

## Guaranteed Success

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To many, prophesying, expelling demons, and other mighty deeds done in the name of the Lord are a clear sign of God being successful at work. Since its done in His name, He must be in it, right? Wrong! Jesus challenged this perception in strongest terms.

*“Many will say to Me on that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name and driven out demons in Your name and done many mighty works in Your name? And then I will say to them openly (publicly), I never knew you; depart from Me, you who act wickedly [disregarding My commands].” (Matthew 7:22-23, The Amplified Bible)*

If the Bible is truly relevant to us believers today, then we have to allow the Holy Spirit to confront us in the same way the Lord confronted His listeners then: How much of what we do in the name of Jesus Christ, even the really powerful stuff, is truly done on God’s command, i.e. His will? Am I sure I do what He tells me to do and the way He tells me to go about it? Or do I do what I do because its the right Christian thing to do and/or others told me to do it? Its a scary thought, isn’t it, being able to do amazing, powerful, mighty stuff in the name of the Lord and yet acting wickedly in it, i.e. disregarding His commands?

For quite some time now I am intrigued with Jesus’ way of operating. In all of Scriptures I can’t find a single hint or proof that the Lord did something unsuccessfully. Whatever He started He finished to God’s full satisfaction. In human, usually worldly perception it might not have looked successful, but from an eternal perspective it was. Jesus absolutely accomplished everything he came to do. So what was His secret? Well, He revealed it Himself,

*“I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself. He does only what he sees the Father doing. Whatever the Father does, the Son also does.” (John 5:19, NLT-SE)*

Every day Jesus had to deal with hosts of people’s worldly demands, hopes, and expectations as well as manipulation attempts, often disguised in holy phrases and goals. Based on their own limited perception, people even tried to tell Him how to establish God’s Kingdom, a Kingdom everyone in Israel was eagerly awaiting. Thankfully Jesus managed to stay focused and singleminded to carry out the tasks His Father had given Him, no matter how foolish, irrational and offensive they looked and were in the eyes of the world. The Son of God acted in obedience to the Father, who directs from the perspective of an eternal Kingdom, not a temporary worldly one. And we are called to do as Jesus did!

The Bible is littered with examples that testify to the amazing success of total obedience towards God’s instructions, no matter how foolish they seemed. Just think of the conquest of Jericho (*Joshua 6*) caused by deafening noise rather than militant combat. But its also filled with sad examples that warn us of acting presumptuous instead of on God’s clear instruction. Here Moses, for example, providing water from the rock the second time (*Numbers 20:8-12*) comes to mind.

If we desire guaranteed success in our Kingdom exploits, then we should be propelled to act in obedience to God’s instructions to us, instructions that will never violate His own word, the Bible. That holds also, or perhaps especially, for the area of finances since money is in direct war with God for our love (*Matthew 6:24*). After all, God will hold us accountable for this. Just doing the obvious “Christian thing” can look powerful and impress others, but might not find God’s approval. The same holds for acting on other people’s ideas, perceptions and expectations.

As we learn to hear for ourselves and act based on God’s peace in our hearts (*Philippians 4:7*) we can trust the Holy Spirit to direct and orchestrate our individual obedient acts in such a way that, as the dynamic body of Christ, we then establish His Kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. Corporately. Success guaranteed!