

FOUNDATION FOR SUCCESS

Hebrews 11:23-27

At dinner one evening a young executive asked his boss, “Mr. Goldman, what is the secret to your success.

The old boss fingered his expensive wool vest and said, “Well my boy, it was 1932. The depth of the Great Depression. I was down to my last nickel. I invested that nickel in an apple. I spent the entire day polishing that apple and at the end of the day, I sold it for ten cents.”

“The next morning, I invested those ten cents in 2 apples. I again spent the entire day polishing them and sold them at 5:00pm for 20 cents. I continued this system for a month, by the end of which I had accumulated fortune of \$9.80.”

“Wow”, said the young executive. “What happened next, did you continue to work the system? Did you make an even wiser investment?”

The old man grinned, leaned in close to his admirer and said, “Nah, my wife’s father died and left us 2 million dollars.”

Someone once said that success is often the result of taking a misstep in the right direction.

How do you define success? Success means a lot of different things to a lot of different people. For some it finds fulfillment in money and power, for others it is nothing more than waking up happy every morning. Whether someone is considered successful or not seems to be quite subjective. One could say that success, just like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder.

It has been said that if you want to be successful in anything, you need to surround yourself with successful people. You

need to examine what they are doing, or have done. You need to pick their brains and find out what traits made them who and what they are. And then you need to eat fish.

One of the best places to start if we want to be successful in life is the Bible. In here we not only have God giving us all of the instruction we need to succeed in this life, but we also have the examples of those who have gone before us. God's Word shows us life in the raw. We see in the lives of these people, good choices, bad choices and the results of both. And if we are good students we can take away the principles that lay the foundation for our own success stories.

Today we're going to look at Moses who I consider to be one of the greatest people in OT. He received the 10 Commandments from God. He led the children of Israel out of 400 years of slavery in Egypt. And he wrote the first five books of the Bible – An amazing man!

Let's begin by reading about him in Hebrews 11:23-27:

Heb 11:23 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw *he was a proper child*; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment.

24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;

25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.

27 By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.

with them to an undefeated 1999 season with a 13-0 record. Their 34-26 defeat of the Georgetown College Tigers gave them the NAIA (National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics) national championship.

Albin is a goal setter and goal achiever. He earned two college degrees and has worked himself up the coaching ladder, now he has reached the big time, he is headed to the University of Nebraska in Lincoln to become their tight ends coach.

But the time came when success wasn't enough.

"I woke up one morning after completing my first season as head football coach, and said, 'There's got to be more than this,'" he said. "I was 32 years old and began to wonder, 'How long is this going to go on?'"

He turned back to the faith of his childhood—he returned to church. Soon after attending again, Pastor Buddy Hunt led him to the Lord over dinner.

"I have a sense of purpose and well-being" [now].

Success without Christ is hollow at best.

Mt 16:26 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

This passage tells us that Moses had settled four key issues concerning his life:

1. **Identity – Who am I?**

24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;

God only sees us in one of two ways, either in a relationship with Him or not. Just like us, he had to choose which Master he would serve.

2. **Responsibility – What am I going to do with my life?**

25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

Moses had no identity crisis. He wasn't holding on to the world with one hand and Christ with the other. This was no closet – Hebrew.

3. **Priority – What is the most important thing in life?**

26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.

The Bible teaches that where your heart is, there your treasure will be also. Moses' heart was with God and the people of God. He understood something about

relationships and chose God over the riches of the world.

4. **Difficulty – How much am I willing to commit to what I'm going to give my life for?**

27 By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.

It was by faith that Moses left the land of Egypt. He was not afraid of the king. Moses kept right on going because he kept his eyes on the one who is invisible.

Why did God choose Moses? Because Moses chose God.

These are issues that every one of us has to deal with – Moses made the right choice in each instance and I want us to learn to make the same choices that he did. Today I want to give you four foundations for personal success.

Four Foundations for Personal Success

1. DISCOVER WHAT GOD MADE ME TO BE

Heb 11:23 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment.

Moses was born a Hebrew slave but he was raised as Pharaoh's grandson in Pharaoh's palace which was the most opulent place in the world at that time. When Moses became of age, he had to decide: "Am I Jewish or am I Egyptian?"

It says "Obstacles are what you see when you take your eye off the goal."

What are you looking at – the obstacles or the opportunities? The problems or the One who overcomes the problems? It's all a matter of vision, what you focus on with your life. That's the key to endurance and perspective.

