

SUNDAY SCHOOL CURRICULUM • FALL B

Gospel Light

“Be kind and
compassionate
to one another.”



teacher guide

preteen | Grades 5 & 6 • Ages 10-12

Gospel Light's
the edge

Activity Overview

Materials

Lesson 1 ★ Unit 1
Popularity and Success
After God's Heart

Small group Discovery

5-15 minutes

Goal: Identify ways people measure success

Option A

Dress up volunteers as successful people

Option B

Vote on characteristics of successful people

Option A: Slips of paper, markers, masking tape, a variety of scrap materials

Option B: Lesson 1 *Student Guide* pages, index cards, marker

Large group Study

20-30 minutes

Goal: Discover that God measures success by the ways in which we show love and faithfulness to Him

Unit Bible Passage

Read **Proverbs 3:3-6** and identify God's way of measuring success

Character Study

Read **1 Samuel 13:13-14; 16:1-13; 26:7-11** to discuss characteristics that made David God's choice to replace Saul as king of Israel

Skit Option

Read a skit about Samuel anointing David

Unit Bible Passage: Proverbs 3 Poster from *Poster Pack*

Character Study: Bibles

Skit Option: Lesson 1 *Student Guide* pages

Small group Application

20-30 minutes

Goal: Name ways to show love and faithfulness to God

Discussion Option

Discuss ways to show love and faithfulness to God

Active Option

Play a relay game to discover ways to show love and faithfulness to God

Service Option

Make posters encouraging others to be successful by God's standards

Discussion Option: Bibles, Lesson 1 *Comics*

Active Option: Bibles, large sheet of paper, tape, empty trash can, index cards, markers

Service Option: Bibles, a sheet of poster board for every two students, markers, collage materials, masking tape or thumbtacks

Distribute copies of the
Sonic Edge #2 CD to students!

God measures my success by my attitude toward Him.

Life Focus

Character Study

1 Samuel 13:13-14; 16:1-13; 26:7-11

Discover that God measures success by our attitude toward Him.

Teacher prep page

Preteens seem to be designed to keep adults on their toes! It's never easy to know whether they'll be spontaneous or sullen, bubbling excitement or oozing coolness. They want to feel successful but often feel too young, awkward, shy or insignificant to expect success to come to them.

David might have felt that way, too. He was the youngest son—forever the baby. Because there was no other son younger than he, the menial task of herding sheep—usually passed to a younger sibling as a child grew up—was his. David was stuck with the job. Although herding probably looked boring, insignificant and menial to his older brothers, David didn't brood over it; he used the time to grow close to God and become a man after God's own heart! After that time of shepherding, worldly success did come to David. Instead of choosing an older, more accomplished brother, God directed Samuel to anoint David for a kingly future—because God had seen in David a heart that already knew true success. David loved God and wanted to obey Him.

For preteens, false and confusing measurements of success are all around. Fame, money, good looks, athletic ability or expensive clothes are constantly held out as measures of success as a person. But becoming a person after God's heart is the only true success! Knowing this can also provide a tremendous relief as preteens realize that the world's false and empty expectations don't have to own them!

Pray for each student in your group. Invite God to open each heart to the reality that loving God brings a person true success. That truth can bring powerful freedom!

Unit Bible Passage

Proverbs 3:3-6

NIV: "Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man. Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight."

KJV: "Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart: So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man. Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."



Option a Dressed for Success

Small group Discovery

5-15 minutes

Goal: Identify ways people measure success

Materials

Slips of paper, markers, masking tape, a variety of scrap materials (tissue paper, cotton batting, newspaper, toilet paper, construction paper, aluminum foil, chenille wire, pieces of cloth, etc.).

procedure

1. Who is someone you think of as successful?

(Basketball player. Musician. Leader of country. Movie star. Honor student.) List each answer on a separate slip of paper. Ask the questions below to guide students in talking about people they name.

- What are some reasons that you consider this musician to be successful?
- What does this person's appearance say about him or her?
- What characteristics are important to be successful at this person's job?

2. Each group of three or four chooses one of the slips of paper naming a successful person. Each group then "dresses" and poses a volunteer to represent the successful person, using the materials you provided to make costumes and/or props (crumpled-paper muscles, paper guitar or basketball, etc.).

