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SUCCESS

By Sam Conley

Success! I could not believe my eyes! Not too long ago I was browsing around a secular bookstore and saw dozens of books on how to be successful. I could not help but think that God has given us one of the greatest success manuals that has ever been written. A successful person is one that has a loving, peaceful relationship with the Maker.

But how do we achieve this kind of success? Why not turn to the Scriptures to find out? Why not look up the word "success" in the Bible? When I did, I came across an easy method given by God himself.

In Joshua, chapter one, God is giving the commission to Joshua, as Moses has died and the people of Israel need a new leader. The whole chapter is a magnificent account of God's charge, Joshua's acceptance, and his charge to the people. Many times in this chapter the word "success" is used. The Lord tells Joshua how to be successful, and much of what he tells him would apply to us as well.

In Joshua 1:7, the Lord says, "Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all of the Law which Moses my servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go."

There it is! Success! How did God tell Joshua that he could have it? By making God the Lord of his life and surrendering completely to his will! Jesus told his disciples, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments." We must be careful to do all he commands. God does not require perfection, but he does require faithfulness. The epistle of John was written that we might not sin, but knowing that man would sin, he was given an Advocate, Jesus Christ the Righteous (1 John 2:1-3). First, we must be "careful to do all."

"This book of the Law shall not depart out of your mouth . . ." One of the best ways to make application of Scripture in our own lives is by sharing what God has said with others. Speak it! We must cause it to sink deeper into the wells of our mind. We should teach it to our children (Deut. 4:9; 6:4-9). Jesus, when confronted with temptation, did not hesitate to speak the word. He knew the value of speaking the word. You would think that some people understand this

"not depart" as "not speaking", when it comes to sharing the gospel. But it is not to depart, it is to always be on the lips of those who claim to belong to Him.

(Although prayer is only a part of the third part of this success, "pray" is used as a help in remembering, as it rhymes with the other words.) "You shall meditate on it day and night . . ." Joshua was to have his mind saturated with the contents of the word of God. He needed the wisdom of the Lord to lead the people. It included studying the word, and constant communication with God in prayer. The man who is happy is the one who has "his delight in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night." (Psalm 1:2.) Sometimes I will get out of my car after turning off the cassette player, and cannot get the last song I heard out of my mind. It is the last thing I heard and it stays with me all day. So it should be with the word of God. We should take it with us all day, and meditate on it when we lie to rest at night. Do you want to be successful? Get into the word! Although John was speaking of those things he was about to write, what he said is true of all of the will of God, when he said, "Blessed is he who reads, and he who hears the words of this prophecy." (Rev. 1:3.)

We discover many things when we really meditate on these things, and really want to share them with others. Many times a

preacher's favorite sermon is one in which he has done the most digging and meditation. It means much to him, and sticks with him. And the meditation on the word causes us to lift up our eyes and lips in praise and prayer to the Author, and thank him for the wisdom that comes only from above!

"So that you may be careful to do all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success" This fourth may look familiar, but it is merely an indication of what will happen when the first three are applied. We will be prosperous and have success, he says, "so that . . ." When we have made application of complete obedience, telling others about it, and meditation of the word, the obedience then seems to come natural. We can overcome any sin, one at a time, if we will make these three steps given previously a part of our everyday lives. It becomes a part of us. The sin is no longer controlling us, but we have it under control, if we continue in these things.

My friend, will you not give your all to the God who says you can have success with him? You need no success manuals except that one which is written by the manufacturer of your own soul. Who knows how you can overcome and be prosperous.

"Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." (Joshua 1:9.)

GOSPEL MEETING

JULY 12 - 17

Ted Knight is a native of Arkansas and now resides in Conway, Arkansas. He is presently preaching for Greenbrier Church of Christ. *Ted* holds many meetings all over the U.S. each year. He has spoken at numerous workshops and lectures throughout the brotherhood. You will find *Ted* a Bible Preacher. It will be well worth your time to come and hear this outstanding Evangelist.

CHURCH OF CHRIST

MAMMOTH SPRING, ARKANSAS

SCHEDULE

Sunday Morning - 10:00 a.m.

Monday -

Sunday Evening - 6:30 p.m.

