



Liberating Ministry from the Success Syndrome

R. Kent Hughes, Barbara Hughes

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Why do so many ministers abandon their churches in frustration? These concepts and biblical lessons can turn lives and ministries around. Frustration in Christian work often results when efforts are not evaluated with biblical perspective. Like many in Christian service, Kent and Barbara Hughes struggled with defining success. Based on their experiences, "Liberating Ministry from the Success Syndrome" is for anyone in ministry facing the disappointment of unmet expectations. As the authors recount the biblical lessons that turned their life around, others will learn to reexamine their understanding of success in light of Scripture.

Liberating Ministry from the Success Syndrome Details

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Author : R. Kent Hughes , Barbara Hughes

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From Reader Review Liberating Ministry from the Success Syndrome for online ebook

Rick says

Ministry, argues the author, is not a matter of creating a church with an ever increasing membership nor is it about acquiring money and resources. Hughes does away with the modern ideas concerning success and tackles that ministry is more personal than that and reminds us it is all about people.

Ben Flegal says

An excellent reminder that success in this life is defined by God and not by the world's ideas or ideals. The book is geared specifically toward those in pastoral ministry, but the principles it teaches are applicable to any believer.

In a nutshell, success is faithfulness to God and the calling he has given to each of us.

The last chapter specifically is helpful for lay people, because it informs us as to how we can better serve, help, and pray for our pastors so they can have true, spiritual success.

Samuel Bierig says

Really good stuff, especially if you have not had an opportunity to think deeply on "the ministries" unique and ubiquitous ability to run the minister ragged.

Ruth Baker says

This book made me critically review my emotional responses and negative thought processes around "success". Everyone in ministry should read this. It puts success squarely back in Gods hands where it belongs and was a salient reminder to me to remember Gods sovereignty instead of spinning my wheels ever faster as I rely on my own abilities

Gavin Breedon says

A helpful consideration of what success looks like in pastoral ministry. At times the book flirted with being a more general book about pastoral ministry and repeated things I've read in a lot of other pastoral ministry books. I would've preferred a slightly shorter book with a tighter focus on wrestling with success in the ministry. But, at the end of the day, I found the book to be encouraging and helpful in reminding me of a lot of things I already "know" but need to believe in my ministry.

Steven McCarthy says

This book was greatly encouraging to me as a pastor, so I decided to share it with my wife, and we've found it a real treasure. Now I'm sharing key insights from it with the other elders in our church. In the first half of the book, the Hughes lay out a Biblical definition of "success" in the ministry, telling how they were compelled to search the Scriptures for this definition in a season of intense discouragement. Though not all pastors enter ministry with an obvious "church-growth" mindset (as in, numbers=success), yet, in subtle ways, we can fail to keep in front of us a clearly defined, Biblical notion of success as faithfulness (obedience and hard work), serving, loving, believing what we believe about God, prayer, holiness, and attitude. When I opened up the chapter on "attitude" I thought, "surely they can't get the requirement of a positive attitude out of the Bible," even though every chapter before had been clearly based on faithful exposition of Scripture. Of course, I was wrong, and I'm glad I was too! The second half of the book provides counsel for how to maintain and work out the Biblical definition of success. I found the second half weak in comparison to the first, but the book is worth obtaining and digesting, even if just for the first 111 pages. Highly recommended.

Shaun Marksbury says

My wife got this book for me after our pastor abandoned small church ministry. It was a difficult time, but this book reaffirmed an important lesson we learned through the process: ministry is measured by faithfulness, not success. Written by a pastor and his wife after they struggled through the same issues, the book actually redefines what kind a pastor should consider "success."

For instance, on p. 108, Hughes writes,

...God is not so interested in our being the star of the show as much as he is that we do our best with the part he has given us. In terms of ministry, it's not whether we minister to twenty-five or twenty-five hundred that determines success. Rather, it is what we are doing with the role he has given us.

This book isn't simply useful for pastors, but also for their wives, as previously intimated. Barbara Hughes interjects at several points to recount her own worries and comforts during ministry. Chapter sixteen is devoted to the pastor's wife, and the candid glimpse into the conflict in their home helps encourage pastoral families.

It's also a resource that members of small churches should consider reading. It will certainly help them understand the thinking (and what should be the proper thinking) for their pastor. Moreover, chapter seventeen specifically instructs the congregation in how it can help the pastor in his role.

Recommended.

Nathan says

This is one of the best books I was required to read during my undergraduate studies. In a world that will badger pastors with invitations to the latest seminar on how to grow a big and successful church, constantly

reminding them of how inferior their faithful ministry is in the eyes of the world (and far too many Christians), this book is welcomed encouragement from a biblical perspective. Much thanks!

Andrew Vanofwegen says

A fantastic book for anyone serving in Ministry. I find that Kent and Barbara have laid out clearly what success is according to God's Word. From their personal experiences and personal study they've helped me to have a healthy understanding of success. I highly encourage this book for pastors, church staff, church volunteers, etc.

Mark Loughridge says

First half of the book on defining what success in the ministry is is particularly useful and a good corrective.

Dónal Walsh says

Solid book, Bible based, simple and well written. At times felt a little old or like I heard a lot of the same analogies and stories before but otherwise good book to ground worn out ministers who've slipped into success syndrome.

Chance Stillwell says

A great book on what it means to be truly successful in Gods eyes.

Will Pareja says

Good book. Read for our internship program.
Require this for young aspiring ministers.

Iain Hamill says

Probably more applicable to those more at the coal face, but still a few helpful and encouraging ideas.

Corey says

Encouraging and very good perspective. This was much needed for me, but I suspect for our churches and

ministries today need this as well. Having looked to the corporate, market-driven business model as the basis for success in the church, ministry leaders and pastors are expected to be CEO's that grow churches in the same way, and whose success is defined accordingly. While this makes for a corporation, this mindset is woefully unbiblical and inadequate for churches today. We need churches that are faithful, serving, loving, and holy. Kent & Barbara's story is powerful and they do a fine job using their story to illustrate the damaging effects of the "success syndrome." On the flip side, they aren't against numbers, just using them as a metric for success in our endeavor to fulfill the great commission. So grateful for having read this, and will probably need to read it again in due course.
