



## SUCCESS, GOD'S WAY! Strength in Weakness

June 25, 2022

### 1 PREPARING

#### A. THE SOURCE

**Matthew 7:12 (NASB)** • “In everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you, for this is the Law and the Prophets.”

**Proverbs 16:18, 19 (NIV)** • “Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall. Better to be lowly in spirit along with the oppressed than to share plunder with the proud.”

**Proverbs 16:20 (NIV)** • “Whoever gives heed to instruction prospers, and blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord.”

**2 Corinthians 10:4 (NIV)** • “The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.”

**Hebrews 13:5, 6 (NIV)** • “Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, ‘Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.’ So we say with confidence, ‘The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?’”

**Luke 12:15 (NIV)** • “Then he said to them, ‘Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions.’”

**Genesis 39:23 (NKJV)** • “The keeper of the prison did not look into anything that was under Joseph’s authority, because the Lord was with him; and whatever he did, the Lord made it prosper.”

**Mark 8:36 (RSV)** • “For what does it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life?”

**Luke 9:23 (RSV)** • “And he said to all, ‘If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.’”

#### B. WHAT’S TO BE SAID ABOUT “SUCCESS, GOD’S WAY!”

Success means achievement, accomplishment, attainment. It can also mean victory, triumph, and winning. Success in the world is defined by winning. This “win at all cost” mentality can become detrimental to our Christian walk. We want to focus the meaning of success on a biblical and Christ-centered perspective. This week’s lesson will concentrate on what God wants for us as kingdom agents regarding success. So many people have simply not thought about how God views the competition we see all around us. We will explore the concept of success in God’s eyes. Is success simply winning, or does God judge success in a different way? We will look at the way God wants us to live in this world filled with competitive situations.

Last, we want to look at the word “prosperity” and what it means to a Christian. Prosperity means wealth, affluence, success, richness, and

fortune. These are blessings from God to be used in His service. “This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success” (Joshua 1:8, NKJV).

God wants us to set goals and reach them. “Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it” (1 Corinthians 9:24, NKJV).

Through Him He wants us to be successful at overcoming sin. “But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 15:57, NKJV).

God wants us all to be successful and to prosper. He wants us to use our success and prosperity to help others by meeting their physical needs—feeding and clothing them—as well as their spiritual needs: leading them to Jesus.

### C. WHERE WE’RE GOING WITH “SUCCESS, GOD’S WAY!”

As a result of this lesson we would like the students to be able to:

1. Differentiate between God’s view of success and the world’s view.
2. Understand how God wants us to be successful and use our prosperity.
3. Commit themselves to answering God’s call to excellence and love in every aspect of life.

### D. MATERIALS NEEDED

**Beginning** • (Activity A) colored construction paper, scissors, glue, poster board, different colored markers or colored pencils, tables; (Activity B) materials will vary according to craft chosen by instructor.

**Connecting** • Bibles and/or student lessons, white/chalkboard, markers/chalk.

**Applying** • Paper, pens or pencils, white/chalkboard, markers or chalk.

## 2 BRIDGING

### A. WHERE WE’VE BEEN

**Allow 10 minutes at the beginning of class for students to:**

1. Share anything that was meaningful to them in this lesson.
2. Engage in a discussion about the topic of the lesson in connection to the belief highlighted this week.
3. Say the Bible memory text either individually or in a group.

### B. OTHER SABBATH SCHOOL COMPONENTS

- >> Song service
- >> Mission emphasis (find a link for Adventist *Mission* for youth and adults at [www.realtimefaith.net](http://www.realtimefaith.net))
- >> Service project reports

## 3 BEGINNING

**NOTE TO TEACHER:** Put together your own program with options from the categories below—Beginning, Connecting, Applying, and Closing. Please keep in mind, however, that the students need to have an opportunity to be interactive (participate actively *and* with one another) and to study from the Word.

### A. BEGINNING ACTIVITY

**Get ready** • Have tables set up with the materials the students will need to create a picture collage of what they believe it means to be successful in God’s eyes.

**Get set** • As the students enter, let them sit where they want. Ask them not to touch the materials until you give them instructions on what the project will be.

**Go** • To begin the activity, pray with the stu-

dents, and then ask them to create a collage of what they believe is success in God's eyes. Encourage them to be as creative as possible, and let them know that you are planning on posting these collages on the walls of the Sabbath School room. At the end of the activity, have them write "How God Views Success" somewhere on their collage.

