



THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST BIBLE OUTREACH

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CROSSOVER SERVICE 2024 HINDRANCES TO SUCCESS IN LIFE

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What are the indices of success?

In a society with a wrong value system, people usually view success in terms of material possessions, notwithstanding the sources of wealth.

Thus, many people, seeking to fit into this description of success, struggle to acquire material possessions through unethical means.

Success has nothing to do with material acquisition. It has to do with spending your life pursuing God's purpose; it is becoming all God wants you to be.

It is pouring yourself into the reason for your creation.

This varies from one person to the other. Therefore, there is no reason for comparison. 2 Corinthians 10:12 "For we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise"

It is not about competing to beat the other person. It is focusing on your goals, in light of your destiny.

Whether their definition of success is right or wrong, everybody wants to succeed, but not all succeed.

Some hindrances to success in life.

1. Disobedience to the Word of God.

The Bible says if you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the best of the land (Isaiah 1:19).

The Word of God is work to be done by man – the doer of the work required by the Word shall be blessed James 1:25

[25] But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

Disobedience to God's Word brings a man under a curse, and to be cursed, means to be empowered to fail.

A cursed man cannot succeed. No man can make it under the curses in



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Deuteronomy 28:15-68, are direct consequences of disobedience to the Word of God.

Your number one step towards success in life is to begin to obey the Word of God.

Listen to this bitter truth prayer will never compensate for your disobedience. If you are not born again, you are disobeying the Word of God. The highest disobedience is not to have faith in God and not to believe in His word.³

2. Ignorance. God's people are destroyed for lack of knowledge (Hosea 4:6). Ignorance is lethal. An ignorant man is a dangerous man both to himself and to everybody around him. He cannot succeed. He doesn't even know what success is. Ignorance manifests in many ways. Lack of adequate knowledge and skills necessary to excel in one's area of operation or field of practice in life can limit one's performance, and therefore, hinder one's success.

The servants of Saul looked for a skillful player on the harp to make Saul well whenever a distressing spirit from God was upon him, not someone who was not proficient. After a national search, they found someone with excellent credentials. "Then one of the servants answered and said, 'Look, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, who is skillful in playing, a mighty man of valor, a man of war, prudent in speech, and a handsome person; and the LORD is with him'" (1 Samuel 16:18 New King James Version). That man was David. He had credentials that were in excess of the requirements for the position

Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881), British writer and former Prime Minister, said, "To be conscious that you are ignorant is a great step to knowledge." If you want to succeed in your profession, career, discipline, or practice, pay the necessary price to acquire the training or knowledge that would make you tower above your competitors. Nobody will leave a highly competent, efficient, and effective professional to patronize a mediocre person, except he is looking for a cheap service. Moreover, such a fellow may end up being penny-wise pounds foolish. Don't be ignorant in your field and hope to succeed. "Wise people treasure knowledge" (Proverbs 10:14a New Living Translation).

Many are ignorant of the Word of God, of the promises of God because they don't study the Word and meditate upon it to do according to what is written (Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1:1-3). You cannot replace the Word of God with prayer. If you are ignorant of the Word of God, you cannot obey it or appropriate it for your success (Joshua 1:8).



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Ignorance of the will of God for one's life is another kind of ignorance. Many are laboring as fools (Ecclesiastes 10:15). They are operating outside the will of God for their lives and not employing biblical principles. Therefore, success is not responding to them. They'll only continue to daydream about success until they change.

In the pursuit of success, you have to find out and switch over to, the will of God for your life. It has nothing to do with what others are doing or what they are not doing. It is about what God has called you to do.

Ignorance of the devices of the devil is another kind of ignorance that will hinder someone's success (2 Corinthians 2:11). You should not glorify the devil, but you should not underrate his intelligence; he has wiles or devices. You should not be ignorant of this. These wiles or devices are neither hidden nor new; they are things he has used before and is still using because they are still working for him! They are well documented in the Bible. Study your Bible and ask the Holy Spirit to teach you.

Satan is man's enemy and his ministry is to steal, kill, and destroy (John 10:10). He doesn't want any Christian to succeed. Many Christians are ignorant of spiritual warfare. We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and power and spiritual wickedness in the heavenly places (Ephesians 6:12). Some think they know, but they don't know. It is one thing not to know and another thing not to know that you don't know. The latter is a more complicated case. Imagine a man who is in the midst of warfare yet does not know; he is already a defeated being. He cannot succeed.

