

Seven Steps to Position Yourself for Success

Introduction

Welcome to this edition of *“My Thoughts with Dale Van De Bogart.”* As a reminder, all notes are in PDF, and located on our website, vdbm.org. Click on My Thoughts Video Series, scroll down on the page to choose the series, and download our notes.

In this week’s segment, *“Seven Steps to Position Yourself for Success,”* I will discuss steps that will place you into a great position for success in all aspects of life. When I have talked about these seven steps previously in other churches or everyday discussions, most people state I am only mentioning them in a biblical sense. Not totally true. Follow along with me and you will see these steps also apply to everyone. Open your Bible and turn to the 1 Peter 5:6-10.

What is Success?

Glad you asked! The meaning of success is the *“accomplishment of an aim or purpose.”* The word *“success”* is never used in the New Testament but used seven times in the Old Testament:

- Abraham, in Genesis 24:12, used it to ask God to grant him success as an encounter.
- Joshua 1:7-8 was used twice to act prudently or to act wisely.
- In Nehemiah 2:20, it was used to describe how God will prosper us.
- Job 5:12 uses success when dealing with sound wisdom.
- Ecclesiastes 10:10 uses success in being advantageous.

Stay with me now and listen to these seven steps from the apostle Peter on how to prepare ourselves for success.

Passage Text - 1 Peter 5:6-10

⁶ Therefore, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time,

⁷ casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

⁸ Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

⁹ Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.

¹⁰ But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while make you perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.

Humble Yourself - 1 Peter 5:6

Peter just finished warning believers to submit to government authorities (1 Peter 2:13-17), for slaves to submit to their masters (1 Peter 2:18-25), and wives to submit to their husbands (1 Peter 3:1-7). Now, he discusses submitting to each other.

As believers and non-believers, younger people need to submit to older people, not only out of respect for their age but out of respect for their maturity. I will use an example of working at a company or business. Older people or people that have worked there for a long time, have a plethora of knowledge about the work it takes for the company or business to prosper.

In my secular job, I have over 30 years of experience and knowledge in Cybersecurity. I have two young men working with me. There is a considerable gap in our ages, but our experience and knowledge outshine as we feed and grow together.

As believers, the young should submit to the older mostly out of respect for their spiritual maturity. I am not suggesting older Christians ***“run the church”*** and could care less what the younger Christians have to say or their ideas. Many churches today are in a ***“generation war.”*** It comes down to the older Christians resisting change and the younger Christians resisting the older Christians.

Humility and Submission

So, what is the solution? It comes in two-fold:

1. We need to submit to each other and not attempt to dictate over each other.
2. We all need to submit to God.

We need to ***“be clothed with humility”*** (1 Peter 5:5) is our answer. Just as Jesus did in John 13:1-5, He became a servant, humbled Himself, and washed the feet of His disciples. You can read Philippians 2:1-11 to discover true humility. Humility is not demeaning ourselves and poorly thinking about ourselves. It is simply not thinking of ourselves at all!

Along with humility comes submission, which is an act of faith. Some people say there is danger in submitting to others. This is a very true statement as there are many who will take advantage of others, but not if we trust God. A true Christian who has yielded to God, who has a heart of servitude towards their fellow Christians, would not ever think to take advantage of anyone, saved or unsaved!

Cast All Anxieties - 1 Peter 5:7

Did you know anxiety is a condition that has been around well before Jesus walked with us? Many old manuscripts dating back to Moses documented many people with anxiety. In our society today, more people have some form of anxiety than any other medical condition known today.

Medication for anxiety finally came out in the middle of the 20th century and sometimes it works and sometimes it does not.

Anxiety (*merimna*) in the Greek means “**concern or worries.**” The dictionary meaning is a “**feeling of worry, nervousness, or uneasiness**, typically about an imminent event or something with an uncertain outcome.” 1 Peter 5:7 states, “casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.” The keyword in this verse is “care,” which means anxiety. So, we can replace “care” with the word “anxiety.”

Many of us have constant worries or anxiety. We worry about the state of our country, economy, and world, finding work, or if we have a job when we come to work each day. We worry about our children, their education, how they are being taught, and the challenges they face every day.

Anxiety is No Joke!

One group of people I support mostly because I am one of them is military personnel. Many of us are trying to cope with many dealings during our time of military service. Not an easy task and we still work a full-time job and deal with mental health issues.

