18. How Do You Spell SUCCESS?

The Course

Key Verse: Joshua 1:8 – How can I be successful?
Joshua 1-2

The Goals

As a result of this lesson the children will:
1. Know that the only way to be successful is to follow God's instructions.
2. Desire to be successful in God's eyes.
3. Study Scripture and do what it says.

The Equipment Room

For the following lesson you will need:
1. A model car or airplane kit [Still in the box]
2. A jigsaw puzzle [Still in the box]
3. Visuals #1a-h [As PowerPoint]
4. Advance preparation needed for Extra Action adaptations

The Warm-up

Songs: Be Strong; Joshua 1:9

Snacks: “Build a snack” – Have the children “build” their snack by making no-bake cookies, a layer cake, or some other type of snack where they have to follow a recipe. It is very important to have the instructions ready for them to follow to reinforce the lesson of following directions.

Game 1: Have the children put together a simple, age-appropriate, jigsaw puzzle without the picture to use as a guide. This will demonstrate that it is difficult to figure out what to do without instructions.

Scripture Memory Review Game: Take a large piece puzzle and glue a piece of paper over it. Write the verse and reference on the paper and then cut the paper along the lines of the puzzle. Tape the pieces of the puzzle under their chairs. Have each child look under their chair when you give the signal. If they have a puzzle piece, they are to bring it up front and help you put the puzzle together. Then review the verse together.

Opening Ceremonies

Song: I Will Remember; Make Me [See Olympian CD Tracks 3 and 4.]

Bible Lesson Review Game: Divide the children into two teams. Have several pieces of puzzles with point values on the back. Ask questions alternately to the two teams. When a team answers correctly, they may choose a puzzle piece and receive the points on the backside of the piece. To make the game more
interesting, write zap on a few of the pieces. Let each child choose as many pieces as they want, but if they get a zap they lose their points earned for that turn.

The Coach’s Corner

[1a] [Show a car or airplane model in the box and a jigsaw puzzle in the box. These can be great prizes at Olympians. You can also refer to the warm-up activity of trying to put puzzles together without a picture to follow.]

[Allow the children to answer the questions throughout the lesson.]

[2] How many of you like putting models like this together? How many of you like putting puzzles like this together? What would happen if you were missing the instructions to put your model together or the picture to use as a guide for the puzzle? What would happen if you were missing a few pieces? You wouldn’t be able to finish the model, and you wouldn’t be able to complete the puzzle. You would not be successful.

What does the word “success” mean anyway? [Display Visual #1a.] “Success” is something that turns out as planned or intended. How many of you would like God to call you a success? We’re going to talk about how we can be successful in God’s eyes.

Many things can keep us from being successful in life, but most often we don’t succeed because we don’t follow God’s instructions. Not following God’s instructions will get us into trouble. If we truly want to be successful in God’s eyes, then we need to follow God’s Word, the Bible.

[9] We’re going to meet some people who trusted God and followed His instructions Please open your Bibles to Joshua chapter one. In Joshua 1:1-5, the Bible tells us that God appointed Joshua to lead the children of Israel into the Promised Land after Moses died. In verses three through five, we find out that God promised Joshua two things. [Read Joshua 1:3-5.]

The first promise was that He would give Israel every piece of land they put their foot on. The Israelites did not have to buy any of the land; God was just giving it to them. Imagine you are at a toy store, and the owner of the store tells you, “Everything you touch is yours.” You would run all around touching as many things as you could, wouldn’t you? Even if it was stuff you didn’t want, you could give it to your friends. That is kind of like what God was telling Israel. He said, “Every place you set your foot on is yours.”

What did Israel have to do in order to claim the promise? They had to step out and trust God. [Display Visual #1b.] Can you imagine God giving you every place you put your foot on; this spot, this spot, this spot, and this spot? [Walk around, pointing to each place where you set your feet.] Wouldn’t that be great? But if they never stepped on any land, they wouldn’t get any of the land, would they?

