

## Sisters Of Success #1

In order to succeed in life. You need good coping skills. The sales person has a quota. The performer has rehearsals. The therapist counsels one depressed soul after another. The pilot must sit in the cockpit for hours. The preacher is never free of sermon preparation and pastoral care. Then there is the mother, with tiny children facing fourteen hours a day of making decisions and competing with strong wills and trying to be everything to everyone. How do you develop the coping skills required to live in the abundant life Jesus promise? *(John 10:10 ESV The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly).*



Paul tells us, "Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks." Rejoicing in the things that never change, can't fail, and won't let you down (like God's promises). And when you feel like you can't cope, pray. Better yet, live with a prayerful heart! With every breath, saying "I trust you, Lord; I turn it over to you, for I know you have everything under control." And don't forget to give thanks. Remember the old adage: "I grumbled because I have no shoes until I met a man who had no feet." Instead of complaining, start counting your blessings. Do you remember what life was like before you met Jesus? Weren't there days when you thought you wouldn't make it? Now look where you are! On the other side of the Red Sea, looking back, the Israelites declared that the Lord was their *strength, their song, and their salvation. (Exodus 15:2 ESV 2The Lord is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will praise him, my father's God, and I will exalt him).* And isn't that what he has been to you, too? Come on and praise God!

Heavenly Father, we thank you for being the one who we can always count on, even when we neglect to count our blessings. We thank you for brand new mercy, every day and we know that we have no real reason to complain. We believe in you and your sovereignty. We thank you for the success you bless us with. In the name of Jesus the Christ we pray. Amen

(Word For You)

## Sisters Of Success #2

When the father saw his prodigal son, "his heart went out to him." Jack Graham writes: "This isn't a father who can't wait to punish his sinful son... who has written him off as wasted and worthless. This is a loving, caring father who can't wait to embrace and welcome him. He runs down the road to meet him... What you see...is a picture of the Father's love for you...eager...excessive...approachable...abundant. Max Lucado adds: "The tale involves a wealthy father and a willful son (who)...takes his inheritance )to) Las Vegas and...wastes (it) on slot machines and call girls...Broke (and) too proud to go home, he gets a job sweeping...stables at the racetrack." When he finds himself...(eating)...their oats, he realizes enough is enough... Off he goes, rehearsing his repentance speech...But...When he was...a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion (v. 20 NKJV)...We expect crossed arms...a furrowed brow...a guarded handshake...a stern lecture...Instead (the father said), Bring out the best robe...a ring...sandals...and the fatted calf (vv.22-23 NKJV). The ring symbolized delegated authority. The one who wore it carried on business in the name of the one who gave it. Would you have given this prodigal the power of attorney over your matters? Entrusted him with your credit card? When you came to God, you were given authority to conduct business in His name. When you speak truth, you're His ambassador (See 2 Corinthians 5:20). As you steward finances He gives, you're His business manager. When you proclaim forgiveness, you're His priest. He has given you the privilege to do for others what He does for you. Don't withhold encouragement or affirmation! Speak words that strengthen others. Why Because you represent you Father!

Heavenly Father, help us to represent you, our Father, in every way and in everyday that we live on this earth. Let us be the stewards over your money, gifts, talents and abilities, because we realize that every good and perfect gift comes from you. We are your children, let us know that and walk in it all the days of our lives. In the name of Jesus, the Christ, Amen.

