



# RAY EDWARDS

LIVE WITH JOY. LEAD WITH PASSION. PROSPER WITH PURPOSE.

## How to Always Win Episode 170

In this life it can feel as though we're faced with the choice to either win or lose and, somehow, it seems to always feel like we're losing. Or, at least, it often feels like we're losing. Why is that? What if you could always win? Is that even possible? I believe that it is possible and I'm going to explain how.

Regardless of the outcome, whether you're winning or losing, it's mostly a matter of your own choice and in this show I'll give you what I call the 828 Tool. It's something you can download and you can use it to always win. Here are some other reasons to listen, in case that's not enough for you.

Would you like to have more peace? I'll explain how you can have more peace and how to use your computer power supply to become more productive. That's all coming up.

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### **Spiritual Foundations**

Often, if you ask people what they want, especially in periods of time where they're very busy or they have lots of pressure on them, which, for most of us, is about all the time. You ask people what they want and the reply is usually something like this. "Ah, I just would like some peace. I'd like some peace and quiet. I'd like some peace, some tranquility. I'd like to get away from it all."

But, we can't get away from it all. The only way we can get away from it all is to be dead and that's not really something that any of us are aiming for, at least not today. So what do you do? How do you get more peace? What does it even mean to have more peace? Well, here's something to think about.

The night before Jesus was crucified; He actually gave his peace to his disciples. Now, this wasn't a metaphorical idea. It wasn't a great descriptive passage of philosophy. He said, "Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you." And I would like to propose it was not just for his disciples, it was also for you and me. We have the peace of Christ.

The moment you accept Jesus, you believe that He's the Son of God, that He was born of a virgin, that He was crucified, died for our sins and rose again on the third day, He comes to live inside you. You have your life inside the life of Christ. He is called the Prince of Peace and once He's within you everything you will ever need that has anything to do with your peace, your wholeness, your completeness, it's already inside you. That's why He said, "The kingdom is within you."

So the question inevitably arises when we talk about this kind of thing, "Well, Ray, if that's so, explain to me why there's still trouble in the world. Why do good people have bad things happen to them? Why is it that I'm broke? Why did I lose my job? Why do I have this health problem? Why is it that my relationship is not right? Why did my husband or wife divorce me? Why did my girlfriend leave me? Or, why did both my wife and my girlfriend leave me?" In some cases it can

be that crazy. “It feels, in other words, Ray, like I just don’t have any peace. Yet, I believe in Jesus, so why do I not have that? Is it even real?”

The answer, I believe, is that we let our hearts become troubled by these external things. Jesus said in John 14:27, “Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” Now, there are a couple of things that are implied there. If He tells us to don’t let your heart be troubled, if He says let not your heart be troubled, it means that we have the capability of letting our heart be troubled.

So if we have the capability of letting our heart be troubled and we have the capability of letting our heart be afraid and He tells us to not let our heart be troubled and not let our heart be afraid, right on the heels of “my peace I give to you”, there seems to be an indication that we have the power to shut off the flow of peace with our troubled and fearful hearts.

Think of it like this. If peace is flowing to you through a hose, when you let your heart become fearful, afraid and troubled it’s like you crimp the hose. You ever take a garden hose and just crimp it over so that the water can’t flow? The water is still flowing, but it’s being pent up by this crimp you put in the hose. I believe that God has a constantly-flowing supply of peace, of blessings, of tranquility, it doesn’t stop. But, if we let our heart become troubled, if we become afraid, if we become anxious then, in some ways, we’re impeding the flow of that peace.

Now, how do we control our fear, our anxiety? It starts with your thoughts. You’ve heard me say this before-- We may not be able to control our emotions, but we can certainly control what we think about. In most cases, unless there is a physiological problem in your brain, your emotions flow from what you think about.

Maybe things are not going your way, maybe they’ve gone from bad to worse, still Jesus’ command stands. It’s actually not a command. There’s only one command He gives in the New Testament. I’ll let you hunt that down yourself, it’s worth hunting. What’s the one command that Jesus gave, but back to the subject.

He tells us, He instructs us, “Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” So what He does is He gives his peace to us. What He does not do is force us to accept. He does not let not for you. He says to us, “Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid.” Only you can do that for yourself, this is why we’re instructed in Scripture to guard our hearts.

