

Secure

CHAPTER 8

Secure

1 Corinthians 9:24 '...Run in such a way that you may win.'

As far as we're concerned, rich uncles, windfalls and free lunches don't exist. Winners don't rely on anyone else to win for them. They win for themselves. They paddle their own canoes. They don't wait for others to do it for them. They do it themselves.

Losers blame everyone else for their failure. They are depending on everyone else for their success. 'It's the weather.' 'The seed they sold me is bad.' 'The banker won't stand with me.' 'My friends let me down.' 'The other people in the church won't get behind it.'

'My parents won't loan me the money.' 'Nobody else gets involved, so what's the use?'

To win the medal, the athlete doesn't expect anyone else to train for him. To grow and sell the crop, the farmer doesn't expect someone else to plough, sow and harvest for him. To stay alive, the soldier doesn't expect everyone else to fight his battle for him.

Abraham is the classic example of self-sufficiency, and his nephew Lot is the classic example of a loser—a man without personal convictions, without personal drive, without inner reserve and resources. Abraham knew he was adequate in himself. His source was God. He knew God. Lot knew Abraham. He never developed his own line of blessing with God.

2 Peter 2:7 '...Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked.'

Even though Lot's environment constantly frustrates him he doesn't get out of it. Someone else has to rescue him from what he got himself into. He is living a compromised lifestyle, his soul restless with the world he has chosen to live in. He has no credibility with his own family. They mock him when he warns of coming judgment. The delivering angel has literally to drag Lot out of the city.

His wife resents leaving. Against the command of the angel, she 'looks back' and her body is petrified into a pillar of salt, forever a lesson to the uncommitted. Even Jesus refers to Lot's wife as a person who was 'unfit' for the kingdom of God (Luke 17:32).

Lot is commanded to escape to the mountains. He pleads for a shorter distance, an easier escape and a more comfortable run. This man couldn't paddle his own canoe even when he needed to.

His final days are spent in a cave. His daughters, fearful of a childless future, inebriate their father so they can have sex with him. The offspring of one daughter becomes the Moabite tribe and the Ammonites are born of the other daughter. Both tribes become perpetual thorns in the side of Abraham's descendants, the Israelites.

On the other hand, Lot's uncle, Abraham, lives right, works hard, walks with God, trains his men for war, teaches his children the ways of God, trusts Jehovah and prospers in life. This man, the father of the Israelite nation, becomes a pattern for the people of God. His will be remembered forever as one of the world's great citizens. He is one of the truly great members of the human family.

Leadership is the call to govern others. This won't happen without the leader exercising personal management. This means exercising

- Time management
- Mind management
- Emotional management
- Relational management
- Spiritual management.

Proverbs 25:16 'Have you found honey? Eat only as much as you need, lest you be filled with it and vomit.'

This verse relates to personal management because when we find something sweet to us it's easy to over indulge. This applies even to religion. We tend to think that if a little is good then a lot must be better. But throughout the centuries most of the extreme wrongs done to others by Christians have been carried out by zealots. These are people who have not managed their 'God-life' at all well, who have believed that if a little restraint is good then complete abstinence must be best. Their strange ascetic practices over the centuries have left a trail of dark representations of God and a harvest of misery among the people who have come under the influence of this religious crowd. It was such people who put Jesus to death, imagining they were doing God a favour. When the religious zealot Paul was persecuting Christians, he justified his murderous actions by the zeal he thought was showing for God.

Ecclesiastes 7:15-18 is helpful to the fair-minded but completely abhorrent to the zealot:

'So don't be too good or too wise! Why destroy yourself? On the other hand, don't be too wicked either—don't be a fool! Why should you die before your time? So try to walk a middle course...' (NLT)

The apostle Peter finds himself in a very awkward position when God tells him to kill and eat animals forbidden to Jewish people by the 'Book'. He tries to be holier than God, telling Him that he is not about to eat unclean animals. But God rebukes Peter telling that him He has called them clean. Peter's religiousness has to be broken down so that he will accept the Gentiles, people he has previously rejected, all in the name of God of course. (Acts 10:9-16).

Success is imperative. The alternative is horrifying. If we have any reaction against success we need to lose it.

The measurements of success transcend mere numbers and dollars. Success is achieving God-ordained goals by God-given means. Our greatest success is in implementing God's plan in the earth.