**Debriefing** • As the students are working on their projects ask the following questions: Is humanity's idea of success the same as God's? Is it easy to know how God views success? Is it possible to know what God's idea of success is? How would you go about learning how God views success? Is there anything you would change about your picture?

## B. BEGINNING ACTIVITY

**Get ready** • The concrete objective of this activity is for each table of students to create a given "craft." (You can have them all create a sculpture with marshmallows and toothpicks or have them make a paper-and-glue Goliath; the possibilities are endless.) However, do not give every table everything they need or the correct amount of the supplies needed to complete their project, so that no one table has everything or the amount needed to be successful. Leave instructions on the tables in sealed envelopes that say they are not to be opened until the instruction to do so is given. Each envelope will contain instructions that state the goal of the project (to make the sculpture, figure, etc.).

**Get set** • Always begin with prayer and welcome them to Sabbath School so they feel comfortable, and then ask them to open the envelope at each table and begin.

**Go** • Tell the students to begin working on their craft. As the students realize they do not have all the materials they need, they may begin to get frustrated. Some may even ask another table for the missing material. Pass out the second set of instructions, which say: "The only way to be successful and complete your proj-

ect is to go around to the other tables and ask for any materials you may need or trade what you have with the group at the other table that needs that item." Remind them that the only way they will be able to finish their project is by each team working cooperatively with the other table teams so each table will be able to complete their project.

**Debriefing** • **Ask** the following questions:

1. How did you feel when you realized you did not have all the materials you needed to complete your project?
2. How did others respond when you asked for some of their materials?
3. When you were asked to share the materials on your table, were you willing to share? Or were you afraid you wouldn't have enough to finish your own project, and so you said no?
4. Did it make you want to help others when they came to ask you for help?
5. With the first set of instructions, was it possible to finish and be successful?
6. How did it feel when you were instructed to use the cooperative approach and help one another?
7. How can you use more cooperation and follow God's ways of positive interaction in your everyday activities?

## C. BEGINNING ILLUSTRATION

**Share the following illustration in your own words.** (This could also be adapted to work as a beginning activity.)

A teacher hands out a test to his class. At the beginning of the test he mentions that it is important to read the instructions to do the test right. Johnny is in a hurry to go out and play basketball. He is a bright student and decides that this test is like any other, and so he hurries directly to the first question. It tells him to put his name in the lower left-hand corner. He does this and quickly glances at the rest of the class. Some of his friends are already getting up and leaving the room. He thinks that this test must be very easy, since some of his

classmates are leaving only five minutes into the test. He is very anxious now and decides to look at the second page of the test to see how long it is. It is only six questions, and he can't wait to get to them.

He moves on to question 2, which instructs him to draw a picture of an aardvark. This takes Johnny a while because he can't remember what exactly an aardvark looks like. However, after a few minutes, while more of his classmates are making their way up to the front and out the door, he finally finishes the aardvark.

The third question is equally as strange and time-consuming. He is to take out a piece of scratch paper and fold it into an airplane.

Johnny is confused now. He can't understand what the teacher is doing, and time is rapidly running away from him. So after answering the fourth question and doing the activity, he quickly scribbles anything in the fifth and sixth questions and then runs up to the front of the empty room. He is the last student to finish the test, and he is really wanting to get out and play some basketball in the few minutes left in class.

The teacher looks at Johnny and asks him if he read the instructions. Johnny nods his head indicating that he had read the directions. The teacher doesn't believe him, and asks Johnny to read them out loud. Johnny is so anxious to get out of class that he doesn't argue, but just begins reading out loud. What he reads surprises him.

**Instructions for this test:** Wait five minutes, put your name in the upper right-hand corner, and turn the test in. Then please go outside and enjoy a great day out in God's nature.

The teacher looks at Johnny and says with a smile, "It's always important to make sure you know what the instructions are before you take any sort of test."

Johnny realizes that he has made a great mistake, but now, at the end of class, there is nothing he can do about it. He sadly looks back at the teacher and says, "Now I understand what you were trying to teach us." And Johnny walks out to the basketball court to catch the

last 30 seconds of the game.