You need to guard your heart from being troubled. You need to guard it from being afraid. What you don’t have to guard is your wealth, your health, your relationships, your property, your job, your car, your house. You don’t have to guard any of those things. God will guard everything else for you, if you will guard your heart.

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### **Tip of the Week**

I learned this tip from Rich Schefren of Strategic Profits and it has served me so well. I just shared it with my private mastermind group, The Regency Group, a few days ago and I thought it was worth sharing again. I believe I’ve shared it here before, but this is a good tactic to use to make yourself more productive and all it takes is the proper use of your power supply cable for your laptop. Here’s how it works.

Decide what you’re going to work on, take your computer to Starbucks, your favorite coffee shop or library, wherever you like to work that’s outside your usual environment and leave your power

supply at the office or leave it at home. Don't take it with you. This gives you a finite amount of time to get your work done and you have a constantly-ticking clock or, rather, a constantly-depleting battery icon on your computer that tells you if you don't get this done your computer is going to shutdown and you won't be able to finish. It will make you more productive.

I know these kinds of tricks sound stupid, they sound silly and you might ask, "Why do we have to do this kind of stuff? Why do we have to have these kinds of gimmicks to make ourselves be more productive?" I don't know. I just know that we do. It's no different than if you have something important that you need to take with you to work tomorrow or if you have an important document that you need to drop in the mail tomorrow, what do you do to make sure you don't forget it?

Most of us put either our cell phone or our keys on top of that document so we cannot leave the house without seeing it and taking it with us. Now, that's a trick. It doesn't make it good or bad that it's a trick, it just works. It's a tactic that works. Putting your keys in the same place, I have a hook that I hang my car keys from. Every day when I come into the house, I hang my car keys on this same hook every time. I never lose my car keys.

Well, I won't say I never do. The only time I ever lose my car keys is when I don't hang it on that hook for some reason. Maybe the phone is ringing when I come in, so I walk right past the hook and I pick up the phone and then I lay my car keys somewhere else and later I wonder, where are my car keys?

These little tricks, these little hacks, if you will, are very useful and so the one that will make you more productive is get out of your normal environment. Go to a coffee shop, don't take your power supply with you and work against the battery life because you know when the battery dies, so does your work session. Is a trick? Yes. Does it work? Absolutely!

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## **Feature Presentation**

How do you always win? That's the subject of this week's show. Now, the challenge we have is that more and more we feel like we're losing. Maybe you don't have this experience, but many of us do. I have felt the pressure of this phenomenon myself. Why is it that we always feel that we're more and more behind, that we're either running out of time or running out of accomplishment or running out of room in our field to excel or succeed, why?

I think there are seven reasons why we feel more and more as if we're losing. Once I explain what the seven reasons are, I believe I have a tool that will help you overcome this problem. All seven of them feel like you're winning all the time. The first reason that we feel like we're losing more and more is because of--

### **1. Higher Standards**

We live in a wonderful age of electronic tools, electronic productivity, of super connectedness and more information and training available to us than any other time in history and there are just higher standards that we're held to in our work, in our personal lives, in our relationships, in our personality, in our physical appearance. We're held to higher standards. It used to be that if you were a freelance writer you did your work mostly in your own home town, now you are competing globally. So you don't have to hold yourself to the standards of the best writers in your city, you have to hold yourself to the standards of the best writers on the planet. The standards have been raised.

### **2. Instant Comparison**

So it's related to reason number one, but this is more of an internal factor, rather than an external factor. We all know that it's not, theoretically, healthy to compare ourselves to other people, yet we all do it and the more we do it, usually, the worse we feel. Do we go and pick the worst people to compare ourselves to? No, of course not, we go and pick the best people to compare ourselves to.

If I decide that I want to become a photographer, I buy a camera and I start working on my photography, who do I compare myself to? Do I compare myself to my Uncle Bob? No! I compare myself to Trey Ratcliff. Well, that's bound to make me feel inferior because he's a master of the craft and it's all he does, it's what he spends his time on. So there's this instant comparison that takes place in every field of endeavor, whether it's a hobby like photography or a profession like photography or if it's your writing or your relationship with your family.