Many don't succeed because of multi-faceted ignorance! They require the multi-faceted wisdom of God to get out of the woods. In the school of life, wisdom is the principal! Wisdom will direct your life on the path to success. The Bible says, "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding" (Proverbs 4:7 New King James Version).

Wisdom is profitable to direct (Ecclesiastes 10:10). Lack of wisdom – knowledge of what, where, when, how, and when – will lead a man to nowhere. Only fools despise wisdom and instruction (Proverbs 1:7b). Wisdom will always prevail over ignorance. If you want to succeed in life, get wisdom and with all your getting, get understanding. "Wisdom brings success" (Ecclesiastes 10:10b New King James Version).



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3. Poor fellowship with God.

This is a product of a lack of commitment to God.

If you are committed to God, you will cherish an unbroken fellowship with Him. Poor fellowship manifests in not reading and meditating on the Word of God enough, a dormant prayer life, a sick church life, etc. If there is good fellowship, a child of God will not fail in his quiet time, personal Bible study, regular waiting upon the LORD, etc.

Many Christians wrongly assure themselves they don't need God to succeed hence there is no need for daily fellowship with Him. They depend on their brain to run their lives. However, the Bible says, "Unless the Lord builds a house, the builders' work is useless" (Psalm 127:1 The Living Bible).

Why must you embark on a vain project? Paul can only plant while Apollo waters, but it is God that gives the increase (1 Corinthians 3:6).

He said in 2 Corinthians 3:5, "It is not that we think we are qualified to do anything on our own. Our qualification comes from God" (New Living Translation).

Without God, you're nothing (John 15:5).

As we fellowship with Him daily, God speaks to our hearts what will make us successful in life. He gives us divine insights and directions, which our brains are too small to generate.

When we distance ourselves from Him, we deny ourselves these invaluable blessings.

4. Trusting in man rather than in God. One of the surest ways to fail in life is to put your trust in man.

As good and useful as man is, he is full of many limitations. Trusting in man has been the reason that many Christians have not succeeded in life. Don't mistake the usefulness of man for his infallibility. Never replace God with a man in your life. That's why many have failed. God is a jealous God. He sees to it that such persons fail!

Don't go to Egypt (trust in man) for help; it will result in failure (Isaiah 31:1-3).

Don't trust in chariots and in horses, but only in the Lord (Psalm 20:7-8). Anyone who puts his trust in mere humans and turns his heart away from the Lord is cursed (Jeremiah 17:5).

God doesn't necessarily need to curse the person but that is the implication when he



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doesn't enjoy His blessing. This means he cannot succeed. However, anyone who puts his trust in the Lord on the contrary is blessed. "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the Lord than put confidence in princes" (Psalm 118:8-9 New King James Version).

God does not fail, but man is limited, and therefore, can fail. Rebellious King Asa of Judah had a foot disease, but even when the disease became life-threatening, he did not seek the Lord's help but sought help only from his physicians (2 Chronicles 16:12-13). He didn't trust the LORD for his healing, but trusted physicians and died as a result. His physicians failed him!

Those who trust in the Lord are stabilized, rock solid, unmovable like a mountain; they stand forever (Psalm 125:1). Proverbs 3:5 says you should trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding, in all your ways acknowledge him and he shall direct your paths. If you take heed to these words, you are just some steps close to success.

5. Laziness.

This is another factor hindering success – laziness at work and in spiritual matters. God and people see the lazy person as unreliable and undependable.

No one wants to commit anything serious to a lazy person. A lazy person doesn't do enough to succeed. God cannot help him because He hates idleness. He is a worker. He worked and is still working.

If the lazy must succeed, he must embrace diligence; he must embrace industry. In any equation of success in life, diligence is a constant.

Proverbs 12:24

[24]The hand of the diligent will rule, But the lazy man will be put to forced labor.

Hard work will always give the diligent person the upper hand in anything, but the lazy man will become a slave. Proverbs 13:4 also says, "The soul of the slothful desires, and has nothing but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat."



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There are several scriptures on diligence and slothfulness in the Bible, especially in the book of Proverbs. By the time a lazy person finishes reading these Bible verses, he would hate slothfulness. It suffices to say that there is no success for a lazy person. "Do you see a man who excels in his work? He will stand before kings; He will not stand before unknown men" (Proverbs 22:29 New King James Version).

