

7 Secrets of True Success

BY DANNY CHENEY

ADAPTED FROM THE CLOUD OF WITNESSES

FIRST SECRET OF TRUE SUCCESS

I will be a person of true success. Success is a mindset; therefore, I will not pursue success as the world defines it, but as God defines it. For I know that I will be successful only if I am a success in the eyes of God. I will seek to be faithful in all He has called me to do and then leave the results to Him. I will give my all to be truly successful. I will not look to the bar that my peers have raised before me, but the standard God has set. While numbers are important, they are not the tell-tale sign of success. Success is not a number or a position, but doing right no matter what circumstance I find myself in. It is pursuing what I know to do and then leaving the results to God. Remembering that whether my influence is great or small, I will remain faithful to what He has called me to do. True success is a matter of the heart. I will endeavor to guard my heart above all other things. I know true success is the pursuit of the one who is a person after God's heart; therefore, my primary pursuit will be to have His heart. May true success come to me God's way, and in God's time, as I look to Him to help me succeed. May I be a person who can be trusted by God to be successful.

SECOND SECRET OF TRUE SUCCESS

I will be a person of prayer. There is no greater evidence of pride than prayerlessness. When I believe I can do things on my own, I will fail to pray. I have not because I ask not; therefore, I will daily make the habit of prayer; to ask, seek, and knock. Only then can I be assured God will respond. If I pray not, I cannot expect Him to answer a prayer that has not been prayed. Therefore, I resolve to have a time of prayer every day. I will commit to this, and I will not miss my appointment with God. I will make Him the most important person in my life for I cannot be a true success without being a person of prayer. When I pray, there is no limit to what God will do. I realize that I cannot have great power in the pulpit unless I have spent time in private with the Lord. I will seek to have the demonstration of power in my preaching which will only come in the outflow of my relationship with God. I also commit to pray for those under my care which will help me feel their needs; therefore, enabling me to empathize with them by understanding what they are going through. I will use prayer as my means to transfer mine and other's burdens to God. This way I will ensure the load does not become too heavy for me to bear.

THIRD SECRET OF TRUE SUCCESS

I will be a shepherd of God's flock. Since God has entrusted me with His people, I will endeavor to love them as Christ loves them. Knowing that a shepherd smells like sheep, I will make myself available to those I lead, so that I might lead them, care for them, and pastor them. I will be aware that even in interruptions there are opportunities for miracles; therefore, I will not view those under my watch as a distraction but rather I will pray for opportunities to touch people's lives. I will make myself available, as time allows, and will not neglect my role as a shepherd. I will not only feed the flock, but I will also tend the flock as well. I will give my all to shepherd the flock that God has entrusted me with, knowing that He has chosen me to be a conduit of His blessing. I will help guide people, understanding that only God has the power to change them. I will always serve others with a willing heart and never minister grudgingly. I will minister to others selflessly, serving to build God's kingdom, not my own. I will seek to serve others, not expecting them to serve me. I will keep the heart of a shepherd knowing that God will reward me as He wills. I will be diligent to keep my heart connected to God's heart so that I might have the heart of the Great Shepherd.

FOURTH SECRET OF TRUE SUCCESS

I will be a person of humility. Knowing that God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble, I will endeavor to keep my heart abased. I will always remember that God is more interested in my availability than my ability. I will remind myself daily that I am not God's gift to the Kingdom, but it is because of the gift of His son that I am even in His kingdom. I will understand that I am not the most important person on earth and God can do this without me. However, I will remain grateful that He uses me to minister to others. I will submit to Him and follow His lead in my life, instead of me trying to lead Him. I will be diligent to guard my heart against the pride that creeps in when God uses me, whether in my preaching, my praying, or my leadership. When the church grows, I will give credit to God for I know that without Him I can do nothing. I will never take pride in my religious duties or even my holiness, knowing that my righteousness is as filthy rags. I will care more about what God thinks of me than what others do. I will not allow power and authority go to my head and I will guard my heart against thinking that I am entitled to respect. I will conquer the temptation to be critical of others, making others small so that I can look better. A critical spirit is one of the great signs of pride; therefore, I will be slow to criticize and quick to praise. I will build others up and seek to make them look good, even if it means that they get the credit. I would rather be exalted by God than to be resisted by Him. I will always keep Jesus bigger than me. I will endeavor to make Christ followers, not my followers. I will live my life with the motto: I decrease that Christ may increase.

