. Well, that just isn't so! If you want to serve God, you've got to work at it. You have to get ready.

IV. ONE MUST BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

If a person is going to be a real Christian and do work for God, he/she must have the Holy Spirit of God! If a person cannot control the lust for money, if one cannot learn to tithe and give offerings, he/she will never be a success. There has to be a complete surrender of one's life, influence and talents. This includes tithing and giving up anything and everything that could come between a person and God.

If a Christian's teaching is any good, he/she must have the Holy Spirit, one cannot do it otherwise. 5 loaves and 2 fish won't feed 5,000 people and have 12 baskets left over. Take a stick and hold it out over water and try to part it like the Red Sea. Try to take the jawbone of an ass and kill a thousand armed soldiers. YOU cannot do any of these things, but THE HOLY SPIRIT CAN. It takes God's power to do the work of God.

Not a single Christian can take a soul away from Satan, all the members of a Church can't do it either, but if the Holy Spirit's power is there, then it can be done.

There is no such thing as living a glorious, successful, prosperous, fruit bearing, soul winning Christian life without the presence of the Holy Spirit.

The power of God is what the Christian needs. That is what it takes whether one is a teacher, deacon, class member or the pastor/ If a Christian has the Holy Spirit, then all things will be taken care of.

CONCLUSION:

To be a successful Christian one must know the Bible, have a daily prayer life, train and prepare him/herself as best he/she can, taking advantage of every training method available and be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Christian! Won't you surrender your life completely to the Lord Jesus? Won't you say to God that with His grace and help you are going to find the job He has for you?

YOU without the Lord Jesus, won't you turn to Him right now and be saved? Don't you want to spend eternity in Heaven with Him? At this moment you are on your way to Hell but that can be changed right now.