Reason number three that we more and more feel like we're losing and it's more difficult to feel like we're winning is—

### **3. More Scores to Keep Than There Used to Be**

You see, it used to be that the only score you had to keep was already troublesome enough. It was that famous 'keeping up with the Jones', which really meant keeping up with your neighbors. You had to have landscaping that was just as good as your neighbors' landscaping. You had to have a car that was just as nice as theirs. If they had a boat, you had to have a boat. If they had an RV, you had to have an RV.

Of course you didn't have to have any of these things, but we felt the pressure. It became such a phenomena that the phrase 'keeping up the Jones' became a saying we all understood. It meant we had to keep pace with the 'stuff' that our neighbors had, the lifestyle that our neighbors had. Now not only do you have to keep up with the Jones that are next door, you have to keep up with everybody that you see on Facebook, everybody who is part of any social network that you're part of because they're showing pictures of their life.

The scores we keep in regard to social media are ridiculous. I'm sure I'm not the only person who posts something to Facebook and then anxiously waits to see, how many likes does it gets? How many comments does it get? I'm sure I'm not the only person or maybe I am. Maybe it's just me. Maybe I'm the only one who thinks for a long time about coming up with some kind of brilliant, maybe controversial thing to say on Facebook to see if I can get people stirred up and into a discussion.

I'm sure you never do that, but I've done it occasionally and I know people who have. I heard Eric Johnson at Bethel Church talking about this and even he confessed to being susceptible to wanting to make sure he got the right number of likes or re-tweets on Twitter or plus ones on Google Plus. These are scores we keep.

It used to be that the only score we kept was on the golf course or at the bowling alley, now we have scores to keep in social media and we're not competing in our local league, we're competing with the globe again. We think we're doing well when we have 100 followers, until we find somebody who has 1,000. We think we're doing pretty good if we have 1,000 followers, until we meet the person who has 10,000 or 100,000.

Reason number four that it's harder and harder to feel like you're winning and it's easier and easier to feel as if you're losing is—

#### **4. More Information to Keep Up With**

There are more blogs to read, articles to digest, podcasts to listen to, books to read and you know about them. There used to be lots of books to read, but you didn't know about every one of them and now you do. Now you can subscribe to a service that gives you the summary of 1,000 books. I did that and I thought that's good. That will save me having to read those 1,000 books. What a crazy way to think about books! I love books. I don't want to be saved from reading 1,000 books. I want to read 10 good books.

There's just more information and there's what's often referred to as 'FOMO', the fear of missing out. Like I'm missing something, so I need to be on top of everything. It just leaves you stressed, tired, depleted, without energy and you always feel like you're behind. You're never winning. You can never keep up with everything.

Reason number five that it's difficult to feel like you're always winning and it's easier to feel as if you're always losing is—

#### **5. You're Always On; Always Connected; Always Plugged In**

I'm amazed at how many people I see walking down the aisle of the grocery store while staring at their smartphone. Now, I do this occasionally, but I'm looking at my grocery list. Maybe that's what they're doing, too, but what about the people who are walking down the sidewalk staring at their smartphone. I actually saw a young woman crossing the street at a traffic light at a four-way stop, she never looked up. When the cars stopped she's looking at her smartphone and she walked across. Never looking to check the status of the light, she just noticed the cars stopped.

It's crazy! We're so plugged in. We're so addicted to these screens and this world that's inside of our phone or our tablet that sometimes it feels as though we live more inside that imagery world than we do in the real world that we're actually occupying at this moment.

Reason number six that it's more difficult to feel like you're winning and easier to feel like you're losing all the time is—

#### **6. Whatever You Do is Never Enough, Whatever You Have is Never Enough; It's Just Never Enough**

If you make a certain level of income, you're going to hear on the Internet or through email or through or a podcast how somebody makes more money. If you have a podcast, you're going to learn about somebody who has more listeners. If you write a blog, you're going to learn about somebody who has more readers. If you take time off from your job, you're going to hear about somebody who takes more time off than you do.

