

3 Elements of a God-centered Path to True Success

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[0:00] I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses. Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the great river, the Euphrates, all the Hittite country, to the great sea on the west.

No one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will never leave you nor forsake you.

Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their forefathers to give them. Be strong and very courageous.

Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you. Do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go.

Do not let this book of the law depart from your mouth. Meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it.

[1:10] Then you will be prosperous and successful. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified.

Do not be discouraged. Do not be discouraged. For the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go. So Joshua ordered the officers of the people.

Go through the camp and tell the people, get your supplies ready. Three days from now, you will cross the Jordan. You will cross the Jordan here to go in and take possession of the land.

The Lord your God is giving you for your own. We'll be in Joshua chapter 1 tonight. So I ask you to keep your Bibles there. Zooming in on the first nine verses of Joshua 1.

We live in a society that in many ways is driven by the desire for, the craving for success. Success at the Olympics brings gold.

[2:12] And for a brief moment, fame. Success at work may bring the boss's praise, perhaps a pay raise. In your school work, it brings good grades, scholarships, college acceptance.

Success in pastoring results in growth and grace and the spread of God's kingdom. Success in parenting brings obedience. Well-rounded children.

And so whether we're breadwinners or students or moms or coaches or elders or deacons, success is something that we rightly crave. You should want to succeed.

And don't let the world's twisted version of success put you off. Many people want success for the wrong reasons. They want the riches or power or fame or praise that comes with it.

And so that's why they want success. I'm not saying to want success for that reason tonight. I trust as the people of God, we want success for good reasons. We should want to succeed as parents so that our children might know and honor the Lord.

[3:21] Not so people can tell us what a wonderful job of parenting we've done. I pray that my desire to succeed as a pastor is so that the body of Christ might be built up.

So God's kingdom might be extended to the ends of the earth. Not for my own praise and to stroke my pride. Not for my own praise and to the end of the earth. It's something we constantly have to fight against.

The motivation for why we want to succeed to keep it God-honoring. But I hope that you do want to succeed, that you strive for success in whatever it is that God has called you to do.

Who wants to fail as servants of God? I hope you're not aiming for failure. And so tonight we want to talk about success and how to attain it. I could give you seven habits of highly effective or successful people tonight.

I could give you the key to your best life now. But instead we'll look at three elements of a God-centered path to true success. We want to see how Joshua was challenged by God to succeed while he stood there at the threshold of the promised land with a daunting task before him. [4:34] And to see what that means for success in our callings. Before we look at those three elements of God-centered success, I want us to look at a little bit of the situation that Joshua found himself in.

Sort of the tall order that was before him. It was no small thing that God was calling him to do. One, he's succeeding. He's coming after the servant of the Lord.

The man that God had chosen to lead his people out of captivity in Egypt and through the wilderness had just died. And that man was Moses. And 18 out of the 21 times in the Old Testament where we find the prestigious title, Servant of the Lord, they're talking about Moses. Moses is God's servant. His chosen one. And though Moses had some moments that weren't spectacular in his career as a leader of Israel, on the whole, he was an amazing leader.

A man who spoke with God face to face and who enjoyed great success. And you just have to look to the previous page to see that. What history's rendering of Moses is.

[5:43] How God viewed him. Because this is God's Word. Look at Deuteronomy 34. In verse 10, Since then, since Moses laid his hands on Joshua and passed the leadership on to them, since then no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face, who did all those miraculous signs and wonders the Lord sent him to do in Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all his officials and to his whole land.

For no one has ever shown the mighty power or performed the awesome deeds that Moses did in the sight of all Israel. Okay, Joshua. No pressure.

That's who you're following. Those are the shoes that you have to fill. And they're pretty big shoes. And then you add to that the task that's given to Joshua. God had made a promise to Abraham that the people of Israel had been clinging to since then.

Promised that Abraham would be a great nation. He'd have many descendants. Through him, all nations of the earth would be blessed and they would have land. A place for that nation to live. And there's already lots of descendants. There would be many more. That promise is being fulfilled. They've started being a blessing to the nations around them. The fulfillment of that is later.

[6:59] But there's still no land. And so, Joshua, your job is to take that land. To go in and to cause the children of Israel to inherit it.