3. Other groups try to guess the person represented. Conclude the activity by saying,

- Let's find out what God says makes people truly successful.

enrichment ideas

1. Dressed-up students talk and act like the successful person they are depicting.
2. **Tech Tip:** Before class, choose five or six successful people your students would be familiar with. Search online to find specific information about these people (age, birth date, number of movies or hit songs, schools attended, etc.). Discuss this information with students. Students may wish to dress as one of the people you discussed.

Simplification idea

Students draw pictures of successful people and label the pictures with characteristics that led to the person's success.

mentoring tip

Showing an interest in a preteen's life is an important element in building a mentoring relationship. When students realize you care, they will be more open to your guidance. As you greet students, take a moment to learn a few things about each person. Keep a list of each student's birthday, school interests and hobbies.



option b success?

Materials

Lesson 1 *Student Guide* pages, index cards, marker.

procedure

1. Distribute *Student Guide* pages. Ask, **How do you know if an athlete is successful? An actor? An artist? A government leader? A student?** (Has money. Is famous. Gets good grades. Wins games.) Students suggest characteristics of success, referring to *Student Guide* pages 1 and 4 for ideas. Print students' ideas on separate index cards.
2. **Which of these characteristics of success is the most important?** Read five or six of the characteristics aloud, pointing to a different area of the room for each characteristic. Students move to different areas of the room to indicate which they think is most important. Tape the card with the characteristic receiving the most votes on the wall.
3. Repeat the voting process, reading the winning characteristic along with several more aloud. If the characteristic receiving the most votes is different from the first winner, tape that card to wall above the first card. If it is the same as the first time, tape the card with the second-most votes below the first card. Continue with the remaining characteristics until all the cards are taped to the wall. Ask the questions below.
 - What are some other things that people usually think lead to success?
 - Who are some very successful people you have heard of? What are some things these people have done to become successful?
4. Conclude the activity by saying,
 - God measures success, too. Let's find out how He does it.



enrichment idea

Pairs of students act out the characteristics from index cards while remaining students guess them. For example, a student might act out a successful basketball player by dunking an imaginary ball, and showing off to an imaginary crowd of appreciative fans.



Character Study after God's Heart

1 Samuel 13:13-14; 16:1-13; 26:7-11

Materials

Bibles, Proverbs 3 Poster from *Poster Pack*; optional—Lesson 1 *Student Guide* pages, *Sonic Edge #2* CD and player or *Extra Edge #2* DVD and player.

Lead students to read and discuss the Bible verses listed. Extend the discussion with the questions and comments provided, and refer to the poster as indicated.

introduction

What is something helpful you've learned from a successful person? We all can learn from successful people. Let's see what we can learn from a successful person in the Bible.



PROVERBS 3:3-6

Our search for success begins by looking in the book of Proverbs. The book of Proverbs is a collection of wise sayings. **What might we learn from reading wise sayings?**

(Students read Proverbs 3:3-6 from Bibles or Proverbs 3 Poster. Optional: Play "Let Love Never Leave You" from CD or DVD.)

- **How is success described in these verses?** ("Win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man.")
- **What are some things these verses say you should do to be a success in God's eyes?** (Always act in loving and faithful ways. Trust in God. Follow God's ways in all that you do.)
- **The writer thought what he was saying was so important that he said to "bind [love and faithfulness] around your neck" and "write them on the tablet of your heart." What do you think he meant?** (Never forget the importance of showing love and faithful-

Large group Study

20-30 minutes

Goal: Discover that God measures success by the ways in which we show love and faithfulness to Him

ness. Make sure love and faithfulness are always with you.)

- **It's hard to forget something that's tied around your neck! So these words tell us that we should always be thinking of ways to show love and faithfulness to God.**
- **Let's discover what happened when someone did not obey these verses and when someone did obey them.**

Saul, the first king of Israel, did not always show faithfulness in obeying God's commands. For example, at a city called Gilgal, Saul did not wait for Samuel, the prophet, to come and offer sacrifices to God, as God had commanded him to do. Instead, Saul offered the sacrifices himself.



Read 1 Samuel 13:13 to find out what Samuel said when he heard about Saul's actions. Samuel probably hoped Saul would repent and live the way God wanted him to.

But later, Saul disobeyed God's commands again! God had told Saul to destroy everything belonging to the Amalekites (uh-MAL-eh-kIts), Israel's enemies. Instead, Saul brought home some of the Amalekites' best possessions for himself. Samuel was fed up with Saul's excuses and lies. He was very upset that Saul had turned out to be such an unfaithful king.