Success is to love God with everything. This is the first command. The second—loving your neighbour as you love yourself—is its equal (Luke 10:27).

Success is achieving the thing we set out to do. Success is discovering and doing what I am meant to do in this life. In his best-selling book, *The Purpose Driven Life*, Rick Warren says, 'If you want to know why you were placed on this planet, you must begin with God. You were born by his purpose and for his purpose'.¹

Success is doing what you do as well as you can. Your journey is not just about arriving, but also succeeding as a traveller. Sometimes, success means I lose well.

Success can mean sacrifice and servanthood. Success is overcoming selfish greed and arrogant bullying. Francis of Assisi forsook his rich father's home and inheritance for a life of voluntary poverty. He succeeded in overcoming the temptation for political power and all the wealth waiting for him. He lived true to his convictions.

Success is forgiving when we want revenge. Robert Schuller, writing about self-love says, 'I will never be brought down to the level of a man who hates me by hating him back'. Success is loving someone when you want to hate them.

Solomon said success is understanding that there's a time for everything and being in harmony with the rhythms of life (Ecclesiastes 3:1-8).

Success is being patient when you want to rush. In 1 Samuel 13, King Saul is told by Samuel the priest to wait seven days after which he will come and offer the sacrifice ahead of the king leading his soldiers into battle. However, Samuel takes longer than anticipated and soldiers leave the battlefield. As Saul's fears increase his patience runs out. He conducts the sacrificial ceremony himself. At that very moment Samuel arrives. Incensed, the priest prophesies to the impatient king that presuming to be a priest has cost him the kingdom. The price of impatience is not small.

Success is being confident when you're intimidated.

Success is being able to tolerate diversity.

Success is changing when it seems impossibly hard.

Success is beating a bad habit and forming a new, good habit.

Success is winning against yourself, doing what you should do, must do, but don't want to do.

Success is telling the truth when you want to lie.

Success is winning by the rules against the competition.

Success is endearing the favour of God over your life.

For me personally, success is leading a church and a movement of churches that are effectively reaching increasing numbers of unchurched people leading them into becoming disciples of

Christ. The call of God to me is to equip His people to provide the environment for this growth to take place.

God gives us as much as He knows we can cope with at present, but as we 'trade' with what we've been given, our capacities grow and we receive more.

Opportunists act quickly, without hesitation, not procrastinating. They are not second-guessers. God calls unproductive servants wicked and lazy. Even though it may seem unfair to us, the principle of the kingdom is that unproductive servants lose what they do have to productive servants.

Matthew 25:29 (NLT) 'But from those who are unfaithful, even what little they have will be taken away.'

SELF-IMAGE

People owning a healthy self-image have found the ability to synthesise honesty, humility and confidence. We need to find the ground between Narcissus (the Greek god infatuated with his own reflection) and the ugly duckling who found no worth in herself.

The way we see ourselves is the way we'll be.

Proverbs 23:7 'For as [a man] thinks in his heart, so is he.'

Romans 12:3 (NLT) 'Be honest in your estimate of yourselves...'

Make some short summaries of how you see yourself. Answer these questions with one-sentence answers:

Q. When I say my name what sort of person do I see and think of?

A. I am ...

Q. What is the purpose of my life?

A. My purpose in life is to ...

Q. What is my personality?

A. My personality is ...

Q. What are my capacities?

A. My capacity is ...

Q. What do I think of my body?

A. I see my body as ...

Q. What do I think of my looks?

A. My looks are ...

Q. What do I think of my personal culture and life-style?

A. My lifestyle is ...

Q. What do I think of my past?

A. My past is ...

Q. What do I think of my future?

A. My future is ...

This is not an exhaustive survey of ourselves but it helps us start to see whether overall we are negative or positive about ourselves.

Self-image is how we see ourselves. We become that image. The saying 'The me I see is the me I'll be' holds true. We move in the direction of our dominant thoughts. Our imagination is a creative tool. We conform to the image we hold of ourselves. Our self-image springs from our having been created. We once were not, now we are. We are created beings. God, who created us, has imprinted His image into each and every human soul. We have been made in His image. His nature is the essence of our being.

Genesis 1:27 'God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.'

Roget's Thesaurus says the word 'image' is synonymous with projection, hologram, silhouette, reflection, reproduction, engraving, true-to-life and embodiment.