What I've given you this morning are the four foundations for success:

- 1. DISCOVER WHAT GOD MADE ME TO BE**
- 2. ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR MY OWN LIFE**
- 3. ESTABLISH A VALUE SYSTEM FOR MY LIFE**
- 4. NEVER TAKE YOUR EYES OFF THE GOAL**

Now I don't give you these this morning just so you can have a neat outline to take home. I give you these because I want you to be successful in your life and I know that if you implement these four foundational issues into your life then you will be a success.

Please take this home and consider what we've talked about this morning. See if there is some area where you need to grow, and then seek God's help.

Let me leave you with this thought:

Tim Albin, 1999 NAIA coach of the year knows something about success. He led his team, the Northwestern Oklahoma State University Rangers from a 5-5 record his first season

27 ... for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.

Moses kept right on going because he kept his eyes on the one who is invisible.

You must visualize your goal, and focus on it – You constantly keep it before you.

Why is vision so important? Because the secret of success is persistence. And the secret of persistence is vision. Vision draws you on so that when you want to give up, you don't. You have your eyes on the ultimate reward.

Did you know that Moses spent most of his life waiting?

From the time that God gave Moses the vision, the dream of setting free an entire nation after 400 years of slavery to the time it was fulfilled and they were ready to go into the Promised Land was 80 years.

Could you wait that long and not give up? Moses spent 40 years in Midian just waiting for God to say "Start!"

Do you ever get tired of waiting on God?
Do delays ever tempt you to give up?
Have you learned the difference between "No" and "Not yet"?

Have you learned that God's delays are not God's denials?
One of the tests of faith is "How long can you wait?"

You must keep your eye on the vision, the goal, on what counts in life so you don't get discouraged. I saw a poster with a picture of the sun shining through a rock that has a hole in it.

Am I a slave or am I royalty?"

The major consequences of his decision would affect the rest of his life. If he chooses to say, "I'm Pharaoh's grandson," he has fame, fortune, a life of luxury, a promising career, and is heir to the throne.

If he chooses to say, "I'm Jewish born of Jewish slaves," he'll be rejected, despised, thrown out, humiliated and will live the life of a slave forever.

But Moses refused to live a lie – He was a man of integrity, a man of character.

24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;

Consider this word "refused" – It means to disown, reject, to leave no door open. - Moses insisted on being what God made him to be and no one could convince him otherwise.

Now what application does this have for you and me?

God made you for a purpose – He wants you to be you. The first secret of success is to be yourself

- Quit trying to be somebody else.
- Quit trying to be somebody you're not
- Quit trying to conform: look like everybody else, drink like everybody else, talk like everybody else, buy the same thing everybody else has –

Be yourself – Discover what God made *you* to be.

2. ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR MY OWN LIFE

God has given you the freedom of choice and the choices that you make will determine your future.

25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

If you want to make an impact with your life, it's your choice, not mine. You might say, "I'm not as close to God as I'd like to be," but I don't believe that. You're as close to God as you want to be – You read your Bible as much as you want to read it – You pray as much as you want to pray – It's your choice.

God chose Moses as a baby, but at some point Moses had to choose God.

24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years,

A mark of maturity is when you start accepting responsibility for your own life. It's a mark of maturity – When you stop blaming other people.

As a baby it was OK for Moses to live off of his parents' faith. But when he had grown up he had to make that decision on his own. He had to go God's way because he wanted to go God's way.

Three facts of life:

1. I can't live off of other people's spiritual commitment.

You've heard people say, "My parents were Christians" or "My dad was a missionary" or "My husband/wife is a believer."

and had every possession he ever wanted – wine, women, and song. But he knew that no possession could give him inner peace. He would have been miserable not doing what God wanted him to do.

Peace comes not from the things you own; peace comes from being in the center of God's will, being what God made you to be, and doing what God made you to do. - That's where peace comes from.

What motivated this guy? What made him live this way?

(Moses) was looking ahead to the great reward that God would give him. – Hebrews 11:26b

Moses had perspective – he had the willingness to look at life through the perspective of eternity – he was not just living for the moment.

What motivates you to reject the world's value system and accept God's value system for your life? It's your perspective.

Are you looking at the here and now or at eternity? Your values are determined by your vision – Whatever you're looking at is what becomes most important in your life.

