

## **HOW TO BE SUCCESSFUL**

**By: Ken Korkow**

Who is the most successful person that you know personally? Out of all the people that you personally know, who do you consider the most successful – the person you would most like to emulate?

No one starts a career, marriage or hobby desiring to be a failure. Most of us do not even wish to be mediocre (a word derived from the Latin that means, "halfway up a mountain"). Most people start an endeavor seeking to be successful, to make it all the way to the top of the mountain.

While deciding on your "most successful person," think about what success really is. Perfection is not necessary for every successful project. Making a sandwich does not demand precision. However, I think of a friend who is a cosmetic surgeon. He combines science and art with an intense desire for the most successful result possible when doing facial re-constructive surgery on an accident victim. He and the patient have a high expectation of what successful completion of the surgery should look like.

As we evaluate success, it is important to determine what areas are truly important to you. You have probably defined your concept of success when you identified the most successful person you know.

Did you select this person on the basis of accumulated wealth? Or was it based on physical appearance, intellectual capacity, or personal achievements? Was their sense of peace and contentment a factor? Or perhaps their ability to raise a healthy, happy family?

Be honest about your true goals. If you think success is having more money than your father, admit it – at least to yourself. If your idea of success is a nicer car, better clothes, or more exotic vacations than your neighbor, then have the intellectual integrity to acknowledge that. After all, if you miss the personal goal that is essential to your own sense of success, you will feel like a pilot trying to land an airplane in a dense fog, just 10 feet to the left and 100 feet short of the runway. Being close is not good enough.

Be cautious as you select your goals: What you give your life to determines who you become. Look at others who have sought or achieved the same goal that you seek. When they were younger, do you think they would have wanted to grow into the people they have become? Take this thought one step further. Think back about 20 years: Would you then have wanted to become what you are today? If not, remember that it is never too late to reevaluate your goals. An old saying expresses it well: "Success is never final. Failure is never fatal."

When considering what it takes to be successful, I appreciate the wisdom of the Bible. For instance, here is what God told Joshua: *"This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous and then you will have success"* (Joshua 1:8).

Elsewhere in the Bible, He gives the same formula: *"Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the Lord and on His law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers"* (Psalm 1:1-3).

That sounds successful to me: Read your Bible and meditate on it, obey it, and you will prosper.

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### **Reflection/Discussion Questions**

1. Who is the person you consider to be "the most successful" individual that you know personally? What criteria did you use for identifying this individual?

2. Do you think "success" means the same thing to most people? Why or why not?

3. Do you consider yourself successful? Explain your answer.

At the conclusion of your life, what goals or criteria do you believe you must meet to be considered a true success?

4. How do you respond to Ken Korkow's statement that to be truly successful, one must read the Bible, meditate on what it says and strive to obey it?

*NOTE: If you have a Bible available and would like to consider other passages that address this topic, look at these selections from Proverbs:*

Proverbs 6:20-23 12:11, 13:14, 15:16, 15:22, 20:18, 21:5, 24:5-6, 28:19