After losing his keys Patrick is looking for them beneath a street lamp. A policeman asks Patrick what he's looking for. 'My keys!' he says. 'Where did you lose them?' asks the policeman. 'Down the road, but there's more light here!'

The (sometimes mystical) search for 'who we are' can lure us down paths without any real answers. We hope that others will help us to 'discover ourselves'. But when others' opinions about us matter too much we are like trees without roots. Our soul is doomed to a life of confusion when the opinion of others is our source of confidence.

Mark 4:17 ‘...and they have no firm root in themselves but are only temporary...’

When we're happy with ourselves, we draw strength from deep within. We stop despising what God loves. I stop rejecting what God accepts—me!

A successful life calls for self-awareness. I need to know who I am if I am ever to begin getting comfortable with being me. This might seem unusual, but one step towards increasing your self-awareness is to get quiet and then tell yourself your name. Say, ‘I’m ...’ If I cringe, I change the cringe to a smile. I get happy with my name, with me. Attaching new emotions to my name, I get to feel good about me. Positive emotions and my name are synonymous.

Our names are extremely important. If we're labelled ‘loser’ enough times, we'll become dysfunctional. Label someone a loser and they'll act like one. Label yourself a winner and you'll begin to behave like one. Label yourself wise and you'll become wise.

God knows you by your name. Your name is written in His Book of Life (Philippians 4:3). Your name is inscribed on the palm of God's right hand (Isaiah 49:16). God even changes our names as He sets our sights on a higher destiny. If your name is associated with failure, He changes it to success, not when it happens but before it happens. You see yourself as you will be, not as you are now. You name yourself as you will be, not as you are now.

Abram, 75-years-old and childless, has his name changed by God to Abraham. He accepts this. He begins signing his name ‘Abraham’ meaning ‘father of a multitude’, before he has a child. God changes Abraham's vision of himself to something that doesn't yet exist.

My name locates me. Saying my name to myself I remember those times I've been the unmasked me, the unselfconscious, free me—unafraid, laughing at breakfast, running through a field, swimming in waves, no masks, just me—and enjoying it! This is the person I love. This is the me I wish I could be all the time—the unselfconscious me.

However, this person doesn't seem to be enough. He's vulnerable, exposed and unsteady. So we hide our true selves, emerging only when it's safe. We don't get the chance to grow. Cold rejection and mockery topple faint confidence, so we put on a mask of bravado, dying inside one more time. When the real ‘me’ occasionally spontaneously skips out, I'm taken by surprise. I shock myself. My follow-up emotions aren't strong enough and I laugh at my own expression, grind my teeth, cringe inside, and look at the floor, embarrassed, dying again. The memory pinches and I kick the door.

But change is happening. Who I am is fine. I refuse to be embarrassed about what God is totally unashamed of. I learn to accept the me I am. What I say is as valuable as what others say. If I'm short on knowledge, I don't say anything. I don't have to. I know in myself I'm enough. I don't have to prove it. If I see myself through the eyes of others, they will always be giants with a better everything than me and I'll be just a grasshopper.

Numbers 13:33 (TLB) ‘There also we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak are part of the Nephilim); and we became like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight.’

The underdog mindset of the Hebrew slaves evaporates their abilities when they see themselves through the eyes of their enemy. They see themselves as grasshoppers. In contrast, champions see themselves through the eyes of God. He sees them winning; so they see themselves winning. Champions return an unembarrassed 'thank you' to compliments.

Susan Jeffers of Fearbusters, LA, says

I spent 10 years studying psychology. But the most powerful principle I know about the human mind, I learned much later. Speaking positive words makes us mentally and physically strong, negative words make us weak—whether or not we believe the words as we speak them ... [The] inner self doesn't know what is true and false; it believes what it is told. Our fearful chatterbox must be out-talked'.²

The person who believes they are a failure finds it hard to receive compliments. It hurts. They just don't feel that good. We say, 'The meal looks good'. They say, 'I think it's burnt'. We say, 'I like your suit'. They say, 'It's a cheap one I've had for years. The colour doesn't suit me'. We make down payments on an apology, not just for the meal or the suit, but for who we are.

But, hey, stop this today! You're alright! The meal is great! The suit looks sharp! Your preaching, pastor, is fantastic! Your business is exciting! Your art is stunning! Your music is wonderful! Your game is great!

