

The 25 Biblical Laws *of* Success

POWERFUL PRINCIPLES *to* TRANSFORM
YOUR CAREER *and* BUSINESS

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AND RUBENS TEIXEIRA



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For my parents,
for Nayara, my wife,
and for my kids, Luisa, Lucas, and Samuel
—William Douglas

For Paulo and Darcy,
Marta, and Renan
—Rubens Teixeira

Skill will bring success.

—ECCLESIASTES 10:10

Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

—JOSHUA 1:7–8

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Introduction

What Does Professional Success Have to Do with the Bible?

The Bible is the greatest manual on professional success ever written. Although it is many centuries old, the Bible remains relevant today and shows you the path to success in the job market and in business management, regardless of whether you are religious or not. *The 25 Biblical Laws of Success* was written to share this knowledge with you.

The Bible's teachings have been confirmed by the experience of several respected professionals who built successful careers based on biblical laws, principles, and values. Professionals, managers, and employees can draw on biblical lessons to attain excellence, credibility, and professional achievements. The laws of the Bible are like keys: they work for everyone. If you use the right key, the safe opens. The laws you will learn in this book are keys that will open to you the doors to above-average results and success.

If you are asking yourself why so little is said about these professional lessons found in the Bible, the answer is simple: people usually see the Bible as a merely religious book. Many apply Scripture in a limited manner, obeying only its religious guidelines. Those not interested in religion completely miss out on important lessons that could boost their career. These oversights come at a high price, since both the former and the latter miss out on precious wisdom that could solve today's work challenges.

Professional success is a goal that is in part a direct consequence of your personal convictions and values. Success also results from a combination of attitudes, thoughts, and behaviors. Hard work alone will not guarantee lasting success. To achieve long-term professional success, you also need to develop characteristics such as discipline, willpower, resilience, intelligence, creativity, courage, determination, and self-control.

These values, all of which are expressed in the Bible, will be discussed in detail in this book. Of course, the Bible is not the only place where we can learn about values that are useful in life, but when we are talking about work and career, the Bible certainly has the greatest quantity and the best quality of advice.

The Laws of Success

Our world is governed by human laws. Whether a law is obeyed or infringed, there will be consequences. When people commit a crime, they go to jail; if people incorrectly pay a debt, they will have to make it right. ("Bad payers pay twice," goes an old Brazilian adage.) On the other hand, those who abide by the law, such as employers who respect labor legislation, have fewer problems and expenses. There

is an upside to opting to act within the law. Everyone understands the force of human laws, such as civil, criminal, and labor laws.

Our world is also governed by natural laws. Everyone also understands the force of the laws of nature, such as the laws of physics and gravity. These natural laws affect us every day regardless of whether we like them or not.

What not everyone is aware of is the existence of yet another type of law: spiritual laws.

Most people think spiritual laws apply only to matters of religion, but there's more to them than that. Spiritual laws are immaterial laws that don't derive from human laws or the laws of nature. These spiritual laws are foundational life principles that can be split into religious laws (which are not the focus of this book) and non-religious laws. For instance, when we say that those who do good receive good in return, or that envy generates bad energy, we are speaking of spiritual laws.

Man-made laws can often be broken without any resulting consequences. Someone who commits murder may not be found out or, due to a technicality, may escape conviction. Laws of nature work differently: they are inexorable and there will always be consequences. There is no getting away from them. For example, you may not be familiar with the law of gravity, or perhaps you don't agree with it, but if you jump from a building you'll splatter yourself on the ground below. When someone chooses to ignore such natural laws (as gravity) and thereby suffers its consequences, there is no moral issue involved. There is only cause and effect. People usually know how it works and they go along with it.

What many people don't know is that the laws of nature are not the only ones easily noticed. Just as the laws of physics, chemistry,

and biology affect your everyday life—and just as accurately as the laws of mathematics—spiritual laws also influence your daily professional life and carry a degree of cause and effect. Complying with them will bring benefits, and ignoring them will certainly result in negative consequences.

In the case of human laws against crimes such as murder and armed robbery, nobody is found “not guilty” by alleging that they weren’t familiar with the law. The same is true with the spiritual laws. Therefore, it’s important to know the twenty-five biblical “laws of success” and thereby avoid losing opportunities and money.

