

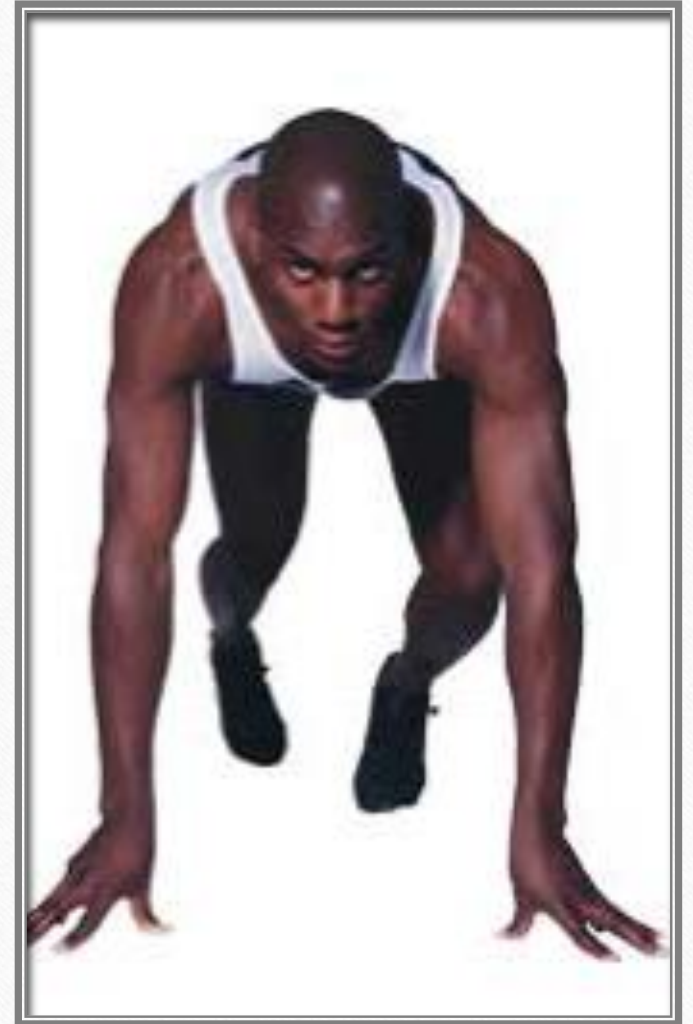
Forging Ahead

BY CHOICE OR BY CHANCE?

*RFC Harvest Centre, Ojoo, Ibadan
@rfcharvestc, rfcharvestcentre@gmail.com*

Forging Ahead

By Choice or By Chance



**How many of us know Wilbur and
Orville Wright?**

**How many of us
know
Prof. Samuel
Langley?**



**So the success story of the
plane: Chance or Choice?**

- **HOW MUCH OF LIFE IS CHANCE ?**
- **HOW MUCH OF LIFE IS CHOICE ?**

- **WHAT IS CHANCE ?**
- In this context
 - Whatever you do not have control over that gives you advantage
 - Luck
 - Genes
 - Parents
 - Favor
 - Place and time of birth
 - etc

- **WHAT IS CHOICE ?**
- In this context
 - Whatever you do have control over that gives you advantage
 - Hard Work
 - Decisions
 - Persistence
 - Skill
 - Training
 - etc

Not by Chance



Success and accomplishment are not limited to those who are lucky. They are available to anyone who chooses to be disciplined, focused, persistent, committed, positive and enthusiastic. True, from time to time luck can play a role in success. However luck bestowed upon anyone is only ever significant for those who choose to turn opportunity into success. **Success like the colour of the shirt we wear is a choice.** Our approach to life is a choice. I believe we should consciously make success a chosen way of life.

Mark Horton - Success - luck or choice

The most accurate definition of “luck” that I know is: Luck is that moment in time when skill, preparation and intuition meet opportunity.

When we are prepared, things go our way more often. When we are not, things can fall apart. The key to having more good luck is hard work, preparation and self-awareness so that we can recognize and be ready when luck crosses our path.

Brad Larsen- Successful people work hard for their good luck

Malcolm Gladwell in his brilliant book “The Outliers-The Story of Success” cites this case to support “Choice” as the cause of success.

A Study by K. Anders Ericsson and two colleagues at Berlin's elite Academy of Music. They divided the school's violinists into three groups

Group 1: The Stars, the students with the potential to become world-class soloists.

Group 2: Those judged to be merely "good."

Group 3: Students who were unlikely to ever play professionally and who intended to be music teachers in the public school system.

All of the violinists were then asked the same question: “**over the course of your entire career, ever since you first picked up the violin, how many hours have you practiced?**”

- Everyone from all three groups started playing at roughly the same age, around five years old.
- Between age 5 and 8, everyone practiced roughly the same amount, about two or three hours a week.

Group 1: By 9 years of age, those in this group were putting in 6hrs/week, age 12:8hrs/week, age 14:16hrs/week, age 20: 30hrs/week. **Total = 10,000hrs**

Group 2: at age 20: **Total = 8,000hrs**

Group 3: At age 20: **Total = 4,000hrs**

Position of the Bible on “Chance”?