(Word For You)

## Sisters Of Success #3

At an educators' conference, one colleague condescendingly asked another's wife, "What is it that you do, my dear?" The husband later wrote: My wife...shot back, 'I'm socializing two Homo sapiens into the dominant values of the Judeo-Christian tradition in order that they might be the instruments for the transformation of the social order that they might be instruments for the transformation of the social order into the kind of eschatological utopia that God willed from the beginning of creation. Then (she) asked...sweetly, And what is it that you do? The woman answered humbly, 'I...I...teach sociology.' The Bible says, " It takes wisdom to have a good family, and...understanding to make it strong" (v. 3 NCV). Wisdom is the ability to see with discernment. Understanding is the skill to respond with insight. If you succeed at everything else in life and fail at home, nothing else will matter. One author writes: "We must fill our children with light so they can discern what's dark...help them cultivate a life of peace so they recognize discord...educate them on what's right so that what's wrong has glaring contrast. We must love them so fully that they're not trying to stave off emptiness...offer the sweet scent of truth so they can smell a lie...build their confidence in Christ so they're not easily dismantled by others' opinions. We must build their foundation on a rock so they (recognize) unstable ground...bring them up so it's difficult for others to bring them down...and teach them to pray for wisdom so they realize being smart isn't enough. As parents, you and I may not see the return on our investment right away, but at...the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up (Galatians 6:9 NLT).

Heavenly Father, help us to know our true role as parents, and that is to educate our children on the real meaning of life – YOU. Help us to know you so intimately, that even when our children observe us, they will see YOU. Keep us stable in our thoughts, ways and actions, that our children will have no other alternative but to give you glory, praise and adoration. In the name of Jesus the Christ, Amen.

(Word For You)

## Sisters Of Success #4

Nothing can dim the light which shines from within.

~ Maya Angelou

Each of us brings to the world unique talents, gifts and abilities. Even if you don't know what it is, or value what you do, someone, somewhere, will benefit from your presence. No one can do what you do exactly the way you do it. It is this uniqueness that makes you valuable to the world. We are each as unique and valuable as the other. It was designed that way. A gift from God. Gifts are not given on the basis of race or gender. As a matter of truth, gifts come in many shapes, sizes and colors. When you do what you do, exactly the way you do it, you are sharing God's gifts, bestowed for the good of the world.

(Acts of Faith)

## Sisters Of Success #5

When the law of an eye for an eye operates, all the people end up blind.

~Bishop Desmond Tutu

People of color must stop blaming everyone else for their current condition in the world. We cannot forget our history. We cannot forget the past. We know there are forces that oppose us, but because they oppose us does not mean they have won. We must stop believing what has been said to and about us; we must take full responsibility for how and what we are. Many people of color are afraid to look at the lessons we must learn from the past. If we do not learn the lessons, we will continue to repeat the class. We have a reason to be angry; we have a reason to be afraid; but there is absolutely no reason for us to remain where we are. When we want to rise, we will. When we are ready to grow, we can. The only thing holding us in place right now are the things "we" do not do.

If I continue to blame them for where I've been, I can only blame me for where I go.

(Acts of Faith)

## Sisters Of Success #6

Jesus said, "If you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches?" (Luke 16:11 NIV) In other words, if you are not faithful to Him with your finances, He will not trust you with greater blessings. What does it mean to be faithful in your finances? Paul writes: "On every Lord's Day each of you should put aside something from what you have earned during the week, and use it for this offering. The amount depends on how much the Lord has helped you earn." That means three things: 1) Regular giving. Note the words "every Lord's Day." This is systematic giving, not sporadic giving. It is not, "I feel good today, so I'm going to give to God." If you try that with your mortgage holder, you will be without a house! You're not supposed to give by impulse, but by a commitment to obey God's Word. 2) Planned giving. "You should put aside something from what you have earned." If you're married, sit down and discuss it with your mate and decide the amount you feel God wants you to give each week. If you don't plan it, you will not give consistently. 3) Proportional giving. "The amount depends on how much the Lord has helped you earn." Giving 10 percent should be the minimum-the beginning point. If God has blessed you financially, you should give more than 10 percent. Bottom line: You are to return to God a percentage of what He enables you to earn. When you do, He promises to increase you abundantly (See Malachi 3:10, 2 Corinthians 9:6-10).

Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for blessing me with your plan for abundance. I will follow your plan as you assure me with your promise that if I do, you will open up the windows of heaven and pour out blessings. Thank you for helping me walk in obedience. In the name of Jesus, the Christ, Amen.

**1 Corinthians 16:2**

(Word For You)

## Sisters Of Success #7

A new employee once asked a coworker, "How long have you been working for the company?" He replied, "Ever since the boss threatened to fire me!" Seriously, employers scramble to find workers who are faithful and dependable. Citizens long for politicians who will faithfully carry out all of their campaign promises. In the marriage ceremony, newlyweds are asked to be faithful to the vows they make to each other. The truth is, without faithfulness, your influence will be restricted-or wiped out. Without faithfulness, the sum total of all your other wonderful talents is diluted. Faithfulness turns the mundane into the miraculous and transforms ordinary individuals into dependable achievers. Wise King Solomon asked this soul-searching question: "Many claim to have unfailing love, but a faithful person who can find?" The world wants people who are faithful. There are more than 300 geysers in Yellowstone National Park (approximately half the known geysers in the world). But one stands above the others. It's not the largest, and its waters don't reach the greatest height, but it's by far the most popular. And its popularity is due solely to one thing-its dependability. People stand in long lines under the hot sun to see it, because according to a precise schedule, it shoots a stream of boiling water more than 120 feet into the air. You can nearly set your watch by it. That's why it's called Old Faithful. People are attracted to our faithfulness. God is glorified by our faithfulness. So in all you do this day, practice faithfulness.

### **Proverbs 20:6**

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the greatest demonstration of faithfulness, even to the death of the cross. We strive to be like you in our daily endeavors, that is to live lives that demonstrate our whole trust and faith in you. In the name of Jesus, the Christ.  
Amen

(Word For You)

## Sisters Of Success #8

Faithfulness requires making 100 percent of your effort 100 percent of the time. Insight magazine once published an article by Gary Sheer called "Strive for Perfection... or Else!" It contained some alarming facts! The article said if 99.9 percent was good enough, 103,260 income tax returns would be processed incorrectly that year...22,000 checks would be deducted from the wrong bank accounts within the next sixty minutes...12 babies would be given to the wrong parents each day...2 plane landings daily at O'Hare International Airport would be unsafe...18,322 pieces of mail would be mishandled within that next hour...291 pacemaker operations would be performed incorrectly that year...880,000 credit cards in circulation would turn out to have incorrect cardholder information on their magnetic strips...20,000 incorrect drug prescriptions would be written within that next twelve months...and 107 incorrect medical procedures would be performed by the end of that day. Those are pretty sobering statistics-especially if you are one of the people whose life is affected! Here is the bottom line: Only your best should be good enough in any situation. Anything less than that, will never be good enough because it reflects your failure to be totally faithful and completely dependable. That's why the Bible says, "It is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful." With God, faithfulness isn't merely a concept or a suggestion; it's a requirement of all who serve God-and that includes you!

**~1 Corinthians 4:2**

Dear Heavenly Father,

Help us to know and to do your will faithfully, 100% of the time, with 100% accuracy. We can only do this with you as our guide. Thank you for being that guide to us daily. In the name of Jesus, the Christ, Amen.

(Word For You)

## Women's Day Inspiration

Theme: "Women of Wisdom, Living Together in Unity"

### Ephesians 4:1-4

*I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;*

Let's just study some of the words in Ephesians 4:1-4 and see if the picture becomes clearer:

(Paul writes this epistle to the church as Ephesus)

**prisoner**- a person who is bound, linked to, or a captive of someone else. In this case Paul says he is bound to or a captive of the Lord.

**beseech**- to beg for urgently or fervently. Paul is pleading not with the the world, he is writing to Christians.

**called**- an invitation. In this case, the invitation to live a Godly life that honors the gift of grace that Christ has given us.

**lowliness**- humbly, reverently or modestly. As Christians, we are to emulate Christ, God wrapped in flesh while on earth. Christ did not boast of his equality with God, rather made himself a servant of humanity.