6. Lack of consistency and constancy.

This leads to poor performance and an absence of positive character. Many Christians are not consistent and steadfast when it comes to their aspiration for success.

Don't think success comes with a little effort. If you read the story of Isaac in Genesis 26:15-22, you will see that he kept on digging the wells until he dug one which nobody quarreled with him over. He never gave up.

Many people lack that staying power that keeps on doing the same thing long enough for success to come.

They give up so soon. Elijah asked his servant to keep going again until the seventh time when he gave what he considered to be a report good enough

1 Kings 18:43-44

[43]and said to his servant, "Go up now, look toward the sea." So he went up and looked, and said, "There is nothing." And seven times he said, "Go again."

[44]Then it came to pass the seventh time, that he said, "There is a cloud, as small as a man's hand, rising out of the sea!" So he said, "Go up, say to Ahab, 'Prepare your chariot, and go down before the rain stops you.' "

7. Complacency. (An instance of self-satisfaction.)

Complacency is the mother of mediocrity. Complacent Christians make no serious attempt to improve continuously on their work and they wonder why business, customers, and good things are passing them by.

If as a Christian you are going to succeed in life, you must not be complacent. A complacent person folds his arms waiting for success to come to him. Amos 6:1 says, "Woe to you who are complacent in Zion..." (New International Version). The rich farmer in Luke 12:16-20 was complacent after the unexpected bountiful harvest on his farm. All he planned to do after storing his harvest was to be enjoying himself. However, that night, God demanded his life from him.



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A Christian should give generously, voluntarily, willingly, and cheerfully out of his possessions to support the Christian ministry and also give to the poor and the needy as faithful stewards of God's blessings (1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 2 Corinthians 8:1-9; 9:1-15). Proverbs 11:25 says, "The generous will prosper; those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed" (New Living Translation). Similarly, Proverbs 19:17 says, "If you help the poor, you are lending to the Lord — and he will repay you!" (New Living Translation).

If you engage in a business where you make dishonest gains through buying and selling stolen goods, etc. you cannot succeed because you are trying to prosper at the expense of somebody's goods. You may gather, but the wind will blow it away!

Proverbs 15:27 "He that is greedy of gain troubles his own house; but he that hates bribes shall live" (American Standard Version). Also, Proverbs 28:8 says, "Whoever increases wealth by taking interest or profit from the poor amasses it for another, who will be kind to the poor" (New International Version).

God does not bless those who exploit others to make it in life. Don't use unjust measures; don't cheat. "Like a partridge that hatches eggs she has not laid, so are those who get their wealth by unjust means. At midlife they will lose their riches; in the end, they will become poor old fools" (Jeremiah 17:11 New Living Translation).

9. Rebellious attitude towards authorities. This includes spiritual and secular authorities because those in authority are servants of God (Romans 13:1-7).

God is a God of order. A Christian who rebels against or disrespects the authorities God places over him cannot succeed. Learn to submit yourself to the authority of your parents, pastor, trainer, boss, etc. You cannot fail to submit to the man you see, and say you are submissive to the God you have not seen physically.

Beware of pride if you want to succeed in life. Take correction.

Proverbs 10:17 "He who keeps instruction is in the way of life, But he who refuses correction goes astray" (New King James Version). Proverbs 15:10 says "Harsh discipline is for him who forsakes the way, And he who hates correction will die" (New King James Version).

10. Selfishness.

Self-centredness and stinginess hinder people from success. Selfishness is a manifestation of a lack of love for others. Many Christians don't give; they are only concerned about themselves. Many don't give apart from the offerings and tithes in church. They close their eyes to the needs of others. As descendants of Abraham, we should be a blessing to others (Genesis 12:2).



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The Bible says the gift of a man (Proverbs 18:16). Your material or financial gifts will make room for him. This is also true of spiritual gifts. Generosity can open doors for you. It is this generosity that the world has abused and turned to bribery. The Bible condemns bribery as we have seen earlier. However, the Bible says a generous soul shall be made fat (Proverbs 11:25). Generosity pays!

In 1 Samuel 30:8-19, David was able to get the most needed information that led to the recovery of all that the Amalekites had carried away because he was kind to the starving Egyptian whose master had abandoned him because he was sick. Many Christians miss it because they think the only giving that has rewards is the offerings in the church. They fail to take advantage of affecting positively the lives of those who can be a blessing to them and help them to succeed. I am not talking about the kind of giving (bribery), to compromise the receiver. Selfishness makes some business owners not to pay their staff well or in time. Yet, they need their workers to succeed. How will they achieve that?