Some search their family tree to discover their roots. What makes me who I am? Are there kings or queens in my heritage? If there are I feel better about myself, more dignified. But what if I find I have a mob of criminals in my family tree? Once we receive Christ our lineage is God the Father, straight from Him

to me, a direct lineage to and from the nature of God. God has no grandchildren, only children, direct descendants.

We need to be products of our future, rather than products of our past. We need to begin behaving how we see ourselves in the future, rather than how we have been in the past.

The 'priests and prophets' of our western culture—scientists, sociologists, psychiatrists, etc—tell us that our lives are preset by our past and that total change is virtually impossible. We are told our first five years determines our character for the rest of our lives. The logic of scientific findings argues that our genetic structure determines our personality. It's not a long distance to the conclusion that if we can engineer genetics, we can produce some kind of ideal race. Others in history have held similar plans!

We are also told that the traits of our father and mother will become ours. If they died of a heart attack, then chances are, we will too. If they had cancer, it is likely we will too. If they suffered from alcoholism or addiction, chances are, we will too. We are also told that our socioeconomic background is a major determining factor as to which side of the tracks our adult life will be lived on. We are also meant to believe that the stars, tarot cards, biorhythms and 'fate' have dictated a plan for our lives that is inescapable.

However, God has spoken:

2 Corinthians 5:17 'Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, ALL THINGS HAVE BECOME NEW.'

Undoubtedly, some of those things mentioned above do influence us, but we do not have to accept them as the primary shapers

of who we are. Romans 5:17 says those who live in Christ will rule in life. If Christ rules in our heart, we rule in this life. The major result of the Holy Spirit coming into our life is the ability to recover self-control over our thoughts, emotions, attitudes, bodies, circumstances and relationships.

The moment we receive Christ, God becomes our Father and we become His children. Your family tree changes! You inherit His character traits. He has never been an alcoholic, has never had cancer, and He has never died of a heart attack. He has remained in extremely good health for an extremely long time! In fact, He has never been sick and never will be!

The minute you receive Christ, you inherit the nature of the Almighty God. Your socioeconomic background is translated from earth to heaven. You have become a member of the family of God! Noah, Abraham, Paul the apostle, are among those who are your family! Jesus Himself is your brother.

Heaven is neither poor nor lacking anything. Those who seek the Lord shall not lack any good thing (Psalm 34:10). Our socioeconomic background is completely transformed. Our natural genetic structure need no longer determine who we are. The major influence upon our life is the Holy Spirit. Our spirit has been recreated in the image of God. We are filled with the 'genes', the mighty power, of the Holy Spirit. Our first five years no longer control us. We are 'born again'.

God's opinion of us is all-important because His statements regarding us are truth, not just facts. The truth is we're the image of God in the earth. It gets a little blurred at times. But we are His image in His earth. You are joyful, happy, and a picture of health itself. You are creative, confident, forgiving, compassionate,

merciful and kind. You are patient and triumphant. For you, life is good. With Christ and His image in you, not even death can keep you down. You have life, resurrection life, in you.

Self-image is our internal climate controller. Turn it up and our whole life turns up. Turn it down and... We live out the way we are inside.

When I change I tell others who this new person is. And now the new 'me' that I've become enables me do what I do. I am the master and my mind the servant. Even though we can be held captive by impressions from the past shaping our lives, change takes place when *I* decide who I am rather than those voices from the past. Changing a self-image means I blow up the old, unwanted, misguided, underrated image of myself—it goes. I close my eyes. I see myself as a different person. He's a successful, winning champion. He gets what he aims for, again and again. Gradually, this new image replaces the old. This is the process of appropriating 'truth' into 'fact'. God does this with Abraham, Jacob, Peter and Paul. He shows them what they can become. They see it. Their minds fasten on the target. Autopilot ON! Our job is to keep the target on the screen. We are like a heat-seeking missile—the picture that's hot claims our attention. We move towards the event that turns us on, the thing that lights our fire. We move through life and hit our bulls eye, because that's the way life works.

