

## The #1 Key to Success in Everything

If I could give you the #1 key to success in everything, would you take it? If I could provide you with the one principle that will help you excel in every aspect of your life, would you want it? Just this week, I have discovered the one piece of advice that if it is the foundation of everything you do, it will guarantee the success of every aspect of your life. Would you like to hear it?

Now, don't misunderstand, I'm not guaranteeing you will be a millionaire, own the house on the hill, or become President. I'm simply sharing the #1 key to success in every aspect of your life. It is the #1 key to finding happiness, contentment, joy, fulfillment, and satisfaction in every part of your life whether emotional, mental, fiscal, relational, or spiritual.

Enough already, you say, spit it out.

I found it in **Psalm 128:1-4**.

*Blessed is everyone who fears the Lord, who walks in his ways!  
You shall eat the fruit of the labor of your hands;  
you shall be blessed, and it shall be well with you.*

*Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house;  
your children will be like olive shoots around your table.  
Behold, thus shall the man be blessed who fears the Lord.*

Did you see it? Did you see the #1 key to success in every aspect of your life? Fear the Lord. Revere and respect Him. Make Him the center of everything you do. Make His will the guide for how you act in every aspect of your life.

The psalm presents three areas of success. First, "You shall eat the fruit of the labor of your hands." That is, you will have success in your work. But when? When you fear the Lord and walk in His ways in your work. This doesn't mean if you "go to church" on Sundays and put some money in the collection plate (though these things are part of fearing the Lord and walking in His ways). Rather, this is talking about how you conduct yourself in your work. Why do you do your job? Do you just do it to get paid? Do you just do it because you "have to"? How do you act on the job? Do you just behave because you fear your boss? Or because you fear getting fired?

The number #1 relationship you are dealing with on the job is not with your employer, employees, co-workers, or customers. The #1 relationship is with God. Are you working as for the Lord? Are you working in a way that pleases the Lord? Does the Lord's will and Word govern how you behave on the job? When you respond to your employer, employees, co-workers, and customers not based on how much you respect them but based on how much you respect God and His will for you and them, then you will have success and fulfillment in your work. Then you will enjoy the fruit of your labor.

Then the psalmist says "Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house." Do you want your wife to be a fruitful vine? Wives, this can also apply to you with your husbands. The answer is not to figure out how to fix her. The answer is not to get up in her face with all your solutions for her life. The answer is to fear God. Revere Him. Revere His will for you and your marriage. Let's face it, if your marriage is going to succeed or fail based on your respect for your spouse, things aren't going to go so well. Few of us are so respectable that we can carry our marriages on our own. But, when you act based on your respect and reverence for God and His will in your life, you'll work on your side of the street and your marriage will improve. The next time you have a disagreement with your spouse, don't respond based on how they deserve. I have no doubt they don't deserve a great response (just as you probably don't). Instead, respond based on your reverence for God. Consider your respect for God and His will. Consider how God wants you to respond because you love and fear Him, not because you love or fear your spouse. You'll be amazed how fulfillment and meaning and success can be added into your marriage when it is not simply based on a mutual respect for each other but rather based on a mutual respect for God.

Then the psalmist says, "Your children will be like olive shoots around your table." Quit trying to figure out how to respond to your kids to get them to like you, agree with you, respect you. Start responding based on God's will. Don't try to manipulate the outcomes of how your children will turn out. Instead, simply do the next right thing. Decide how to treat them not based on your fear of how they will act or turn out. Instead, raise them based on your fear and reverence for God. What would God want you to do in whatever situation you find yourself in with your kids? Do that. You don't have to read all the latest parenting manuals or be an expert in child psychology. Just get into the Word and treat your kids based on the principles found there. Then simply let the Lord do His work through His will.

These are just three examples. But the psalmist's point is simply that the #1 key to success in everything is your relationship with God. Get that right, let everything else flow from that relationship, and you will have success, fulfillment, meaning in every aspect of your life.

Let's start working on our relationship with God first and then let that fix everything else we are doing. Let's start that this week.

-Edwin L. Crozier