FIFTH SECRET OF TRUE SUCCESS

I will be a person of complete integrity. I will guard my heart knowing it is the well spring of life. I will walk in purity in all things, sexually, financially, relationally, in my words, as well as in what I do behind closed doors. Character is a choice, and I will choose to do the right thing when I am alone and in my dealings with others. I will choose integrity, one decision at a time. I will seek to be accountable to others in my life. People who can encourage me but also rebuke me if needed. Knowing that sin will take me farther than I want to go and will have consequences I do not want to face, I will seek to live holy in every area of my life. I will take care of the small things. Little foxes spoil the vine; therefore, I will take care of them when they are small. I will not allow sins to grow into bigger ones, understanding that God honors the person of integrity. I will hide God's Word in my heart that I might not sin against Him. I will choose to do the right thing, knowing that all my actions, whether good or bad, are a choice. Therefore, I will choose righteousness.

SIXTH SECRET OF TRUE SUCCESS

I will be a person of the Word, reading my Bible daily for more than just sermon preparation. I will allow it to change me before I expect it to change others. I will obey whatever God shows me and I will seek to live by His Word in my everyday life. I will read more than I expect my congregation to do; therefore, I will read the Bible in equal or greater portions than I read other books. I will seek to continually grow so that I can bring my family and church up to where I am. I cannot expect anyone else to grow if I am not growing. I will not allow any distractions to keep me from having a steady diet of God's Word. I recognize that the Bible is God-breathed and is the greatest benefit to my spiritual life. I rely on the truths of God's Word to shape my life, and I will teach it so that it might transform those who hear. I will preach only what the Lord lays on my heart, and I will always check my motivation for what and why I am preaching. I will preach the whole counsel of the Word of God using it to encourage, correct, reprove, or guide as the Lord leads. I will rightly divide the Word of Truth. Before preaching to others, I will let God's Word do its work on me and in me. I will be careful not to make the Bible say something that God never intended it to say. I will conform my opinions to the Word of God, not conform the Word of God to my opinions. I will never shackle people by man-made rules and will rely on showing them what true holiness looks like in the Scriptures. I will preach all of the Bible, not just parts. I will teach about, not only the "big" sins, but also the "small" ones as well. I will never excuse sin. When I preach, I will pursue transformation in the lives of the listener, not only preaching in words but seeking for the power as well. I will not take Scripture out of context and I will interpret Scripture by Scripture. I will speak what God desires knowing that one day I will be judged for my work here on earth. There is no greater honor than preaching. I will take my role seriously. I will carefully guard the truth by relying on the power of the Holy Spirit in my life. I will always remember that God gave me this calling because He trusts me.

SEVENTH SECRET OF TRUE SUCCESS

I will be a person who is faithful in and through everything. I will persevere no matter how heavy the load of ministry becomes. I will be made strong in my weakness knowing that God's grace is sufficient for me. I will always rest in knowing that God has called me because He trusts me to lead. I will rely on Him for the strength to finish the task. I will not take responsibility for other people's decisions, only my own. I know that I cannot carry their pains or sins; therefore, I will give them to the Guardian of Souls. I will seek to never let my hurts and the words of others to callous my heart. I will place my wounds into the wounded hands of Jesus. I will not grow weary in well-doing, understanding I will reap if I do not faint. I will always keep a heart of compassion no matter how fatigued I am and will keep it alive by continually praying for those I serve. In order to remain faithful to the end, I will stop relying on myself and will rely on God. I will always remember my calling so that I will be able to let God fight my battles, for they are His not mine. I will cast my cares on Him for He cares for me. In prayer I will relinquish those under my care to the Lord. When hurt by others, I will be quick to forgive. Whether I am hurt or criticized, I will choose to focus on the good things in ministry or the people who are an encouragement to me. When I see others start to slip in their faith, I will leave the ninety-nine and go after the one. I will seek to love them back into the hands of God. I will do my best to build God's kingdom but also remember that it is His church, not mine. I will leave my ministry on the shoulders of the One whom the church is built upon. I will learn to grow through my hardships and use my experience to minister to others. I will persevere knowing that I will always have a concern for the church, but I will let Jesus help carry that load. I will remember that pastoring is a marathon not a sprint; therefore, I will pace myself so that I may make it to the end. I will always remember if I am faithful in the least, He will make me ruler over much. Whether that much comes to pass in this life or the next, I will be faithful to the end. I will serve God no matter what!