

**October 28, 2020**

A devotion for success in life.

Success in life does not come easy. It requires diligence, prayer, investment, and hard work. Many self-help books and programs have been written and developed to help people succeed in life. God provided us the definitive writings on how to succeed in life. Today let us read from 1 Chronicles 29:10-20.

*10 So David blessed the LORD in the sight of all the assembly; and David said, "Blessed are You, O LORD God of Israel our father, forever and ever. 11 Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, indeed everything that is in the heavens and the earth; Yours is the dominion, O LORD, and You exalt Yourself as head over all. 12 Both riches and honor come from You, and You rule over all, and in Your hand is power and might; and it lies in Your hand to make great and to strengthen everyone. 13 Now therefore, our God, we thank You, and praise Your glorious name. 14 "But who am I and who are my people that we should be able to offer as generously as this? For all things come from You, and from Your hand we have given You. 15 For we are sojourners before You, and tenants, as all our fathers were; our days on the earth are like a shadow, and there is no hope. 16 O LORD our God, all this abundance that we have provided to build You a house for Your holy name, it is from Your hand, and all is Yours. 17 Since I know, O my God, that You try the heart and delight in uprightness, I, in the integrity of my heart, have willingly offered all these things; so now with joy I have seen Your people, who are present here, make their offerings willingly to You. 18 O LORD, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, our fathers, preserve this forever in the intentions of the heart of Your people, and direct their heart to You; 19 and give to my son Solomon a perfect heart to keep Your*

*commandments, Your testimonies and Your statutes, and to do them all, and to build the temple, for which I have made provision.” 20 Then David said to all the assembly, “Now bless the LORD your God.” And all the assembly blessed the LORD, the God of their fathers, and bowed low and did homage to the LORD and to the king.*

A few years ago I went to a seminar and the theme of this seminar was based in part upon two questions: “How strong is my foundation?” and “What am I willing to do to strengthen my foundation?” What was not included in this seminar is the simple fact that each of our foundations for success in life was laid as we were growing up. The foundations for living were set in place in the early years of our lives by our parents and other adults. We often fail to realize to what extent our parents are responsible for the success we enjoy in life. What are some of the ways our parents have laid a foundation upon which we may build for success?

In our Scripture King David prays after providing every opportunity for his son Solomon to succeed in building a temple for God. So what are some of the things that David did to set a solid foundation in place for Solomon?

We must learn to build upon the promises of God. God told David that his son and descendants would sit on the throne of Israel forever (see 2 Samuel 7:8-17). David believed God and set out to strengthen the foundation upon which his son would build for success.

As parents and adults of influence on others we too must build for our children a strong foundation which has as its base the promises of God. Paul reminds, “No man can lay a foundation other than the one which is [already] laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 3:11). Jesus also teaches the life which has as its foundation the Solid Rock of Christ Jesus will be able to withstand even the greatest of life’s desperate

moments (Luke 6:46-49). Remember to build the foundation of a child's future also requires faith in God. Let all of us build our children's foundation upon the promises of God.

We must model integrity in every aspect of our lives. I have been asked many times to define integrity. Integrity is to do and say what is right because it is right. Remember, children watch us adults closely. They see us in the most difficult and the most beautiful times of life. How we act must be constant regardless of the circumstances that confront and confound us. The Sage encourages, "A righteous man who walks in his integrity—how blessed are his sons after him" (Proverbs 20:7). A person's reputation is always based upon their integrity or lack thereof. We adults must model integrity for our children, their future depends upon it.

Adults be diligent in your work. The way you approach your career will be observed by the children around you. Let your children see the value you place upon hard work, education, and the satisfaction of a job well done. Let them see your commitment and diligence to do your work without grumbling and complaining; to see your work accomplished with excellence. Again we turn to the Sage for advice, "The soul of the sluggard craves and gets nothing, but the soul of the diligent is made fat" (Proverbs 13:4). Be diligent in your work whether at work or home, children are watching you.

Demonstrate patience with children and others. Patience is a gift of God (see Galatians 5:22-23). Without the Holy Spirit working in our lives none of us could cope with the responsibilities of life. Many find it easy to have patience with others, but with our families we have a short fuse on our temper and a hair trigger on our tongue. We must learn to respond to children's questions and concerns with patience. Be patient

with others, especially children; they are after all just learning about life and they are learning from you!

Allow others the freedom to fail. When we demand perfection in everything others do we are providing a high standard, which is good but, we must also allow freedom to fail. Those around us must have sufficient freedom to make mistakes so that you can teach, nurture, and mentor. After all, failure is a step on the road to success. No success ever came without first experiencing failure. Allow people the freedom to fail so that they will use these stepping stones to become a success in life.

Nurture others in the ways of God. The habits we instill in others sustains them throughout their lives. If they begin with bad habits they will finish with bad habits. Among the habits necessary for success in life are those which develop faith and strength of character.

Sacrifice your own self interests for those of others. Sacrifice is never easy. Yet we must learn to invest in others. There are precious few opportunities in which we can make a lasting impression upon others. Let us not squander these moments. Take advantage of them to nurture others' dreams, hopes and desires. Be willing to set aside your own self interests in order to help others succeed. Remember sacrifice inherently has a cost, but the cost of not sacrificing is more expensive.

Learn to love without condition. This is God's example. God accepts us as we are, but He loves us too much to leave us that way. Our heavenly Father sacrificed His own Son, Jesus so that you and I could be with Him for all eternity. It is God's example of love that we must model for others. Let us teach others how to love as God loves. John writes, "In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another" (1 John 4:10-11).

Christians, people are watching you. They will follow the example you provide. People learn from you, both bad and good. Love without condition. Show them what it is to be a person of God and a follower of Jesus. Live in such a way they will see your good deeds and thereby glorify our heavenly Father. Let us pray.

*Heavenly Father, help each of us to be Your excellent examples. Let us always seek to glorify You in all we say, in all we think, and in all we do through Jesus our Lord, amen.*

Never forget that you live under a microscope: others are always watching your example for Jesus.

Until the nets are full