

"Redefining Success"

Jeremiah 9:23-24

Introduction

As followers of Jesus, we must understand that true success in life is directly related to the level of our experiential knowledge of God. If a believer boasts about their wisdom, might, or riches, this shows conceit. A lack of humility illustrates pride and also idolatry: a greater appreciation and honor of self instead of gratitude to God for His provision. Every Christian should be aware that a heart of pride is a serious matter. A dominant, conceited focus on self is evidence of a satanic spirit; it is a spirit that has as its highest goal personal achievement and self-exultation.

When we attempt to measure our human success apart from God, we will measure our outcomes in life with measures apart from God's standards. The believer must be on guard against looking to knowledge, power and wealth as their chief goals. The believer also needs to guard against boasting how far they can get in life in the areas of education, degrees, power, clout and money. Finding one's identity in those things indicates a believer has positioned themselves away from God.

The word "know" in Scripture relates to intimacy: we are to have a personal, growing relationship with God through Jesus. Knowing involves sharing the deepest part of oneself with the life of another. God wants our passion for Him to overshadow our passion for other things, including our own success. God wants to be first, and this should be our dominant life pursuit. This is why the Bible refers to the importance of our return to our "first love" (Rev 2:4). A passion for God comes before and defines true success in life, which is God's full experience. The more intimate you are with God, the more life you possess. The converse is also true: the less intimate you are, the less life you possess. To know Him is to experience eternal life in time and eternity (see also John 17:3).

Any person who has lived through the pandemic crisis understands that a good life cannot be measured by power, riches or educational degrees. Living in passionate pursuit of God establishes our experience with God now and forever. It behooves every believer to allow God to awaken and reset our priorities to experience what it means to be genuinely successful and fully alive in Christ.

Getting Started

1. What one point resonated with you from this week's sermon?
2. How has the pandemic crisis over the last year impacted what you see as real success? How has the pandemic affected what you view as truly important?

Let's Get Personal

1. When you look at your day-to-day decisions in how you spend your time, what do your actions indicate that you value? How do you define success based on how you spend your time?
2. Do you think you are operating with false definitions of success? If so, why do you think this is the case?
3. Based on today's sermon, how do you need to address or adjust your view of success?

Take the Next Step

1. The passionate pursuit of God must take priority in the life of every believer. To fully experience God, we simply have to prioritize intimacy with Him. How much time have you been giving to spiritual intimacy recently? How did this week's sermon confirm or convict you?

2. As you take the concepts from this week's sermon to heart, what steps will you take to prioritize your pursuit of deeper intimacy with the Lord? Share your plan of action with your group. In what ways can your group hold you accountable and provide encouragement to you as you seek to prioritize intimacy with God?
3. If you have found ways to prioritize intimacy with God and have practical encouragement to lend, take this opportunity to share with your group what works for you! Your experience will bless others.
4. Want to dig deeper? Take a look at the following passages: Philippians 3:7-11; Proverbs 30:7-9; Psalm 100:3; Exodus 15:11; Luke 12:13-21; John 17:1-5; 2 Corinthians 2:6-8; Matthew 23:23.

Renew Your Mind

*"but let the one who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me,
that I am the Lord who exercises mercy, justice, and righteousness on the earth;"*

Jeremiah 9:24
