



FEARS, TEARS & JEERS:

Staying positive
in a negative world, Lesson #7

GOOD MORNING!

Thus far in this series, we've covered:

- Lesson 1: FEAR of eternal insecurity...
- Lesson 2: FEAR of death...
- Lesson 3: FEAR of failure...
- Lesson 4: FEAR of choosing...
- Lesson 5: FEAR of strongholds...
- Lesson 6: FEAR of problems...

**At first blush,
today's fear may seem odd:**



What IS success?

- It means different things to different people...
- ...and it also means different things in different contexts.

How you define success...

- Can be affected and shaped by your family culture growing up.
- By your spouse.
- By all kinds of influences at work, in school, in the media...

- By the road you've travelled—personal experiences.
- By current circumstances and predicaments.

One core definition of success is...

- LACK OF FEAR!
- False Evidence Assumed Real
- 2 Timothy 1:7 says *“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.”* So then, living the Spirit-filled life is success.

Another core definition of success is...


- Knowing and consistently abiding in God’s Call. 1 Corinthians 7:17, 20, and 24 say, *“But as God hath distributed (spiritual gifts) to every man, as the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk. And so ordain I in all the churches...”*

- *“...Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called...”*
- *“...Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God.”*
- Why? Because if you do, you’ll bear more fruit for the Kingdom.



Another definition is...


- The accomplishment of goals in life.
- Which begs the next profound question:
- Exactly what **ARE** your goals?



Can you relate to these goals?

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|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| • Staying "healthy." | • Being a good person. |
| • Staying emotionally "stable." | • Being a good spouse and parent. |
| • Staying mentally "sharp." | • Being a good citizen. |
| • Staying financially "in the black." | • Being a good employer or employee. |
| • Staying enthused about life. | |

Isn't it true that your goals shape your life?



- Many people in our culture define success in the wrong ways, through the core goals of selfishness and covetousness.

• Let's re-read Matthew 19:16-26.
• Luke 12:15
• Colossians 3:5
• 1 Timothy 6:9-11
• Psalm 39:6

• *“And behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?”*

• *And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments...”*

• *“He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, THOU SHALT DO NO MURDER, THOU SHALT NOT COMMIT ADULTERY, THOU SHALT NOT STEAL, THOU SHALT NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS, HONOR THY FATHER AND THY MOTHER, AND, THOU SHALT LOVE THY NEIGHBOR AS THYSELF...”*

• “The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?”

• Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow me...”

• “But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions.

• Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven...”

• And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.”

• “When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.” Matthew 19:16-26

• *“And he said unto them, “Take heed, and beware of covetousness, for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.” Luke 12:15*

• Translation: he who dies with the most toys **doesn’t** win. Have you ever seen a hearse with a trailer?



• *“Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupisence, and covetousness, which is idolatry...” Colossians 3:5*

• *“But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things: and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.” 1 Timothy 6:9-11*

• *“Surely every man walketh in vain shew: surely they are disquieted in vain; he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them.”*
Psalm 39:6

If you don't want to fear success...

- Then make sure your core definitions of success and your core goals in life are compatible with God's definitions and God's goals! That's why *The Purpose Driven Life* has been so effective.

Which drummer are you marching to...

- The Lord...
- or the world?
- You cannot serve two masters. Which will it be ***from today forward?***
The rich young ruler had an opportunity to change his goals, his definition of success, but he wouldn't.



So, then, why can we fear success?

- Deep inside, we feel insecure...we don't feel that we deserve it.



- Deep inside, we are afraid of succeeding because it will mean change. We're not ready for it.

- Deep inside, we are afraid of succeeding...because we're afraid of the possible fall afterwards.




- Deep inside, we are afraid of success because we don't think we have what it takes to succeed.

- Deep inside, we fear success because it will raise people's expectations and increase pressure.




- Deep inside, we fear success because it will make us more accountable. You'll lose your anonymity.



- Deep inside, we fear success because we know the road to it may be long, challenging, and perhaps pretty lonely.
- Deep inside, we fear success because others will be jealous of it. We'd rather slither on the ground than soar like an eagle because we'll be more accepted.

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- Deep inside, we fear success because we have failed in the past, we view ourselves as failures, and we prefer to remain failures.
- There are all kinds of reasons why we can fear failure—most of which are subconscious.

People are very complicated!

- We're all comprised of this dysfunctional, goulash-type stew of emotions and thoughts that can get us tied up in knots!
- Don't let Satan play mind games and rob you of enjoying genuine success!



Let's close with Joshua 1:8-9

- This is the only place the word "success" appears in Scripture:
- *"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein..."*

- *"...for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."*
- *"Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed; for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest." Amen!*

Some tips:

- Confess your fears to the Lord, and repent of them in prayer.
- Surrender yourself to the Holy Spirit regularly. The Lord has to be your Authority.
- Abide in your call.

Think positive!

- You stay positive in a negative world by thinking positive: *“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.”* Philippians 4:8

- In the wake of the recent 8th anniversary of 9-11, we need “more” successful Christians in this world! If evil people can choose to be terrorists then we can choose to be JOYISTS...and successfully overcome evil with good!
- Let's close in prayer.
