

YP Bible conference 2018



**“For then you will make your way prosperous,
and then you will have good **SUCCESS.**”** Joshua 1:8b

WELCOME TO THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S BIBLE CONFERENCE
(August 31 – September 3)

With excitement for the weekend ahead of us, we welcome you to the conference this year!

We are confident that it is the LORD who brought you here. You are not here by chance but for a specific purpose!

Join us whole-heartedly as we study God's Word together, share what we learn each day and also have lots of time for conversations, sports and games.

But WAIT! There is still something we need to talk with you about...

It's something the Lord knows. But it's something that really only you can tell us about yourself. Can you truly say, with full confidence, that you have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ as YOUR Saviour? If you know that you cannot answer that question with a simple yet resounding "YES", please find one of the leaders and we would be delighted to open the Bible together and show you clearly how you can secure your ETERNITY NOW!

If you are saved but know you are not WALKING well with the Lord, ask the Lord to draw you to Himself. We trust the lessons learned from our sessions together will affect your heart and soul and draw you back to the Lord with a total commitment of your whole person...spirit, soul and body.

Don't take this weekend lightly, but let it be a time where you can get into the lectures and discussion groups, dig deep, and ask God to work in your HEART and LIFE personally. It's really up to you to get the most out of the theme and studies.

As this conference gets underway, let's pray for our eyes to be focused on Christ. May he be glorified as He works in our lives and each family that we represent.

Let us know if you need anything, and we will try to assist.

WELCOME TO THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S BIBLE CONFERENCE **(August 31 – September 3)**

In this booklet you will find the Standards of Conduct, Lesson Notes, Discussion Questions, Reading Articles and the Schedule.

Standards of Conduct

Please do take a moment to read the expectations of the leaders and conference organizers as outlined in this section. Our goal is to have everyone conducting themselves in a godly manner.

Lesson Notes

There will be five lessons during the weekend. We encourage you to take notes during the lectures and specifically include references and the major points presented that you can review later. The space is for note-taking...not doodling.

Discussion Questions

These questions will be part of our small group discussion time, following the lecture. Be prepared to share what you learn from the lecture and/or the discussions with all the young people.

Reading Articles

These articles are provided as short works to be read during your free time or when you arrive home after the conference. We hope they are thought-provoking and encouraging.

Schedule

Please respect the schedule and be timely for each activity...it's more fun when we're all on the same page!

**“Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life;
and they are they which testify of me.” John 5:39**

STUDY I: THE RIGHT BEGINNING FOR A SUCCESSFUL LIFE

Readings:

1 Kings 2:1-3

Deuteronomy 30:15, 20

Mark 12:30-31

John 14:15, 21, 23

Mark 8:36

Notes:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

STUDY I: THE RIGHT BEGINNING FOR A SUCCESSFUL LIFE

Discussion questions:

1. What role does loving God have in living a successful life?

.....

.....

2. What's the first step in establishing a successful life, and how does this lead to a transformed life? (John 1:12-13 & 2 Corinthians 5:17)

.....

.....

3. What are some characteristics of a transformed life?

.....

.....

4. Why is it important to "keep God's word," and what would a daily effort in doing so look like?

.....

.....

5. Compare the world's meaning and requirements to succeed, to God's scriptural meaning and requirements to succeed.

.....

.....

THE KEYS OF TRUE SUCCESS IN THE LIVES OF SUCCESSFUL MEN STUDY II: THE KEY OF FEARING GOD AND OBEDIENCE AS IN THE LIFE OF JOSEPH

Readings:

Genesis 37:12-14

Genesis 39: 2-4, 7-9, 20-23

Genesis 41: 37-40

Genesis 42:18

Notes:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

THE KEYS OF TRUE SUCCESS IN THE LIVES OF SUCCESSFUL MEN
STUDY II: THE KEY OF FEARING GOD AND OBEDIENCE AS IN
THE LIFE OF JOSEPH

Discussion questions:

1. Discuss the fear of God as it relates to our relationships.

.....

