

Inspirational Emails

Success is Personal by CV Doner, PhD

One of the keys to success is so obvious that many people overlook it.

That key is: **see yourself as a successful person.**

Unfortunately, many people who are quite successful in areas that count (areas that even they themselves consider important) don't "see" themselves as "successful." **This happens whenever we allow others, or our culture, to define success for us.**



In Western culture, success is usually defined as having a lot of money or never looking older than 30 or being a celebrity or having an SUV, RV, BMW, M.D., MBA, PhD, owning your own business, or ... you fill in the blank.

Unfortunately, people who have obtained these popular symbols of success often sacrifice true wealth along the way. They become so focused on our culture's rules of success (i.e., money, fame, career) that they forget friends, family, and often their own health: spiritual, mental, and physical.

In reality, **a person is truly successful when they can consistently experience the personal values they have determined will define their life** (these values become the essence that infuses their life with meaning).

If you are following God's Rules for successful living, you will value success with your family, as a spouse and partner, as a son or daughter, as a brother or sister. You will desire success as a friend, as well as a mentor, as an active participant in your community and in **cultivating the spiritual values that will allow you to lead a God-empowered life.** You'll also value success at "growing" your mind and keeping your emotions and your body healthy.



Take some time, this month, to **review your personal values** - not those of your co-workers or friends, not those of your political party or favorite sports team, not those of the media - yours. Then look for the areas where you are experiencing those values consistently **and give yourself some credit for your success.**

Getting along better with your spouse than you were a couple of years ago? That's success! More accepting of your best friend's political views? That's success! Enjoying volunteering at your community food bank? Walking several times a week after dinner? Taking time daily to tune in to God? All that is success!

If on top of all this, your career and finances are also successful, great! That's the icing on the cake. **But it's only the icing; don't mistake it for the cake.**

