

Define Family Success in Godly Terms

How do you define success? We often talk of a person being “successful.” But what is the image that usually comes to mind? They’re rich. We think of success in terms running a company, or doubling the square footage of our current residence. But is that real success?

The dictionary defines success as the achievement of something desired, planned, or attempted. So, if you go home tonight and desire to mop your floor and do it, you can be successful! You don’t need Tony Robbins to help.

Of course, we can get goofy about it, but how ironic is it that we determine the ultimate success of someone in our culture in completely materialistic terms? It’s a reflection of our shallow nation. So what should be the achievements we desire to accomplish?

Well, one should be to live a family-saturated life. This is the idea that loving your spouse and raising children of character is a greater accomplishment, as far as you are concerned, than driving the latest model BMW. Now there’s nothing wrong with nice material things; just remember that money is a great servant, but a poor master.

So how do we live a family-saturated life? As long as we’re bringing up the business world, let’s craft a “family vision” and “strategic plan.” Feel free to adapt accordingly.

Family Vision

To live my life deliberately to encourage, prompt and foster spiritual, emotional, mental and physical growth in my spouse and children.

Family Strategy

1. To Lead by Example. To demonstrate a consistent pattern of self-sacrifice for my spouse and children. This includes the deliberate putting aside of selfish interests for the good of my family—understanding that the rewards of doing so will far outweigh the slight sacrifice.

2. To Make Time for Family. A deliberate lifestyle of quantity and quality time with spouse and kids. This means not only engaging in family outings, but also not trying to crunch family time in between other obligations, so that I'm more concerned about external events than my internal household.

3. To Commit to Being Romantic. Knowing that my wife loves romance—even though sometimes I think romantic notions are a little goofy—I will do those extra special things that I know makes my wife feel wonderful.

4. To Speak Encouraging Words to My Kids. I know my kids aren't perfect, and will make mistakes and willfully disobey. With that being said, I will not use words to demean them or tear them down, but will instead choose to use words and attitudes that firmly correct, but always in the end, build them up.

5. To Limit Distractions Within the House. Football games, computer programs, even yard work, can all be great things in themselves. But I will only engage in these and similar activities as long as they do not detract from family. My time with my wife and kids is priceless, and I will make the most of it.

6. To Actively Engage in My Kids' Worlds. This includes deliberate steps to listen and watch what my kids are listening and watching, and to get to know my children's friends. I know many things in our society encourage kids to rebel and behave wrongly, so I will take steps to limit this influence and instead pour into my children good and pure things.

7. To Take Responsibility for the Proper Education of My Children. I will not leave learning up to an unknown teacher but will actively partner with my children's educators, and my wife, to ensure my children get the best education possible, which will give them a richer and fuller life.

8. To Live With the End in View. I recognize my mortality and therefore wish to focus my limited time here on earth on things that are really important—and with God's help—to leave my children an example of an upright man and loving father.

These are just a few ideas for your family strategic plan. But the point is that all successful people in the business world have specific steps to help them reach their goal. So why not have specific steps to help you reach your family vision? You can have a great family, but it won't be handed to you. You must live deliberately. Your children are counting on you.

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