**forbearing**- not acting against someone when you have a right to do so. This implies an exercising of patience that can only be given by the Holy Spirit.

**love**- agape, to bear or to endure. The world has twisted this four-letter word to mean give me what I want. That is not what love is, actually love does mean give, but to give with pure and untainted motives.





**endeavoring**- make an effort. We may not want to, but endeavoring requires effort and energy to work against our natural inclinations.

**unity**- a state of being undivided or oneness. Every saved believer, is saved by the same faith in the same God. The body of Christ is not a segmented side show looking for a place to put their gifts and talents on display, it is a single, unified body with one purpose, to glorify our Father in heaven, while we are on earth.

There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling. I have never seen a body fight itself, especially a body that has the Spirit of Christ dwelling within in. What if our physical body fought against itself. The legs would attack the arms, or the eyes would shut to prevent the body from seeing, or the feet would refuse to move to get the body where it is supposed to be. A body that functioned like this would be considered dysfunctional. Well, we should examine ourselves daily, to make sure we are not dysfunctional as members of the body of Christ! A dysfunctional body cannot glorify a Holy God. God did not make a dysfunctional body. I sometimes think that we have come to the point where we think God needs me and cannot do anything without me. It is His desire for us, those who are called out and full of His Holy Spirit, to be fully functioning in His will. Truth is, He is all powerful, we need Him!

Heavenly Father, help us to become a pure and accurate representation of you in this earth, simply to fulfill the calling which you have purposed in us and to glorify our Father in heaven. In the name of Jesus, the Christ. Amen

Researched by Paula T. Warner

## Sisters Of Success #9

Pastor James Merritt said, "The other day I asked my beautiful wife if she married me for my looks." She replied, "No, I married you for your brains-it's the little things that count!" Merritt was joking of course. What really counts in life is faithfulness in little things; it's how dependability grows and matures. Longfellow wrote, "Most people would succeed in small things if they weren't troubled with great ambition." Sometimes we think we're too big for small things; we would rather get on with what we perceive as bigger, more important matters. But here is how Jesus sees it: "Anyone who can be trusted in little matters can also be trusted in important matters. But anyone who is dishonest in little matters will be dishonest in important matters. If you cannot be trusted with this wicked wealth, who will trust you with true wealth? And if you cannot be trusted with what belongs to someone else, who will give you something that will be your own?" If you want to succeed on the job, come to work on time; stick with the job until it's finished; when you see something that needs to be done, do it-even if it's not in your job description. Give an honest day's work for an honest day's pay; take your designated lunch break, not a three-hour paid vacation; report your expenses truthfully; support the team; and uphold the company's reputation. The same is true of your service in your local church! In other words, be faithful on the job: "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might" (Ecclesiastes 9:10). That's the kind of faithfulness God honors.

~Luke 16:10

Heavenly Father,

Help us to know that being faithful to you, over the large and the small things matter. Whether large or small, let us know that if we are faithful to you, our success is granted by you. Thank you for this and more, Amen.

(Word For You)

## Sisters Of Success #10

Faithfulness can turn the most menial job into a vitally important one. For example, think about how dependent we are on something as small as a postage stamp. It's all ready for service. It goes wherever it's sent. It does whatever it's asked to do. It sticks to the task until it's done. It doesn't give up when it's licked. It stays up to date. And it finds no job too small. We weren't all born with equal talents; some of us are more gifted in certain areas than others. But every one of us was born with an equal responsibility to utilize his or her abilities at full capacity. That's the most of any of us can do-and it's what God, who gave us our talents, expects us to do. Two hundred years ago when the U. S. Marine Corp was first formed, officials gave considerable time to contemplating a fitting motto. They finally chose the Latin phrase *semper fidelis*, a phrase now engraved on the mind of every Marine. What does it mean? "Always faithful"! Both are important words, but the most important is the first one: Why? Because a Marine can't afford to be faithful only when it's comfortable or convenient, or when he feels like it, or when it will make him happy. *Semper fidelis* means you must always be faithful-regardless of the cost. God wants to be able to say the same thing about you as is said about Him: "Great is thy faithfulness." So whether you're a boss, an employee, a father or mother, a husband or wife, a friend, teammate, or a Marine, the word for you today is-always be faithful.

