

THE MAKING OF A MAN #13 Solomon

The dictionary defines success as “*achieving wealth, respect, fame or the desired result of an attempt.*” Business magnate, Richard Branson, says it “*is measured by how happy you are.*” Author Stephen Covey, defines it as “*what you want said at your funeral.*”



Computer guru, Bill Gates, says it’s “*feeling like you made a difference by inventing something or helping people in need.*” Billionaire Warren Buffett measures it by “*how many people love you.*” TV personality Mark Cuban sees it as “*waking up in the morning with a smile knowing it’s going to be a great day.*” Legendary UCLA basketball coach John Wooden says it’s “*Peace of mind attained only through self-satisfaction in knowing you made your best effort.*” Actor Woody Allen claimed that “*80% of success is showing up!*” Thomas Edison said it was “*1% inspiration, 99% perspiration.*” Winston Churchill saw it as “*experiencing failure without losing enthusiasm.*” **How would you define success? According to the following verses how would God describe it? What chisels does He use to make you the successful man He wants you to be?**

Joshua 1:7-9

Gen 39:1-3; 23

Matt 22:36-40

John 17:4

Ps 1:1-3

I Cor 3:10-15; I Cor 4:2

Gal 2:20

THE MEASURE OF SUCCESS Your Creator is far more committed to your success as a man than you will ever be! Like a good Father, He has designed you for and deeply desires your success according to His high standards. He has promised to give you all the resources, power, wisdom, principles and opportunities for success....on His high terms! Jesus is God’s most successful man! He never dipped into His deity to live successfully the life and die the death His Father called Him to. Instead, He depended daily on the wisdom, power and guidance of the Holy Spirit just as He expects us to (Acts 10:37-38; John 1:32-33; Matt 3:16-17; Luke 4:1-2, 18-19; Is 11:1-3; Heb 9:14; Rom 8:11; Eph 5:18). In Christ, God illustrates biblical success as **FAITHFUL OBEDIENCE** to His Word in response to His love. Though we may experience high positions, increased performance, or multiplied possessions they are never equated with being successful from God’s point of view. In fact

though the world may measure success by these, Christ’s men can be successful without having any of them! By worldly standards, King Solomon is the picture of success, but the Lord uses Him as an historical chisel to help us understand real success and to give us wisdom to pursue Him first in life. Let’s discover God’s key principles of success from Solomon’s life who was born in 990 BC (2Sam 12:24) to David and Bathsheba, becoming the 3rd king of Israel at age 20 and who reigned for 40 yrs (2Chron 30) and died at age 60 (1King 11:40-43).

TRUE SUCCESS IS

1. Doing life **GOD’S WAY** (1 Kings 2:1-4). Like any great dad, David challenges his son, Solomon, to be successful...God’s way! What principles of success did David leave to Solomon with his last words? How well are you living and teaching these to your children/grands? Did Solomon successfully live out his words to his children (**Prov 3:1-8**)?



2. Finding and removing all **EXCEPTION** clauses. “Solomon loved the Lord except....” (1 Kings 3:3; 15:5; 22:43; 2 Kings 12:2-3; 17:33; 1 John 2:12-17; 5:21) As Covid has revealed, it’s often not the big things that trip you up but the little things that kill success! Solomon loved God **BUT** left the door open for relatively little things that were not of God to destroy him, his family and divide the nation. God states clearly the standards for His men in leadership and there are to be no exception clauses as we “*carefully observe ALL*” His truth from the heart (Deut 17:14-20). In fact, this passage warns us to avoid at all costs those things which the world says will make you successful! What little ‘exceptions’ are ruining your success in God’s eyes?



