



**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Series:** Character Shapers  
Spring Year 2, Lesson 53

# Seeking Success

**Take Home Point:** \*When seeking success, seek Jesus first. \*Repeat this phrase throughout the lesson.

**Bible Event:** Luke 19:1-10; 1 Timothy 6:6; Ecclesiastes 5:10

**Key Verse:** Matthew 6:33, "But first, be concerned about his kingdom and what has his approval. Then all these things will be provided for you."

**We will help kids know:**

- The Bible event of Zacchaeus.
- Kids may define success as achieving status, fame, possessions, grades, or accomplishments. These can be wonderful blessings, but if one chases after them ignoring a relationship with God, they will never find true happiness.
- God defines success as contentment with what you have while seeking what God wants.




**We will help kids feel:**

- Contentment in their relationship with God.
- Amused at how ridiculous it is to chase after fleeting status, fame, possessions, grades or accomplishments to find happiness.

**We will help kids do:**

- Talk about their definitions of success.
- Play a game of "Chasing After Worldly Success."
- Add a group cross to the Alfred sculpture.

# THIS LESSON'S ROADMAP

DESTINATION	PAGE #	DISCOVERIES ON YOUR JOURNEY	SUPPLIES NEEDED
<b>Small Group Warm-Up</b> 	3	Children choose and discuss items they feel would make them successful and happy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ten Marks of Success cards (appendix)</li> </ul>
<b>Large Group</b> 	4  7  8  10	<b>Overview</b>  Pablo Pistachio adds yet another piece to his sculpture reminding kids what they are to seek after first.  <b>Game:</b> Kids play two games to help define chasing after things that are not eternal.  <b>Video:</b> <i>Treasures of Heaven</i> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a set of Ten Marks of Success cards from Warm-Up, each having a paper clip bent in the shape of a fish hook taped to the card</li> <li>the Alfred sculpture</li> <li>a hook made from a wire coat hanger opened up and mounted from behind the head sculpture and extending over the top of the head</li> <li>two fishing poles made from yarn attached to dowel sticks and bent paper clip hook</li> <li>cross paper cut-out</li> <li>video clip of Zacchaeus from <i>Treasures of Heaven</i> (Nest Family Entertainment, 1999)</li> </ul>
<b>Small Group Application</b> 	4	Group cross is made and added to sculpture. This reminds kids to seek after God first to find true happiness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sculpture from previous weeks</li> <li>opened up wire clothes hanger for hook on sculpture head</li> <li>cross pattern</li> <li>scissors</li> <li>ten Marks of Success Cards</li> <li>glue</li> <li>paper clip</li> </ul>

# Small Group Warm-Up: 15 minutes



**Purpose: Get pointed in the right direction!** Build relationships and help guests feel at ease. Do the learning readiness activity that will point your group in the right direction for the lesson.

*Supplies: Ten Marks of Success cards (see appendix)*

**People sometimes define success as getting what you want. This might be status, fame, possessions, grades, or accomplishments. Today we will play a game where you get to choose what you think would make your life seem more successful and happy. Everyone needs to choose one of these ten cards.**

Spread the cards out face down in the middle of the group. Have the kids take turns picking a card and reading it out loud. Have them keep the card if they think it is the one thing that will make them more successful or happy. If they don't keep it, they must put it back face down again and wait until their turn comes around again. The next kid can either pick up this same card or pick up another one and read it. He/she can either keep it or return it to the middle face down. Continue until everyone has kept a card. Then ask kids:

**Why did you keep this card and why do you think this will make you more successful or happy?**

*At the end of the drawing, you might find someone got stuck with a card they did not want. They can always express that they would have liked to have someone else's card.*

**Is it wrong to have the things printed on these cards? Of course not. They can be wonderful blessings. But, what would happen if these things were so important to us that we chased after them and expected them to make us happy—more than anything else? There may be a problem with that type of thinking. Today, we will discover *\*when seeking success, seek Jesus first.***

# Large Group Overview: 20-30 minutes



**Purpose:** *Help kids observe what the Bible says. Present the Bible event in creative fashion. Help kids begin to interpret what it means.*

Pablo Pistachio adds yet another piece to his sculpture reminding kids what they are to seek after first.

**Game:** Kids play two games to help define chasing after things that are not eternal.

**Video:** Choice of two videos—*The Miracle Maker* ([www.booksofthebible.com](http://www.booksofthebible.com)) or *Treasures of Heaven* ([www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)).

# Small Group Application: 20-25 minutes



**Purpose:** *Help kids map out the meaning of the Bible event in their lives. Use the questions to stimulate discussion, but don't feel tied to them. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you. Include personal examples from your own faith journey. The example of Christ at work in your life will leave lasting impressions of how Christ can work in the children's lives.*

*Use your Bibles! Children need to learn how to look up references and follow along when scripture is read aloud. Allow for quality time of prayer at the close of the lesson.*

## Observation Questions: What happened?/Interpretation Questions: What does this mean?

**King Solomon had everything this world had to offer, yet he didn't find that money or fame fulfilled him. Read what he wrote in Ecclesiastes 5:10 and Proverbs 22, verses 1 and 4.**

Read these passages together.