So, what is the solution to anxiety? Our secular society will tell us to see and mental health professional or read hundreds of self-help books to make ourselves better. Most of the time, this route does not work, or if it does, only for a short time. It is a band-aid and when it is removed, it will all come back. The real solution is to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and give Him all of your cares. 2 Timothy 1:7, “**For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.**”

The apostle Peter wrote we must once and for all, give all of our cares, past, present, and future to the Lord Jesus Christ. Don't piecemeal them and keep some for yourself. If we keep some of those cares, they will become big issues later on. Each time a new burden comes into your life, give it to Jesus and know, by faith, that it is all taken care of so you can continue to move forward.

Be Sober - 1 Peter 5:8

Here in verse eight, we have two of our seven steps. The first one is “**Be Sober.**” This does not have anything to do with alcohol or being drunk. Peter says to be, “**sober-minded**” having our minds under control when issues or crises arise.

Satan is a dangerous enemy for both believers and unbelievers. He will do anything in his power to stop you from hearing the truth of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is a liar and the father of lies (John 8:44). He will throw everything including the proverbial “**kitchen sink**” at you to stop you from accepting Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. For believers, he will attempt to stop you from serving him by placing life's “**roadblocks**” in your way. He knows he is a loser, and he has been stripped of his power at the cross.

The power satan has is the power we give him through our thoughts and actions. He knows at the end; he will be sentenced to the **“lake of fire”** forever (Revelation 20:10). Hell was only made for satan and his angels, not us (Matthew 25:41).

You should never give satan any room in your life. James 4:7, **“Therefore, submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”** We know how to do it by reading the Word of God. We have the power and authority to kick satan to the curb and cast him and his demons out of our lives. Read the gospels as Jesus gave us the power to do so (Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:17-18, Luke 9:1-2).

Don't Put the Blame on Others!

Without a sober mind, you will blame everyone for everything that goes wrong in your life. Even worse, you will take it out on them as well. You will destroy any and all relationships you have with your spouse, family members, friends, and co-workers. It can cause jealousy, anger, strife, bitterness, and loss of joy. You will end up a toxic person and no one will not want to be around you.

Again, our solution is to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. He will show you how to be sober-minded. The only way to take control of your mind is to give it to Jesus and let Him take control. No self-help books or expensive seminars are going to give you the sober mind you need.

Be Vigilant -1 Peter 5:8

The second of the steps in verse eight is to **“be vigilant.”** It means **“keeping a careful watch for possible danger or difficulties.”** Other words used in place of vigilant are observant, alert, or watchful. The English Standard Version (ESV) uses the word **“watchful,”** and the New American Standard Bible (NASB) uses the word **“alert.”**

In our society and the world today, we need to be on constant alert. There is danger lurking around every corner no matter where you live, what work you perform, or who you fellowship or have a relationship with.

Satan does not care if you are a believer or a non-believer. For the non-believer, he already has you in his control. He knows you are not reconciled to God and by your choice, you will spend eternity with him. Not a very good place to be, trust me!

For believers, satan is always lurking around waiting for the right time to come after you. Remember, the only power he has is the power we give him through our thoughts and actions. He would love to take you away from your walk with Jesus. This statement is so true, **“you are either walking with satan or you are butting heads.”** For me, I am butting heads.

Be the Wheat

Solution? Accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Then you will be able to recognize satan as he is the great pretender. Always be on alert. What God does, satan attempts to counterfeit it.

To prove my statement, we have the Parable of the Tares in Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43. Tares (***zizania***) are a weed that resembles wheat. When God plants true Christians (wheat), satan seeks to plant counterfeit Christians (tares). Satan would have full reign and deceive us if it were not for the Word and the Spirit of God (1 John 2:18-27). The better we know God's Word, the keener our spiritual senses will be to detect the enemy or adversary at work.

Resist the Devil - 1 Peter 5:9

Steps five and six come from verse nine in 1 Peter. Step five, "***Resist the devil.***" When you accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, you will have the knowledge to resist the enemy. I am going to give you three cautionary measures to keep in mind when resisting the devil:

- First, never discuss anything with satan and his people. The only thing we need to discuss with non-believers is work-related issues and God's Word. Also, we need to show them an example of what a true Christian is.
- Second, never attempt to fight the enemy in your own way. This means taking on satan without God's Word. You will lose every time. Remember, four individuals know the Bible better than we will ever know it, God, Jesus, Holy Spirit, and satan. Want to beat him at his own game, do what Jesus did in Matthew 4:1-11 and Luke 4:1-13. Use God's Words!
- Third, never get the idea you are the only one going through these battles. We all go through battles, even pastors. We are not exempt from them. We have victory because Jesus overcame the world and provided victory for us (John 16:33).

