

On the Footpath to Success

by J.R. Miller

True success is not just about achieving wealth or fame, but about building a life of character and integrity that will last forever.

Scripture: Proverbs 10:4, Colossians 3:23

Topics: "Character Building", "True Success"

Description

J.R. Miller emphasizes the true meaning of success, urging young men to pursue achievements that are built on integrity and hard work rather than superficial wealth or fame. He defines success not just by material gain but by qualities such as industry, dependability, economy, and courtesy, which contribute to a meaningful life. Miller warns against the pitfalls of dishonesty and extravagance, advocating for a life that prioritizes character and service to others. Ultimately, he asserts that true success encompasses the entirety of one's life and character, extending beyond earthly achievements into eternity.

Transcript

Every young man, unless he is dead to the real meaning of life, has a desire to achieve success in his heart. He wants to do something which will make his living worth while. He has dreams of success which shine before him in splendor, and woo him to earnestness and energy. He would like to make a name for himself, that the world will remember and honor. It is always in order, therefore, to speak to young men of success.

Before we talk about success, however, we would better define the word. What do we mean by success? When we are told that a certain man is successful, that he began poor and is now rich, that he has risen from obscurity to great fame and power -- we need to inquire how he reached his high place. If he crawled to it through slime and mire; if he trampled conscience and the law under his feet as he went up; if he made his money by extortion or by dishonesty -- his apparent success, is wretched failure; and his self-complacent pride, is an object for our contempt.

There are certain qualities which always belong to the life that is truly successful. One is INDUSTRY. There is no royal road to worldly attainment or achievement. Easy positions, as a rule -- mean failure in the end. The pressure of hard work in youth, builds noble manhood for later years.

Charles W. Eliot has said: "I believe that long hours and hard work are best for every man. No man can work too hard, or too long hours, if his health will permit." We all grow best, under burdens. It is only the

used powers, which get strong; the unused remain undeveloped and shrivel up.

DEPENDABLENESS is another essential quality in the winning of success. Lytton says: "A man is already of consequence in the world, when it is known that he can be implicitly relied upon." Whatever one's duty may be -- there should never be the slightest doubt that it will be done promptly and carefully. Thus the man becomes essential to the life of the world -- essential in his own place, large or small. This means that one's word should be sacredly kept, no matter at what cost to himself. It means that he will never fail in anything that is assigned to him. Life is very complicated, and failure in the smallest matter -- may bring great disaster. If a watchman does not swing his red lantern, or if a switchman does not turn his lever, or if the engineer does not see the signal as his train flies by -- no one can tell what the consequences will be. One who is absolutely dependable in his place, is on the way to success.

ECONOMY is also an element in the making of success. The cause of poverty is not always small income -- oftentimes it is unwise, extravagant, or sinful expenditures. The habit of saving, doing without things which one cannot afford -- is one secret of prosperity, and part of the foundation of fortune. There is no disgrace in living poorly, when one's resources are small; there is disgrace in living above one's means.

A writer on success says: "The way a young man spends his LEISURE TIME, is a sure index to his future." One of the papers contained a good commentary on this wise saying: "Two men stood at the same table in a large factory in Philadelphia, working at the same trade. Having an hour at noon, each undertook to use it to accomplish a definite purpose. One of the men employed his daily leisure in working out the invention of a machine for sawing a block of wood in any desired shape. He succeeded and sold his patent for a large sum of money. The other man -- what did he do? Well, he spent his noon hour for nearly a year in the very difficult and important task of teaching a little dog how to stand on his hind feet and dance. He succeeded, too -- but he still works at his old bench and bitterly complains of the unjust fate which keeps him poor, while his old fellow-workman has become rich."

COURTESY is among the qualities which lead to success. A man who is rude, uncivil, thoughtless, or ungentlemanly in his treatment of others -- will never make much of his life. A true gentleman will never intentionally or even heedlessly hurt another's feelings. He is as kind, too, to the poorest and lowliest -- as to the rich and the highest in rank. The mere commercial value of civility is almost incalculable. But true courtesy is not a superficial quality. It is not merely good manners. It begins in the heart. It is interest in people, real, not assumed interest. It has an errand to everyone -- not to get something from him -- but to give him something, to do something for him; not to be served by him -- but to serve him. With this spirit in the heart, one is always sincerely and unaffectedly courteous; and he who meets others in this way, is recognized as their friend and cannot fail in his work.

It should always be remembered, too, that true success must take in ALL THE LIFE -- not only up to the day of a man's death -- but after that, through the vast forever. In the last analysis, the only real success is character, the building of a life which we may carry into the long hereafter.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/jr-miller/on-the-footpath-to-success/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net