.....

.....

2. Discuss the fear of God as it relates to purity.

.....

.....

.....

3. A) Joseph made on the spot decisions based on his relationship with God, which is what he valued most in his life. If you were asked to replace what is valued most in your life, would you consider it a loss or gain for Christ?

.....

.....

B) How would you consider it a loss or gain?

.....

.....

5. How does obeying hurt our pride?

.....

.....

STUDY III: THE KEY OF ADHERENCE TO THE WORD OF GOD AS IN THE LIFE OF JOSHUA

Readings:

Exodus 33:11

Joshua 1:7

Joshua 11:15

Joshua 23: 6,8

Notes:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

STUDY III: THE KEY OF ADHERENCE TO THE WORD OF GOD AS IN THE LIFE OF JOSHUA

Discussion:

1. The word of God for the believer is the only way to:

- a. Grow
- b. Live a pure life
- c. Have true understanding and wisdom
- d. Be an overcomer...
- e.
- f.

2. What are some hindrances to reading the Bible ?

.....

.....

3. What would be the gain towards succeeding in your life, by cleaving to the Lord (Joshua 23:6-8)?

.....

.....

4. What would you say the purpose of God for us is, in making us successful, as he was with Moses and Joshua?

.....

STUDY IV: THE KEY OF A LIFE OF PRAYER AS IN THE LIFE OF NEHEMIAH

Reading:

Nehemiah 1:4-11

Nehemiah 2: 4-8, 20

Nehemiah 4:9

Notes:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

STUDY IV: THE KEY OF A LIFE OF PRAYER AS IN THE LIFE OF NEHEMIAH

Discussion:

1. What does prayer mean to you?

.....

.....

2. When/how should we pray?

.....

.....

3. How can we obtain a sense of direction and affirmation to succeed in our life? How did Nehemiah do it?

.....

.....

4. A) Can you name a few of the enemy's subtle attacks, to discourage you from praying and succeeding?

.....

.....

.....

B) What can be done so that you can be victorious over them?

.....

.....

STUDY V: LESSONS FROM THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS IN REFERENCE TO A SUCCESSFUL LIFE

Readings:

Matthew 25:14-29

Lessons:

Working diligently here and now.

1. God has equipped us with everything we need for what He's called us to do.

.....

.....

2. We are not created with equal abilities (each according to their own ability).

.....

.....

3. We work for our master and not our own selfish purpose.

.....

.....

4. We will be held accountable.

.....

.....

8 LIES CHRISTIANS BELIEVE ABOUT SUCCESS



I have spent my whole life trying to be successful. I thought it was what we were supposed to do. Worse than that, I thought success was the mark of a blessed Christian.

If God loves you he'll bless you, says the prayer of Jabez and North America's favorite verse, [Jeremiah 29:11](#). His desire is to prosper us, not to harm us—to give us hope and a future.

Just look at all those megachurches, with their million-dollar sanctuaries. Look at all those bestselling Jesus-loving authors and speakers.

But then there are the 21 Egyptians, or the 30 Ethiopians, martyred recently for their Christian faith. There are the faithful pastors who don't have megachurches, who suffer heartache and setbacks. And there is my own journey as a Christian author, through anorexia, miscarriage, and anxiety. And there are countless other believers who do the right thing, who say the right prayers, who believe, and yet who know the anguish of Job.

At some point in my life, Christianity had become a magic wand instead of a humble posture.

Here are some lies we in the church often believe about success.

1. Bigger is better.

No, in fact, small is good. Small is the only way to get into the kingdom of heaven. We are to become like a child. A child is defenseless, dependent. A child has no "status" in today's world. He or she doesn't strive, but rather dwells. "Unless you become like one of these," Jesus says, "you will not enter the kingdom" ([Matt. 18:3](#)).