It's just never enough, especially for those of us who are achievement-oriented. Some of us have been programmed to believe that we are achievers. I used to say this about myself. I used to say, wow! I took my strengths finder and I'm an achiever. Well, if I'm an achiever, what I'm saying is I've taken on the identity of achievement, that my achievement is who I am. Here's a hint. Never attach your identity to something that can be taken away from you.

So if you're an achiever, what happens if you're injured and you can no longer achieve in the area that you excelled at? If you're an achiever, you're a Ph.D. scientist and you have a motorcycle accident, have a traumatic brain injury and can't do science anymore, what happened to your identity? These things can be taken away from you, so be careful about how you identify yourself.

Reason number seven that it's easy to feel like you're always losing is because we are faced, all of us, constantly, with—

## **7. Impossible False Standards We're Expected to Meet**

Look at the cover of any major magazine and look at the celebrities on the cover. They're beautiful, the men and the women are beautiful. Their hair is perfect. Their skin is perfect. Their proportions of their body, perfect. Often, they're wearing very little clothing and we can see that every detail of their body is perfect. When we look in the mirror we realize, I don't stack up against that comparison. Well, neither do the people you're looking at those photographs of. They've all been manipulated by digital photography processing.

Most of us have seen the examples of how post-processing of photographs of models make their skin clearer, their eyes brighter, their hair more perfect, their body proportions more pleasant to look at. Not only are they manipulated digitally so they don't even look like themselves, the people who are in those careers, the modeling or the acting careers that we admire so much, they're genetically gifted, in most cases, in a way that none of us are.

If you're not gifted in that way there's nothing you can do about it. If you don't look like Brad Pitt, if you look totally different than Brad Pitt there's nothing you can do to make yourself look like Brad Pitt. That's just an accident of the genetic lottery, so it's nothing to aspire to and it's nothing that has anything to do with your character or your identity.

So they start with a genetic advantage, then they are digitally manipulated by photographers and in between they use makeup, have people who work on their hair and lighting specialists who set the lights up in just the right way. They've got a team of people working to make them look the way that you see them on the magazine cover for an instant or the way you see them in that scene in that movie for two minutes. There's hundreds of thousands of dollars that went into making that happen, that is an impossible false standard for you or I to meet.

The same goes for the way people live. If you look at your house and you compare it to what you see in Architectural Digest, you are always going to feel like a loser. Even the people whose homes appear in Architectural Digest, their homes only look the way they do in those photographs when the photographs are taken because the rest of the time they're living in the house. That means that the countertops are not clear, the floor is not perfectly clean and that the side tables have books, magazines and coffee cups on them, just like every other home in the world -- impossible false standards.

So those are some reasons that we can always feel like we're losing. We feel as though, to sum it up, our life must be perfect and when it's not perfect, when it doesn't match the blueprint of perfect that we have in our head we feel as though we're losing. Then, couple that with the fact that bad things sometimes happen, disappointing things sometimes happen. Sometimes the plans we had don't work out the way we wanted them to. Look, it isn't about living the perfect life. It's about learning to understand the perfection of life that is already there, even when bad things happen, seemingly bad things.

In the Bible in the Book of Romans 8:28 it says, "And we know that for those who love God, all things work together for good for those who are called according to his purpose." Let me give you a hint. We're all called according to God's purpose. He made you for a purpose. He wants you to fulfill it. He did it for your job because He loves you.

If that's too churchy for you, if you're not into Romans 8:28 and you think, ah, I'm not a Christian, I don't read the Bible like you do, Ray, that doesn't work for me, this same wisdom is recognized by great thinkers in many different ways.

Napoleon Hill wrote: "Every adversity, every failure, every heart ache carries with it the seed of an equal or greater benefit." Albert Schweitzer said: "One who gains strength by overcoming obstacles possesses the only strength which can overcome adversity." The Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius, the philosopher king, wrote: "If you are pained by external things it is not they that disturb you, but your own judgment of them and it is in your power to wipe out that judgment now."

- How do we see the good in adversity?
- How do you see the perfection within our imperfect lives?
- How do we transform our experience of losing into the experience of winning?
- How can you transform the obstacle from being in the way to being the way, to paraphrase Ryan Holiday's book?

