
“It is Inevitable”

We all strive for success. The success that we strive for can come in many forms. There are those that define success as reaching their goals. Some define it as reaching a place where they are content in life. Still, others equate success with some financial gain, or the attainment of a position of power, the realization of a life-long dream, a business achievement, getting that degree they've studied so hard for, or just having a good marriage and family life. All definitions are well accepted and really are subject to your own personal perspective. Whatever success is to you may not be success to another. However, the achievement of success in whatever you have strived for can bring along unwarranted baggage that can draw you away from GOD if one is unaware and ignorant.

The baggage I speak of manifests itself in many ways. One way is in a false sense of security, whereas we begin to believe that because we have achieved success we can sit back and “call it a day”. After all, we have “arrived”. The sense that everything will always be fine and that nothing will ever go wrong is deceiving. This false sense of security can create a laid back attitude and aid in lowering our defenses, thereby, creating a perfect foothold for the enemy. When the Bible says “Be on your guard.....” (1 Corinthians 16:13) it refers to how we should be on all occasions and at all times. This person begins to forego prayer and doesn't read their Bible as often as they once did. The tight grip they once had on the Lord begins to loosen. Their once vibrant relationship becomes anemic.

Another unwarranted baggage of success is the development of pride. Most people who have experienced tremendous amount of success in their lives (inherited or otherwise) begin to develop the notion that “I have done this on my own, therefore, I really don't need anyone to tell me what to do”. Have you ever met someone like this? I have. I can tell you that they are arrogant, boastful, and incredibly prideful. Their self-made success has led to their smug notions that they *and only they* are responsible for their success. Their acknowledgment of dependency on others is almost foreign to them. These people only tend to either distance or alienate themselves from GOD because, “after all, I got here on my own”.

Finally, success can bring the baggage of forgetfulness. We simply forget, not only the people responsible for our success, but the very systems or habits that allowed us to achieve success. What worked in the past is no longer practiced. Some even look at what worked with disdain and go as far as trying to change it. In the Bible, GOD experienced the same thing with His people as is evident in the Book of Amos. In the Old Testament, when the kingdoms of Judah and Israel were experiencing great prosperity and success, both politically and militarily, GOD sent the prophet Amos to tell them that destruction was coming because of their sins (Amos 3:2). The people of these great kingdoms had experienced so much success that their unwarranted baggage overcame them. They became politically secure and spiritually smug relying on their own ways, laws, and rituals as a means of pleasing GOD. They became spiritually distorted, forgetting GOD's laws and creeds, while promoting their own agendas. Their pride swelled up to the point that they no longer wanted to hear anything that Amos had to say (Amos 7:10-12). Ultimately, GOD did destroy Israel, but not totally because of His grace and compassion. However, the results of the unwarranted baggage that came along with success took its toll on the people of Israel. Unless checked at the door, the baggage that comes with success will lead all of us to the same results. *It is inevitable.*

By Jesús Maymi