Some spiritual laws are so important that compliance is mandatory for those who desire to succeed in their careers. Failure to abide by these spiritual laws results in losses and defeats. Some spiritual laws work by expanding or maintaining success, while some are steps in a progression toward success.

Spiritual laws, such as those of wisdom, work, and sowing, among others, cannot be put on the back burner. Either you follow them or you won’t get very far in your career—or in life. Other laws will serve to bring you greater personal equilibrium and happiness—for example, spiritual laws about serving your neighbor—but they aren’t mandatory. One can be professionally and financially successful without becoming a philanthropist. Andrew Carnegie, Warren Buffett, and Bill Gates, however, decided to share their fortunes. It’s a personal decision.

Abiding by the most important spiritual laws, or following all of them, and reaping the results is a personal decision. It’s your choice.

If it is correct to say that the happiness of an achievement is impossible without the effort of striving for it, then it is also true

that the more you apply the spiritual laws of success, the more successful you will be.

What Kind of Success Do You Desire?

Although this book is focused on professional success, it is good to remember there are other kinds of success—such as personal, spiritual, social, and financial—that you have to take under consideration in order to achieve a balance in your life.

A career and a paycheck are helpful, but they are not enough to make you happy and fulfilled. There will be moments when every one of us will face the questions: *Am I fulfilled? Do I enjoy what I do? Do I appreciate life?* These have nothing to do with money, market placement, or owning our own business. They are also unrelated to our assets. Living in a nice house and owning a great car are pleasant, for sure, but there are many people who own these things and are not satisfied.

Being interested only in professional and financial success and forgetting family and personal success, reputation, credibility, and social respect is a risk. Once more, this is an individual choice. Nevertheless, social respect, credibility, and a good reputation are strong aids to developing your career and increasing your finances. And, of course, health and family are indispensable to a better life.

There is another dimension of personal fulfillment beyond material success, which is characterized by an inner state of peace, security, gratitude, and happiness. As the Brazilian psychiatrist Roberto Shinyashiki has titled his bestseller, *Success Is Living Happily*.¹ To that end, we do not want you to be frustrated or miserable at work, restrained in your gifts, indebted, broken, or lacking in perspective.

We don't want this for ourselves or for our neighbors. This is why we will teach you the spiritual principles to follow to help you find a balance in your finances, your work, and your personal life, for happiness can be found only in the harmony of all three.

*I had no ambition to make a fortune. Mere money-making
has never been my goal; I had an ambition to build.*

JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER

PART

1

Laws
concerning
Wisdom

1

The Law of Opportunity

Your Father in heaven . . . causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

MATTHEW 5:44–45

The Law of Opportunity says that everyone, at some point in his or her lifetime, will have an opportunity to get ahead in life. This means that even though we are affected by our social and economic background, access to education, culture, and family development, we can all rewrite our stories. If we are satisfied with our lives, then there is no need to change; but if we aren't, while we are alive we will have the opportunity to change course.

This spiritual law does not promise that all the opportunities will be the same but that everyone will have a fair share of them. We cannot assume that everyone will have the same sorts of opportunities. Unfortunately, it is not as simple as choosing to be

rich and successful. These accomplishments depend on a number of circumstances, some that are the result of our personal choices and others that are outside of our control. However, no matter what, there is always something we can do to move forward toward success.

Happiness, as many say, is not a matter of circumstances but of how you deal with the circumstances you are given. In life you will be called to react to a number of things—some are foreseeable while others are unpredictable. The best you can do is learn how to seize the opportunities. Hence, your success doesn't depend on the number of chances you get but on the ones you take.

It is useless to compare yourself with others in terms of how lucky or unfortunate you are. That won't change a thing. We all have to play the hand we are dealt in life. You must move from where you are to where you want to be. For that, you have to be willing to pay the price and expend the time and the effort necessary to get there.

King Solomon is widely regarded as the wisest man who ever lived. The Bible says that God granted Solomon “a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be” (1 Kings 3:12). In Solomon's biblical book of Ecclesiastes, he writes, “All share a common destiny—the righteous and the wicked, the good and the bad, the clean and the unclean, those who offer sacrifices and those who do not. As it is with the good, so with the sinful; as it is with those who take oaths, so with those who are afraid to take them” (9:2).

