

J.J.

GOD'S FORMULA FOR SUCCESS Part 6

Joshua 1:1-19

Story : Don't step on ducks!

Three women die together in an accident and go to heaven. When they get there, St. Peter says, "We only have one rule here in heaven: don't step on the ducks!" So they enter heaven, and sure enough, there are ducks all over the place. It is almost impossible not to step on a duck, and although they try their best to avoid them, the first woman accidentally steps on one. Along comes St. Peter with the ugliest old man she ever saw. St. Peter chains them together and says, "Your punishment for stepping on a duck is to spend eternity chained to this ugly man!" The next day, the second woman steps accidentally on a duck and along comes St. Peter, who doesn't miss a thing. With him is another extremely ugly man. He chains them together with the same admonishment as for the first woman. The third woman has observed all this and, not wanting to be chained for all eternity to an ugly man, is very, VERY careful where she steps. She was so successful on not stepping on any of the ducks, that one day St. Peter comes up to her with the most handsome man she has ever laid eyes on, young, very tall and muscular. St. Peter chains them together without saying a word.

The happy woman says, "I wonder what I did to deserve being chained to you for all of eternity?" The man says, "I don't know about you, but I stepped on a duck!"

Joshua 1: ¹ After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, it came to pass that the LORD spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, saying: ² "Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them—the children of Israel. ³ Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, as I said to Moses. ⁴ From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the River Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory. ⁵ No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you. ⁶ Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. ⁷ Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. ⁸ This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. ⁹ Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

Pray

- I. GOD'S PERSON FOR SUCCESS Joshua 1:1-2
- II. GOD'S PREPARATION FOR SUCCESS
- III. GOD'S PROMISE OF SUCCESS Joshua 1:2-5
- IV. GOD'S PROCESS FOR SUCCESS Joshua 1:6-9

Review

Now, how do we take possession of these blessings? What's the process?

1. Be strong and courageous!

⁶ *Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.*

⁷ *Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. ⁸ This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. ⁹ Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."*

*2. Be faithful and obedient to God's Word

⁷ *"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. ⁸ Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.*

*Look at God's promise when we read God's Word :

....that you may be successful wherever you go.

...Then you will be prosperous and successful.

What does it mean about God's promise of being prosperous and successful in this context?

Etymology 1 : successful "prosper" in KJV "sakal" which means "insight, comprehension, understanding"

It simply means : You will know what to do in "ALL" situations **because you are guided by God's Word. You will know what to do or how to react!!!!**

Then you will be **prosperous and successful.*

Etymology : prosperous "tsalach" pronounced as (tsalaehac) which means to advance, to progress...

Visual picture of the word : it's like a river : You can't stop it...it makes progress, it just goes through and through.

In short : To be prosperous, means, nothing can stop your progress, you will advance in what God wants you to do.

***Now how can we be faithful and obedient to God's Word?**

a.) Make sure we understand God's Word correctly.

***First : Make sure it is in the Bible.**

That's why God says to Joshua :

⁷ "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. ⁸Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

Today of course, our Bible is the 66 books : 39 in OT and 27 in NT written by over 40 authors inspired by the Holy Spirit. If you want to find out how the "canon", which means "officially recognized" as inspired, send me an email. That's one of my first lessons when I was digging deeper into God's Word and I have to refresh myself again.

Note : There are certain rules in order for a certain book or letter to be included in the Bible

These are the things I remember : Does it agree with the other revealed Scriptures? For the New Testament, was it written by an "apostle"? Or someone who was close to Jesus... or one of the apostles" When was it written and etc? For the OT, one of the sure tests is , "Was it mentioned by Jesus?" and etc etc.

***That's why Paul says to Timothy :**

2 Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is God-breathed....

Etymology : Scripture "graphos" something put down in paper
God-breathed "Theo-pneustos" coming from God Himself

Second : Make sure you get the exact meaning (exegesis)

do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

***Third : Make sure you put it in your mind and heart.**

.⁸Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night,

Etymology : meditate “haga” to mutter

In short : how do you memorize something? You use your lips right...you mutter (haga) it. **It means, you are always thinking about it.**

How do you meditate? If you know how to worry, you will know how to meditate.

