

FOUR KEYS TO SUCCESS FOR CHRISTIAN LEADERS

INTRODUCTION

All normal persons admire those who are successful. We desire to be personally successful. Christian workers should desire “success” in their work in the sense of rendering effective service that benefits others and glorifies God. Success does not come accidentally. While many factors contribute to a Christian worker’s success, four are essential.

I. Character

- A. Definition: Essential quality or nature. What one really is. “What a person is like when no one sees.” Reputation is what others think about us; character is what God knows about us.
- B. Strong faith is essential to Godly character. Heb. 11:1, 2, 6; 2 Peter 1:5-ff.
 - i. Genuine faith involves conviction, obedience, and trust.
 - ii. It is produced by the Word. Romans 10:17; John 10:31
 - iii. Faith keeps the Christian who keeps the faith. Eph. 6:16; I John 5:4
- C. Purity of heart is essential to Godly character.
 - i. Thoughts are the raw material out of which character is made.
 - ii. The heart is a person’s control center. Our thinking controls our actions and words. Proverbs 4:23; Matt. 15:19
 - iii. The subconscious mind doesn’t know the difference between a real and an imaginary experience.
 - iv. Thoughts are the source of spiritual power or weakness.
 - v. Testing our thoughts; Would we want the best person we know to be aware of them? Would we be ashamed for them to be written across the sky for all to see?
 - vi. Mediating on sinful thoughts dulls our sense of morality.
 - vii. An exclusively negative approach to thought control is ineffective. “Overcome evil by good.” Emphasize positive, wholesome thinking. Phil 4:8.
- D. A person of Godly character values the spiritual above the material. I Tim 6:5-10
 - i. We are prone to apply this warning only to others.
 - ii. Rich is relative
 - iii. One’s mindset toward material wealth is what matters.
- E. A good conscience is essential to Godly character. I Tim 1:19
 - i. Conscience is an “inner voice” that approves when we do what we think is right and disapproves when we do what we think is wrong.
 - ii. The conscience can be dulled. I Tim 4:2; Eph 4:19
 - iii. One whose conscience informs him he is guilty of sin is self-condemned. I John 3:20.
 - iv. The conscience is a safe guide only when it is guided by God’s word.
- F. One does not acquire good character accidentally, but through determined effort with God’s help. I Tim 4:16; II Tim 2:15
 - i. Press forward in spiritual growth. Phil. 3:7-14
 - ii. Prayer. Acts 6:4; Rom. 12:12; Eph. 6:18

II. Competence

- A. Ability, qualifications, and expertise
- B. God endows us with natural abilities which can be vastly improved through his help and proper effort on our part.
- C. We are to be diligent in maintaining and improving our competency.
- D. Competency as a Bible student and teacher comes through prolonged, diligent effort.
 - i. Young preacher said to the older one, "I would give a lifetime of study to be as skillful in the word as you are." Reply: "That's what I have given."
 - ii. II Timothy 2:15
- E. One who desires to be competent takes advantage of learning and training opportunities.
 - i. Look for opportunities, not excuses
 - ii. Sacrifices must be made to achieve our maximum potential – time, mental effort, money, etc.
- F. When we stop growing, we start dying.
- G. Success comes to those who are prepared for it.

III. Compassion

- A. Concern for the problems of others with a desire to help.
- B. The compassionate Christ. Matt. 9:36; 14:14; 20:34; Luke 23:34.
- C. The compassion of Paul. Rom. 9:1-3; 10:1
- D. Genuine compassion will cause us to:
 - i. Try to win the lost to Christ
 - ii. Counsel and comfort the troubled.
 - iii. Identify with people's problems and needs.
 - iv. Be patient with those whose behavior is undesirable. Eph. 4:32
 - v. Be more interested in other's welfare than our own. Phil. 2:1-5
 - vi. Continue in spite of discouragement. I Thes. 2:2

IV. Commitment