The second promise God gave to Joshua was that He would never leave him nor forsake him. God was asking Joshua to do some really big and important things. God promised to help Joshua to do what he needed to do. Do you know what? God wants us to do big and important things for Him, too. And He doesn’t expect us to do them on our own. If we have accepted Jesus as our Savior, God promises to never leave us. [Display Visual #1c.] When you understand that God is with you, you can do great things for Him!

God told Joshua exactly how to lead the children of Israel. When God asks you and me to do something, He always tells us how to do it. He tells us how to be successful, and this time was no different. Listen carefully as I read verses seven and eight, and see if you can figure out what Joshua needed to do in order to be successful. [Read Joshua 1:7-8.]

So, what was the first thing Joshua needed to do to be successful? Joshua needed to be strong and of good courage. [Display Visual #1d.] Joshua needed all the people to be strong and courageous in order to be successful in taking over the Promised Land. We, too, need to call on God for strength and courage to do the things He has called us to do. We can’t do anything for God in our own strength, can we?
Next, God told Joshua that they needed to be careful to obey all that is written in God’s Word. But how could they obey God’s Word if they didn’t know what was in it? They needed to study God’s Word in order to find out how God wanted them to live. [Display Visual #1e.] We are no different today than Israel was back then. We need to study God’s Word so that we know how to live and how to be successful. You can’t follow God’s directions if you don’t know what they are, can you? (1b)

Once the Israelites knew what God expected of them, what did they need to do next? They needed to obey! They needed to embrace God’s instructions and follow them. [Display Visual #1f.] Embrace means to hold on to something and make it your own. When we embrace God’s Word, we hold onto it and make it a part of us. We don’t think of God’s Word as something way over there that has no meaning for us. We embrace it, make it a part of our lives, and follow it closely.

Joshua trusted God and followed God’s instructions leading the children of Israel to be successful, too. In Joshua chapter 2, we see that Joshua sent two men to spy on the city of Jericho. If they got caught, they would surely be put to death so they probably snuck in under the cover of darkness. [Pretend you are sneaking around under the cover of darkness.] While they were spying out the city, they met a woman named Rahab. Rahab lived on the wall surrounding Jericho, and she let the spies stay in her house. The king of Jericho sent a message to Rahab demanding that she bring out the men who were staying at her house because they were spies.

Rahab had an important decision to make: would she trust God and follow His instructions or go against God and follow the king? What do you think she did? She chose to follow God because she could see God’s power working through His children. [Display Visual #1g.] She had seen the great things God did for Israel, and she knew that Israel’s God was the one True God. (8)

When we are obedient to Scripture, we will see God’s power work through us in wonderful ways.

Rahab did what the two spies asked her to do. First, she hid them from the king who certainly would have killed them. Then later that same night, she helped the spies escape. Before they left, they promised Rahab that when the children of Israel attacked the city of Jericho, she and her family would be saved. They told her that her whole family needed to be in her house when the attack started and that she needed to hang a bright red rope outside her window so that the children of Israel would know which house to save.

_The Bible tells us that the two spies made it back safely._ Soon after, the Israelites attacked and destroyed Jericho. They kept their promise to Rahab, and her whole family was saved because she trusted God and followed His instructions. [Read Joshua 6:25.] Not only was Rahab spared, but we learn in Matthew 1:5 that she is listed in the genealogy or family tree of Jesus Christ. She married an Israelite named Salmon, and they became the great-great-grandparents of King David! Rahab’s life changed forever when she trusted the God of Israel; she became part of God’s family and was able to share in the reward of God’s goodness. [Display Visual #1h.] What a great message to share with others: God can change lives! _God made sure that Joshua, the spies, Rahab, and the children of Israel were all successful._

God kept His Word to Joshua and the Israelites. Because they obeyed God, He gave them the land, everywhere they placed their feet! He only asked that they be strong and courageous and do exactly what He told them to do. Raise your hand if you think they would have been successful by ignoring God’s instructions. How about if they refused to believe it? What if they never embraced it or followed it? What if they never showed it or followed God’s instructions by living them out; would they be successful? [No to all of these questions]

This is true for us, too. If we ignore God’s instructions and don’t believe them or try to live them out, we will not be successful either. We, too, should always trust God and follow His instructions. If we do, we will be successful for God. (3)
Running the Race

