

CEO Devotional – December 2, 2013
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The Success Trap

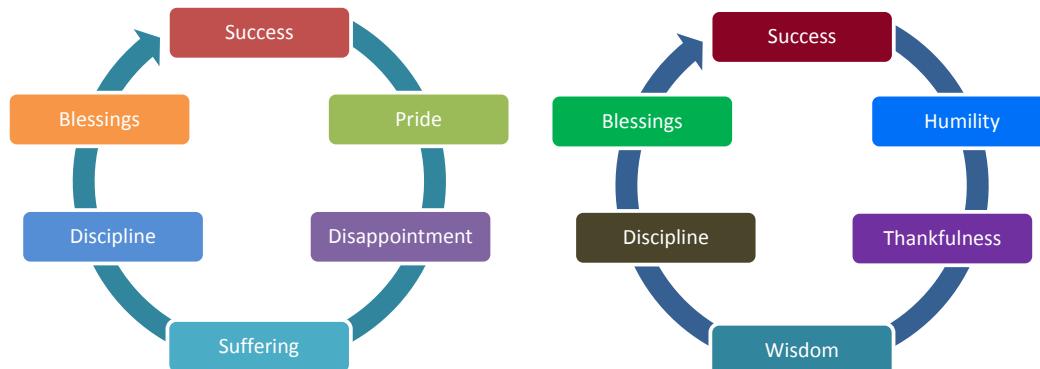
The company I lead completed a significant acquisition a few years ago during the downturn in the U.S. economy. Despite the tough economic times, this acquisition was an opportunity to dramatically improve our competitive position and chart a course toward growth and prosperity. However, the integration activities, combined with a weak economy, took their toll on our people and created a challenging environment for the first two years after the acquisition.

As a faith-friendly company, we had plenty of people praying for better times. As the CEO, I felt like I was facing one of the most challenging times of my career. We had great people, a solid business platform, and a good plan, but the overall financial results were disappointing. I found myself on my knees quite often asking for God's wisdom and that His will be done in all of our affairs.

Year three unveiled a much different story as the fruits of our labor began to flow through to our financials, and the overall momentum of the business changed for the better. Much of what we had been praying for, along with all of our hard work and discipline, was now paying off.

It quickly became clear to me that this would be my greatest leadership challenge to date—dealing with success and the rewards that follow. How would I set a tone that recognized our people for their hard work and dedication while honoring God for His faithfulness and provision? How would we avoid the cycle of destruction that comes with pride and ego that has repeated itself since time began?

The Biblical Paths Toward Success



Scripture reveals that pride goes before destruction (Proverbs 16:18) and that thankfulness and humility bring honor and life (Proverbs 22:4).

Proverbs 15:33 reminds us that “Reverence and submission to the Lord provides wise instruction, and before honor comes humility.”

As leaders, how do we react to success and the fruits of our labor? How do we lead when times are good and everything seems to be hitting on all cylinders? What does God expect of us when the rewards come our way?

Pray that we have the strength as leaders to humble ourselves before God—in good times and bad. Pray for humility and sacrifice, especially during the good times when it appears to all involved that “we” have it all figured out.

Remember 1 Peter 5:6: “Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time He may lift you up.”