

## “HOW TO BE SUCCESSFUL”

### Hebrews 12:1-2

Message 1623

I believe everyone wants to succeed regardless of what position or standing in life the person may have. Success is the goal we all strive for. Not everyone has the same standards by which to measure success. Some are satisfied with less than the best. Indeed, success varies, depending upon what you are doing.

As in the natural life, so in the spiritual life, success must be worked at. Nothing in the way of success ever comes automatically, by itself. Success will crown our efforts only when we are ready to put forth effort to attain that success.

Hebrews 12:1 and 2 tell **HOW TO BE SUCCESSFUL** as a child of God.

- 1. Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,*
- 2. Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

From this text I set forth the **INSTRUCTIONS** which, if followed, will bring you success in your spiritual life.

**MAKE ADEQUATE PREPARATION** is the first counsel to assure success. You can never expect to attain success unless you start right. So it is necessary for you to make adequate preparation. This text tells us how.

We lay aside every weight. There are those tendencies we are born with which hold us down in the spiritual life. We have a tendency toward evil, and our enemy, the devil, plants unholy thoughts in our minds. He tries to influence our responses and reactions to life and its complexities. So it is necessary to lay aside every one of those weights.

When a runner runs a race he lays aside anything that would hold him back. This is the way it is in the Christian life. We must make this preparation of laying aside everything that would hold us back in the Christian race.

Then, to make that adequate preparation, we must lay aside every sin, “which does so easily beset us.” Ah yes, we all have our particular weaknesses. Those weaknesses we must deal with sharply and lay them aside. For some it may be one thing. For someone else it may be another thing. But whatever it is, that sin must be laid aside. Perhaps you have the tendency to become angry easily. That must be laid aside. Perhaps you have the problem of controlling your tongue. You say things when you don’t want to. That must be laid aside.

To make adequate preparation then, we need to lay aside every weight and every sin. This preparation is instruction number one.

**MANIFEST ACTIVE PERSEVERANCE** is a second instruction for assuring success. This text says, “Let us run with patience.” Patience has in it the idea of calmly staying right there. The meaning of the word perseverance is not giving up, keeping right on running in the race.

It takes effort. It takes persistent effort in the race of life. We cannot stop. There is no way to stop in physical life. We must not stop in the spiritual race. We dare not if we expect to win. If we expect success we must manifest active perseverance to run the race. We must maintain a persistent effort to keep going in the race set before us. We must practice active perseverance to follow the course.

I observe that this race has been laid out for you and for me. We do not choose the path. The path has already been marked out; the course has been laid out and we cannot deviate from that course because it has already been prescribed. We are not running against someone else in that race, we compete only with ourselves.

So instruction number two is manifest active perseverance. Stay right in there and keep on going.

**MODEL ABSOLUTE PERFECTION** is the ideal for assured success. There are many who take other people as their model. They are usually led astray. This text instructs us to model absolute perfection: look unto Jesus and see what He is, “the author and finisher of our faith.” That means He is the One who began and the One who finishes our faith. He is the object and content of our faith.

Now, that means there can be no substitute for Him. He is in a place all by Himself. There is no way that anyone else can take His place, because He is the One who began our faith and He is the One who finishes it. We must, therefore, look to Him who is absolute perfection.

Because of the joy that was set before Him, He was willing to endure the cross. He was willing to despise the shame. And so, He is now sitting at the right hand of God. My friend, when you think of the joy that is coming for the believer, does it not inspire you to endure; to take the blame, and share the shame. Jesus exemplifies for us how that joy brings strength. Now He is at the right hand of God, He has been successful, and He has achieved the goal.

When we model our lives according to His absolute perfection, we follow Jesus. So instruction number three is model absolute perfection as it is in Jesus. Often we do not attain success because we fail to follow the right instructions. These instructions are taken right from God’s Word. I can assure you they will bring you success of the highest order if you follow them.

For success, these instructions must be followed: make adequate preparation, manifest active perseverance, and model absolute perfection. Your success in the spiritual life is assured. Praise the Lord!