That's the language that we find here in Joshua 1. You, Joshua, make the people of Israel to inherit this land that I've promised them. That's your task. The covenant promise, Joshua, hangs on you. Again, no pressure. But this is a big thing that Joshua has before him. You see, God's command in verse 2 is to arise and cross the Jordan into the land that God's giving them.

And you see the promise that God made to his people down in verse 6. Now, to this point, Joshua has done some pretty impressive things as a highly respected man in Israel. He led the battle against Amalek, the one where Moses raised his hands.

And as long as his hands were raised, they prevailed. And when they were down, the enemy prevailed. Well, Moses up on the mountain, the man on the ground leading the battle is Joshua. That's something that he's done.

[8:02] It's pretty impressive. He went partway, at least, up the mountain of God with Moses when Moses went to talk with God. He spied out the promised land initially and brought back a good report and believed that God would give it into their hands.

But primarily, you know what Joshua had been? He had been Moses' servant. Moses' personal aid, his personal assistant. That's what he's called here in verse 1.

After the death of Moses, servant of the Lord, the Lord said to Joshua, son of Nun, servant of Moses. So you've got Moses, the servant of the Lord, you've got Joshua, who is Moses' servant. He's his personal assistant. And now he's being told to do the job that Moses had done prior to this. It'd be like appointing the secretary to the president of the United States to the presidency. It's a daunting task. I want you to feel just a little of the weight that's on Joshua's shoulders. In other words, it's an impossibly high calling. How on earth can he succeed in what God's calling him to do?

[9:08] But as we talk about these three God-centered principles for success tonight, don't just leave it in Joshua's world. Where has God called you to succeed?

Where are you viewing your world as something that's impossible? You've got shoes that are way too big that you just can't fill. A task before you where the enemies seem too strong.

Maybe your parents before you have done very well, and you feel the pressure to be as great as they have been. Maybe grandma and grandpa put a little pressure on you to raise their grandkids, and they wouldn't ever say it like this, but as well as they managed to raise you.

Or maybe you feel the pressure of your mother-in-law coming to visit, or living in the same town who would like your home to run as efficiently as hers did. When she was your age.

Maybe it's the expectation that as a 30-year-old, you'll be able to do everything that the more seasoned, mature, experienced 65-year-old before you has done. The expectations of your boss at work to succeed like the guy before you that had the job are burdensome.

[10:19] You know one thing that it was for me? It was following an older brother to the same high school, and then, believe it or not, to take the same major at the same college.

You're Ben Hoek's brother? Got big shoes to fill. The professor actually said that to me. Maybe you know what it's like to try to succeed in the shadow of a fabulous older sibling.

Maybe your dad was a well-loved pastor before you. Even a babysitter knows something of the pressure of a small child saying, that's not the way mom does it.

Well, we've got nothing on Joshua. In fact, he's got some wisdom for us how to succeed in pressure-filled callings that God has given us.

God's called you to where you are in your life right now, whether it's a student, a mom, a homemaker, a dad, a breadwinner, a pastor, a deacon, a Sunday school teacher, whatever role you're struggling with today that God has called you to, He's also given you what you need to succeed in it.

[11:29] So three God-centered steps to succeed in the face of enormously difficult odds. These are God's directions for Joshua at the threshold of the promised land, taking up Moses' position of leadership, and they're relevant for us tonight.

Three things. Know God's Word. Obey God's commands. And believe God's promises. You want to succeed? I know that's simple, but that's what God tells Joshua.

And so let's soak it up tonight. Know God's Word. Obey God's commands. And believe God's promises. I won't dwell long on the first. Know God's Word.

Pastor John pointed us to Joshua 1.8 on Wednesday night. Don't let the book of the law depart from your mouth. Don't forget what it is that God has taught you. Don't forget what you've learned.

Don't fail to speak of it. Joshua, to the people of Israel, you're their leader now, so don't let that book of the law depart from your mouth. Make sure that they hear it from you. So that they remember it.

[12:30] And so that they do it. God had not taken all the time on the mountain with Moses. And then have Moses tell all the people of Israel his law. And then have him do it again.

You know what Deuteronomy means? It means second law. Deutero, second, namas, law. And really what it is, it's a really long sermon that Moses preaches right before they go into the promised land.

