

How to be (Un)Successful: An Unlikely Guide to Human Flourishing - Pete Portal

An old lady stopped Pete from reciting his achievements, saying: *Growth is fine but if you haven't grown in the presence of Jesus and his presence of love for the poor then you haven't grown at all, you've just swelled.*

Do we struggle to compare ourselves with others? Leads to conceit or pride! Need to avoid angst driven activism. *Success, like happiness, cannot be pursued, it must ensue and it only does so as the unintended side effect of one's surrender to a person other than oneself.* Viktor Frankl.

Pete showed a video of his work in Manenberg (see treeoflife.org.za)

Phil 3v10-11 *I want to know Christ – yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.*

To know Christ leads to 2 keys - Power of resurrection and Participation in suffering. He showed slides and illustrated each point with stories from Manenberg:

Contemplation: “I want to know Christ” Prayer, solitude, silence, fasting. As we abide, we're aware of heaven (Revivalism). In Christ we see the world from heaven's perspective and so we lament (Activism).

Revivalism: The power of resurrection, physical healing, “Next-world” focused evangelism, demonic deliverance.

Activism: Sharing in His sufferings, healing of memories, “This-world” focused advocacy, deliverance from systems.

Prophetic: feeds into Revivalism personally and into Activism systemically and both have relationship with:

Past: Moves of God and Historic injustice

Present: Church / Spiritual and State / Political

Future: Revived Church and Rewired Culture

*Turn your eyes upon Jesus, Look full in His wonderful face,
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim, In the light of His glory and grace.*

*His Word shall not fail you, He promised; Believe Him and all will be well;
Then go to a world that is dying, His perfect salvation to tell!*

Augustine said: *Hope has two beautiful daughters. Their names are anger and courage; anger at the way things are, and courage to see that they do not remain the way they are. Collective action requires the right combination of anger and courage.*

Jesus said: *I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.* John 10v10 Jesus laid down his life as the Good Shepherd (Jn 10v11). H Nouwen was applauded by others for his success but commented that this made “his own soul sick.”

If the end is fullness of life, the means is death to self. Death is a pre-requisite to resurrection. *“Nothing you have not given away will truly be yours. Nothin in you that has not died will ever be raised from the dead”* CS Lewis.

Need to turn down the noise of the world so we can hear the Holy Spirit.

Things to reflect upon

- Is what we live for worth dying for?
- Do we have areas of our lives not surrendered to God? Pray for liberation.
- Is God's call intimidating? Pray for a re-stirring.
- Have “older folk” got burnt from “trying it once”? Congratulations for giving it a go! Time to renew trust.
- Are we “a bit bored”? Meet the Holy Spirit.
- Is there a call to pioneer something new? Don't be intimidated - God doesn't call the qualified by qualifies the called.