**What does King Solomon say in Proverbs 16:3 will bring success?**  
(*Entrusting your efforts to the Lord.*)

**How can we entrust our efforts to the Lord?** (*Ask him to lead and guide our decisions and then trust him for the outcome; not get so caught up in doing what we think will make us successful.*)

**What did the apostle Paul learn in Philippians 4:19 about contentment?** (*God will richly fill our every need.*)

**1 Timothy 6:6 says “A godly life brings huge profits to people who are content with what they have.”**

**In the Bible event today, how did Zacchaeus learn this lesson?** *(He realized that money did not bring him success. He was disliked as a tax collector. Jesus brought him joy, so he returned four times what he took from others and gave half of what he owned to the poor. This brought him satisfaction and happiness.)*

### **Application Questions: What does this mean to me?**

Have each person briefly discuss one thing he thinks would make them feel successful.

*Note to shepherd: It is okay to find success in accomplishments. However, if this is the only way to base your success, you won't find contentment because there will always be a desire for more of the same.*

**How do you think Zacchaeus felt before he met Jesus, even though he was rich?**

**How did Jesus reward Zacchaeus after he returned four times the amount back to those he cheated and gave half of what he had to the poor?** *(Luke 19:9. Jesus told him that he and his family were saved that very day.)*

**So, what do we learn from Zacchaeus is more important than money or success?** *(Eternal life. Having a relationship with Jesus.)*

### Application Activity

*Supplies: sculpture from previous weeks, opened up wire clothes hanger for hook on sculpture head, cross pattern, scissors, ten Marks of Success Cards, glue, paper clip*

Have the students take their "handpicked" cards from the Warm-Up activity. Using the cross pattern, make an outline of a cross on it.

While kids are doing this, attach the opened up clothes hanger to the sculpture like the example in large group. Have kids then cut out the crosses they traced. Glue all the cards together and make a thick cross and attach a bent paper clip hook to suspend on the hook of the group sculpture.

**The key verse for today from Matthew 6:33 says, "But first, be concerned about his kingdom and what has his approval. Then all these things will be provided for you."**

**We are attaching this cross to our sculpture as a reminder that**  
***\*when seeking success, seek Jesus first.***

## Prayer Time:

Have kids pray for each other to seek Jesus first to help them find true contentment. Thank God that he knows our hearts' desires and has made a perfect plan for each of us. Pray the Holy Spirit to remind all that they will find true joy and contentment with life by seeking first the kingdom of God.

**Safety and Security:** Safety and security procedures are important for each church to carefully define and implement according to their unique needs. The security, safety, illness and accident procedures described in this curriculum are provided for example purposes only and may not be appropriate, applicable or adequate for every situation. Each church is responsible for determining whether any security, safety, illness and accident procedures contained in the curriculum are appropriate, applicable or adequate for its unique situation. The activities described in this curriculum require adult supervision and may not be suitable for each child and each situation. Each church is responsible for ensuring that adequate adult supervision is provided for all activities and for determining whether an activity is appropriate for each child and each situation. Kids Kount Publishing disclaims all liability for the implementation of any procedures or the performance of any activities described in this curriculum.

# Large Group Presentation: 20-30 minutes

## Character Shapers: Seeking Success

*We face challenges in life that God can use to shape our character if we let him. These are called character shapers. These challenges might seem negative, such as encountering troubles or facing personal failures. Or they may be positive, such as encountering opportunities to show service of faithfulness. All of these can be character shapers if we allow God to shape us through them.*

*Pablo Pistachio will present this series. This artistic character might be costumed with an artist's smock, palette and beret. A prop used from week to week is the figure of a sculpted head on a table. This will be a significant visual prop as different features are applied in conjunction with weekly discussions about how God shapes our character. The features added will create abstract art, but will give clear visual illustration to the concept of the day.*

*Create a head for this series that will act as the focal point for "shaping one's character." Form a paper maché head with a filled balloon, strips of paper and paste. Create eyes, nose, ears, eyebrows, and lips from magazine cutouts or with markers. This needs to be prepared ahead of time and dried. Other options that could be used are a Styrofoam head and straight stickpins, or a mannequin head.*



### Supplies:

- a set of ten Marks of Success cards from Warm-Up, each having a paper clip bent in the shape of a fish hook taped to the card so it is perpendicular and easy to be hooked; the Alfred sculpture
- a hook attached to the

*sculpture made from a wire coat hanger opened up and mounted from behind the head sculpture and extending over the top of the head (The wire hanger hook will hold the cards by the attached paper clips.) See the pictures.*

- two fishing poles made with yarn attached to dowel sticks and a bent paper clip hook

- *cross paper cut-out*
- *video clip of Zacchaeus story from the Miracle Maker (Family Home Entertainment, 1999—order from <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/B00000JYX7/104-3896023-4046336?v=glance> or Treasures in Heaven (produced by Nest Entertainment, 1991—order from [www.nestfamily.com](http://www.nestfamily.com). Go to the left margin and choose Children's Bible Stories. Then type in "treasures" in the search box.*