2. God's blessing is tangible.

Blessed are the poor, blessed are the meek, blessed are those who grieve, blessed are those who hunger and thirst, blessed are the pure in heart. These beatitudes have nothing to do with physical or material blessings, and everything to do with entering eternal life now by knowing Christ fully.

3. God helps those who help themselves.

When God tells us to become like a child, he doesn't mean "become like a child emotionally but make sure you have life insurance and pension and a stocked pantry." No, he means seek first the kingdom of heaven and all of these things—the food, the clothing, the future—will be added unto you. He wants to take care of us while we devote ourselves to him. And it will probably mean appearing foolish to the rest of the world.

4. You are what you make of yourself.

There's a lot of pressure to speak up, to be assertive, and to make your name known lest you get lost in a sea of pixels. But Jesus says the last shall be first. Despite being God, he made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant and becoming obedient to death—even a cursed death on a cross ([Phil. 2:5–11](#)). He trusted God to glorify him, even as he emptied himself of glory. We're called to do the same.

5. Suffering is a sign of failure.

When did North American culture become averse to pain? If we begin to feel uncomfortable, we pop a pill. If we struggle with depression or discouragement, or if we encounter a terrible diagnosis, we rush to therapy or the doctor instead of first going to the Father and asking him what he wants us to learn through this suffering. God uses suffering for our good, even if it should end in death. We carry around within us the death of Christ, and we will never know the power of Christ's resurrection if we don't enter first into suffering.

6. If it feels good, do it.

We are big on praying for answers, but not big on waiting for them. We figure if we've prayed about something, it's been heard and blessed. But God so often asks us to wait for his timing, and this waiting hurts. It's so hard to be patient when you want something now. The world, and the prosperity gospel, teach us to seize opportunities and chase after our dreams. But the Bible says, "Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart" ([Ps. 37:4](#)). Become pliable to the Lord, submit yourself to him, and then will give you the desires of your heart. Why? Because his desires will have become your desires, not the other way around.

CONTINUE

7. Believe in yourself and anything is possible.

On the contrary, we are like dust. Apart from Jesus, we are nothing ([John 15:5](#)). Indeed, God “chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; he chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before him” ([1 Cor. 1:27–29](#)).

8. Only trust what you can see.

Our faith depends on the unseen. True value and true success cannot be measured, it won't be witnessed or grasped until we reach heaven. Look at Hebrews 11. Consider these Christians of the past who “were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised, since God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect” ([Heb. 11:39–40](#)).

They never received what they were promised, and yet they believed until the end—because they knew life wasn't finally about them. They knew they were but a thread in a beautiful tapestry of faith God was weaving through his people. Many of us have lost this collective sense of story, trying independently to make a mark. But what would happen if we laid down our lives for one another, for the greater story, for the gospel?

I spent my whole childhood thinking the point of life was to become an adult. Now I'm spending my adulthood trying to be like a child. Because that's where the pearl is ([Matt. 13:45–46](#)).



THE BIBLICAL MEANING OF SUCCESS

Two great lies have been promoted in our culture during the past 20 years.

1. "If you work hard enough, you can be anything you want to be."
2. "You can be the best in the world."

These lies have been accepted and promoted by many Christians as well as non-Christians. Success, defined as being the master of one's own destiny, has become an idol. Tim Keller in his book *Counterfeit Gods* describes the idol in these words:

More than other idols, personal success and achievement lead to a sense that we ourselves are God. . . . To be the very best at what you do, to be at the top of the heap, means no one is like you. You are supreme.

Thankfully, Scripture gives us a strong antidote to misguided ideas of success. Through Jesus' Parable of the Talents ([Matthew 25:14-30](#)) we learn that the kingdom of heaven is like a man going on a long journey. Before he leaves, he gives his three servants different amounts of money, denominated by talents. To the first servant, the man gives five talents; to the second, two talents; and to the last, one talent—each according to his ability.