**Debriefing • Say:** In our understanding of success, it is always important to know what it is that God is saying to us in His Word and what His plan is for us. He only wants the best for us. Have someone read Jeremiah 29:11. **The Bible is our map to help us find our way and live our life on earth.** Please ask the following questions:

1. Have any of you ever had a teacher do this to you?
2. Did you get caught in the trap of moving too fast and not looking at the instructions?
3. Do you think we do this when it comes to success?
4. Do you think you know what God wants for you in regards to success?
5. How can we know better the will of God for our lives?

## 4 CONNECTING

### A. CONNECTING TO THE KINGDOM

**In your own words, share the following:**

As we learn more about the kingdom of God, we find that God's goal is character building in our personal lives, and unity in our relationships. How we approach success and prosperity is completely up to us. God defines success as obedience to Him and prosperity as commitment to loving our fellow human beings through the power of His Spirit. Taking these two points into any given situation will allow us to represent God as we continue to live in this world.

**Ask:** How many of you want to have the success and prosperity that God offers? Can you live and enjoy life while living for God? Do your activities agree with God's idea of excellence? Do your activities and lifestyle represent God to others? (Answers will vary.) Read Matthew 25:31-46. How does this fit with the concept of God's kingdom and His view of success?

## B. CONNECTING TO THE LESSON ILLUSTRATION

Ask someone beforehand to read or tell the story from Sabbath's section of the lesson.

**Debriefing • Say:** Dave Dravecky's faith in a loving God never wavered. He trusted God even when things were bad. **Ask:** Do any of you know someone in your life who trusts God this way? What was the greatest miracle in Dave's life? (He wanted his life to show that his will and commitment was to God in all things.) Is this the type of example you want to be—faithful to God and trusting Him no matter what is happening in your life? Direct students to see the connection between following God's will for their lives and the outcome of true happiness and meaningful living they will enjoy in this life and in God's kingdom.

## C. CONNECTING TO LIFE

Present the following scenario:

You love hanging out and playing games with your friends. You like the camaraderie that comes from being part of a group. However, you find that some of your teammates are unhappy if they don't win, and you are embarrassed by their attitude when they do win.

**Ask:** What do you do? What are some biblical guidelines that will point you in the right direction? Have students find and read the references listed in The Source in this teacher's guide. List on the white/chalkboard the principles at which the students arrive.

**Ask:** Based on these biblical guidelines we have established, what can you do to help your friends have a better attitude and to focus on what is really important?

## 5 APPLYING

### A. APPLICATION ACTIVITY

Pair the students and supply each pair with a piece of paper and pencil. Give them a few minutes to put down the attributes of someone they think is successful. It does not have to be a particular person, but just words that define those who are successful in their minds. At the end of the time, have them report to the rest of the group. Using a white/chalkboard, write down the words that you hear and put checks beside the words used by more than one group. If there is time, have them do the same thing but instead of using the term successful, use the term prosperous.

**Debriefing • Ask:** What is the difference between being successful and prospering (flourishing, thriving) in God's eyes and making sure you are successful by the world's standards? Can you be successful God's way and at the same time be successful by the world's standards? Which do you want to be in life? **Say:** The world sees the person who competes and pushes their way to the top as successful. God sees the person who has put Him first in their life and made it their lifework to put others first and to help others, both physically and spiritually, as successful. **Ask:** Are they both successful? Does God see the person who has hurt others to get where they are as successful? Which one looks more like the kind of success that God wants for us?

### B. APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. Would you define yourself as successful?
2. Would you define yourself as prosperous?
3. Does prosperity have to do only with money? Or can its definition be expanded?
4. What is your biggest obstacle in becoming prosperous?

5. Is being successful and winning by the world's standards important to you?
6. What does excellence mean? (superior merit) How does this apply to our Christian walk?
7. Can you be loving, have a standard of excellence, and be a follower of God and still continue to strive for the world's standard of success?
8. What does God call us to be?
9. Are you using the Bible as your "standard of excellence"—to be the person that God wants you to be?

## **6** CLOSING

### **SUMMARY**

**In your own words, conclude with the following ideas:**

God is looking for young people to uphold His standards, not the standards of the world.

