

Introduction: "Empty Buckets"

- **Futility** – Webster's – lit. "that which easily pours out," hence untrustworthy; that which fails completely of the desired end, or incapable of producing any result; trifling, unimportant. **Syn:** vain, fruitless, ineffective, useless
- **Fruitful** – Webster's – Latin "fructus" – enjoyment, means of enjoyment, profitable, productive, producing results and/or desired ends.

"He is no fool to give up what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose."

Jim Elliot – Martyred 1956

How can we avoid futility in our lives?

- **Refuse to Confuse Success With _____!**

"What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self? If anyone is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels."

Luke 9:25-26

"God is always trying to give good things to us, but our hands are too full to receive them."

- Augustine

• **SUCCESS IS . . .**

about productivity
“climbing the ladder”
about what you do
about applause
leaving an impression
about stuff
about “taking off”
about now

• **SIGNIFICANCE IS . . .**

about satisfaction
“on which wall”
who you are
about peace
leaving a legacy
about people
about “landing well”
about forever

Further Resource: Halftime by Bob Buford
Paradox of Success by John O'Neil

How can we move from success to significance?

- Clarify your _____! Why are you here?
 - Two things last forever: God's Word & people's souls
 - Matthew 28:19-20
 - To know _____ and make Him _____!

- Embrace your _____! Where are your greatest spheres of influence?
 - Your home Deuteronomy 6:4-9
 - Your work Colossians 3:22-25
 - Your network Colossians 4:5-6
- Engage in the Harvesting Process

NETWORK	BEFRIEND	IDENTIFY	SHARE	INVITE	HARVEST
Goal:	Goal:	Goal:	Goal:	Goal:	Goal:
Make contact with unchurched.	Build trusting friendships.	Look for felt need.	Share your story.	Expose to Gospel.	Encourage commitment to Christ. Assimilate into church.
Action:	Action:	Action:	Action:	Action:	Action:
Establish visibility in community. Identify, pray for and contact personal and social networks.	Build bridges socially. Show love and care. Look for divine appointments.	Listen attentively. Show concern for felt needs.	Look for receptivity. Sensitive share your story.	Bring your unbelieving friend or contact to a weekend service, small group, or special event.	Persuade through presentation of Gospel at celebration service or personal witness. Invite to church introductory session and growth group.

- “Sharpen your tools for impact!”
 - Learn spiritual “door openers”
 - Learn your evangelistic style –
 - Not Beyond Reach by Aaron Pierce

Application: Into which “bucket” are you pouring your life?

Discussion Questions:

1. What did you think about when you heard the illustration about “empty buckets?” Why?
2. What is the difference between success and significance?
3. What mission field has God called you to? Where do you need help to be more effective there?
4. What step of faith would God have you take in response to His message to you? What will that look like this week?