Well, I have a tool that I think will help you do this. I call it the 828 Tool and it's named after Romans 8:28, which is one of my favorite verses of Scripture for obvious reasons. So whether you buy into my beliefs or not, the 828 Tool will still work for you. You can just call it the 828 Tool and not have to worry about what that means. You can download this tool if you go to the page for this show on my website. It's at [RayEdwards.com/170](http://RayEdwards.com/170). Just click the link that you see there on the page to download the tool and I'll walk you through how you use this tool to transform any experience into a winning experience.

Once you've downloaded the 828 Tool it's a PDF file and you can print out as many copies as you want. The only thing I ask is that you don't change it and you don't charge for it, but you can make copies and distribute it as much as you want. There are actually just a few simple boxes to fill out and it's a process of thinking about whatever experience you've just gone through that you may think is less than ideal. So the first box says, 'What happened?' In other words, what's the problem?

This may sound like an obvious question, but many of us are unhappy about how things have turned out and we don't even know what the problem was. We haven't really clearly defined the problem. Let's pick something at random. 'Let's', I'll just pick something at random since I can't hear you right now. Let's say you broke your leg. You are in a hurry to get out the door, you run down the steps from your apartment and you break your leg. You fall and break your leg. You break your right ankle.

The problem is I have a broken leg and the problem is I walk for a living. I do door-to-door surveys or I work at a golf course. Whatever, I have to walk for my job, so now I'm immobilized. The further problem is I was signed up to be part of a marathon. I was going to run a marathon. It's a life goal, I was going to run that next week. I've been training for it, now my leg is broken and I can't run the marathon. This is a horrible problem, it's really messed up my life. So now you know what happened, I broke my leg. It messed up all my plans.

The next box on the 828 Tool says, 'What is the win within?' In other words, what's good about this situation? Of course, for most of us, when something like having a broken leg happens... And maybe your experience is not this bad. It could be something a lot less severe, it could be I lost my car keys. That could be what happened or I had an overdue library book and now I owe \$10 to the library. It could be anything that is an adversity. We might call it a negative experience, but let's go with this broken leg example.

So what's the win within? What's good about the situation? Your first response might be there is nothing good about breaking your leg. In no way is that good. Well, think it through. Is it possible, is it just possible there might be something good that comes out of it. If you are a Christian, if you are a believer and you know that God makes all things work for your good it doesn't mean He broke your leg, but maybe He can use that situation to bring some other good to your life. How could He use it? If you don't share those beliefs, how could you use the situation to your good?

Well, since I'm not going to be doing a lot of walking and I'm not going to be doing any running of a marathon I've got a lot more time on my hands, so I could work on some things that don't require me to walk or stand. I could work on reading those books I've been wanting to read, instead of reading the summaries. I could catch up on the movies I've been wanting to see. I could spend time sitting and visiting with friends and family that I haven't taken the time to talk with. There are some wins here, I could rest and relax. I've been too busy, I've been stressed out. Even with a broken leg there could be some wins.

I have a friend who, just a matter of a week or so ago, had a heart attack. I didn't even know about it. I happened to stop by where he works and I asked how he was doing and I was told, "Well, he just got out of the hospital. He had a heart attack and had to have bypass surgery." So in that situation what's the win within? Well, you didn't die. You're still alive. The heart surgery was a success. The win within is now maybe I'll have more discipline to work on my diet and my exercise program. There's a win within every situation, if you decide that it's so and you just dig deep enough to figure out what's the win within.

Okay. The next box says, 'What part of the system is malfunctioning and how?' What I mean by this question is your entire life is a system. What is a system? It is a series of actions and activities that produce a desired result. To stay alive we have a respiratory system that allows us to breathe. We have a digestive system that allows us to take in nourishment and energy and transform it into a form that we can use. We have a system that disposes of the waste from our body. These are all systems.

Within a broader scope of our lives, we have a system of activities that we were involved in that produce income so that we can purchase the things that we need and want to live and enjoy life. That system is called the economy. Within the system of the economy there is the system of your job, your work, your skill set, of your day-to-day activities. Everything is a system within a system within a system within a system, so when anything goes wrong, once you've identified what's good about it, what the win within is.

