

Intro: How do you measure success in life? Different people do it different ways! Look at a couple of quotes...

- Ted Turner: *"Life is a game, money is how you keep score!"*
- Vince Lombardi: *"Winning isn't everything...it is the only thing!"*
- Popular: *"Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away."*

When we live for Christ there is an ENTIRELY DIFFERENT SCOREBOARD!

In 2 Cor 10:12-18 pg 821

STRENGTH TO SEE SUCCESS DIFFERENTLY

1. Three Ways Our Culture Measures Success:

Vs 12-13

Some things never change

Bible says: There is nothing new under the sun...and the ways we measure success are certainly one of those things.

- Classify: *"to put in the same category"* I am as good as you!
- Compare: *"measure against another"* I am better than you!
- Commend: *"recommend yourself"* Look at how great I am!

It is a very up/down kind of relationship. I am doing better when you are doing worse!

Paul tells us, when you look at life THAT way...then you have already lost! Even when you think you win.

Instead he says, as a follower of Jesus, you have to measure yourself with an entirely different standard!

Instead of measuring yourself against others, success is found when you measure yourself against what God wants for you.

Paul says, *"I'm boasting in what God has done IN and THROUGH me! That is what I call success. I did what God wanted!"*

Key: Mt 25:21;23

Parable of the Talents: 1, 2, 5: *"Well Done Good and Faithful Servant"*

How do we get there? What kind of Life do we live that bring us to the point of hearing...Well done?

Paul shows us that in the next few verses

2. Three Ways God Measures Our Success.

Vs 14-18

In the next couple of verses Paul describes for us 3 different ways God evaluates his ministry. Same criteria for us.

These are the measures of success we should all ask ourselves as we look at our own lives.

A. Are we IN the right lanes of life?

Vs 14: We will not boast "beyond proper limits"

To the field God has assigned to us!

Lit = *beyond the measure (boundary) that God has laid out*

Lit = *assigned to us: Lit to mark, out to lay out, to distribute or to divide out*

Illus: The concept Paul is using here is based on the Olympic games...and the boundaries laid out

When you run the race, you have to stay YOUR lane...if not...you are disqualified!

He is saying to us, listen, God has placed specific "lanes" in your life...and you have to know what they are, stay there

5 "Lanes" Of Life:

If you have been around RTBC for a while, you know that I have taught before that in the bible there are specific lanes

These are the things the Bible tells us God wants us to be involved in...and the ORDER they fall.

1. God:
2. Family:
3. Work
4. Church
5. Other

3 Keys: The CATEGORIES are important. Aren't there OTHER things in life we can do? Yes...but the categories count

The ORDER is important.

If you get these out of order...you life will be a spiritual mess!

The COMMITMENT is important. If you put too much emphasis on the wrong things....

Key: Am I IN the right "lanes" God has laid out for my life? Do I have the ORDER right? Is my level of COMMITMENT?

B. Are we actually DOING what God calls us to do in those areas?

One thing to know...it is quite another to do!

Vs 13-15

In these few verses Paul uses a number of different words to talk about the "doing" of success

- Reaches to you: *To extend ourselves beyond Lit = to hyper extend! (to stretch further than we thought we could!)*
- Work done: *Labor, pain, trouble, weariness from exertion*

Once you know what the right lanes ARE...Now you have to look at, Am I actually DOING What God has given ME to do?

Have I moved beyond KNOWING what God wants me to do, UNDERSTANDING His desire, to IMPLEMENTATION?

That is the key, Am I doing...

For many of us, a quote that I heard all the way back in Bible College comes into play

"Many of us are biblically educated far beyond the level of our day to day obedience!"

If we take each one of the areas of life that we talked about, there are some specific questions we should ask!

5 “Lanes” of Life

1. God: What is my relationship like with God? Is HE first, am I honoring Him?
Mk 12:30 *“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength.”*
2. Family Am I honoring the ones that God has put closest in my life?
>Honor father and mother >Leave and cleave
>Husbands love as Christ loved, wives respect your husband
>Don’t provoke your children
3. Work Am I working as unto the Lord? Is my boss GLAD I work for him or her?
1Co 10:31 *“Whatever you do, do it all to the glory of God”*
4. Church Am I a fully functioning part of the body of Christ?
Heb 10:25: *Meeting together*, 1 Cor 12 *Am I using my gift in the body*
5. Other All the other things that we want to add to our life...
Are they in their proper, appropriate place...or have they been reordered...
Have SECONDARY things become PRIMARY?
Is my level of commitment appropriate?

Key: This isn’t easy: Heb tells us that: “Run with perseverance the race set out before us!”

Heb 12:1-3

- Divest: Get rid of things that slow you down: You CANT have and DO it all!
- Determine: Perseverance: Don’t give up when it gets hard
- Devote: Set your eyes on Jesus: His journey was hard...but He did what God had for HIM

C. Is The Kingdom Going Forward Because of ME?

VS 15-18

Remember the commendation from the Parable of the Talents:

“Well done good and faithful servant!”

That’s what we are aiming at, vs 18: The one the Lord commends!

Lit = approve: *To validate after evaluation*

In these few verses notice what Paul writes about how the Kingdom of God should be impacted by our actions.

These are the things that God looks for. When HE finds them in our life, He validates, checks off, says “Well done!!!”

1. Faith continues to grow: Lit = *to grow, to enlarge, to increase:*
2. Area of kingdom activity expands: Lit = *to make great or to magnify, to expand*
3. Gospel goes to new places: Lit = *places beyond! (New places, never heard before)*

Illus: Child Dedication: All three questions make sense

When you look at those things you have to ask yourself:

1. IS my faith increasing? Getting larger? *Am I able to trust God more today than before? (Comes via exercise!)*
 2. Are the areas of kingdom activity expanding in my life? *(God in my work, my sports, my neighborhood?)*
 3. Is the gospel going to new places? *(Cuba Pastors: Pray we can plant new: Neighborhood Bible Clubs)*
- Exciting Meeting on Friday: Planning to Get the Gospel to new people!

CONCL: All of us have to determine how WE are going to measure success in our own lives.

1. Like the world around us?
2. Comfort, Easy, no strife or struggle
3. Will I hear, Well Done?

- Am I in the right lanes? If not, Come pray: Priorities, Order, Commitment
- Am I actually doing God’s will? Am I investing myself the way God wants me to?
- Will I hear Well Done? Faith bigger, Kingdom taking new ground, Gospel shared where never before