

Keep Your Eye On The Ball!



Pursuing Our Biblical Mandate in a Godless Culture

Part 2. Measuring Success

(Psalm 73)

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Introduction: Our Struggle with Success

- Why do the ungodly succeed while I (pursuing godliness) seem to fail?
- It affects us all at certain times, even the spiritually-mature.
- We must “keep our eye on the ball” as it relates to a correct view of success!

1. Struggling with Temporal Success

A Psalm of Asaph.

Surely God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart! ²But as for me, my feet came close to stumbling, my steps had almost slipped. ³For I was envious of the arrogant As I saw the prosperity of the wicked. ⁴For there are no pains in their death, And their body is fat. ⁵They are not in trouble *as other* men, nor are they plagued like mankind. ⁶Therefore pride is their necklace; The garment of violence covers them. ⁷Their eye bulges from fatness; the imaginations of *their* heart run riot. ⁸They mock and wickedly speak of oppression; they speak from on high. ⁹They have set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue parades through the earth. ¹⁰Therefore his people return to this place, and waters of abundance are drunk by them. ¹¹They say, “How does God know? And is there knowledge with the Most High?” ¹²Behold, these are the wicked; and always at ease, they have increased *in* wealth. ¹³Surely in vain I have kept my heart pure and washed my hands in innocence; ¹⁴for I have been stricken all day long and chastened every morning. **Psalm 73:1-14, NASB**

Worldly Attributes of the Ungodly

- Self-Exalting: Arrogance, Pride, Personal Freedom (Autonomy)
- Self-Sufficient: Prosperous, Wealthy/Rich, Well-Fed, Trouble/Care-Free, Imaginative
- God-Mockers, Wicked, Violent

2. Acknowledgement of the Ungodly’s End

¹⁵If I had said, “I will speak thus,” Behold, I would have betrayed the generation of our children. ¹⁶When I pondered to understand this, it was troublesome in my sight ¹⁷Until I came into the sanctuary of God; *Then* I perceived their end. ¹⁸Surely You set them in slippery places; You cast them down to destruction. ¹⁹How they are destroyed in a moment! They are utterly swept away by sudden terrors! ²⁰Like a dream when one awakes, O Lord, when aroused, You will despise their form. **Psalm 73:15-20, NASB**

Steps toward a Godly, Eternal Mindset

- Catching ourselves before saying something to derail other believers. (Vs 15-16)
- Being in God’s presence (through worship) in order to re-align our thinking. (Vs 17a)
- Perceiving the certain end of the ungodly. (Vs 17b-20)

3. Repentance (Changing our Thinking & Direction)

²¹When my heart was embittered and I was pierced within, ²²then I was senseless and ignorant; I was *like* a beast before You. ²³Nevertheless I am continually with You; You have taken hold of my right hand. ²⁴With Your counsel You will guide me, And afterward receive me to glory. ²⁵Whom have I in heaven *but You*? And besides You, I desire nothing on earth. ²⁶My flesh and my heart may fail, But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. ²⁷For, behold, those who are far from You will perish; You have destroyed all those who are unfaithful to You. ²⁸But as for me, the nearness of God is my good; I have made the Lord GOD my refuge, That I may tell of all Your works. **Psalm 73:21-28, NASB**

- Confessing Spiritual Bitterness (Vs 21-22)
- Confessing the Care of God and Dependence Upon Him (Vss 23-26)
- Confessing the Eternal Distinction between the Ungodly and the Godly (Vss 27-28)

4. Now HERE'S an Example of a Successful, Eternal-Minded Living!

For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. ⁷I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; ⁸in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.

- 2 Timothy 4:6-8, NASB -

5. Application

- A. Honestly admit your sense of frustration over the two measurements of success.
- B. Worship the Lord and fellowship with his people to re-align your view to God's.
- C. Reinforce your thinking with an eternal mindset over a temporal one.
- D. Confess your times of bitterness in your struggle between temporal and eternal success.
- E. Thank God for His faithful care.
- F. (Repeat process as necessary!)

Ponder Point

As a citizen of Heaven, an ambassador of God's eternal kingdom in a foreign land, don't allow the world's temporal view of measuring success to detour you from your divinely-assigned mission. Keep reinforcing in your mind the truth of eternity, the end of the ungodly and the reward that comes from God for living an earthly life for a Heavenly reward – This leads to a successful, godly life!