



Stepping Stones to Success

Some years ago, George and Alec Gallup undertook an exhaustive investigation as to what makes some people more successful than others. Using the polling techniques that have made them famous, the brothers researched and wrote a book on *Success*. One of their conclusions: **Successful people read**

Foundations for Constructive Conversation

George Gallup found that reading was essential because it *"makes a person ready to converse... these people have a broad knowledge... and more information with which to make evaluations and decisions."*

Gym for the Mind

Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body. Books are minds alive on the shelves. By taking up one of these books and opening it, we can hear the voices of people far away in time and space. By reading we can hear great people of long ago speaking to us, mind to mind, heart to heart.

Inspiration from Examples of Excellence

If it was announced that Martin Luther, John Calvin, Charles Spurgeon or David Livingstone was speaking at a particular church, Christians from all over the world would show up. But we need to remember that when we open up a book by one of those authors, we can hear them speak and learn from them in a greater way than you could if you just heard them at a single meeting.

Character Shaping

A man is known by the company he keeps. It is also true that a person's character is to a large extent developed by the books he reads. A man is known by the company his mind keeps. A book is good company.

Learning from the Past

"The reading of all good books is like conversation with the finest men of past centuries."
Descartes.

Soul Food

"In books lies the soul of the whole past time." Thomas Carlyle.

Advantage

Mark Twain observed: *"The man who does not read good books, has no advantage over the man who cannot read them."*

Best Friend

Abraham Lincoln commented: *"The things I want to know are in books; my best friend is the man who will get me a book I have not read."*

Treasure

Walt Disney said: *"There is more treasure in books than in all the pirates' loot on Treasure Island...and best of all you can enjoy these riches every day of your life."*

Live Life to the Fullest

"In a very real sense, people who have read good literature have lived more than people who cannot, or will not, read... it is not true we have only one life to live; if we can read, we can live as many more lives and as many kinds of lives as we wish." S.I. Hayakawa

Secrets for Success

"If we encounter a man of rare intellect we should ask him what books he reads." Ralph Waldo Emerson

Truths that Transform

Charles Spurgeon counselled his students: *"Master those books you have. Read them thoroughly. Bathe in them until they saturate you. Read and re-read them... digest them... a student will find that his mental constitution is more affected by one book thoroughly mastered than by 20 books he has merely skimmed."*

Choose Wisely

Daniel Webster recommended that it is better to master a few books than to read indiscriminately. It was his contention that to master a few great writers was preferable to skimming a multitude of lesser works.

Tried and Tested is Better than the Current Fashion

C.S. Lewis recommended: *"If one must read only the new or only the old, I would advise them to read the old. It is a good rule, after reading a new book, never to allow oneself another new one until you have read an old one in between."*

Reject the Shallow and Superficial

Inferior books are to be rejected in an age and time when we are courted by whole libraries. No man's life is long enough to read even those which are good and great and famous. Why then should one waste one's time with lesser works when some of the greatest are available?

Savour the Special

Francis Bacon wrote: *"Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed and some few to be chewed and digested."*

Select the Superlative

"Read the best books first, or you may not have the chance to read them at all." Henry David Thoreau

Preparation for Life

"Many times the reading of a book has made the future of a man." Ralph Waldo Emerson

Empowered

"Employ your time in improving yourself by other men's writings so that you shall come easily by what others have laboured hard for." Socrates.

True Discipleship

"Next to the Holy Scriptures, the greatest aide to the life of faith may be Christian biographies." A.W. Tozer.

Victorious Christians

"The reading of good biography forms an important part of a Christian's education. It provides him with numberless illustrations for use in his own service. He learns to assess the true worth of character, to glimpse a work goal for his own life, to decide how best to attain it, what self-denial is needed to curb unworthy aspirations and all the time he learns how God breaks into the dedicated life to bring about His own purposes." Ransome W. Cooper.

Those Who Changed the World

"Biography transmits personality... who can gauge the inspiration to the cause of missions of great biographies like those of William Carey, Adoniran Judson, Hudson Taylor, Charles

Studd..." J. Oswald Sanders.

Impact

"History is but the lengthy shadow of great men." Emerson.

Enrich Your Life, Work, Family and Ministry

Those that love reading have everything within their reach. For a small price one can visit other lands and great periods of history, learn from some of the greatest minds and world shapers, grapple with great issues, learn in a space of a few hours what others grappled with, researched and studied for their whole lives.

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See also:

[English Literature - A Treasure of Western Civilisation](#)

[Victorious Christians Who Changed the World](#)

[The Greatest Book in the World](#)

[Books That Will Change Your Life](#)

[Some of the Most Important Books Ever Written](#)

THE POWER of the PRINTED PAGE

"The Lord gave the Word; great was the company of those that published it." Psalm 68:11

The written Word can go where and when the human voice cannot.

Literature is the most cost-effective way of proclaiming the Gospel.

It has no passport or visa problems.

It knows no fear.

It never loses its temper.

It never tires.

It is never discouraged.

It can tell its story over and over again.

It can be received, read and studied, in secret.

It speaks without an accent.

It never compromises.

The written Word is more permanent than the human voice.

A drop of ink may make a million think!

"So then Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God." Romans 10:17

"For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes..." Romans 1:16

"For the Word of God is living and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit and of joints and marrow and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Hebrews 4:12

"Your Word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You." Psalm 119:11

"The entrance of Your Words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple." Psalm 119:130

"O, how I love Your Law! It is my meditation all the day." Psalm 119:97

"Therefore, you shall lay up these Words of Mine in your heart and in your soul..." Deuteronomy 11:18

"Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." Colossians 3:16

"Heaven and earth will pass away, but My Words will by no means pass away." Matthew 24:35

"...but the Word of our God stands forever." Isaiah 40:8

"So shall My Word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it." Isaiah 55:11

Dr. Peter Hammond