Continued...

b.) Make sure we obey God’s Word carefully.

⁷ “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. ⁸Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

Note : It is not only important to read and study God’s Word, what’s important is we obey God’s Word

James 1: ²² Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

The best Bible translation according to Vernon McGee : The doer’s translation

Obedience shows our love for God :

*John 14:23 -14Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will **obey** my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. He who does not love me will not **obey** my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.*

Obeying God is making sure that we maintain that right relationship with Him.

Explain : Because of Jesus and only Jesus, He made it possible for us to have a relationship with God. Before we have no relationship with Him. If you are a Christian, you have a relationship with God. The question right now is not whether you have a relationship or not, it’s do you have a right relationship with Him? Which means, are you obeying Him.

*John 15:10 If you **obey** my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love.*

Some people think that they're doing a favor to God by doing something for Him and yet remains in sin :

1 Samuel 15:22 Obedience is better than sacrifice

*"Be strong and very courageous. **Be careful to obey all the law***

Etymology : careful "shamar" to guard, like a watchman

What does a watchman do?

- a.) In the ancient world of agrarian societies, large watchtowers were placed overlooking the fields. There, in the weeks the crops were ripening toward harvest, men would stand watch, guarding the fields from animals or from thieves who would make off with the crops. With the community's basic food stores at stake, the watchman's role was critical to the townspeople.
- b.) We also find several references in Scripture to a watcher mounting the city walls in times of stress to survey the scene outside the fortifications. He was situated on a spot from which he could monitor the approaches to the town. If a threat appeared, he would sound a warning and the town would shut its gates and prepare for battle.

Application : When we are commanded to carefully obey God's Word, it means like a watchman, he is to watch out if what they are doing is according to the revealed Word of God.

Consequences : Because if we are lax in doing that, then it's either our enemy would seize the open opportunity

1 Peter 5: Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

This is the reason why the prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel were called "watchman". Their job is to warn people about sinning and the impending danger if we are not following God's Word.

1. The extent of our obedience

*....Be careful to **obey all the law** my servant Moses gave you*

*... careful **to do everything** written in it*

In short : God is commanding Joshua everything that has been given to them in the Torah or Pentateuch.

Important Question : Then why are we not sacrificing lambs and etc etc today?
Answer : We have to differentiate the different laws that God has given in the OT

1. Ceremonial Law - or also called ritual law

Example : The offering of lamb without defect as a sacrifice for sin

Why don't we follow this? It's because "ceremonial" laws shows how God wants us to deal with sin.

Hebrews 10: ¹ The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming—not the realities themselves. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship

In short : A shadow means that there is something tangible that is behind it.

This is the reason why John the Baptist declared when he saw our Lord Jesus :

John 1: ²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

In short : We don't need to sacrifice a perfect lamb because our Lord Jesus, THE LAMB OF GOD already made the sacrifice for us.

Hebrews 10: ¹⁰ And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Now you will understand why Jesus said to His disciples :

*Matthew 5: ¹⁷ "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them **but to fulfill them.***

2.Civil Law – laws that were given by Moses to Israel on how they are to act as a "nation" collectively as a people of God.

Example :

Leviticus 13: ¹⁸ "If the body develops a boil in the skin, and it is healed, ¹⁹ and in the place of the boil there comes a white swelling or a bright spot, reddish-white, then it shall be shown to the priest;

Of course, you won't go to the pastor if you have a "pigsy".

The context : The priest will need to see if it's leprosy. And when it is leprous, he needs to be isolated from the people to stop it from spreading.

3.Moral Law - these are the laws that we should be obeying even today because it reflects the character of God.

Example : The Ten Commandments : You shall have no other gods before Me; Honor thy father and mother; thou shall not commit adultery, thou shall not steal, thou shall not kill...

Case study :

The Old Testament says in

Exodus 21: ²⁴ eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, ²⁵ burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise.

But in the New Testament, Jesus says :

Matthew 5: ³⁸ “You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.’ ³⁹ But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also

Does it mean our Lord abolished this law? We just learned earlier that He came to fulfill the law.

Here it is : Remember that the OT law of eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth is a civil law where you can apply the principle still today.

