

The Exchanger

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THE NEWSLETTER
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*The
Mission
of
FBCWR:
To present the Lord Jesus
Christ: His work
on the
cross
and
His in-
dwelling
power
to meet
man's
needs.*

*...let us run with
endurance the race that is
set before us, fixing our
eyes on Jesus, the author
and perfecter of faith,
who for the joy set before
Him endured the cross,
despising the shame, and
has sat down at the right
hand of the throne of God.*

Hebrews 12:16-2

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Self-help for Dummies ifitistobeitsuptome - Oh Really?

I kept seeing this odd "word" in the sport's headlines. It's the name of a race horse. Maybe the guy wanted to motivate his jockey, or his horse.

In our society, the noise from motivators and trainers is deafening. "Killer abs in 10 minutes a day". "How to catch the man of your dreams". "How to catch the bass of your dreams". If nothing else, as a result of all the hype, we should become fairly successful dreamers. But why is it so hard to get that lunker fish out of the water of our dreams and into the reality boat? Isituptome?

According to a study of successful people by Dr. Ari Kiev of Cornell University, your ability to succeed in life hinges upon focusing your energies on a specific objective. His conclusion, "The establishment of a goal is the key to successful living." Hmmm. And these guys wonder about that "ivory tower" critique.

Well out here in Realworldville, we have goals stacked to the rafters and layers of disappointment to match. In fact, we sometimes are so goal-oriented that we make ourselves and others miserable. Consider James' observations about goals people make,

"What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures" (James 4:1-3).

Whoa, we even discover from this verse that Someone may be blocking certain goals. So to help us avoid the frustration of fighting against God, we have a list of self-help goals for dummies. In other words, you're a dummy if you set these type of goals:

1) Goals that necessitate other's cooperation

- It is tough enough focusing our own efforts towards a desired end, let alone recruiting others

to jump on our little bandwagons. We should ask God for wisdom on His best strategy to **influence** others since we have **no control** over others and no promise that God will hold a rally on our behalf.

2) Financial Goals

- Again, James nails it: *"Come now, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit.' Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. Instead, you ought to say, 'If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that.'" (James 4:13-15).*

Contentment and gratefulness should be added to our wholehearted service to God in our jobs.

3) Numeric Goals

- John the Baptist understood that God was responsible for the quantity of his ministry. When he was told that all of his disciples were switching to follow Jesus, he answered, *"A man can receive nothing unless it has been given him from heaven" (John 3:27).* So as the crowds dwindled, John sowed seeds faithfully and then served through his imprisonment and martyrdom.

"But", someone objects, "won't this lead to passivity"? Not if we focus on Jesus' counsel to be faithful in the small things - then we will be successful in the only arena that counts - His. So to accomplish those big dreams that we believe are from God - let's take small steps of faithfulness. In the end we'll be crowned in the winner's circle.

So how is this name for the pony we are riding on the track of life -

ifGodisleadingandIamfaithfulwin

by Joe Fornear