We need to pray and encourage one another in the Lord. Our personal victories will help others just as their victories have helped us. Always remember James 4:7, "***Submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.***" Praise God forevermore!

Stand Firm in the Faith - 1 Peter 5:9

Step six again comes from the same verse, "***steadfast in the faith.***" The word "***steadfast***" means resolutely or dutifully firm and unwavering. Other words used instead of steadfast are loyal, devoted, or firm. We will use the word "***firm***" in our teaching. There are three different meanings for the word "***firm***" depending on using it as an adjective, verb, or adverb. Peter uses it as an adverb in a resolute and determined manner.

So, when you accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, you will have the knowledge to stand firm in the faith. My wife and I tell each other daily in texts to "***stand firm.***" We are telling each other to take a stand on the Word of God and make it "***first place and final authority.***" We refuse to be moved by what is in the natural for "***we live by faith and not by sight***" (2 Corinthians 5:7).

Our weapons to stand firm in our faith are the Word of God and prayer (Ephesians 6:17-18). Our protection from the enemy is the armor of God (Ephesians 6:12-18). We resist him because of our faith in God and taking a stand in professing our faith. We do this in the victorious name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Remember, before we can take a stand against the enemy, we must bow before God, and submit to Him.

Be Hopeful - 1 Peter 5:10

The last step in our ***“Seven Steps to Position Yourself for Success”*** is to ***“be hopeful.”*** Hope (*elpis*) in Greek is meant to have an expectation. In verse 10, Peter starts to close his letter with a positive note. Believers and non-believers need to listen up and know where true hope attitude comes from as Peter gave the following four reasons:

1. *God’s Grace*

In 1 Peter 1:10, our salvation is because of God’s grace. He sent Jesus down to us as a sacrifice for the forgiveness of our sins, but also to reconcile us to Him and redeem us from the curse. His grace meets every situation in our lives. As we submit to God, He will give us the grace we need every time (Hebrews 4:16).

2. *We Know We Are Going to Glory*

Glory is translated into heaven. By accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, we are inheriting the kingdom of heaven. We are now citizens of heaven, and our name will be written into the ***“lamb’s book of life”*** (Revelation 21:27). Whatever begins with God’s grace, will always lead to God’s glory (Psalm 84:11). It may be difficult at times, but it leads to glory, and that is what counts most of all.

3. *Present Suffering is Only for Awhile*

In 1 Peter 1:6, he states trials are only ***“for a season,”*** but glory is eternal. The apostle Paul had the same thing in mind in 2 Corinthians 4:17, ***“For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”***

4. *Trials Build Our Christian Character*

The word ***“perfect”*** used in this verse means ***“to equip, adjust, and fit together.”*** God has several tools He used to equip us for service and the best tool is His Word (2 Timothy 3:16-17). He also used fellowship and ministry of the church (Ephesians 4:11-16). Peter uses the following three words to describe the character God wants us to have:

- Establish: Meaning to ***“firmly fix or set fast.”***
- Strength: God’s strength to meet the demands of life. To stand on a firm foundation.

- Settle: To ***“lay a foundation.”*** To continue in the faith grounded and settled (Colossians 1:23)

If you are a believer, you will not be overcome by trials. Romans 5:3-4, ***“And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulations produce perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope.”***

Conclusion

So, let us conclude our teaching that all seven steps just do not pertain to believers, but to non-believers. You need all seven of these to be successful in life, family, careers, relationships, and even as a Christian.

Peter gave us this letter to encourage us as believers and to help unbelievers see their only hope is in the Lord Jesus Christ. Individuals and churches throughout time have experienced trials, but the enemy has yet to destroy it. To be prepared, we need these steps to position us for eternal success, Amen!

I am Dale Van De Bogart and I fully agree on God’s Word!

If you are reading this and never accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, what are you waiting for? Click on [FREE GIFT](#) and make Jesus the Lord of your life **TODAY!** Remember, read your Bible daily, it’s good food! Like and follow us on [Facebook](#), subscribe to our [YouTube](#) channel, and watch this and other My Thoughts videos.

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