This will often put you at odds with what the world views as successful. In fact, there may even be times that the world seems to hate you. However, John 15:18 states, "If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you" (NKJV). We are not called to be of the world, but to be a light to the world. One way we can do this is to hold ourselves to a standard of excellence and refuse to follow the world's way of success. We don't succeed by hurting those around us. Rather, our goal is to win life eternal and help others find God by using the prosperity with which He blesses us. When we work and play with others, showing them a spirit of kindness and cooperation, we draw them to Christ. The kingdom of God is a place where a brother helps a brother, and a sister helps a sister, and so forth. Be part of the kingdom of God here on earth and live by the principles He has given us in the Bible to prepare for His Kingdom of glory some day very soon (see the Beatitudes, in Matthew 5).



## STUDENT LESSON

### SUCCESS, GOD'S WAY! Strength in Weakness

June 25, 2022

#### Sabbath

#### FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** "He who is of a proud heart stirs up strife, but he who trusts in the Lord will be prospered. He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, but whoever walks wisely will be delivered" (Proverbs 28:25, 26, NKJV).
  
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 7, The Nature of Humanity:** "Their [Adam and Eve's] descendants [all of us] share this fallen nature and its consequences. They are born with weaknesses and tendencies to evil. But God in Christ reconciled the world to Himself and by His Spirit restores in penitent mortals the image of their Maker. Created for the glory of God, they are called to love Him and one another."
  
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 79-81.

#### STRENGTH IN WEAKNESS

"A devoted Christian, Dave Dravecky entrusted his life to God every morning. . . . When a cancerous tumor in his arm threatened to cut short his career, Dave did not demand to be healed. Instead, he committed himself to God's will, and his quiet faith was a witness to millions.

"God worked a miracle for Dave Dravecky. Although his cancer operation required the removal of muscle that he used for pitching,

against all odds he came back to play again. Thousands of San Francisco fans cheered wildly when he took the mound again at Candlestick Park. Incredibly, he even won the game.

"Dave Dravecky was back! But the comeback miracle lasted less than a week. Dave was playing in Montreal, winning the game, when suddenly, as he pitched, his arm broke. He collapsed in a heap at the foot of the mound. The whole crowd heard that awful snap of the bone.

"As they carried Dave off the field he quietly affirmed his faith in God. That faith did not waver during long months of uncertainty. Finally doctors determined that they had no choice but to amputate his arm, and they did.

"Did Dave become bitter when God did not heal him . . . ? Not at all. Secular sports writers around the country marveled at his faith, solid as a rock. . . . God displayed a miracle greater than physical healing in the amazing display of Dave's contented commitment.

"The apostle Paul experienced this rock-solid faith. He too suffered from an incurable physical affliction. Three times he asked God to miraculously heal him. God's response was plain. 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness' (2 Corinthians 12:9, NKJV). Paul's answer is remarkable: 'I will rather boast in my infirmities. . . . I take pleasure . . . in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong' (verses 9, 10, NKJV). . . .

"Like Dave Dravecky and the apostle Paul, God invites us to hang on to Him today with the hand of faith."—Mark Finley, *Solid Ground* (Hagerstown, MD:

Review and Herald®, 2003), pp. 158, 159.

## Sunday

### RESPONDING

- » Read Proverbs 16:18, 19 (NASB). "Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before stumbling. It is better to be humble in spirit with the needy than to divide the spoils with the proud."
- » Keri loves to play piano. Her teacher is proud of her and has advised that she can participate in the national piano competition for her grade if she would come faithfully to her 7:00 A.M. intensive practice sessions each day for an extended period of time. This is not always possible for Keri to do. Keri lives in a single-parent home with her mom and a sister too young to be left alone. Her mom works all night and doesn't always make it home in time to take care of the little sister and get her to school on time. If you were Keri, what would you do? How would you distinguish between the world's idea of success and God's ideal plan for true success in our lives?

## Monday

### BIBLE ANSWERS ON THE NATURE OF HUMANITY

- » Read Genesis 1:27; Romans 5:12-17; 1 John 4:7.
- » We were created in God's image. When Adam and Eve sinned, God's image was damaged in humanity, and all of us are born with tendencies to sin. So even though our nature, through Adam, bends toward evil, in Christ we can be made whole again and restored to God's image. When we love and put God first, we will love others and think of their needs before our own.
- » What is it in your nature that you struggle with? How can you be sure that God is first in your life?