Friday - 7:30 p.m.



TED KNIGHT
Conway, Arkansas

FULTON COUNTY GOSPEL NEWS

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EDITORS: Erwin Cowen and
Harold Turner

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The "They" Monster

By Joe R. Barnett

"They" is an insidious monster. You can't see it; can't put your finger on it. But it's very real. Those who work with groups live much of life with the ominous "They". "What will They say?" "What will They think?"

Think about it! Your life has often been influenced by a conversation which started off with, "They say . . ."

"They" is the camouflage of weaklings, it is used by those who don't have the backbone to assume responsibility for

their own wants, or those who recognize their arguments aren't strong enough to win their case. So, their approach is, "They want it!" The devious intention is to leave the impression that all persons involved have been polled and overwhelmingly favor the measure.

"They" is even more insidious when employed for destruction of a program. If a man's opposition to a matter is not substantiated by logic, he may launch the

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THE PROMISE OF GOD'S PRESENCE

By Harold Turner

"There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee." (Joshua 1:5).

The above promise was made to Joshua as he was about to undertake the task of leading the children of Israel into the land God had promised them. Joshua had worked close to the side of Moses for the past forty years, and now Moses was gone and he must lead these people. He had seen the stubbornness and rebellious spirit of these people. He had heard their murmurings and complainings as they expressed their displeasure with God's provisions. Joshua obviously recognized the difficulty he faced as he undertook the role of leadership among these people. Therefore God reassured this great man that he would never fail him nor forsake him.

One of the greatest problems we can have in living the Christian life is when we fail to stand firm on the promises of God. His promises are the basis for our assurance of victory over all evil, and they also provide us with the key to a life of success. Our constant remembrance of his promises will help us to keep pressing on toward the goal of eternal life. God has given us the same promise of assurance as he gave Joshua. In Hebrews 13:5, 6 the writer stated, "For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." We need to believe this promise with all of our heart, and let it become a vital part of our life. The writer

of Hebrews 10:23 encouraged Christians to hold fast their profession of faith without wavering, with the assurance, "For he is faithful that promised." And Peter reminds us that "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise." (2 Peter 3:9.)

However, all of us know that there are times and circumstances which cause us to forget the wonderful promises that God has made. Sometimes we get to looking at the tasks we face in such a way that we forget to keep our mind on the promise that we are not alone. Sometimes there are problems that seem to be so much greater than we, and we forget the promise of God's presence. In Matt. 14:28-33 Jesus taught a lesson that so clearly illustrates this problem. He had sent his disciples across the sea of Galilee while he went into the mountain to pray. As they journeyed across the sea a storm came and the sea began to churn beneath them. They battled against the huge waves, but made no progress. Then Jesus came walking to them on the water. He saw that they were troubled and in distress, and said, "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid." Then Peter answered and said, "Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water." And Jesus said, "Come." And, "when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"

Why do you think Peter doubted? Why did he begin to sink after walking a few steps on the water? I believe that there is one very simple answer to these questions: Peter turned his attention to the problems about him, and momentarily forgot about Jesus who had invited him to come. In principal this is a problem we all face at times. We let the problems of life stand between us and the Lord, and we forget about his presence.

We can never successfully overcome as long as we permit our attention to be focused on problems or the difficulty of our tasks. Our Lord has promised to be with us, no matter how difficult things may become. In the book of Daniel this truth is illustrated in an extreme way. Nebuchadnezzar had commanded that all people worship an image he had made. Three men of the Hebrews, Shadrack, Meshack and Abednego refused to obey the king. The king said, "If ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?" These three men faced a difficult choice from man's point of view. But they responded, "If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king." As the king had commanded, these three were cast into the fiery furnace. But notice what happened. When the king looked into the furnace, which had been heated seven times hotter than usual, he said, "Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. He

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What Does Truth Say About The Church?

By Ted Knight

In our world today hundreds of different churches exist. Religious division abounds and many even think that such is good for the cause of Jesus Christ. False teachers have come and we have not really heeded what the Bible teaches about them. John wrote in I John 4:1 "Beloved believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets have gone out into the world." The Apostle Paul warned the elders at Ephesus in Acts 20:29-30 "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves men shall arise speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." Certainly this has come to pass and the confused and divided condition of the religious world is the result.