## Introduction

**Hello, class. As you remember from last week, I am Pablo Pistachio, the great artist. This is my latest creation, Alfred. These past two weeks, Alfred has reminded us how God shapes our character through the challenges we face.**

**We talked about how God shapes us through troubles and that is when Alfred's head was created. God shapes us through failures and that is when we created Alfred's feet. He shapes us through service and that is when we gave Alfred hands. Now, God shapes us through the way we seek success.**

## Worldly Understandings of Success: Chasing After Stuff

**Each one of you must determine how you will define success. Success means you succeed in getting what you are chasing after. The problem is sometimes after you receive what you have gotten, you will find you are still not content or happy. For example, the world says that if you can just get more things or possessions, you will achieve success. You will be able to buy happiness. Is that true? Or, what about status? If you just become popular enough, will you be successful? What about intelligence? If you get good grades, you will succeed in your goal of good grades. But is that enough to make you content?**

**You see, the world says if you chase after these things and get them, you are successful. The problem with getting these things is it doesn't mean you will be content or happy. You may be chasing after the wrong things if you expect them to make you happy and fulfilled.**

## Play A Game of Chasing After Worldly Success

**We are going to have a contest between the boys and girls. I need one boy volunteer and one girl volunteer.**

Choose the volunteers and have them come forward.

**Using this fishing pole, you will go over to the table and hook one of the Marks of Success cards. Then you will run back across the room**



and, without using your hands, hook a Mark of Success card onto the hook at the end of our sculpture, Alfred.

You will have 90 seconds to attach as many cards as you can. The challenge is, after one team member has attached a card, he or she will pass the fishing pole to the next person on their team (a boy or girl) and let them continue. That person will tag another, depending on how many can complete the job in the time allowed.

The boy's team has 90 seconds and the girl's team has 90 seconds.

Start the contest.

### The Wrong Measure of Success

After the contest continue with:

**Matthew 6:31-32 says, “Don’t ever worry and say, ‘What are we going to eat?’ or ‘What are we going to drink?’ or ‘What are we going to wear?’ Everyone is concerned about these things, and your heavenly Father certainly knows you need all of them.”**

Jesus teaches us that sometimes people measure success and contentment by just getting enough things. And they worry if they don't have them. The truth is that these things will never make you happy. You will only chase after them like the unbelievers.

### The Right Understanding of Success

The problem is that we don't want to simply chase after status, fame, possessions, grades, or accomplishments. Instead, we want to keep our eyes on Jesus. Jesus is the one who gave his life for us so that he would live in us. When we trust him as our Savior, our sins are lifted off of us. That's what the Bible says we are to seek after in Matthew 6:33, ***“But first, be concerned about his kingdom and what has his approval. Then all these things will be provided for you.”*** If you chase after God and his kingdom, everything else comes in place.

## The Right Understanding of Success-Being Content

**So the Bible tells us that it is okay to have status, fame, possessions, grades, and accomplishments. They are wonderful blessings. But, when they become so important that we seek them for contentment or use them to measure success, this goes against God's design for us. 1 Timothy 6:6 it says, "*A godly life brings huge profits to people who are content with what they have.*"**

### **Video**

Read or show a video of the Bible event of Zacchaeus, Luke 19:1-10.

If showing a video containing the story of Zacchaeus, one resource would be.

- *Treasures of Heaven*, distributed by Nest Family Entertainment (order from <http://www.nestfamily.com>)

After the Bible reading or video, say:

**Zacchaeus collected taxes for the Romans. This was one of the worst things that someone could ever do in the Jewish culture. For Zacchaeus, it meant he would have plenty of money and be successful. But when he met Jesus as his friend and Jesus accepted him, he realized that he had interpreted success all wrong. Then he turned around and gave half of all his property to the poor. He also said he would pay four times what he owed to those he cheated. Zacchaeus learned instead *\*when seeking success, seek Jesus first.***

### **Closing Prayer:**

**Heavenly Father, we thank you for all you have given to us. Help us to realize that success is not made of things or status, but success is how we focus on you and do what you want us to. Help us to focus on Jesus who gave his life for us on the cross so that we might have friendship with you and a home in heaven. In Jesus' name. Amen.**

## MARKS OF SUCCESS

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>MONEY</i></b></p> <p>Win \$2,000 for your own spending.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>GRADES</i></b></p> <p>Get straight “A”s or #1s.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>VIDEO</i></b></p> <p>Scoring the highest in the nation in a video game—winning a whole new game system.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>VACATION</i></b></p> <p>Go on a cruise and to Disney World.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>BEAUTY</i></b></p> <p>Win first place in your city's beauty contest.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>SPORTS</i></b></p> <p>Be the best <u>(name your sport)</u> player in town.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>POPULARITY</i></b></p> <p>Be the most popular kid in your grade.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>MUSIC</i></b></p> <p>Be the best musician in the land.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>ART</i></b></p> <p>Be the most famous artist in the country.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>COMPUTER</i></b></p> <p>Computer company so impressed with your skills they give you \$10,000 worth of equipment.</p>