- What are you focusing on?
- What are you looking at?
- What is most important?

Are you focusing on things that are going to last, or things that won't last even 10 years much less for eternity?

Moses was a man of vision – He had eyes of faith.

Finally the last foundation for personal success is to:

4. NEVER TAKE YOUR EYES OFF THE GOAL

Verse 25 tells us that *Moses chose to **share the oppression** of God's people instead of **enjoying the fleeting pleasures of sin**.*

I like this verse – The Bible always tells the truth.

It says there is pleasure in sin – The Bible says sin is fun.

Of course it's fun; if it were a bumper nobody would do it! But it's only fun for a season, for a short time – It doesn't last.

Moses could have temporary pleasure being the next Pharaoh of Egypt or he could go do what God had called him to do and help the people who were in pain, who needed to be set free. He could have stayed there in pleasure and today no one would even have known Moses' name – He'd be some mummy in some tomb in Egypt.

But he chose the right thing, and we are called to choose the right thing to.

3. God's peace is more valuable than possessions.

*Verse 26 tells us that Moses **thought it was better to suffer for the sake of the Messiah than to own the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking ahead to the great reward that God would give him.***

A couple verses back he rejects the world's measure of success. Then he rejects the world's pleasure – Now, he rejects the world's treasure.

He does what is right because God's peace is more important than possessions. He could have stayed in the palace of Egypt

So what? You need a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

Some of you are teenagers; it's time to grow up! Some of you are 40 and need ...

You need to quit living off the spiritual apron strings of your parents and get your own faith – When Moses grew up, he chose.

2. I can't blame others for the direction of my life.

Society says the exact opposite – It says "It's not your fault, you're a product of your environment. Blame other people for your messed up life." But you can't blame other people for the direction of your life – It's your life. You can't control all the circumstances but you can choose how you'll respond.

3. No one can ruin my life except me.

I'm free to choose my response. You might have had the worst upbringing possible, you might have suffered through an abusive situation, there might have been a horrible tragedy that you've been through, and I'm very sympathetic to all that. But as real and tragic as these experiences are, they will not ruin your life. The only one who can do that is you, but you have a choice to do differently.

*Now the 3rd foundation for personal success is to:

3. ESTABLISH A VALUE SYSTEM FOR MY LIFE

If you're going to make your life count you need to settle the issue of what is really important – Clarify it in your life. Moses clarified his values and priorities:

26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.

Moses thought this thing out and made a decision to do what was right. He evaluated his options, considered them, and weighed them in the balance. It is the same thing that each of us must do.

We need to establish whether we are going to accept God's value system or not.

You need to sit down and seriously consider What in the world am I living for?

What are you living for today? If I were to ask you the 5 or 10 values – the pillars – on which you're building your life, would you be able to do it? Think it through.

Moses regarded what is important and what is not important. Most people have never done that and that's why they're failures at life. They don't know *why they are here*, they don't know *what they want to accomplish* in life, and they don't know *what's really important*.

You need to establish values in life, things that you can build your life on, the things that will be important to you. Why? The fact is that if you don't decide what is important in your life, others will do it for you. The world is more than happy to pressure you into its mold and to promote its value system on you. We have a lot of Christians today who have bought into the world's value system. They're living that system without even thinking about it rationally.

What is ironic is that Moses, by the world's standards, had it made. He already has everything the world had to offer:

- He had power – He was heir to the throne of the most powerful country of the world at that time.
- He had pleasure – Every whim would be satisfied in the palace of Egypt.
- He had possessions – The wealth of the world was concentrated in Egypt.

Moses had it all but he walked away from it. Like Moses, we need to learn to say with conviction, "I'm not going to be sucked up into this world's system, the rat race, the hollow lifestyle that says life consists of pleasure, passions, possessions and prestige. I'm not going to buy into that."

That's the kind of person Moses was and that's why he made an impact with his life.

He wasn't conformed - He went against the flow.

Moses' Value System:

1. God's purpose is more valuable than popularity.

"God has a plan for my life. I'm going to lead these people to freedom." He refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He said, "I'm going to give up the prestige, the power, the popularity because it doesn't last."

Pride and prestige is fleeting – This year's superstars are next year's has-beens.

Moses said, "I'd rather fulfill God's purpose and do what He's told me to do than be in this place of power and prestige." He wasn't impressed by popularity.

2. People are more valuable than pleasures.