

Eric Butterworth Speaks

Essay #29

THERE IS SUCCESS FOR YOU

What does the word "success" mean to you? When is a person really successful? Someone said recently that success is "making more money to meet obligations you wouldn't have if you didn't have so much money." A better definition might be "the art of making mistakes while no one else is looking."

There was a time when we thought of success purely as making a great deal of money. Now the idea is evolving that the successful person is one who has achieved fame. But this raises the question of whether the person is really famous or merely different. Chiefly, success is the ability to do things better than well; it is doing things rightly. It is the faculty of releasing your own greatest potential, possessing a calm and peaceful mind, utilizing that mind to its maximum, having satisfying personal relationships, and doing something useful in your world. Broadly speaking, success is achieved by making the most out of your life.

There are a number of important spiritual ideals that concern the attainment of success and prosperity. Certainly, for one, there is no substitute for hard work. A young boy employed in an Oregon lumber yard asked an efficiency expert, "How can I get promoted?" The man replied, "Wear a red shirt and work hard. The red shirt will catch the eye of the boss and the hard work will win you a better job." This is, of course, an oversimplification. No one can succeed without diligence, to be sure; but hard work alone may bring nothing more than calloused hands and an aching back. There is more to it than that, and the "more" is your attitude toward your work.

The successful American businessman is often portrayed as snapping orders through a telephone while eating his breakfast, stopping his automobile halfway through town to get off a couple of telegrams, rushing through a breathless day at the office, and dictating letters in his limosine in the way home.

However, nothing has impressed me more about the really big success than that certain suggestion of leisure--a kind of elevation above the maelstrom of detail with which the average person is caught up and whirled by throughout the day. The really successful person does big business without appearing too busy. You know from the record of his achievements that he must get through an enormous amount of work each day, but he appears to have nothing on his mind when he meets you but what you have to say.

Abraham Lincoln was the supreme example of the really great person's ability to carry his burden easily and with no suggestion of desperate haste. Members of his Cabinet never grew accustomed to his habit of stopping on the way to the Cabinet meetings to play a moment with Tad and his goat.

Robert Lewis Stevenson once remarked, "Extreme busy-ness is a symptom of deficient vitality; while a faculty for idleness implies a catholic appetite and a strong sense of personal identity. There are dead-alive people about who are scarcely conscious of living, except in the exercise of some conventional occupation. Bring those fellows into the country, or set them aboard ship and you will see how they pine for their desk or their study. They cannot be idle; their nature is not generous enough...this does not appear to me as being a success in life."

Perhaps the real secret is to apply oneself diligently, but to work in a relaxed way--to be effective, yet unhurried--to be industrious without being really busy.

One of the truly great stories of the Bible is told in a very few words: "And as Jesus passed forth from thence, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the receipt of custom, and He saith unto Him, 'Follow me.' And he arose and followed Him." That is the whole story. There was Matthew, a tax gatherer, gold running through his fingers, liking the feeling of money, scanning his ledgers to see where he might squeeze out a little more. And, all of the sudden, a shadow fell across his

book. He lifted his head to see a man looking into him, beholding something which he had not even dared to believe was there. He closed his ledger, got up, and followed. But he took along his pen for the book he was later to write: "The Gospel According to Matthew." One of the great factors in this great Gospel is that it contains a secret which leads from failure to success. In simple words, the great idea that it conveys is that it is necessary for a person to get what we might call an obsession.

I use the word "obsession" in the sense that we can be totally immersed in a vision that will not let us go. When you get into your mind that, with God's help, you are going to succeed, there is no power in the Universe that can make you fail.

Lord Halifax wrote that "Failure and success are habits." Some people form the habit of failure. They just know that they are going to fail. They think failure and, in a way, they insist on failure. I have known and talked to people who build walls around themselves. They defy every attempt to reach them with a constructive idea. Halifax continues, "If you hold a thought long enough, that thought will make you prisoner."

This is a terrible thing if misused. If you hold the thought of defeat and failure, that thought will make you prisoner. But the glorious part is: take the thought that with God's help you can succeed, that you will succeed, and that thought, too, will hold you prisoner until it wins out.

The common view is that the rich get richer and the poor get poorer, and people fret about the injustice of it all. But actually, success and prosperity come to those who have the consciousness of prosperity. First must come the consciousness, and then follows the success. You do not succeed until you have the image, the vision, the ideal. If you could see into the mentality of a successful person, you would find the imprint of success written in bold letters across the doorway of his mind.

The first step is to formulate a concept of success. No one has ever succeeded in any field who has not first seen himself through creative imagination as a success. The great achievers do comparatively little with their hands. They build with their thought. They are practical dreamers. Their minds reach out into the Infinite Energy ocean and create and produce what they envision and idealize. For yourself, think of things not as they are, but as they might be. Think of things as you want them to be, and you can be a success.

We might think of ourselves in terms of marksmanship. We begin to learn marksmanship when we begin to shoot at the target, not when we begin to hit it. We learn as much from the misses as from the hits...or we should. We begin to learn when we begin to try. If we never try, we never learn.

Emerson says, "A little consideration of what takes place around us every day would show us that a higher law than that of our will regulates events; that only in our easy, simple, spontaneous actions are we strong. And by contenting ourselves with obedience we become divine. The whole course of things goes to teach us faith. We need only obey. There is guidance for each of us, and by lowly listening we shall hear the right word."

Success begins for you when you reach in a specific direction. Creatively imagine that you have already attained it. Then, when you begin, rely on the Eternal. Realize your innateness; tie in and synchronize your thoughts with the divine flow. There is success for you!