And he's repeating what he'd already said. God gave the law the first time. He makes sure that Moses gives them to him. He gives that law to them a second time. He makes sure that it was set down, that it was written in the book of the law in Deuteronomy 31.

After Moses finished writing in a book the words of this law from beginning to end, he gave this command to the Levites who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord. Take this book of the law and place it beside the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God.

There it will remain as a witness against you. That's the book of the law that God's talking about now to Joshua. Take that book of the law and don't let it be far from your mouth when you speak to the people of Israel.

[13:37] God, the law is clearly important to God. He's gone out of his way to make it plain to his people more than once and to write it down for them. And so it must be important to his people as well if they would know success.

It must be passed from the leader to the people, from parents to their children. In Deuteronomy 6, let it always be on your tongue, always on your mouth. It's the law of God. The Word of God is important to you as it is to God.

We're to know it. Meditate on it day and night. Again, helpful thoughts on this Wednesday night. The deeper, though, that we sink into God's Word, the more we soak in it, the more of it we will

understand, the more of it we will profit from, and thus the easier it will be to do everything that is written in it.

That's a pretty tall order. Don't let this book of the law, apart from your mouth, meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. You're not going to be able to do everything that's written in it unless you know it.

Unless you've soaked in it. Unless you've meditated on that Word. Now you can imagine that Joshua's got his hands pretty full. He's organizing a full-scale invasion of a land full of strong enemies.

[14 : 55] It's not an easy task before him. He's also trying to keep the peace among his own people, judging between wrong parties, delegating authority, digesting scouting reports that are brought back to him from the spies.

And you can bet that Joshua's already going to be burning the candle at both ends. And so where is he going to find time to meditate at all, let alone day and night, so that when he speaks to the people, it's natural for the book of the law to flow out of his mouth to the people.

How's he going to do that? And maybe you feel the same. God has called me to be a breadwinner for my family, so I've got to put in the hours at work. And to be a loving husband, so I need to set aside time with my wife.

And to be a faithful follower, and so I need good quality time with my kids. And family worship, those things are a necessity. And then there's the extra responsibilities I've got with teaching Sunday school, or some other service in the church, and I need to sleep occasionally.

And there's just not time to meditate on God's Word. Certainly not night and day. God says that the way to success in each of these areas is not to forego spending time in the Word, which if we're honest, often can be the first thing that we cut out of a busy schedule.

[16 : 12] I just don't have time to read today and to meditate. God says the way to success in these things is not to skip spending time in the Word, but to meditate on it, to marinate in it, to soak in it.

And if we don't know what God expects of us in the workplace, and in the home, and in the church, then we won't be successful in it. So seize the moments. While you take time to read God's Word, leave some time to meditate on it.

And then those other moments through the day when you're shaving, or when you're in the shower, or on the commute to work, or when you're ironing, or vacuuming, or something else where you can give your mind to ruminating on God's Word so that He knows what to...

so you know what He expects of you. Meditate. You remember what the psalmist says in Psalm 1. Mrs. Wessner's class could say it with me.

Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, or stand in the way of sinners, or sit in the seat of mockers, but his delight is in the law of the Lord.

[17 : 20] And on His law, what does he do? Meditates day and night. Just like Joshua is told to meditate on the law of God day and night.

And you know what verse 3 Psalm 1 says. See, if Joshua meditates on the law, does everything in it, then he'll be prosperous and successful. And Psalm 3 says that the man who meditates day and night is like a tree planted by streams of water which yields its fruit in season and whose leave does not wither, whatever he does, prospers.

The Word of God explicitly links together meditating on His Word and success. Prosperity and what it is that He calls you to do. If you want to know success in your calling, meditate on the Word.

And if I don't meditate, then I won't succeed. God promises to Joshua success wherever he goes. And the psalmist says whatever he does, prospers. So you meditate.

The first key to success is knowing God's Word but secondly, obeying God's command. Not enough just to know it. You've got to do it. You've got to put it into practice to do what He calls you to obey.

[18 : 39] For Joshua, verse 2, it's crossing the Jordan and taking the land. Get up. Literally, it's get up and go. It says here in verse 2, get ready to cross the Jordan.

