

Redefining Success

So the LORD was with him, and Hezekiah was successful in everything he did. He revolted against the king of Assyria and refused to pay him tribute.

2 Kings 18:7

What does it mean to be successful?

Success usually brings to mind financial achievement or being number one. Others would define success by the bumper sticker: "He who dies with the most toys wins." Some like to think that success is being busy—on the go, racing from one appointment to another, and having too much to do with too little time to do it.

The problem with these definitions of success is they exact a high cost. The *Executive Digest* has noted, "The trouble with success is that the formula is the same as the one for a nervous breakdown." That's sobering, uncomfortable, and too often true.

Maybe the definition of success that you are familiar with is not the correct one. I would encourage you to reassess your definition of success before it is too late. May I propose a new look at the word .?

Service. There is no such thing as success without service. The secret of success lies in meeting the needs of others. And when we are meeting people's needs, we will discover fulfillment.

Understanding contentment. Let's not measure success by how much we own or how much money we have but by a sense of inner contentment. Real success is always internal, never external.

Character. Character is of greater value than how much money or status we have. A man's best test of character is revealed

in how he treats people around him. So measure your success not by your possessions and achievements. Measure success by the quality of your character and conduct.

Compassion. What really matters is not money, power, and ego but issues of the heart—such as compassion, kindness, bravery, generosity, and love. Do you love people more than things?

Excellence. Excellence is not being the best but being *your* best.

Significance. The popular notion of success has not cut it. A growing number of people yearn for significance more than success. Significance comes by giving ourselves to something that is greater than us and that will outlast us.

Sacrifice. A problem in our society is that we are spending our entire lives looking for something worth living for. It would be better if we found something worth dying for. Success under these guidelines will bring you into harmony with God's guidance.