3. Valuing God’s **WISDOM** by seeing things from His vantage point and then applying His truth in every area of life (1 Kings 3:5-14; 4:29-31; 2 Chron 1:10-12; Prov 1:1-7; 3:13-19; 4:1-8; 9:10; Luke 6:46-49; James 1:22-25). As soon as Solomon became king at 20 years old, the Lord tested him to determine the real priorities and values of his heart. God gave him an opportunity to ask for whatever he wanted! If God gave you the same opportunity what would you honestly ask for? Why did Solomon ask for wisdom as he began to reign? How was this

wisdom displayed in **1 Kings 3:16-28**? How does the working definition of wisdom, *understanding and then applying God's truth*, make a man successful? With this definition, how is wisdom one of the Lord's most effective chisels? Solomon collected 915 principles of God's truth (Proverbs 1-31) but foolishly failed to live them out (**Prov 12:15; 13:16; 14:16; 17:24; 26:11; 28:26**). What specific truth from God are you currently living out? Assignment: read at least 3 chapters in Proverbs this week corresponding to the day's date and choose 1 verse of wisdom that you will commit to apply to your life. Write out a prayer asking the Lord to motivate you to wisely apply it that day in His power and not yours. How will these chisels make you more like Jesus?

4. Consistently focusing on God's character in WORSHIP (1 Kings 6:1-2, 11-14). We often become so busy living that we forget Who we are living for! Why do you think Solomon's 1st official act as king was to build the Temple? What is the connection between heartfelt worship and biblical success? According to **1 Kings 8:22-61**, what was the focus of Solomon's heart as he led the nation in worship? What did he pray on behalf of the nation? What have you been praying for our nation (**1 Tim 2:1-8**)? What promise did God make to Solomon when His men pray for their nation (**2 Chron 7:14-20**)? How vital and valuable is both personal and corporate worship as a chisel in your life?

5. Following God with a FOCUSED heart. (1 Kings 3:1; 11:1-14; 1 Cor 10:12-13; Heb 12:1-3). Even ungodly men teach that the secret to their worldly 'success' is a relentless focus and refusal to become distracted until they reach their goal. Solomon's fall from success started when his heart became distracted from what God values. He used his God-given gift of wisdom to run the nation but failed to let it run his life. In what area(s) is a man's heart most often pulled away from God's? How does this happen? After building a temple for God how did Solomon fail to protect the temple of his own heart (**Prov 4:23: 18:10; 1 Cor 3:16-19**)? What practically will you do to get refocused on the character of God?

6. Helping your WIFE SUCCEED (if you are married) in life (Prov 31:10-31; Psalm 128). The Lord lists 20-25 items which guarantee your wife's success as a WOW (Walk On Water) woman!. List 2 for which you will praise her and 2 you will commit to helping her obtain so that she can experience success in the Lord. In addition to being a servant-leader in helping your bride succeed, we also need to

communicate our love to her. Taking a cue from Adam whose first words to Eve was a romantic poem (Gen 2:21-23), read through **Song of Solomon 4:1-15 and 7:1-8**. Write a love letter (perform a rap, rent a billboard, hire a plane to write it in the sky), to your wife expressing from your heart why she is



your greatest and most appreciated gift other than the Lord. Then, where appropriate, brag on her in front of the kids (grands)! Your job is to make her blush as did Solomon with his bride! Top it off with a dinner at her favorite restaurant. (Behind every successful man is his wife and behind the fall of every successful man is another woman.)

7. Taking the ETERNAL view rather than the temporal view on life (Eccl 1-2; 3:11; 7:1-4; Psalm 90; 2Cor 4:7:16-17). Why is taking the long view like a sharp chisel making us successful God's way? In these passages where do you see Solomon frustrated with the short, temporal view of life but experiencing peace in God's eternal view? How did Solomon learn that success is not achieving your own goals but receiving from His grace! What goals in life (bucket list) have become your god? How is failure a great chisel used by God to make you more like Christ and the man He wants you to be?

8. Getting back to the basics of OBEDIENCE motivated by a reverent respect for your Father (Eccl 12:13-14)! Ecclesiastes was written by Solomon as an old man (@ 60) as he reflected on his failures and what he finally learned about success in life. God is not frustrated by our failure. Rather, He is committed to using men greatly who have failed grandly and now cling to His grace. Solomon confesses that in his pride he thought success was a matter of 'IQ' (how much we know) but realized that it is really a matter of 'I will' in surrender to God in obedience. Solomon goes full circle and finally returns to our basic definition of success. Why is his last written word in these verses a great summary on God's definition of success?

TAG TEAM DISCUSSION So how successful have you been in life according to the Lord? How can taking your failure to the Lord at the Cross motivate you to be successful in God's eyes (1 Peter 1:16-18)? To really succeed, God asks that you start where you have failed the most. God specializes in transforming your failure into lasting success.