But it's get up and cross the Jordan. You go do... That was Joshua 3. That was His calling. It was what God had for Him. And none of us have been commanded to go cross the river and take the land.

But do you ever find that it's hard to get up and do what it is God has called you to do. To get up on Monday morning and to go to work.

To do that work. To be glad to do it. To provide for your family and to subdue the earth. However your occupation fulfills that creation mandate. That calling from God on your life.

You've got to get up and do it. Or to... You hear the melee. The children in the next room. And God's call to you is to get up and go.

[19:36] And to parent your children. And to sort it all out. And to discipline the ones that need discipline. Which is probably all of them. Maybe. In my house it usually is. But it's much easier to sit.

And to pretend like you don't hear it. But God calls us... That's not the way to successful parenting. If you want to succeed you've got to get up and go. You've got to obey the command.

And Joshua did. You see it in verses 11. God says, you go take the land. And Joshua, as soon as God's done talking to him, orders the officers of the people. Go through the camp. Tell the people get your supplies ready. Three days from now you're crossing the Jordan.

Here. To go in and take possession of the land the Lord your God has given you for your own. God said, get up and go. And he did. Do we? More commands for Joshua.

Be strong and courageous. Three times. In verses 1-9. Be strong and courageous. You want to succeed you obey this command. Once it's be strong and very courageous. And there's obviously ample reason for Joshua to need strength and courage.

[20:42] Moses had already told him when he was telling him you're going to lead this people. He said, back in Deuteronomy 31 you be strong and courageous. The transfer of power from a great leader to a new leader is no small thing.

And so David tells Solomon the very same thing in 1 Chronicles 22. Verse 13 Be strong and courageous. And Joshua's going to need strength and courage as if he's going to go in and take the promised land.

He was one of the ten spies. He remembers what he saw there. He remembers that the people were giants and that the Israelites looked like grasshoppers in their sight. Yes, he was one of the two that said we can do it in the power of God.

But now he's the leader of these people. And he's got to lead them into this daunting challenge. He'll need strength and courage to do it.

And the same command comes to us. If we would enjoy success in our callings, we can't be timid and fearful. Timidity and fear will keep you in bed on Monday morning.

[21:42] But God says to be strong and courageous and to get up and to go. Somebody else that had big shoes to fill was Timothy. He was following the Apostle Paul.

Talk about two giants of the faith. Moses and the Apostle Paul. And you almost feel bad in some ways for Joshua and Timothy. So what does Paul remind Timothy? 2 Timothy 1.7 For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.

For God did not give us a spirit of timidity but a spirit of power, of love, and of self-discipline. Paul has trained Timothy up to continue in the ministry. Interestingly, I think he's laid his hands on them. He's ordained them to that work. If you read Deuteronomy 34 you'll see that Moses laid his hands on Joshua. And now they are both to be filled with courage and not fear.

And perhaps nobody has laid hands on you but God has called you. He has gifted you to do the work that He's called you to and so be bold and courageous. Don't hold back. Fear will paralyze you.

[22:50] It will kill you. It will cause you to fail. Fear on the athletic field will do that. A timid drive to the basket, a hesitant drive to the bucket is going to be eaten alive by a swarming good defense on the basketball court.

You can't be timid. You've got to take it with authority. You know, a quarterback that's sort of hesitant and he sort of hopes that the pass is going to be complete, he's going to get picked off. It's not going to be pretty.

And a timid mom and dad will be eaten alive by their aggressive children. They can smell fear, I think. A minister who's unsure of himself will foster a church full of people who are not bold and courageous.

Strength and courage are virtues in the pursuit of excellence in our callings. It will take courage to make decisions instead of waffling back and forth to forge ahead where fear says to hold back. It's a command that we must obey as Joshua did. Be strong and courageous. Be bold. Another command to obey, would you enjoy success?

[23:59] Be careful to obey the law. Be careful to do everything written in it. Don't turn to the right or the left. It's in verses 7 and 8. A broad command, which is why knowing God's Word, key number one to success, is so important.

You won't be able to keep it all if you don't know it all. Again, knowing not enough, we must obey it. Don't forget what my servant Moses taught you. Again, just a little more pressure on Joshua. God calls him my servant. Moses was my servant. What will you be, Joshua? So remember everything Moses my servant taught you. If you would enjoy success wherever you go, whatever you do, don't turn aside from the right.