In short : The punishment must befit the intensity of the crime.

Example : Speeding gets a speeding ticket; Murder gets lifetime imprisonment or capital punishment

The problem our Lord was confronting in Matthew 5: 38 : They applied a civil law to personal offenses

Example : Somebody insulted you, you also destroy his reputation by slandering him or her

2. The range of our obedience

...do not turn from it to the right or to the left...

In short : We follow what is exactly commanded by the Lord. We don't add to it, we don't subtract from it.

Example of going to the right : Legalism

Some people are prohibited from dancing when there is no specific command in the Bible not to dance. Of course, we just have to make sure that the dance is not sexually subjective.

Another one : Some people would say that we should only read the King James Version of the Bible...and the list goes on

In short : It's putting unnecessary guilt on a person

Example of going to the left : Licentiousness

Some people say that it's ok to sin already because of grace and our Lord Jesus Christ has already forgiven our sin. Of course not, we have not understood God's grace if we do that.

Romans 6: ¹⁵ What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace? By no means! ¹⁶ Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? ¹⁷ But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. ¹⁸ You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.

Important to Remember : When you became a Christian, you were set free from Satan and sin who is your former master. We now have a new master who is all-powerful, loving, gentle, who only wants the best for us, who died for us...our LORD Jesus Christ!!!!

Illustration : There was a woman who was married to a cruel husband. He would verbally abuse her and just be mean to her. She will make sure that the meals she cooked for him were delicious or else she will be insulted. She will make sure his clothes were properly ironed OR else the husband would get angry. THIS WOMAN WAS ALWAYS CRYING BECAUSE OF THIS. Only her friend knows about his. But after a few years, the husband died.

One day, a loving gentle man fell in love with her, courted her and eventually married her. The man took care of her. When the man goes home, she would ask him how her day was and he would listen. She would always praise the cooking of the wife. He will help in washing the dishes. He would always surprise her with gifts.

One day, the woman's friend visited her while the husband was away. She was ironing the clothes of her husband and this time, she saw her crying again. The friend asked why she was crying when she always told her that she married a wonderful husband.

The woman replied, "Before, with my former husband, I made sure that I cook the best food, I make sure the house was clean and I ironed his clothes because I was afraid of him and that's why I always cried. Now, I'm crying because these are tears of joy. I'm doing the same thing, making sure I prepare the best meal, the house is clean and his clothes are ironed well because he loves me so much and I love him so much."

In short : This is what happens when it comes with our obedience with the Lord. We obey Him because we love Him because we know HE LOVE US.

Now since Christians are living in the New Testament, this is what we should be doing :

Matthew 28: 19 -20 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Special announcement :

Matthew 18: 15 "If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. 16 But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' 17 If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

18 "Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

19 "Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. 20 For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.

Note : brother (KJV) adelphos – fellow disciple

It is no accident that we are studying and now obeying God's command in order to prosper and be successful.

Outline :

1. This church practices discipline and we follow the process of Matthew 18
2. The purpose of discipline is not to condemn but to restore
3. Example of last year and some of you thought it was too harsh and I understand but we have to follow God's Word. But the person involved repented.
4. Today, this woman is back with her husband and they are living as a family again. And the husband was so grateful. The woman recently emailed us saying that she is also so grateful to what the church has done.
5. It is with sadness that we had to do it again to a member of this church. But instead of accepting their sins, they decided to leave the church and the reason I'm telling you this is because :

We already have done

Process 1 and 2

' 17 If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

6. Narrate what the couple did. O Holy Spirit help me. Search my heart first, O Lord!!!!

7. I'm a coward to these things. I don't like confronting people, as much as possible. Kung puwede lang para wala nang away. BUT LOVE IS NOT SENTIMENTAL OR FOO FOO...IT'S ALWAYS LOOKING OUT FOR THE HIGHEST GOOD OF THE OTHER PERSON.

And the only thing that encourages me during this situation is this line :

¹⁸ *“Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.*

¹⁹ *“Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.*

Right from the Old Testament times, this is the encouragement God has given to His people :

Ending with : ⁹ *Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.”*

Let's pray

S.D.G.