Winners make it happen. Losers let it happen

2 Corinthians 3:18 'We all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory...'

SELF-RESPECT

If I respect who I am I live above my animal instincts—the flesh, the lower nature, the old man, the carnal nature. The force called ‘sin’ resident in my flesh pushes me to do things that I hate myself for afterwards. Then I direct my hate outwards towards others. Amnon, a son of King David, is in love with his sister Tamar. Unbelievably, he rapes her. He is a king’s son on the outside, but not inside. Inside he’s a slave, ruled by lust he can’t control. After the torrid moment he hates himself and his wasted sister. ‘Get out of here’, he tells the woman over whom just minutes before he had been ‘sick with love’ (2 Samuel 13:14-16).

The moth is attracted to the light of the fire, but the fire will kill it. It’s not the heat, but the light that is seemingly irresistible. A hot room doesn’t attract moths. As the moth circles ever closer unable to resist the attraction, it is finally burned to death. All of us face the same dilemma. We are attracted to things that will destroy us and unless we make strong choices to live above the temptations, they will destroy us. God has left us with options, so that we will make choices that honour Him. And as a result, we ‘lift’ our own lives.

Self respect demands discipline that keeps us within certain boundaries. I live as a king’s son should—above the downward pull.

Romans 8:2 ‘For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.’

One law overcomes another. Gravity is an all powerful, pervasive law of the universe. However, the law of aerodynamics overcomes the law of gravity. The wing with its aerodynamic shaping lifts the

aeroplane as it jets forward. It defeats gravity. Sin, negativity and the world are powerful forces. However, the resurrection power of Jesus Christ lifts me above those laws. We choose to live by different rules and find ourselves powered from within.

Because I respect who I am, I am not intimidated. I don’t need to be patronised. I can laugh at myself. I’m OK with being me. I can be self-effacing because I’m secure, deep inside. I don’t have to humiliate others to establish my place. I don’t get second chances at first impressions, so I look my best and look you in the eye and we both feel good with a firm handshake. After only six seconds, we each have an opinion about the other. Others treat us like royalty because that’s what we are inside—children of a king.

This self-respect causes me to live life right. I speak well. I leave out certain words because of what is good and acceptable to me and what is not. I choose right out of respect for who I am. I refuse to corrupt this person made in the image of God. The amazing outcome of this is the respect I receive from others. If we respect ourselves, others will too. If we accept ourselves, others will too. Maybe the reason we don’t receive the respect we desire is because we fail to give it to ourselves.

A further outcome is that because we respect who we are, we easily show respect to others. These are basic life skills Jesus taught when he said we are to love others as ourselves, and do to others as we’d have done to us (Matthew 19:19).

The heart of the problem is generally the problem of the heart. Deep inside, I need to enjoy being me. I have to take me with me everywhere I go. I can catch a plane to Greece, go to a disco, become a millionaire, or swallow some pills, trying to be someone else somewhere else, but I will find that I’m there too. I, just as I

am, will be with me everywhere I go. I have got to stop trying to escape myself and start enjoying being who God has made me.

SELF-ESTEEM

'Victimitis' robs us of faith that overcomes. It robs us of the 'I believe I can do it' mindset. People defeat themselves before they even begin. For six weeks the entire Israelite army is paralysed with fear as Goliath the giant roars his reverberating challenge through the valley, 'Give me a man'. Not one soldier is thinking outside the norms of warfare. Their world is frozen. Yet one young shepherd, without a uniform, without armour, without any combat experience, without sword or spear believes he can do it. Inside he is a warrior. He sees himself winning. He sees himself equal to the giant.

We esteem ourselves capable because we know that 'with God, all things are possible' (Matthew 19:26). We know that 'we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us (Philippians 4:13). We know that 'nothing is impossible to him who believes' (Matthew 17:20).

David Yonggi Cho, Pastor of the Full Gospel Central Church in Seoul, Korea, with a congregation of 800,000 elevates self-esteem, discipline, and the vision of the church leader as central factors in the growth of a church.

Self-esteem can be boosted by, our education, our talents, our background, our heritage, our house, our car, etc, but shouldn't be founded on such things. These help, but they are certainly not the bottom line. The bottom line is me and the fact that I'm confident about being me. How many talented failures have you met? How

many doctorate disasters do you know? If I'm confident that I can do it, then my self-teaching abilities will be harnessed, my self-learning capacities unleashed and I will acquire the intelligence and education, the talent I need to take me on a path to success. It all comes together because I believe I can do it. I rise to what I believe about myself. I become what I believed I could be. That vision God shows me—the vision of me being like Him.