Prov 22:29

- *Have you seen a man who is expert in his business? he will take his place before kings; his place will not be among low persons. (BBE)*
- *Observe people who are good at their work — skilled workers are always in demand and admired; they don't take a back seat to anyone. (MSG)*
- *Do you know a hard-working man? He shall be successful and stand before kings!*
TLB

Position of the Bible on “Chance”?

- **Prov 14:23**

All hard work brings a profit, but mere talk leads only to poverty. NIV

- **Prov 24:33-34**

33 A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest — 34 and poverty will come on you like a bandit and scarcity like an armed man. NIV

2 Thess 3:10

10 For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "If a man will not work, he shall not eat." NIV

Not by Choice

According to Tom Hertz

- it is rare for those born poor to go from “rags to riches,”
- only 1.3% of those born into the poorest 10% managing to “struggle upward” into the top 10%
- nearly one third of those born into the top 10% are able to hold on to their class position.

<http://business.time.com/2012/04/25/is-romney-the-wrong-kind-of-rich/>

Without “Chance” how do you explain the Michael Phelps of this world?



Michael Fred Phelps II (born June 30, 1985) is a retired American swimmer and

- the most decorated Olympian of all time, with a total of 22 medals.
- Phelps also holds the all-time records for Olympic gold medals (18, double the second highest record holders), Olympic gold medals in individual events, and Olympic medals in individual events for a male .
- In winning eight gold medals at the 2008 Beijing Games, Phelps took the record for the most first-place finishes at any single Olympic Games.
- Five of those victories were in individual events, tying the single Games record.
- In the 2012 Summer Olympics in London, Phelps won four golds and two silver medals, making him the most successful athlete of the Games for the third Olympics in a row.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Phelps

Without “Chance” how do you explain the Michael Phelps of this world?

- Generally, a man's arm span equals his height but in the case of Michael Phelps it's 6'7"-three inches more than his height. Naturally his arms work as powerful propulsive paddles, giving him a clear edge over others.
- His lower body, interestingly, is shorter than that of an average man of his height. His relatively short legs result in less drag or resistance.
- In short, Phelps has an upper body of a 6'8" person but his lower body seems to be of someone who is only 5'10", which also make the perfect plane in water."
- His size 14 feet may not dwarf Ian Thrope's size 17 but Phelps' double-jointed ankles allow him to do a ballerina's 'pointe' standing on the tips of the toes. It allows him to whip his feet as if those are flippers and break loose.

<http://gawker.com/5038018/michael-phelps-freakish-physique-explained>

Without “Chance” how do you explain the Michael Phelps of this world?

- Phelps began swimming at the age of seven, partly because of the influence of his sisters and partly to provide him with an outlet for his energy. When Phelps was in the sixth grade, he was diagnosed with attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

That however is not the whole story

There are countless day to day examples like that of Phelps

Position of the Bible on “Choice”?

Rom 9:16

- *So then, everything depends, not on what we humans want or do, but only on God's mercy. GNT*
- *So it is God who decides to show mercy. We can neither choose it nor work for it. NLT*
- *And so God's blessings are not given just because someone decides to have them or works hard to get them. They are given because God takes pity on those he wants to. TLB*

Position of the Bible on “Choice”?

- Eccl 9:11-12
- *11 Again I looked throughout the earth and saw that **the swiftest person does not always win the race, nor the strongest man the battle, and that wise men are often poor, and skillful men are not necessarily famous; but it is all by chance, **by** happening to be at the right place at the right time.** TLB*

Example and Examination of Chance from the Bible

1 Kings 22:34-35

34 *But someone drew his bow at random and hit the king of Israel **between the sections of his armor**. The king told his chariot driver, "Wheel around and get me out of the fighting. I've been wounded." NIV*

34 *An Aramean soldier, however, randomly shot an arrow at the Israelite troops and hit the king of Israel **between the joints of his armor**. "Turn the horses and get me out of here!" Ahab groaned to the driver of his chariot. "I'm badly wounded!" NLT*

34 *Just then someone, without aiming, shot an arrow randomly into the crowd and hit the king of Israel **in the chink of his armor**. The king told his charioteer, "Turn back! Get me out of here — I'm wounded." (MSG)*

34 *By chance, however, a Syrian soldier shot an arrow which struck King Ahab between the joints of his armor. "I'm wounded!" he cried out to his chariot driver. "Turn around and pull out of the battle!" GNT*

Example and Examination of Chance from the Bible

The Story of Joseph, son of Jacob

Conclusion of the Matter ?

- How much of life is Choice?
- How much of life is Chance?

Prov 21:31

**³¹ The horse is made ready for the day of battle,
but victory rests with the Lord. NIV**

Conclusion of the Matter ? 2 Things to go home with

1. The God factor in your life is the greatest chance you can ever have

Ps 127:2

² It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep. KJV

Ps 127:2

² In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat — for he grants sleep to ^a those he loves. NIV

Ps 127:2

² It is useless to work so hard for a living, getting up early and going to bed late. For the Lord provides for those he loves, while they are asleep. GNT

Conclusion of the Matter ? 2 Things to go home with

2. The Choice and Chance factor also determines where you spend eternity. The chance factor is that you were invited here and you came. But the choice factor is what you decide to do with eternity.

IT IS YOUR CHOICE