Mostly Unchurched Children

My question to you is this: are you following God’s instructions? If you are not following God’s instructions, why not? God tells us to be careful to do what the Bible says. That means to follow the instructions that we find in the Bible. Let’s review one more time how we can be a success. [Point to each letter and say the phrase together:]

- Step out and trust God
- Understand God is with you
- Call on God for strength and courage
- Carefully study God’s Word
- Embrace God’s instructions
- See God’s power
- Share in God’s goodness

Some of you may come from homes where you know that trusting and obeying God will be hard. Maybe you are scared to obey God. It may be some of your friends are making fun of you because you go to church and try to live the way God wants you to live. If you have accepted Jesus into your life, God will give you the strength if you are willing to step out and trust Him. It may be hard to do what is right, but God will be with you no matter what happens in your life.

Please bow your heads and close your eyes. If you would like to ask God to help you to trust and obey Him, please raise your hand and I will pray for you.

[Close in prayer praying in general for the children who raised their hands.]

Concept Switch

Mostly Churched Children

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- Share in God’s goodness

I am challenging you today; will you trust and obey God? You may be thinking that you are pretty good, but you have been relying on yourself or your own abilities instead of trusting God. Maybe you are scared to obey God. You may believe that God wants you to do something that is really big, even great. Remember, God promises to always be with you, no matter what.

Let’s close our eyes and bow our heads. No one is looking around. How many of you want to do a better job at following God’s instructions so that you will be successful? Raise your hands.

[Close in prayer.]

Personal Training Time

1. What difficult decision did Rahab have to make, and what was its result?
2. What happens when we do not follow directions?
3. What is one special instruction in God’s Word that you have a hard time following and need help with?

The Big O’vent

Jigsaw Jumble [See Big O’vent Mega CD, page 224.] Did you have success putting your puzzle together? God wants our lives to be successful for Him!
Closing Ceremonies

Follow God this week by getting into His Word and getting to know His instructions!

[Coach playing News Anchor Ned in next week’s lesson should enter.]

News Anchor Ned: That is just enough time for me to check my hair. [Looks in the mirror] What a handsome fella! [Straightens his clothes] I betcha that [Insert the name of one of the coaches.] wished that he could dress like me. I am sure that he wants to look as good as me. [Chuckles] I’d better check my teeth. [Brushes his teeth with his finger] I sure am glad that I brushed my teeth last month. A news man needs a colorful smile.

Coach: What are you doing here News Anchor Ned?

News Anchor Ned: I’m getting ready to do the news cast.

Coach: I think you are a week early! Be here next time as we hear from News Anchor Ned and the entire news team about the most exciting event that is happening!

Lesson Adaptation Explanations

1a Extra Action: The following Pipsqueak and Beeper skit can be used to introduce the lesson.

[Have someone make a lot of noise by banging pots and pans together.]

Coach: My, what’s going on? Who is making that awful racket?

Pipsqueak and Beeper enter. Beeper is wearing a chef’s hat.

Pipsqueak: Beeper, what is going on? What are you doing with that thing on your head?

Beeper: I’m cooking! I am [he pauses for effect] a great chef!

Pipsqueak: I remember the last time you cooked. It took five days to get the burnt smell out of the house.

Beeper: But this time is different. This time I used a recipe.

Pipsqueak: I made Jumbo Chocolate Surprise Cookies! [A timer goes off.] Sounds like they’re done! [Beeper exits behind stage] WOW! They look so good! They look just like the picture in the recipe.

Pipsqueak: Great! Can I have some?

Beeper: [entering] Sure, you can be first to have one. I left them on the table; go try one and tell me what you think. You’re gonna love ‘em!

Pipsqueak: Great, thanks! [He exits] These cookies sure do look good!

Beeper: Taste one. I’m sure they’re great!
Pipsqueak: Ugh! That's horrible!

Beeper: What do you mean, it's horrible? My Jumbo Chocolate Surprise Cookies are horrible?

Pipsqueak: Well first off, Beeper, it tastes salty, not sweet.

Beeper: Really? Well that's the surprise!

Pipsqueak: Beeper, didn't you follow the instructions on the recipe?

