That Which Makes For Success

Intro. It is my intention to enumerate some of the things that help me personally to live a better life for possibly it will aid you to live a better life also.

1. Success in the material realm can usually be attributed to the influences that bear upon our lives physically.
2. The same is true spiritually.
3. Notice some of the influences in my life that help me to live a better life.

I. A REALIZATION OF THE VALUE OF MY SOUL.
A. When I think seriously how valuable my soul is it invariably helps me live better.
   1. Mat. 16:26 “For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”
   2. Christ’s sacrifice to save my soul.
      a. Gal. 2:20 “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”
      b. Luke 22:19-20 “And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.”
B. I can readily see my soul’s value.
   1. Mat. 16:26 “For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”
   2. Christ’s sacrifice to save my soul.
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   C. My soul is my most valuable possession and realizing that fact helps me live better to secure the eternal well being of that soul.

II. HAVING MY SINS AND FAULTS REBUKED.
A. I am indebted to many for the reproof and rebuke they have given me in love.
B. Mat. 18:15 “Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.”
C. Paul was interested in helping people to live better; 2 Tim. 4:1-2 “I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom: 2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.”
   1. Go to me, not to others.
   2. 2 Tim. 3:16-17 “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.”

III. BEING ENCOURAGED IN THAT WHICH IS RIGHT.
A. Though we often lose sight of its power, encouragement helps a person more.
B. 2 Tim. 4:2 “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.”
   1. Gal. 6:2 “Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.”
   2. Notice how Barnabas helped Saul; Saul could have been lost to the cause of Christ; Acts 9:26-27 “And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed
to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus.”

C. **How much more could be accomplished if we were quick to give words of encouragement**
   1. Elders, preachers, Bible class teachers, song leaders.
   2. The only time some hear anything from us it is words of rebuke and criticism.

IV. **The Thought That I Am An Example To Others.**
   A. Have you ever notice children walking in their parents’ shoes, wearing their clothes?
   B. 2 Cor. 3:1-3 “Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you? Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men. Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.”
   C. 1 Tim. 4:12 “Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”
   D. **Impossible to judge how much we influence others.**
      1. By our confession of faults others are encouraged to do likewise.
      2. Often people obey the gospel because of the example set by others.
      3. This helps me to attend all services, be on time, be reverent, sing enthusiastic and generally live better.

V. **Realization I Must Stand Before God In The Day Of Judgment.**
   A. Rom. 14:10 “But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.”
   B. 2 Cor. 5:10-11 “For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again; neither doth God respect any person: yet doth he devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him.”
   C. Ecc. 9:5 “For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten.”
   D. Heb. 9:27 “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:”

VI. **That Eternity Will Be Spent In Heaven Or In Hell.**
   A. One or the other and for eternity.
   B. I am thankful to a merciful God for His picture of the beauties of heaven and the horrors of hell: it helps me live better.

VII. **Consciousness Of The Fact This Day May Be My Last On Earth.**
   A. Job 14:1 “Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble.”
   B. 2 Sam. 14:14 “For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again; neither doth God respect any person: yet doth he devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him.”
   C. Ecc. 9:5 “For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten.”
   D. Heb. 9:27 “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:”
E. **Jam. 4:13-14** "Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: 14 Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."

**Conclusion:** If today you should die where will you stand in the judgment and where will you spend eternity?