Don't turn to the right. Don't turn from the left. Don't omit any part of it. Do everything that God has commanded you to. And on the road to success, you will find that there's many opportunities to get sidetracked.

Many places where it would be very easy, very tempting to turn aside to the right or to the left. There will be things that seem to you like a good idea while you're pursuing success.

[25:08] But remember the wisdom of Solomon in Proverbs 14.12 there's a way that seems right to a man but its end is death. In the end it leads to death. Don't turn aside to what seems right to you.

Do what God says is right to do in His Word. Israel discovers this the hard way. Right off the bat they're conquering Jericho. In Achan it seems good to him.

There's some silver and a wedge of gold and some really nice clothing and that would be good for my family. And somehow it seems good to him and he justifies it even though the explicit command of God through Moses was that everything was to be devoted to destruction.

And so Achan just turns off to the left. Just a bit. Off to the left. And you know what happens. It seemed good to him but it ended in death.

For many Israelites as they're routed trying to conquer Ai and then for Achan and his family because of his sin. You're not going to succeed if you're living contrary to the Word of God.

[26:19] And lest you protest that many wicked people in this world are wealthy successful business people let's make sure that we define success the way God does in fulfilling the calling that He has given us and honoring Him whether outward result is success or failure by the world's standards.

Are you doing what God has called you to do and honoring Him in it? And remember Asaph who envied the wicked he says until I entered the sanctuary of God then I understood their final destiny and their final destiny is destruction it's defeat and that's not success.

So you won't succeed if you're living contrary to God's Word. And all of the strength and courage in the world remember would it be strong and courageous all of that that we can muster won't do us any good if it's not guided by God's Word.

In fact strength and courage not guided by God's Word are dangerous. If we forge ahead in the wrong direction we'll do great damage to ourselves our family to our church. And so we must know what God expects of us.

Blindly seeking success whatever the cost in raising your children I'll try whatever works. That's not the kind of courage you want. It'll require real courage and boldness to obey God's Word when it says to spank and all of society shouts that spanking is the worst possible way to discipline a child.

[27:48] It'll take courage to run your business honestly where the world says the way to success is to cut corners and to hide your assets and to make a profit whatever it takes lie, cheat, steal be fearless be bold in your dishonesty says the world to the man that wants to prosper in his business.

That's not the kind of boldness we're talking about. It's going to take boldness to not pursue dishonest tactics to be honest and above board. To succeed as a student won't mean plagiarizing and cheating to get the grade that you so desperately want and need.

That takes courage I might get caught. It's not the kind of courage that's directed by God's Word. You're turning aside to the right or to the left be bold enough not to do those things when everyone else is.

And one last command to obey don't be terrified or discouraged. The flip side obviously of being strong and courageous don't be trembling and dismayed.

We should fear God and when we do we won't need to fear men or our circumstances. We talk about shaking in our boots and fear and God's command is don't.

[28:58] We look at a seemingly impossible task. I simply cannot raise godly children in this godless culture. And we're dismayed but God tells us no. And I tell you what if I was 80 year old Joshua you know Joshua was 80 years old when God says this to him.

He's still strong when he was young but he's 80. If I was him I'd be trembling in my Moses sized shoes going I can't do this. Were it not for the promises of God.

Without the promises the commands would be impossible. I can't be strong and courageous on my own. And that's why God gives the promises. And so finally the third key tonight the third element of God's centered success is believe his promises.

Know his word obey his commands. Believe his promises. The promise for Joshua right off the bat is I will give you the land. Yes it's Joshua's job to cause the people to inherit the land but God has promised to give it.

I will give it to you. And you can imagine that it's a comfort to Joshua as he stands before this enormous covenant fulfilling task. It's like us.

[30:13] We're called to work out our salvation with fear and trembling but we're assured that God is at work in us. And the promise comes no one will be able to stand before you in verse 5.

No one able to stand against you all the days of your life. And we're talking again about these giants in the land. Many will try to stop the people of Israel from taking the promised land but they won't be able to stand.