- » Below are two Bible verses mixed together. Can you separate them into proper verses? Verses are from the New King James Version. Write the verses below. (Hint: both are found in 1 John.)

1 John He another who one does love 4:  
not to love ought does also not we 8 know  
us 4: God loved for so God God is if love 11  
Beloved 1 John

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## Tuesday

### REFLECTING

- » Read Matthew 5:1-15, 43-48.
- » The world's idea of success is that of being rich, important, and powerful. In God's eyes true success is becoming more and more like Jesus, and leading others into a saving relationship with Him. The Bible asks, "For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matthew 16:26, NKJV). God does not want us to be successful by the world's standards and not be ready to meet Him when He comes. Real success is working together to save others. When God blesses us prosperously, we can help others with what we have been given.
- » God's concept of prosperity teaches us that our value is in a job well done. We should be looking on the inside and asking if we are doing well on what we know we are capable of. In Matthew 5:3-10, Jesus gave the Beatitudes. "Blessed are the poor in spirit . . . those who mourn . . . the meek . . . those who hunger and thirst for righteousness . . . the merciful

. . . the pure in heart . . . the peacemakers  
. . . those who are persecuted for righteous-  
ness' sake . . ." Ask yourself, "Do I have  
these qualities?"

### Wednesday

## BIBLE INSIGHTS

- » Fill in the blanks after looking up the texts in the New International Version of the Bible. If you do not have this version, you can go to Biblegateway.com.
  1. "So in \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ to others what you would \_\_\_\_\_ them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets" (Matthew 7:12).
  2. "Pride goes before \_\_\_\_\_, a \_\_\_\_\_ spirit before a \_\_\_\_\_. Better to be \_\_\_\_\_ in spirit along with the \_\_\_\_\_ than to share \_\_\_\_\_ with the \_\_\_\_\_" (Proverbs 16:18, 19).
  3. "The \_\_\_\_\_ bring \_\_\_\_\_ to their households, but the one who hates \_\_\_\_\_ will \_\_\_\_\_" (Proverbs 15:27).
  4. "Make it your \_\_\_\_\_ to lead a \_\_\_\_\_ life: You should \_\_\_\_\_ your \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ with your \_\_\_\_\_, just as we told you, so that your daily \_\_\_\_\_ may win the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ and so that you will not be \_\_\_\_\_ on anybody" (1 Thessalonians 4:11, 12).
  5. "And the Lord's \_\_\_\_\_ must not be \_\_\_\_\_ but must be \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_, able to \_\_\_\_\_, not \_\_\_\_\_. Opponents must be \_\_\_\_\_ instructed, in the hope that God will grant them repentance \_\_\_\_\_ them to a \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_" (2 Timothy 2:24, 25).

### Thursday

## CONNECTING

- » Read Matthew 7:12.
- » Review the memory text.
- » God wants to see His kingdom here on earth. As well, He wants to see His people cooperate with and love one another. He even wants us to succeed and prosper in whatever it is we choose to undertake. But remember, success to God is very different from how this world defines success. It is not about money or power or popularity. It is not about how you look. It is not about comparing yourself to someone else. Rather, it is about how you love and give away the grace that God has given you. He wants you to be a wonderful representation of Him. He knows that someday someone will look at you and determine what God is like because of how you act. What an awesome responsibility! But He will not fail you! Not one of us is worthy of the love and grace He has given us, but we can with God's help achieve what He has planned for us.
- » The devil is always trying to use our own human nature to get us to focus on the wrong things. What is it you want? What will you do to achieve your goals? Are the things you want and the goals you are setting in line with God's plan for your life and with the kingdom of God? When your desires match His, He will be right there with you to provide the power to do it through His Spirit (see Psalm 37:4). What a powerful promise!

### Friday

## APPLYING

- » Read Proverbs 3:5, 6; Galatians 6:9.
- » How do your ideas about life, success, and the goals you want to achieve fit into God's ideas about life and success? Answer the questions below:

1. What does success mean to you?

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5. What is God's standard of excellence?

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2. Do you think that your idea of success is in line with God's idea of success?

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6. How does being the best you can be glorify God?

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3. In what areas of your life do you want to ask God to help you succeed?

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7. How does helping and loving others fit in to your picture of success?

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4. What does it mean to have a standard of excellence?

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