There are several different ideas expressed concerning the Church. (1) Some do not feel that the Church is necessary at all. They believe that we should accept Jesus but reject the church and encourage men to have nothing to do with 'organized religion'. (2) Others would have us believe that one church is as good as another and that man should just join the church of his choice. Are these and other theories similar to them correct?

The Only way to know what is right and what isn't right concerning the church is to investigate what truth says about it. After all, Jesus said that "the truth will make us free". John 8:32. He also declared that His Word is truth. John 17:17. Therefore, whatever His Word says about the matter will settle it once and for all. What does truth say about the Church?

Truth says that there is just one Church. The prophets spoke of only one Church. Isa. 2:2-3 says, "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountain, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."

Notice in that passage that every reference is singular. The words 'house', 'it'

and 'his' all are singular words. Not one time does the prophet give any hint that there would be more than one house built. A similar reference is found in Micah 4:1-2 AND Dan. 2:44. In both of these passages the singular is again noted.

When Jesus came He taught that there would be only one Church. In Matt. 16:18, He said, "Upon this rock I will build *my Church* and the gates of hell will not prevail against *it*." In Acts 2:47 we are told that "the Lord added to *the Church* daily those who were being saved." Note again the emphasis upon the singular. Jesus did not promise to build more than one Church! He did not intend to do so and the scriptures give not one single hint that He ever did.

The Apostle Paul declared that there was one Church. In Eph. 1:22-23 he wrote, "And hath given him to be head over all things to *the Church* which is His Body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." In this passage we learn that the Church and the Body are one and the same. In Eph. 4:4 Paul again wrote, "There is *one Body*". Eph. 5:23 declares that Christ is the Savior of *the Body*. I Cor. 12:13 teaches that by one spirit we are all baptized into *one Body*. Is there any way for us to make these passages teach that there is more than one body? Of course not! Truth clearly teaches that there is just one Church - the one that Jesus Christ built and over which He rules as head. He purchased it with His own blood. Acts 20:28. Will you accept what truth says?

Truth says that Christ added people to His Church. It is not possible to 'join the church of Christ' because when one obeys the gospel, the Lord adds him to the Church. Acts 2:47. On the day of Pentecost not one person 'joined' the church. However, there were 3,000 added to it by the Lord. Nobody voted whether to receive these individuals or reject them. They did not ask to join the church. They obeyed the Lord and He added them to His Church. This is contrary to what is taught and practiced by millions of people in our world, but truth gives us this pattern and not some man-made law. Which will you observe?

Truth declares that all of the saved are in the Church. Friends, it is contrary to

the Holy Spirit's teaching to believe that there are saved people in all denominations and some saved and not members of any church. Notice what the Apostle Paul wrote in Eph. 5:23: "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church: and He is the Savior of the body." If it is true that Jesus is going to save 'the body' does it not follow that if one expects to be saved, he must be in the Body of Christ? Does it seem reasonable to believe that Christ is going to save the Body, but that He will also save some "out of the body"? Truth declares that Jesus is going to save the body, therefore one who hopes to be saved MUST be in that body! Every saved person on this earth is in the body of Christ because the Lord Himself added them to His body. Regardless of the opinions of men, this is what the truth says.

My friend, do not be deceived. Do not believe that the Church is unimportant or unnecessary. Truth says that it is important, yea, essential for one's salvation.

THE "THEY" MONSTER

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fatal attack, "They object to it." He may even call "They's" first cousin, "Some of 'em." as witness. He does this by authoritatively saying, "Some of 'em have been talking' to me 'bout it. They don't want it: They're not gonna' support it!"

Strangely, there is seldom any legitimate attempt to find out who "They" are. Any such investigation is suffocated by one sentence: "I'm not gonna' name names." And that ends that.

"They" may be a man's own personal feelings. "They" is often a man's wife. Seldom is "They" outside a man's immediate circle of cronies.

"They" is never present. When the discussion begins leaning toward a decision opposed by the skilled "They" user, he mentions absent members of the deciding body. "They" are opposed. By this tactic he buys time to regroup his forces for a hopeful later defeat.