### **Lamentations 3:23**

Heavenly Father,

Thank you for blessing us with an equal responsibility to be faithful, whether of one talent or ten. Help us to know and to do what you expect of us, faithfulness. In the name of Jesus the Christ, Amen.

(Word For You)

## Sisters Of Success #11

The Bible describes the Christian life in war terms: fight, conquer, strive, battle, overcome, victory. You're in a spiritual battle whether you realize it or not, and you need support and backup. When you became a Christian, you became a member of God's army. Imagine you go to a recruiting office to join the Army. They say, "Wonderful, sign here." You say: "Wait! I have one stipulation. I don't want to be committed to any particular platoon. I want to be able float around. I'll be part of the Army, but I don't want to be committed to a certain group of soldiers. If the battle gets too hot in one



area, I'll move to another area and join another platoon. And if I dislike one platoon's leadership, I'll join another. "Would you want a person like that fighting by your side? Of course you wouldn't! But that's how many Christians today relate to God's army. They float around from church to church with little or no commitment to any particular group of Christians-so while the battle is being fought, they are AWOL(absent without leave). There is no such thing as a free-floating believer in the Bible. The difference between just attending church and becoming a member is like the difference between getting married and just living together. The distinction is commitment. The Greek word for fellowship is koinonia, which means being committed to one another. Jesus said, "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:35). And you can't love in

absentia. So, be committed and connected.

### **Romans 12:5**

Heavenly Father,

When you overcame the world, you told of to be of good cheer because you had already overcome. Help us to walk throughout our days with the spirit of an overcomer, demonstrating the full commitment to you and your way. Amen

(Word for You)

## Sisters Of Success #12

The Bible says, "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect. Two ways to get an egg out of an eggshell are to (1) crack it open, or (2) put it in a warm, loving environment and allow it to incubate and hatch. The second way preserves the chick, while the first kills it. Similarly, two ways to get the good news of the gospel across to people are to (1) pound them over the head with it, or (2) love them into God's family. Have you noticed that a lot of evangelism is just a thinly-veiled insult? "You need what I have because you're awful." People do need the good news., but your disposition can keep them from receiving it. Respect unbelievers; don't humiliate them. Respecting means accepting them. That doesn't mean you have to approve of their lifestyle. Acceptance and approval are different. But everybody has the right to be treated in a respectful way. The best way to share the gospel with unbelievers is to surround them with love and acceptance as you share it with them. Be respectful, sensitive, and caring. Theologian D. T. Niles said, "Evangelism is just one beggar telling another where to find bread." Share God's Word! You do the sharing, and God will do the saving. Once you sow the seed of God's Word into someone's heart, you can love them and leave them and trust God to do His part.

Heavenly Father, guide us in our life experience on earth, to be as effective as you were in showing others love, the greatest commandment. Thank you for souls being drawn to the kingdom, by doing it your way. In the name of Jesus, the Christ, Amen.

