

## Success

We all want to be a success. The definition of success, though, may vary. Some would choose immediate success over a long-term success that takes much work and comes very slowly, but that is one's choice. A success in numbers or money may not be the same as a success in changed lives and souls in Heaven. But we all want something called success.

For me, I want success in God's eyes. I want success at the end of the story more than fame today. With the draw of the contemporary, worldly church philosophy, I thought it might be good to again point out some results or long-term success.



This picture to the left is our elementary Christian school students and staff. You may be able to date the picture by the ladies' hair, but in case you can not, it is from 1994. There was no playground or ball teams at this time; not much in way of buildings -- as you can see, the picture was in our tent. But ten of these little

students went off into the full-time ministry as preachers, missionaries, or full-time church staff... hmmm. That sounds like success when you measure it by "teaching them to observe all things..." Many of the others in the picture who are not in full-time ministry are busy in their churches, but not full-time.

These young people never heard any rock music, praise bands, or contemporary sound in their church or youth department. They learned the hymns and heard lots of preaching. Songs were sung with an out-of-tune piano (try keeping a piano tuned in a tent). The children and teens also heard a lot of "Patch the Pirate." Ten young people serving God out of that small group? Yep! I would call that success!

Okay, you say, but that was a long time ago. That kind of old-fashioned preaching, soul winning, and conservative music will not work today will it?

The picture to the right was a PART of our youth group at Brother Trieber's youth conference in Santa Clara, California. Yes, those fundamental, conservative, hard-preaching, hymn-singing ways are still working. I must confess, we are so worldly that we got our teens their own music. At our church we use "Soul Stirring Songs and Hymns" for the congregation. Our teen choir uses... ready for it?



"Songs and Hymns from the Heart" from North Valley Publications. Yes, that is a hymnal, but it is our teen hymnal. As we look at this picture, I am grateful that almost every one of these teenagers works on a bus route in addition to going soul winning every Wednesday. Maybe that is a successful youth department?

Four of my former teens started churches in the last three years, one of them on the mission field. Depending on what your definition is, those teens might be called a success. Thanksgiving week in 2014, we had a big day when we preached all over the valley. We had 25 services or so, and simply handed out food, John and Romans, and preached. Over 5,000 people heard the Gospel and over 1,200 accepted Christ. Best of all, over 300 of my members were involved in making it happen. More than 300 out soul winning, preaching, and getting the Gospel to over 5,000 souls. You might call that a success. There was no one swaying on the platform; there were no colored lights; there was no fancy auditorium, just a group of folks getting the Gospel out.

Success? I guess you first have to figure out what you call a success, then work for whatever you think is a success.

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