

193. Guard Yourself

By Arland Steen

Guard yourself from these characteristics as they limit success in life.

#1: Avoid unbelief, weak faith and natural logic.

Unbelief always looks at the negative instead of the positive.

Hebrews 10:17 (NKJ): *17 So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

Faith will be weak unless you're soaking in God's Word. Fear will creep in and block God's moving.

Faith speaks vision. People without vision work for people with vision.

Small vision makes everything small.

The people that live in western Kansas were on their way to California but their vision wasn't large enough to get them there.

Logic always talks you out of the supernatural.

Luke 5:4-6 (NKJ): *4 He said to Simon, 'Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch. 5 But Simon answered and said to Him, 'Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net.'* Faith looks beyond logic because often what God does is not logical.

#2: Avoid criticism, slander and gossip.

James 4:11-12 (NKJ): *11 Do not speak evil of one another, brethren.*

Titus 3:2 (NKJ): *Remind them ... to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men.*

A judgmental attitude and speaking against one another person is two of Satan's greatest tools to steal our blessings. Criticism interrupts faith. Slander will cause bad health and financial woes. All three should be avoided like the plague.

#3: Avoid sin, disobedience, indulgence and rebellion.

You want to avoid these things because they give rise to guilt, judgment, and condemnation. Separated from fellowship with God like this will cause us to suffer a needless and constant "put-down" of ourselves.

God paid an extreme price for our redemption from these things.

When we indulge in these things, we cannot rise in faith because we become aware of our weaknesses.

Deliberate and intentional sin denies God the privilege of blessing us because He cannot violate His word.

1 Peter 1:15-16 (NKJ): *15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 because it is written, 'Be holy, for I am holy.'*

Our response should be: Psalm 101:3 (NKJ): *3 I will set nothing wicked before my eyes; I hate the work of those who fall away; it shall not cling to me.*

#4: Avoid pride and insubordination.

Pride causes us to take matters into our own hands when we can't see what God is doing. It loves the praise of men. Pride is the essence of sin and God hates it. He will resist and frustrate prideful behavior.

God's response is:

Proverbs 16:18 (NKJ): *Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.*

Proverbs 11:2 (NKJ): *When pride comes, then comes shame; but with the humble is wisdom.*

Isaiah 57:15 (NKJ): *For thus says the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity, 'whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit.'*

James 4:6 (NKJ): *God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.*

#5: Avoid an unwillingness to tithe and give.

Refusing to tithe reveals a real lack of trust in God. It ties His hands to bless us. It is a root of poor health because we have financial problems as a result and begin worrying. Worry leads to headaches, back problems, nervousness and sleeplessness.

God's response is: Proverbs 11:24-25 (NKJ): ²⁴ *There is one who scatters, yet increases more; and there is one who withholds more than is right, but it leads to poverty.* ²⁵ *The generous soul will be made rich, and he who waters will also be watered himself.*

#6: Avoid bitterness, resentment and anger.

Bitterness questions the goodness of God.

Resentment compares our circumstances with that of others and then says that God isn't fair. It leads us away from His blessing.

Anger toward people is often evidence of anger toward God. Questions arise in angry hearts. Why? Why? But when this happens, it is easy to become sarcastic and disrespectful and lose our peace. Beware the danger of self-pity. Beware of it and refuse to be hurt by people. Walk in love toward them. These things give the devil a foothold to cause confusion in many areas.

God's response is: Mark 11:25-26 (Amplified): ²⁵ *And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him and let it drop (leave it, let it go), in order that your Father Who is in heaven may also forgive you your [own] failings and shortcomings and let them drop.* ²⁶ *But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your failings and shortcomings.*

#7: Avoid strife with your spouse.

Look what happens with strife here – 1 Peter 3:7. It dissipates God's anointing on our lives.

God's response: 1 Peter 3:1 (NKJ): ¹ *Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives.*

1 Peter 3: 7-9 (NKJ): ⁷ *Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.*

#8: Avoid foolish spending and greediness.

Credit card debt causes it hard to recover and this is called greediness and covetousness. The issue is lack of discipline. Lack of self-control in this area brings financial stress, which creates fear, worry and anxiety.

God's response: Luke 12:15 (NKJ): *And He said to them, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of things he possesses.*

#9: Avoid negative talk and negative attitudes.

We must talk the answer instead of the problem. Doing otherwise, gives Satan a foothold inside us. Guard your thoughts and the words you speak.

God's response is: Proverbs 18:21 (NKJ): *Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit.*

(Good News Bible): *What you say can preserve life or destroy it; so you must accept the consequences of your words.*

Then there is one godly characteristic that will unlock prosperity in both your personal and business relationships.

Here's a vital principle that will offset the aforementioned hindrances.

Adopt praise as your language of faith.

Praise is a key to blessing and success. Psalm 50:23 (NKJ): *Whoever offers praise glorifies Me; and to him who orders his conduct aright I will show the salvation of God.*

We honor the Lord by praising Him and it opens the way for Him to work on our behalf.

God responds aggressively to a grateful heart. Psalm 50:14-15 (NKJ): ¹⁴ *Offer to God thanksgiving, and pay your vows to the Most High.* ¹⁵ *Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me.*

Activate the great principle of praise. Psalm 100:4 (NKJ): *Enter into His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name.* ⁵ *For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting. And His truth endures to all generations.*

Obedience to godly principles will cause God's flow of blessing to come toward you!