The Bible says as we have the opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith (Galatians 6:10) Ephesians 5:16 says, "Use every chance you have for doing good, because these are evil times" (New Century Version). According to Proverbs 3:27, "Whenever you possibly can, do good to those who need it. Never tell your neighbors to wait until tomorrow if you can help them now" (Good News Translation). The people you help may not necessarily be the ones that will repay you, and you shouldn't even expect them to repay you. God knows how to pay you back.

It has been rightly said that whatever you make happen for somebody, God will make happen for you.

11. Trying to please everybody.

This is very important in order to balance the last point I made. That you should do good to people does not mean that you should try to please all. It is not possible to please everybody.

Doing good to others does not mean you compromise because you want them to see you as a nice person. That is what many people do. They don't want to offend people, which is not possible.



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I like what John Mason said. He said, "There is one guaranteed formula for failure, and that is to try to please everyone." You cannot satisfy everyone; you can only help as many people as you have the means to help.

Do not be sentimental; do what is right only, and do only what you can afford. Don't go out deliberately to impress people so that they can speak well of you; not everyone will do that even if you strip yourself naked to give to them. As you are trying to help somebody another person is unhappy about it, but you can't do anything about that.

Don't try to be a man-pleaser; be a God-pleaser, and help those you are in a position to help. Those who are not in a position to help because of lack of means or because it violates the Word of God, don't have a guilty conscience about that. Even if helping them does not contradict the Word of God, but you lack the means, don't be troubled; that may be an assignment for another person. You can still encourage them and pray that God will use somebody else to help them. You cannot help everybody that comes your way. Paul the apostle said in Galatians 1:10, "For is it man's favour or God's that I aspire to? Or am I seeking to please men? If I were still a man-pleaser, I should not be Christ's bondservant" (Weymouth's New Testament). He was a God pleaser – he knew his Source. You should know your Source too.

12. Wrong relationships.

The right relationships can contribute to your success and the wrong relationships can hinder your success. Everybody needs relationships, but not just any relationship. You need the right relationships. Everyone who has succeeded in life will tell you that some persons played certain roles. Those who have ruined their lives will also tell you about those who influenced them negatively. Proverbs 13:20 says, "He who walks with wise men will be wise, But the companion of fools will be destroyed" (New King James Version). For you to succeed, you need in your life the right people that will bring out the best in you, encourage you, fire you up, teach you, advise you, etc. "As iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend" (Proverbs 27:17 New King James Version).

Perhaps the greatest danger of a wrong relationship vis-à-vis success is wrong advice. This has ruined many lives and projects. For example, Rehoboam's acceptance of wrong advice by his mates led to the division of the kingdom (1 Kings 12). Amnon, son of David, listened to the advice of Jonadab on how to rape his half-sister, Tamar (2 Samuel 13:5-6). A



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God-fearing friend would have rebuked Amnon for even talking about lusting after his half-sister, but Jonadab, a crafty man, was a bad influence on him. Absalom, Tamar's brother, later retaliated and killed Amnon, his half-brother, for humiliating his sister. Who are your friends or advisers? Wrong relationships will open you to bad counsel. "The godly give good advice to their friends; the wicked lead them astray" (Proverbs 12:26 New Living Translation).

13. Lack of respect for time.

God has given us 24 hours each day. This represents our lives each day.

It is amazing how people waste their time and indeed their lives.

Really, we don't waste our time; we waste our lives. Those who don't have respect for their time cannot have respect for other people's time. Invest time in what is profitable, what has a bearing on your life assignment, what blesses people, and what builds and makes other people succeed. How you spend your seconds will determine how you spend your minutes, your hours, your days, your weeks, your months, and your years. The Psalmist says, "Teach us to realize the brevity of life, so that we may grow in wisdom" (Psalm 90:12 New Living Translation). The Contemporary English Version renders the verse thus: "Teach us to use wisely all the time we have."

To succeed in life, use your time wisely. As much as you need to spend time to show love to people as commanded by God, beware of people who like to waste your time. Know how to manage your time so that people who waste your time don't gatecrash into your schedule or take more time than they deserve. Learn to manage one minute and you will be able to manage your time and indeed your life.

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