Exciting and mysterious but always surprising things happen to everyone in life. The strongest doesn't always win, and the cleverest doesn't always become rich. Again, Solomon says, “The race is not

to the swift or the battle to the strong, nor does food come to the wise or wealth to the brilliant or favor to the learned; but time and chance happen to them all” (Eccles. 9:11).

We can observe that Solomon’s statement is true: time and opportunity come to all. Whoever wins the race wins the medal. To the victor go the spoils. Therefore, success will come to those who, when their own time and chance happen, make the most of their opportunities.

Jesus also spoke of the Law of Opportunity. He illustrated this spiritual law through the following story:

Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash. (Matt. 7:24–27)

The rain, the floods, and the winds affect everyone, but some have sound foundations and structures and others do not. Some roll their sleeves up and drill in stone, while others prefer the ease of building on sand. This is a product of the Law of Sowing, which says that we reap what we sow, as we are going to see later. Some lay solid foundations and they remain secure. Yet the Law of Opportunity was also in effect, since all had the chance to build and the rain fell on all of them.

These teachings of Solomon and Jesus warn us that bad weather, crises, calamities, opportunities, and changes in scenario affect

everyone. Some will have the emotional, intellectual, financial, and relational foundations to weather the storms; others will not. The sun rises and the rain falls on everyone. Some are prepared for it and others are not. What about you? Are you ready to deal with the surprises life throws at you?

In our home country of Brazil, there is a saying: “The sun rises for everyone; the shade doesn’t.” This interesting concept implies that only those who have learned to deal with the sun are able to enjoy the shade. Only those who have built four walls and a roof over their heads are deserving of the shade. Even if you are hiding under a tree, you have to earn your shade by first moving under it.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Andrew Carnegie hired Napoleon Hill to study the common ground of successful people. Hill spent over twenty years researching the lives of the most successful men of his time. He studied over sixteen thousand rich and powerful people in order to discover what they had in common. Among those he studied were the five hundred most important millionaires at that time, including Thomas Edison, Alexander Graham Bell, Henry Ford, Elmer Gates, Theodore Roosevelt, George Eastman, Woodrow Wilson, and John D. Rockefeller.

The results of Hill’s research were summarized in 1937 in a book titled *Think and Grow Rich*. The book was submitted to the analysis of bankers, businesspersons, and university professors in order to correct or eliminate information lacking practical, scientific, or economic basis. Not a single modification was proposed.

Considered a treatise on the development of leadership, this book summarizes the laws that successful people follow, consciously or subconsciously. In the first chapter, Hill tells the story

of Dr. Gunsaulus, a young pastor who announced to Chicago's newspapers that he would preach a sermon that Sunday called "What I Would Do If I Had a Million Dollars." Curious as to what he would hear, the meat-packing mogul Philip D. Armour decided to attend. In the sermon, the pastor laid out the well-structured plan for a technical college in which young people would develop the ability to think in a practical manner. The bottom line of the story is overwhelming.

After the sermon was over Mr. Armour walked down the aisle to the pulpit, introduced himself, and said: "Reverend, I liked your sermon. I believe you could do everything you said you would, if you had a million dollars. To prove that I believe in you and your sermon, if you will come to my office tomorrow morning, I will give you the million dollars."¹

There is always plenty of capital for those who can create practical plans for using it.

You may not like the work in which you are now engaged. There are two ways of getting out of that work. One way is to take little interest in what you are doing, aiming merely to do enough to get by. Very soon you will find a way out, because the demand for your services will cease.

The other and better way is by making yourself so useful and efficient in what you are now doing that you will attract the favorable attention of those who have the power to promote you into more responsible work that is more to your liking. You may be surprised to discover that you are standing right over a rich mine.

To make a long story short, the sun rises for everyone, opportunities come along, but not everyone takes advantage of them.

Those who seize opportunities are more likely to fulfill their dreams.

*Two men look out the same prison bars:
one sees mud and the other stars.*

FREDERICK LANGBRIDGE