Beeper: Yeah! Well, kind of. I ran out of sugar so I used salt instead. They still look good though, don't you think?

Pipsqueak: Yes, they look good, but they taste awful because you didn't follow the instructions.

Beeper: Hey, let's take them to school tomorrow and give them to all the kids.

Pipsqueak: I don't think that would be very nice.

Beeper: I can just see their faces now! They'll take a big bite, their faces will...

Pipsqueak: Beeper, that's really not a good plan. Listen, Coach has a lesson on following instructions so that you will be successful. I think maybe we'd better listen too. Say goodbye, Beeper.

Beeper: Goodbye, Beeper!

Pipsqueak: Beeper! Goodbye.

[Continue lesson at: What does the word “success” mean anyway?]

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1b Extra Action: Have a “nerdy” husband and wife come in and disrupt Olympians. They are on their way to the bathroom. The pastor gave them directions, but they haven't bothered to open up the map and look at it; therefore, they are lost.

Coach: May I help you?

Wife: We're trying to find the bathroom, and we're lost.

Husband: No, we're not. We just haven't found it yet!

Coach: Well, we have maps that will give you directions. May I give you one?

Wife: Nah, your pastor already gave us one, but my husband won't look at it!

Husband: I don't need directions; we'll find it eventually.

Coach: Let me help you. [Take the map from the husband's hand and open it up.] Here is the bathroom, right here. Just go out these doors and follow these directions.

Wife: Well, I thank you coach. [She pats the teacher on the head.] And my husband thanks you, too. Don't ya' honey?
[Husband grunts. The couple exits.]

2 Small Group: Give each child an age-appropriate model. Make sure that the picture and the instructions are missing. Tell them to put their models together. Give them several minutes to work on the models, then discuss with them how difficult it was to work without instructions or even a picture to guide them.

3 Large Group: Bring in and interview a soldier – preferably one who has a solid walk with God and has seen combat or been deployed in a war zone. Ask him or her to share what happens when you follow instructions and what happens when you do not. Then reiterate and challenge the Olympians to follow God's instructions.

8 Champions Only: Joshua was asked by God to lead His people into harm's way, to lead them into battle against their enemies. If you were Joshua, and you knew that leading God's people into battle could cost you your life, what would you do? The spies were asked to sneak into enemy territory to spy out the land. If they got caught, they would most certainly be killed. If you were one of the individuals who were asked to sneak in and spy out the land, what would you do? Rahab had a choice to make: would she follow the king, or would she disobey the king to follow God? Her life was on the line either way. If you were Rahab, what would you do? What about your life today? God wants you to live for Him. And sometimes our friends will make fun of us as we are living for God. So, what will you do? Maybe you believe that God is asking you to do some really big things, too. And you know that doing those things may cost you friends or time or money or something else. What will you do? Will you obey God and follow His instructions for your life or not? [Encourage the Champions to be specific about what they believe God is asking them to do.]

9 Challengers Only: This adaptation uses hand motions to reinforce the “SUCCESS” acrostic.

“S” – God asks us to do great things for him, but we have to step out and trust Him. [“Walk” the two fingers of one hand across the palm of your other hand.]

“U” – When we step out and trust God, we need to understand [point to your head] that He promises to be with us [hug yourself].

“C” – Because He is with us, we can call on Him [Cup your hands around your mouth, as though calling someone from a distance] for courage and strength [hold up your arms and flex your biceps].

“C” – And how do we know what to do? By carefully studying God's Word. [Hold hands together, palms up, and move your head back and forth as though reading the Bible.]

“E” – Once we've learned what's in the Bible, we need to embrace it, make it part of us, and do what it says. [Hold your arms in a circle in front of you, as though you're embracing something.]

“S” – When we do what God's Word says, we will see God's power at work. [Put your hand to your eyebrows like your looking for something.]

“S” – When we trust God and obey His Word, God allows us to share in His goodness. [Hold your hands out, palms up as if offering something to someone.]
Step out and trust God
Understand God is with you
All on God for strength and courage
Carefully study God’s Word
Embrace God’s instructions
See God’s power
Share in God’s goodness