That's a good reason for courage. A good reason not to fear. Your enemies are going to melt like water before you. So don't fear. Our obstacles shouldn't be able to stand before us or won't be able to by God's blessing and we shouldn't fear when we face them.

So don't fear the special challenges and needs that your children bring to you. Don't tremble at the hostile work environment. Don't melt away before the stiff load of homework and papers that are piling up that you're expected to accomplish because the rest of verse 5 just as I was with Moses so I will be with you.

I will never leave you. I will never forsake you. You want to know the key to success. It's resting in the promise of God. He'll never leave us.

[31:31] He'll never forsake us. And what a promise to Joshua following Moses. He says, as I was with Moses so I will be with you.

That's good news. God was with Moses from the plagues bringing the people out of Egypt crossing the Red Sea talking with God face to face providing food and water in the wilderness.

God had clearly been with him in that same presence as promised now to Joshua. a wonderful covenant promise. And people of God the same promise is made to you. Be a child of God tonight and he makes the promise to you.

I will be with you. I'll never leave you or forsake you. Hebrews 13:5 Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have because God has said never will I leave you. Never will I forsake you. Whatever circumstances as you find yourself in. I love the context of Hebrews 13:5 being free from the love of money being content with what you have whether you have little or nothing whether you're employed or unemployed God will be with you.

[32:49] He will not forsake you. You have an insurmountable task facing you. God is with you in the midst of it. God promises it to Joshua again when he repeats the be strong and courageous and adds do not fear in verse 9 and the command by itself might cause us to laugh like Sarah did at the promise of a child in her old age.

Don't be afraid. Really Lord? Joshua might say. Have you seen the challenges before you? Do you know whose footsteps I'm following you? Really?

Don't be afraid. And we might say the same thing. Our challenges appear as insurmountable to us as Joshua's did to him. And God comes to you and says don't be afraid.

And you go Lord, do you know what you're asking? Do you know what I'm up against? Do you know the pressure I face? That's right.

Don't fear. Because wherever you go God will be with you. There's truth we can rest in. I really don't have to fear because of the presence of God with me.

[34:00] That's amazing. You want to succeed you cling to this promise with all your heart. And then the promise for success itself comes in verses 7-9. If you keep the law and have God with you then you will enjoy success Joshua wherever you go.

You have to believe God's promise that He will grant you success and wherever you go wherever your path takes you so long as it's according to His Word not turning aside to the right or the left and you will be successful.

You will give the land to the people Joshua. God promises then to us I have everything that you need to be an effective parent productive employee a godly husband a good boss a faithful shepherd a diligent student.

He has what you need and He will be with you. Do you believe His promise 2 Peter 1.3 that His divine power has given us everything that we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness.

Notice it's through our knowledge of Him who called us we have to know and we know His Word and He's given us everything that we need. But did Joshua succeed?

[35 : 11] The people of Israel went into the promised land and they took it. The second half of the book of Joshua is the division of the land among the different tribes of Israel as their inheritance.

He caused the people to inherit the land. The people did fail to drive out everyone in the land and they didn't obey God fully and so they didn't enjoy complete success.

Again, you see the danger of not doing everything that God commands. As long as they follow God's commands, yes, they enjoyed success but Achan again is that prime example. The people turned away from following God and they're routed in that next battle and I want you to hear what God says to them after they're defeated at Ai because of Achan's sin.

He says, Joshua 7 verse 12, that is why the Israelites cannot stand against their enemies. They turn their backs and run because they have been made liable to destruction.

I will not be with you anymore unless you destroy whatever among you is devoted to destruction.

You see, they forfeited the presence of God and they were the ones who weren't able to stand.

[36 : 23] God's promise to them was that your enemies won't be able to stand but now, it's the Israelites who aren't able to stand because they've forsaken the way that God called them to go. And so don't expect success if you're living in disobedience.

You omit the obeying God's command part and the success goes with it. But I believe Joshua did succeed on the whole. They take the land, they conquer it and the reason that I truly believe that he was a success, that he obeyed God, that he knew God's word and that God fulfilled his promises to him is in Joshua 24 and verse 29.

The end of Joshua's life. After these things, Joshua, son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died at an age of 110. 30 years later after God gave him these instructions we've looked at in Joshua 1 tonight, the land has been inherited but did you catch it?