Upon his return, the master asks what they did with the money. The first and second servants have doubled their investments and receive their master's praise. The third servant, however, has safeguarded the money but done nothing to increase it. As a result, he is condemned by the master for his inactivity.

The Parable of the Talents teaches us five important things about the biblical meaning of success.

First, this parable teaches us that success is a product of our work.

In the opening chapter of Genesis, we find the cultural mandate in which God commands Adam to work by stewarding and growing the resources he has been given. This mandate was meant not only for Adam and Eve, but also for us.

As Christians, we have a mission that our Lord expects us to accomplish right now. We are called to steward all we have been given while we wait for our Savior's return.

John Calvin defined the talents as gifts from God in the form of a person's calling and natural ability. Alister McGrath, in an [article on the topic of calling](#), suggests that for Calvin:

The idea of a calling or vocation is first and foremost about being called by God, to serve him within his world. Work was thus seen as an activity by which Christians could deepen their faith. . . . To do anything for God, and to do it well, was the fundamental hallmark of authentic Christian faith.

The Parable of the Talents teaches that biblical success is working diligently here and now. The servant with five talents was industrious, for he "went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more" ([Matthew 25:16](#)). He used all the talents that his master gave him—without hesitation—to produce the expected return.

Second, the Parable of the Talents teaches that God gives us everything we need to do what he has called us to do.

The New Testament talent is likely a large sum of money, maybe even as much as a million dollars in today's currency. We are tempted to feel sorry for the servant who received only one talent, but in reality, he received as much as a million dollars from the master and buried it in his backyard. Is it any wonder the master was so upset?

The master in the Parable of the Talents expected his servants to do more than passively preserve what had been entrusted to them, for he told the lazy servant, "You ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest" ([Matthew 25:27](#)). Similarly, God expects us to generate a return by using our talents toward productive ends. Like the servants in the parable, God has given us more than enough to accomplish this charge. It's up to us to use the talents wisely.

Third, the Parable of the Talents teaches that we are not all created equal.

The most overlooked part of the story is the second half of verse 15: "each according to his ability." The master understood that the one-talent servant was not capable of producing as much as the five-talent servant. We want to protest the unfairness. Yet we know this differing ability is true from experience. Diversity is woven into the fabric of creation.

But even though we're not created equal in regard to talents, we still see equality in the Parable of the Talents and in God's economy. It takes just as much work for the five-talent servant to produce five more talents as it does for the two-talent servant to produce two more talents. This is why the reward given to each by the master is the same. He tells each of his faithful servants the same thing: "Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much" ([Matthew 25:23](#)). The master measures success by degree of effort, as should we.

Fourth, the Parable of the Talents teaches that we work for the master, not our own selfish purposes.

The money given to the servants does not belong to them. They do not keep the money they earn with the master's capital. The servants only steward the master's investment, and the master measures the quality of their stewardship.

We should maximize the use of our talents not for our own selfish purposes, but to honor God. He cares about our attitude, the motivation in our hearts.

Finally, the Parable of the Talents shows that we will be held accountable.

The Parable of the Talents is not about salvation or works-righteousness, but about how we use our work to fulfill our earthly calling.

The unfaithful steward in this parable didn't so much waste the master's money; he wasted an opportunity. As a result, he was judged wicked and lazy. One day we will be held responsible for what we do for God with what he has given us.

So how should we define the biblical meaning of success?

The answer is almost counterintuitive; when we work for God in everything we do, including our vocational callings, we truly find the purpose, fulfillment, and satisfaction that we all desperately seek.

We work at the pleasure of the Lord, driven by our love of God. Our only desire should be to hear him say, "Well done my good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of the Master."

QUICK DEVOTIONS

1 John 4:18

(18) There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love.

If understanding how much God loves us and believing in it are so important, how can we tell where we stand in the strength of that belief? Verse 18 begins to answer that question. Fear and worry signal that we are not yet perfect in our belief in how much God loves us. If we believe that the God of infinite power and wisdom loves no one in the universe more than us, what do we have to fear or worry about?