However, God had a plan. **Read 1 Samuel 16:1-4. What did God tell Samuel to do?** When Samuel arrived in Bethlehem, he did not mention to Jesse that his mission was to anoint a new king. Instead, Samuel invited Jesse's family to a sacrifice and feast.

Samuel told Jesse and his sons to consecrate themselves before participating in the sacrifice. ("Consecrate" means prepare one's heart, mind and body to come into God's presence. It often includes washing oneself and putting on clean clothing.)

When everyone was ready, they came together for the sacrifice. Jesse introduced his sons one at a time to Samuel.

Lesson 1 ★ after God's heart

Distribute Lesson 1 *Student Guide* pages. **In this skit, see which candidate for the job of king of Israel appeared to have the best qualifications.** Volunteers choose parts for act 1 of the skit on pages 2 and 3. Students read skit aloud. (If time permits, students read act 2 of the skit at the appropriate time later in the study.) **Now let's find out how this part of the story really happened.**

**Skit
option**

1 Sam. 16:6-7 **Read 1 Samuel 16:6-7. What did Samuel see that made him think Eliab might be God's choice for king? What did God tell Samuel He was looking at instead? What characteristics might God have been looking for?** Samuel was introduced to all seven of the sons that Jesse had brought to the sacrifice, but not one of them was God's choice. "Don't you have any other sons?" Samuel asked Jesse. Samuel knew God could not have made a mistake, so he assumed that Jesse must have more sons! And sure enough, there was one more!

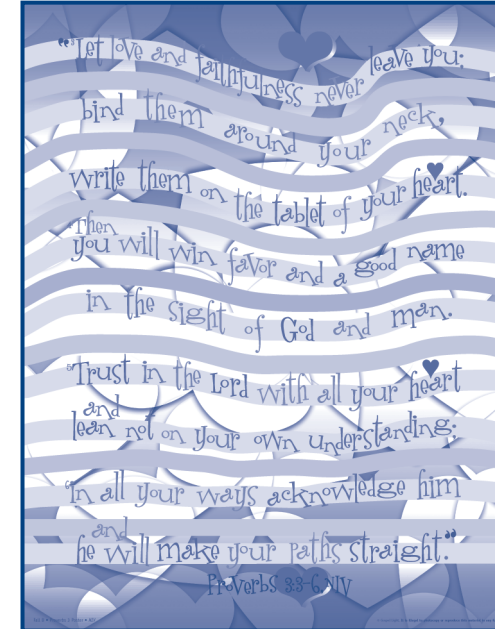
When David was brought before Samuel, God told Samuel that David was the one God had chosen. So Samuel anointed David to be the next king of Israel.

1 Sam. 13:14 **Read 1 Samuel 13:14 to find out why God chose David. Why do you think David was considered "a man after [God's] own heart"?** David loved God more than anything. Even though he sinned badly at times, he always turned away from his sin; and he showed his love for God in many ways. God promised that a descendant of David's would have a kingdom that would last forever. When God's Son, Jesus, was born many years later, He was called the Son of David because Jesus' earthly parents were from David's family.

1 Sam. 26:7-11 **In the years before David actually became king, he showed the characteristics Proverbs 3:3-6 talks about. Read 1 Samuel 26:7-11 to find out what he did.** (Optional: Students also read 1 Samuel 17:45.)

conclusion Saul failed to be a success in God's eyes because he refused to admit his sin, and he did not love God above everything else. Saul wanted to be popular and powerful. He wanted things that showed great public status. When David was chosen as king, he didn't have any of these things. But David was chosen by God because he loved God very much. And David became one of the most successful leaders in the Bible.

Today people often measure success by how a person dresses, the things the person has or how many people want to be around that person. It's not wrong to be popular, rich or famous. But what God calls true success is our attitude toward Him. If God sees that we really love Him because we gladly obey Him, then we are truly successful. We will be popular with God! Being successful in God's eyes is more important than anything on Earth! (Lead students in prayer, asking God to help them be loving and faithful to Him.)





Talk with students about putting into practice the Bible truths discovered in this lesson. Use these **discussion questions** as you lead students to complete one of the activities on the following pages. Conclude the activity with the Life Application Challenge below.