Always...give an answer...with gentleness and respect. ~1 Peter 3:15 NIV

(Word For You)

## Sisters Of Success #13

Did you know that some master gardeners actually talk to their plants? Why? Because it helps them grow! Imagine yourself saying, "You're such a good plant. My, you sure are looking fine today! I'm so proud of you!" Now picture yourself talking to a plant you're pruning and saying, "This pains me more than it pains you." Whack! "You will thank me for this afterward!" Whack! "It's for your own good!" Whack! Now picture the plant talking back: "You don't have a heart. You hate me. I've worked long and hard to make those roses you just cut off." Isn't that what we say to God while he prunes us? "Don't you love me Don't you care about me? Don't you see what's going on in my life right now?" We think God is mad at us. No, He is not mad at us. No, He is not mad. One of the major mistakes we make is confusing pruning with punishment. Don't equate the two. God sees you as someone who can bear more fruit, someone with potential for greatness, someone He wants to utilize in a significant way. He wants you to be as fruitful as you can conceivably be, so He prunes you, even lopping off some of the things He has been blessing in your life. Have you lost a job you loved? Or a relationship you loved? God may have something much better in mind. Can you trust Him? Do you believe He is at work in your life? His Word says, "God, who began the good work within you, will continue His work until it is finally finished." Philippians 1:6 NLT

Our Father, please help us to understand that you love makes the pain of pruning bearing to be more fruitful. Continue doing the good work within us until you are finished. We give all glory and honor to your name. Amen

God's discipline is always good for us.

~Hebrews 12:10 NLT

## Sisters Of Success #14

God uses problems, pressures, and people to prune you for greater fruitfulness. Are you aware of Him using any of these three things in your life today? God can use all situations in your life to help you grow if you will just have the right attitude. He will use a major frustration, a financial setback, a sudden sickness, a broken marriage, a rebellious child, or even the death of a loved one to get your attention. You say, "But it hurts so much!" Yes, pruning is painful. Sometimes a gardener will prune a tree until it looks like a totem pole or a giant toothpick. It's not a pretty sight. But the pruning process is positive. God is not mad at you. "There is therefore no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1 NKJV). God does not punish His genuine children. Jesus took your punishment on the cross. God's pruning is for your best, for more fruitfulness in your life. Can God's pruning fail to produce? Sure, if you don't cooperate. How does God's pruning produce "love, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control" in your life? (Galatians 5:22-23 NLT). He produces these qualities by allowing you to face situations and people with exactly the opposite qualities. He teaches you to love by putting you around difficult people. He teaches you patience by letting things frustrate you. You say, "How can I cooperate with God?" The Bible tells you: "Always be joyful. Never stop praying. Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus" (1 Thessalonians 5:16 – 18 NLT).

God's discipline is always good for us. Hebrews 12:10 NLT

Our Father, help us to go through the pruning process by your grace. Strengthen us to become obedient to all of your word, even the part we have to say out to.

In Jesus' name, Amen

(Word For You Today)

## Sisters Of Success #15

Everybody wants peace of mind. Whether you're a businessperson facing the pressure of deadlines, a homemaker trying to round up kids, or a student trying to make it through the college semester, everyone wants peace of mind. But most of us experience more stress than peace. How acquainted are you with stress? One author writes: "Here is a little quiz. Complete each of these sentences with the appropriate word: 'I am ready to throw in the ... I am at the end of my ... I am just a bundle of ... My life is falling... I am at my wits ...I feel like resigning from the human ... How did you do? If you answered towel, rope, nerves, apart, end, and race, give yourself an A+." Most of us have muttered these words so often that they're almost second nature. Stress is a regrettable fact of life in our contemporary world. Sales of sedatives are at an All-time high, and books on peace of mind become immediate best sellers. We are warned that too much stress is unhealthy. So what else is new? We have understood that for centuries. Thousands of years ago, Solomon wrote, "A heart at peace gives life to the body" (Proverbs 14:30 NIV). We know about stress, but where can we go to find peace? To God! Take a moment and read these two promises: 1) The Lord gives strength to his people; the Lord blesses his people with peace." 2) Don't worry about anything; instead pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace" (Philippians 4:6-7 NLT).

The Lord blesses his people with peace. Psalm 29:11 NIV

Heavenly Father, I thank you for your word that says you will keep me in perfect peace if I keep my mind on you. Grant me the comfort of keeping my mind on you.  
In the name of Jesus, the Christ, Amen.

(Word For You Today)