Joshua, son of Nun, the servant of the Lord. It's not the servant of Moses anymore. And it's not Moses servant of the Lord. It's been Moses servant of the Lord all through the book of Joshua repeatedly.

But now at the end, it's Joshua, servant of the Lord. He's called that again in Judges 2 and verse 8. Joshua knew God's word.

[37 : 46] He obeyed God's command. He believed God's promises and he was a successful servant of God. A couple concluding thoughts tonight as we think about success and pursuing it as Christians.

One, our goal, what we are aiming for, what we want success in must be God's goal. We must be shooting for success in the thing in which he wants us to succeed.

Joshua's not promised prosperity and success in anything. It was success in that to which God called him, giving the people of Israel inheritance of the land.

So success isn't getting whatever we want. It's not success in the world's terms. It's fulfilling the work that God has given us to do and honoring him in it.

And wherever we go in that, we'll succeed. I hope that you want to succeed. Don't let the world's tainted version of success and their pride and their celebrations and their success and how they soak up the praise of men turn you off from desiring success.

[38 : 49] Go and succeed quietly. Maybe nobody will ever see your success the way that you faithfully raised your children and taught them the Word of God how the book of the law didn't depart from your mouth as you brought them up.

Maybe they'll never see your service in the church. Maybe you'll never get a pat on the back for the thing that you did Lord's Day after Lord's Day that nobody ever saw but that was a task that you

were given in the church and you were faithful to do it.

Maybe they'll never see the love that you showed to your husband or your wife as a faithful spouse the kind that God called you to be or your diligence or your work ethic that God called you to do.

The world may never see those things but your reward is in heaven and so pursue success and any success that you enjoy that is Christless is not success at all.

The only way to enjoy true success is to have God with you. And who is Jesus? He is our Emmanuel. God with us.

And if you don't have Jesus I don't care if you're the richest man on the planet or Time Magazine's man of the year you're not a success. The poorest most obscure unknown Christian who knows the fear of the Lord even though he has but little just a dish of vegetables is far more successful and blessed than the man who has great wealth and feasting but with it turmoil and hatred and strife.

[40 : 26] And more importantly we can't expect to succeed in our own strength because we know that we failed to keep God's commands. We're missing one of the keys to success. Obedience to God's commands.

And therefore we can expect failure unless we are in Christ. in union with Him who has kept God's commands perfectly. All our success in this life and our reaching of glory is in Christ.

It's because of Him the work that He has done and the work that He has accomplished. And yes having trusted in Him we must obey. And you'll find in your Christian life when you turn aside to the right or the left the Lord will discipline you and you'll find some failure that will bring you back.

But even that obedience as a Christian that is in the power of Christ. You can't do it without Him.

And so if you've rejected Christ you may be looking for success.

You may be looking for the praise of the world to be a good student a good athlete and you think you're good going it alone. But if you've rejected Christ you can expect failure.

[41 : 32] If you're trusting Him you're guaranteed success just as Moses and Joshua succeeded and were called servants of the Lord it will be said to you well done good and faithful servant.

That's God speaking to you. Saying that one is my servant. What more reward do you need than God calling you His servant like He did for Moses. Moses my servant. Joshua servant of the Lord. Put your name in there child of God. Servant. Well done good and faithful servant. Enter the joy of your master. So whatever God has called you to in this life your ultimate calling is to serve Him in it. True success then is honoring Him serving Him in every part of the work that He has given you to do. So may He give us grace to go from here to know His word to obey His commands and to believe His promises.

Let's pray together. Father we pray that you would grant us success.

[42 : 40] Not the kind that the world craves for our own praise and satisfaction but that you might receive the praise. We want people to look at us and to go what not what a remarkable person he or she is but what an amazing God they serve.

May we be known as servants of the living God. So give us grace to know Your word to love it so much that we delight to meditate in it. And give us grace then knowing Your word to obey it.

There's much in this book that You have called us to do and so give us grace to do it. And we know that we can't do it in our strength so we pray that You would give us the power of Christ that we might believe Your promises.

We thank You for Your promised presence with us. May we cling to that and may we know the success of having You say to us well done good and faithful servant enter the joy of Your Master. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.