- **The Bible says David was “a man after [God’s] own heart.” What did David do to win favor with God? What does Proverbs 3:3-6 tell us to do to win favor with God?**
- **What might a kid who doesn’t show love and faithfulness to God be like?** (Selfish. Doesn’t pay attention to God. Disobeys God by making fun of people.)
- **How can a kid today show he or she is a person “after [God’s] own heart”?** (Love God and others. Talk to God. Obey God. Trust and depend on God. Ask for God’s help in solving problems.)
- **Why is it better to be successful God’s way rather than any other way?** (Success in God’s eyes lasts forever, but money or fame will go away or end.)
- **How can you show a loving and faithful attitude toward God?** (Believe and trust in Jesus. Thank God often. Read the Bible. Pray.)

small group application

20-30 minutes

Goal: Name ways to show love and faithfulness to God

life application challenge

Plan one way to show love and faithfulness to God this week. Students think silently for a moment. **The best way to show our love to God is by accepting His gift of forgiveness made possible by Jesus Christ’s death on the cross. Because Jesus took the punishment for our sins, we can be part of God’s family.** (See p. 105 for ideas in talking to students about salvation.) Pray, asking God to help students show love and faithfulness during the week.

discussion option secret success



Materials

Bibles, Lesson 1 *Comics*.

procedure

1. Distribute comics and invite students to read “Headline News” on page 1. Ask the questions below.
 - **Who in this comic would be called successful by most people? Who might God say is successful?**
 - **Someone secretly cleaned up the yard of Mrs. Kravitz and did a variety of things for other people. How might those who did this work fit God’s definition of success?**
 - **How did their actions reflect Proverbs 3:3-4?**
 - **How does Proverbs 3:3-4 encourage you to show love and faithfulness toward God?**
2. **One way to show love and faithfulness to God is to become a member of His family.** Talk with interested students about salvation, referring to “Leading a Student to Christ” on page 105. Ask the **discussion questions** to extend the conversation about showing love and faithfulness to God.



enrichment idea

Students brainstorm some creative ways to show love and faithfulness to God that might surprise others. Students present ways in a headline news format, thinking up creative names for the news anchor, and performing simple interview skits that reflect the essence of Proverbs 3:3-4.

Lesson 1 ★ after God's heart

active option faithful body

Materials

Bibles, large sheet of paper, tape, empty trash can, index cards, markers.

Preparation

Attach paper to the wall on one side of the room. Place a tape dispenser and trash can near the paper.

Procedure

1. Students tell characteristics of people who are successful in God's eyes because they show love and faithfulness to God, and characteristics of people who are not. Students write words or phrases on separate index cards, each student making at least one card. Ask the **discussion questions** to extend the conversation.

2. Divide group into two teams for a relay race. Teams line up opposite the wall where the paper is displayed. Shuffle the index cards and place them facedown in a pile between the two teams. At your signal, the first player on each team chooses a card, reads it aloud and races to the wall. If the card describes an example of love and faithfulness, the player tapes the card to the paper in a stick-figure shape. If what the card describes is not a good example, the player tosses the card in the trash can. Player runs back to his or her team and the next player takes a turn. Continue until all cards have either been taped to paper or thrown away.

3. Retrieve cards from the paper and trash can to play the game again as time permits.

If you have several small groups meeting in one room, play game as a large group after small groups have discussed and created the index cards.



service option success posters

Materials

Bibles, a sheet of poster board for every two students, markers, collage materials (catalogs, magazines, glue, scissors, glitter, stickers, etc.), masking tape or thumbtacks.

Procedure

1. Group students into pairs. Each pair works together to create a collage poster encouraging people to be successful in God's eyes.

2. Ask the questions below and the **discussion questions** to encourage further conversation about ways to show love and faithfulness to God.

- What do you think David would say about success to people today?
- What's the most important idea about success you've learned today?
- What are some slogans that would encourage people to become successful in God's eyes? ("God's Ways Always!" "Be Faithful to God—He Is Faithful to You." "Always Love." "Trust in God.")

3. Students mount posters in designated areas in your church (obtain permission beforehand, if needed).

enrichment idea

As an alternative to posters, create banners using old white sheets or fabric pieces. Students use fabric paints to write slogans or illustrate people demonstrating loving and faithful actions.



Tear out this Bible Truck-In™ and place it in your Bible for class use.