What good parent does not use all the resources available to ensure the well being of his or her children? We are in the minute-by-minute care of the great God ([Matthew 10:29-31](#)). "If God is for us, who can be against us?" ([Romans 8:31](#)). Similarly, [Isaiah 43:13](#) (CEV) records an important promise from God: "I am God now and forever. No one can snatch you from me or stand in my way."

Nothing outside of us can stand in His way of accomplishing His purpose to save except ourselves ([John 6:39-40](#); [10:28](#); [Philippians 1:6](#)). As difficult as Job was, God knew exactly what trial was necessary—in his case, a quite painful one—to get the right result. He knows the buttons to push and the pressures to apply to set each of us straight. [Job 36:15](#) (Today's English Version) tells us, "But God teaches men through suffering and uses distress to open their eyes."

A second sign of our lack of faith in His love is how we respond to trials. If we believe in how much He loves us, then we know the trial is for our good. Because of His love, we should know that a trial is not just an arbitrary act without rhyme or reason. Because He is God, it cannot be an accidental circumstance happening without His awareness or concern. It definitely cannot be an act just to make our lives more difficult. These might be the thoughts of a child while receiving a spanking, but they should not be ours.

A third way to measure the strength of our faith is to list the things that would make our lives better yet seem to be out of reach. For some, it is money, others, a job, and still others, a mate. [Psalm 84:11](#) is a verse we can use to get the right perspective: "No good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly."

If we are walking uprightly, our lack of a desired thing is in itself a good indication that at this time it is not good for us, no matter what we might think to the contrary. Otherwise, this verse cannot be true. Getting what we want rather than what we need can be spiritually lethal ([Revelation 3:17](#)).

A final way to measure our faith is to examine if we ever feel we love ourselves more than God does. A person with this attitude begins to take things into his own hands because he cannot trust God to do it—he does not believe how good God is and how much He loves him. To doubt the depth of God's love for us is to deny God and the very essence of who He is—love.

This describes Satan's attitude, one that could be considered insanity. Human nature, which mimics Satan's spirit ([Ephesians 2:2](#)) is suicidal, wanting to sin even though it knows the result is death. Thus, because human nature contains this spirit of self-destruction, God always loves us more than we love ourselves.

It is vital that we build our faith in God's love for us and realize just how special we are to Him. He loves no one else in the universe more. [1 John 4:17](#) promises that perfecting our faith in God's love for us gives us the power we need to face our trials, our day of judgment, boldly. In doing so, we will be imitating the faith Jesus Christ exercised in facing His trials, showing absolute faith in God's love for us.

1 Corinthians 13:7

(7) bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Do we love the brethren enough to bear with them? By using the word *stego* (meaning "cover, conceal, protect"), Paul means that it is an act of godly love when we keep silent about unfavorable matters; when we restrain ourselves from talking about somebody else's [sin](#); when we delay judgment and keep our brother's reputation in tact; when we keep a sin or a fault "hush, hush" between us and the walls, as it were, so the person has time to [repent](#) and to recover from it. We need to be careful not to let any of our brothers' sins become a source of mockery toward the church because we "let the cat out of the bag" and gossiped.

There are peoples' sins and faults that we should take with us to the grave, as Paul says about the man in Corinth: "These things shouldn't even be talked about. Shut up. Keep it to yourself. Cover that person's sin in love." Love covers a multitude of sins ([1 Peter 4:8](#)). Do we love our brother enough to give him a chance to repent? [God](#) does. Why can't we?

Such a rush to condemnation causes the church to fly apart! Rather than have the forbearance to allow our brethren to repent, we just want to kick them out, and as quickly as possible. Or, we want to shun them, saying, "Go to some other group. We can't stand you anymore." Why can we not be a little bit more forbearing, as God is? He takes the time to let these matters work out. We need to show a little bit of love, as Paul advises, "Let brotherly love continue" ([Hebrews 13:1](#)).