By the way, why do we start with that? Once we say what happened, why do we next go to what's the win within? Why don't we just start with, how do we fix the problem? Because that does not set you up emotionally to get at your best resources for problem solving. Think about it, ask yourself this question. When am I able to come up with my best, most creative ideas, when I'm feeling lousy, condemned, down, depressed and hopeless or when I'm feeling good and resourceful and happy and I'm seeing the positive bright side of things.

Which of those two scenarios produces my best ideas? Without exception, it's when you're in the better mood, when you're more positive, when you have access to more of your best resources, the best parts of yourself. That's why we start with looking for the win within, then we move to not what did I do wrong or how did I screw this up, that's not the way we approach it. We're looking at what part of the system malfunctioned that caused this problem. If there's a problem you've had, it simply means there was a breakdown in the system somewhere.



In the example of falling down the steps and breaking your leg, maybe it happened during the winter and there was ice on your steps. So the malfunction within the system is there's ice on my steps. In the case of my friend who had the heart attack, I don't really know all the factors that went into it so I'm not speaking for him, but in general, usually if we have heart disease there may be a genetic predisposition to heart disease.

Often, it's a self-inflicted illness. We work on it over the years with what we eat and the activities that we don't engage in. In other words, we eat too much of the wrong food and we don't exercise enough to keep our circulatory system healthy, strong and free from obstruction. So what part of the system was malfunctioning? Well, my diet, my exercise routine and my normal visits to my doctor to get checkups to stay on top of my cardiovascular health. Those are all components in my system that broke down that lead to the heart attack. I'm imagining this scenario, I've never had a heart attack and I don't plan to have one.

By the way, just because this system is malfunctioning and just because it's something that you could have thought of before and you didn't or something that you already knew, like I should eat less and exercise more and you didn't, don't fall into the trap of self-condemnation and getting angry with yourself because that's really just another form of victim thinking. It's a way to beat yourself up and say, "Oh, look how stupid I am I let this happen to myself. This always happens to me." Then you're just reinforcing a negative identity and negative behavior and you don't want to do that. We're trying to be construction and get at how to prevent the problem from happening again.

So once you identify what part of the system is malfunctioning and how, the next box in the 828 Tool is, 'What new procedures can you add to your system to prevent this problem in the future?' And you just dot down some ideas. I can check the weather before I go to bed and find it if it's supposed to rain tonight, if it's going to get below freezing. If it is, I can set the salt out so that I can put the salt on the steps and melt the ice. I can put on my ice cleats before I walk down the steps when they're icy so I don't fall and break my leg. I can stop eating chilly cheese fries every day for lunch and start eating a salad. I can stop watching four hours of TV every day and take a walk or go to the gym.

Those are procedures I can put in my place in my system to prevent future heart attacks or future broken legs. If I lose my keys all the time, the procedure I can put in place is I can always hang them on the same hook when I come in the door the first thing. That will prevent me from losing my keys in the future.

The beauty of this tool, the 828 Tool is it transforms every experience into a win because even if something bad happens to you, if you have a car accident and you're horribly injured, there is a way that you can find a win within that situation. If you have a problem in your relationship, if you have a terrible illness, there are wins within because we know that God makes all things work for the good of those who love him and are called according to his purpose.

So what I encourage you to do is go to the page where the notes are for this particular show [RayEdwards.com/170](http://RayEdwards.com/170) for episode 170 and download the 828 Tool. It's very simple, but it will allow you to always win. You can honestly say that you're always winning.

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### **Question of the Week**

So my question for you this week is, use the 828 Tool and share your results. Let us know how it's working for you and how you are turning every situation into a win.

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### **What to Do Now?**

I appreciate you so much. I thank you for listening to the show. If you want to help us out, the best thing you could do is subscribe to the show in iTunes and give us a rating with the star system and then write a review of the show. That way, more people get to see it in the iTunes Store and more people will download it and be exposed to the helpful stuff we give you. If you've been helped at all, I would appreciate you doing that.

Until the next time, may God continue to bless you, may He do more for you than you can ask or possibly imagine and may He continue to make all things work for your good because you love him and you're called according to his purpose.

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