The procedure is very dishonest. It is untruthful to infer majority opposition when there has scarcely been a sampling.

Be on guard against the devastating cousins, "They" and "Some of 'em." They're beasts!

CAN INSTRUMENTS BE USED BY FAITH?

By Glynn Purdy

In Hebrews 11:6 the Bible states, "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." The Bible also states that the Christian is to "walk by faith and not by sight." (2 Cor. 5:7.) These passages plainly teach us that we must be directed by faith in order to please God. Everyone should desire to please God, and this can be done only when one walks by faith. But what does it mean to walk by faith? In Romans 10:17 we read, "So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God." Since faith comes from God's word, it should be obvious that where God has not spoken there can be no faith. This principle is illustrated by the worship of Cain and Abel. The record states that God accepted Abel's sacrifice and rejected Cain's. Why? Hebrews 11:4 gives the answer, "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain." Since faith comes from hearing God's word, it is obvious that Abel acted by God's instructions, and Cain offered something that God had not instructed, and therefore acted by his own opinion rather than by faith. This illustrates that "without faith it is impossible to please God."

In the worship of the New Testament church, can instrumental music be used by faith? If the New Testament commands the use of instrumental music, then it can be used by faith and God will be pleased, on the other hand, if there are no instructions concerning their use, they cannot be used by faith. If they are used without the Lord's instructions, then they would be like the worship of Cain, and the Lord would not be pleased. To do something that God has not authorized or commanded is sin; for Rom. 14:23 states, "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Keep in mind that faith comes from hearing God's word. When we add anything to the worship that God has not authorized it cannot be of faith, and is thereby sin.

This principle seems so simple and easy to understand, but if it is, then why do so many people use the instrument in worship? One of the reasons comes from the use of the Greek word "psallo." In Ephesians 5:19 Paul wrote, "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in

your heart to the Lord." The word "melody" is derived from "psallo." Many contend that to "psallo" includes the using of an instrument. It is said that to "psallo" means to pluck upon an instrument. Notice first that to sing is a command to each Christian, and no one else can sing for us any more than another can be baptized for us. If "psallo" means that we are to play an instrument, then every Christian must play an instrument; because each one is instructed to "sing and make melody." If not, why not? Can you find one command that applies to only one member of the church and not to all? God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34-35). If one can play for the whole congregation, then one can sing, attend, contribute, commune, etc. for the whole congregation.

The word "psallo" does suggest an accompaniment, and the New Testament tells us what it is, "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody (psallo) in your hearts to the Lord." We are to sing and psallo in the heart, or sing and touch the chords of the heart. Our singing is to have an accompaniment, and God said that the heart is to be that accompaniment. This excludes all other instruments, or accompaniments. When we touch the chords of the human heart as the vocal chords sing the words, we are psalming according to the instructions of God and thus we please him. Yet when another instrument or accompaniment is introduced, it is not of faith, and since it is not of faith, it is sin.

Every action of worship and service must be expressed by the instructions of God if it is by faith. Any and every action of worship that is without the Lord's instructions is not of faith, and will not please God. The use of instrumental music is without authorization from the Lord; it cannot be used in faith, and it will not please God. To please God we must walk by faith. May we be careful not to act by our mere opinions, but always and in all things by the instructions that he has given us through the New Testament.

THE PROMISE OF GOD'S PRESENCE

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answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire,

and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." (Daniel 3:24, 25.) If God stood with these men in the midst of a fiery furnace, can we not believe that he will stand with us in the midst of our small problems?

In all that our Lord has asked of us, he has promised to be with us, and never to fail us. In Matt. 28:19, 20, Jesus commissioned that the gospel should be preached to every nation, and promised those who were to carry out this commission, "And lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Our Lord has asked each of us to share the good news of salvation with others, and he promises us that he will be with us in this task. We should believe that what he has promised, he will perform (Rom. 4:21). We can all be a success for the Lord if we will build our life upon the solid foundation of his promises. May we believe, and sing with fervor, "Standing on the promises that cannot fail, when the howling storm of doubt and fear assail, By the living word of God I shall prevail, Standing on the promises of God."

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