

## **SERMON: SUCCESS FOR LIFE**

### **2<sup>ND</sup> Chronicles 26:3-5**

**(3) Sixteen years old was Uzziah when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty and two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was also Jecoliah of Jerusalem. (4) And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father Amaziah did. (5) And he sought God in the days Zechariah, who had understanding in the visions of God: as long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper.**

### **Introduction**

The Georgia lottery has a game called Cash for Life. If you win you will get a thousand dollars a day for the rest of your life. Simple math will show that equates to three hundred sixty-five thousand dollars a year for the rest of your life. This is not pocket change. There is only one problem besides the debated ethical issue: the odds are against you. You have a better chance-God forbid- of being struck by lightning than winning this game of chance. A disclaimer: I have not and will not play the Georgia lottery or any other lottery.

As we congratulate the members of our church who have excelled academically, we want them to know that this success, as meritorious as it is, does not have to be short term. God can give you success for the rest of your life. This success is not a gamble; it is a sure thing. It is as reliable as the principles of mathematics, physics, and chemistry. The success that God gives, when we follow Biblical principles, is not limited to academic endeavors, but to all aspects of our lives. Jesus came that we might have life and that we might have it more abundantly.

This Scripture has both positive and negative elements. It does tell us that we can have success for life if we follow godly principles. Uzziah was very successful as long as he followed the ways of God and listened to the old prophet Zechariah. When he became filled with pride and abandoned his "home training" he fell mightily. Especially to the young folk, I say, stay with God and you will have success for your entire life. The success that God gives is not the success of the world. According to Joshua 1:8, there is "good success" and "bad success." I know "bad success" is an oxymoron but it is a reality.

As I talk to you, I am reminded of how my father, William Bradford Ward, Sr. would sometimes talk to us. He would come where we were playing and give us unsolicited parental advice and his tone sounded almost like he was chastising us. We would reply, "Daddy, we are being good. We are staying out of trouble and we are making the honor roll." His reply, "I know you are doing well and I want to keep you doing well." So, young folk, I don't want to sound as if I am scolding you. You are doing well and we want you to keep doing well. As our fore-parents would say, "Keep on keeping on." We are proud of you; keep us proud of you. Keep giving us bragging rights.

## **Exposition**

**1. God-Given Success Is True Success.**

**2. God-Given Success Is Sustainable.**

**3. God-Given Success Satisfies.**

## **Closing Thoughts**

There is only one winner at a time for Cash for Life, but we can all be winners when we give our lives to Christ. We are climbing Jacob's ladder and every round goes higher and higher. Spirituals have many verses and they vary by region. In Gulfport, Mississippi, where I used to pastor, they have three verses of *Jacob's Ladder* that I really like:

"When you're weary, keep on climbing,

"When you're weary, keep on climbing,

When you're weary, keep on climbing,

Soldiers of the cross.

Call on Jesus - He will help you,

Call on Jesus - He will help you,

Call on Jesus - He will help you,

Soldiers of the cross.

One day, we will reach the summit,

One day, we will reach the summit,

One day, we will reach the summit,

Soldiers of the cross.”

Give God Glory! Give God All The Glory!

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