A study by Harvard University reveals that 85 percent of the reasons for success—accomplishments, promotions, etc—are to do with attitude, whilst technical expertise and ability only accounts for 15 percent.³

The business, entertainment and sporting worlds reveal a definite pattern of the successful person—they're successful inside first. The successful person has purpose burning inside for their world. They are competent and organised. Their speech is effective. They communicate simply (using less instead of more), briefly (not taking a long time), specifically (sticking to the point) and clearly (ensuring no misunderstandings). They ask more than they tell ('Could it be that...?'; 'Would you think...?'; 'Is it possible that...?'). These people listen to answers, making sure they understand, not accepting generalities. Successful people remain calm under pressure. They don't rush. They are decisive, stating the problem, then the solution, talking straight, not wasting time.

These people are confident. Obstacles are opportunities. They're not tense with their superiors, or anyone else. They're easy with the art of casual conversation. They dress one level up, keeping weight down.

There are unspoken rules to living successfully. They are obvious. Those disregarding them shouldn't wonder why they keep losing.

SELF-WORTH

When we believe we have worth to God and others, then we will live like it. Knowing our worth begins with the question, 'what is my value to others—my family, my friends, other people, and God?' Take a moment and write down your answer.

God uses people, not programs. When a leader says to me they have implemented a system and now it will work no matter who runs it, I know we'll be in trouble soon enough. I'll need another effective leader. I've actually seen it work the opposite way—weak system, strong leader, successful. Definitely there are methods and systems that are effective. But God has chosen to move in our world through people. He gives people methods to work with, but ultimately it is the person who is securing success.

Moses is told by God to climb the mountain and hold up the 'rod of God' over the Israelite army (Exodus 17:9). His army defeats the Amalekites in the valley below. However, as the battle wears on, Moses' arms grow tired. He drops his hands. Mysteriously his army below retreats, defeated. He realises the rod needs to remain aloft but he doesn't ask Aaron to hold up the rod. The power is not in the rod. It is in the man and the rod working together. Aaron and Hur help Moses by supporting his arms. Joshua leads the army below to victory. Victory dwelt in the man Moses, not the rod.

How do we measure our worth? 'He's worth \$50 billion.' You've heard it. I've heard it. But God says 'You're worth My Son.' Our value in possessions, achievements and dollars becomes paltry by comparison. However many billions and billions of dollars the rich may have, they still need Christ who has died for us all. He is heir and owner of the entire universe. He is the Creator of all that is. He is the ultimate 'person of wealth'.

In a world that values 'looks' over most everything it's easy to feel our worth is in how physically attractive we are. Plastic surgery is booming. The surgeon can take an ugly nose and make it seemingly perfect. Yet after the bruising goes and the new nose appears, she can still feel ugly. Our perception is our reality. She has been feeling ugly for years. For outside change to have impact, our inside perceptions also need to change. We must accept that we are loved, accepted and wanted by God. This is not just a piece of knowledge for us to digest. It is truth to be believed. Our value emerges from within.

1 John 4:15-16 'And we have KNOWN and BELIEVED the love that God has for us.'

Some people need to win to feel their worth. Prior to fighting Michael Spinks, Mike Tyson, ex heavyweight champion of the world, said 'I'm going to kill Spinks'. Spinks was saying, 'I don't even want to fight this man. But it's in my contract, so I have to'. Ninety-three seconds after the first bell, Spinks feels cold canvas on his face. It's over. He was beaten before he began. People who win feel their worth before the fight begins. Losers fail before they start. Give yourself a break. Give yourself some worth. You're worth more. To whom? To the world, to your family, to the universe, to the eternal plan of God. You have value. Jesus says, 'My Father looks after sparrows. You are of much more value than them. He'll look after you'.

Luke 12:7 'Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.'

God sent His Son for each one of us. That's our worth. Our worth is measured by God's love. God's love places an ultimate value on our heads. How much am I loved by God? Did He send an apprentice angel, an errand boy, some unwanted cherubim, or a rejected human to die in our place for our sins? No! He sent His only, awesome Son, Jesus, the Perfect One, the ultimate Man, the Prince of Peace, who is in fact the Almighty God Himself. For you and me. A gift from God to us. There's the measure of your worth.

Internal success is the first secret, the first law, of external success. Life is lived from the inside out, not the outside in. And it's the inside first, then the outside. It's a law. Obey this and live!



CHAPTER 9