

Culture Wars #7

The Achievement Culture

Word

Scripture Reference

Psalm 1:1-6

Discussion Questions

1. We live in a culture driven by the desire for achievement, whether in school, at home, at work, and even in the church. What drives a person's desire to be successful? How is this manifested in your life?
2. The drive to achieve something, often the result of our desire for happiness and significance, comes from four underlying subcultures:
 - A *Culture of Materialism* from the drive to have more
 - A *Culture of Intellectual Elitism* from the drive to be the smartest
 - A *Culture of Power* from the drive to be the most influential
 - A *Celebrity Culture* from the drive to be the most famous

Discuss the following:

- (a) Why is success often associated with cultivating these pursuits?
 - (b) How are these subcultures manifested? In what ways has it affected your life as a Christian? In what ways do you think has it affected the church community?
 - (c) What dangers do you think these subcultures bring to your life as a follower of Jesus Christ?
3. The achievement culture is driven by our pursuit of identity, significance, and happiness—things that we believe give us joy and satisfaction in life. Read Psalm 1:1-6. Verses 1-3 describe to us a “blessed” or a “happy” man.
 - (a) Discuss how the environment (or people) you frequently associate in affects your way of life as a follower of Christ (v. 1). How does a Christian become immersed in a culture of sin? Describe its progression. In what ways have people in your circle influenced you, especially in your spiritual walk?
 - (b) Where do you get your identity and sense of happiness? Do you take delight in your identity as a child of God? What does delighting in something mean?

- (c) As a follower of Christ, do you take delight in God's Word? The more you want to follow God more intimately, the more you must know what He says. What steps are you taking to know God better? Are you intentionally applying it in your daily life? Share with the group how God's Word has influenced and transformed your beliefs, actions and your way of life.
- (d) Discuss how being rooted on Jesus Christ can make you prosper in your pursuits (v. 3)

4. What is a chaff? Why do you think verse 4 used this word to describe people who define themselves by their achievements apart from God? What kind of rewards does pursuing earthly achievements bring to you, and how does God view it? How does its worth and significance compare with pursuing heavenly success (v. 5-6)?
5. As a follower of Jesus Christ, how are you to engage a culture so defined by success? Read Proverbs 2:7. A drive to live uprightly and righteously to be more like Christ results in a culture of discipleship that defines our success not by what we have, what we know, or who we are, but by the eternal victory Jesus Christ achieved on the cross and gave us freely. What are you doing to cultivate a culture of discipleship in your life?
6. If there is one thing you pursue in this life, can you honestly say that you will pursue being the most Christ-like? Is that something you can find satisfaction and joy in?

Walk

The world may define your success and significance by who you are or what you have, but who you are in Jesus Christ and what you have in Him has eternal value and is worth far more than the greatest human achievement there will ever be. A God-controlled life that results from your active, intentional pursuit of Christ-likeness is TRUE SUCCESS in God's eyes. Do you find your significance in what you have in Jesus Christ? Could you honestly say that you would rather have Jesus than anything this world has to offer? Examine your life now. Do you think you would be someone who will be remembered as a person who walked with God?

Worship & Prayer

Pray for GCCP worshipers to acknowledge God as the source of all wisdom and knowledge & to be faithful to use them for His glory. Pray also for preparations for the Spiritual Life Conference, and also for the healing and recovery of our brothers who are suffering both from physical and spiritual illness.