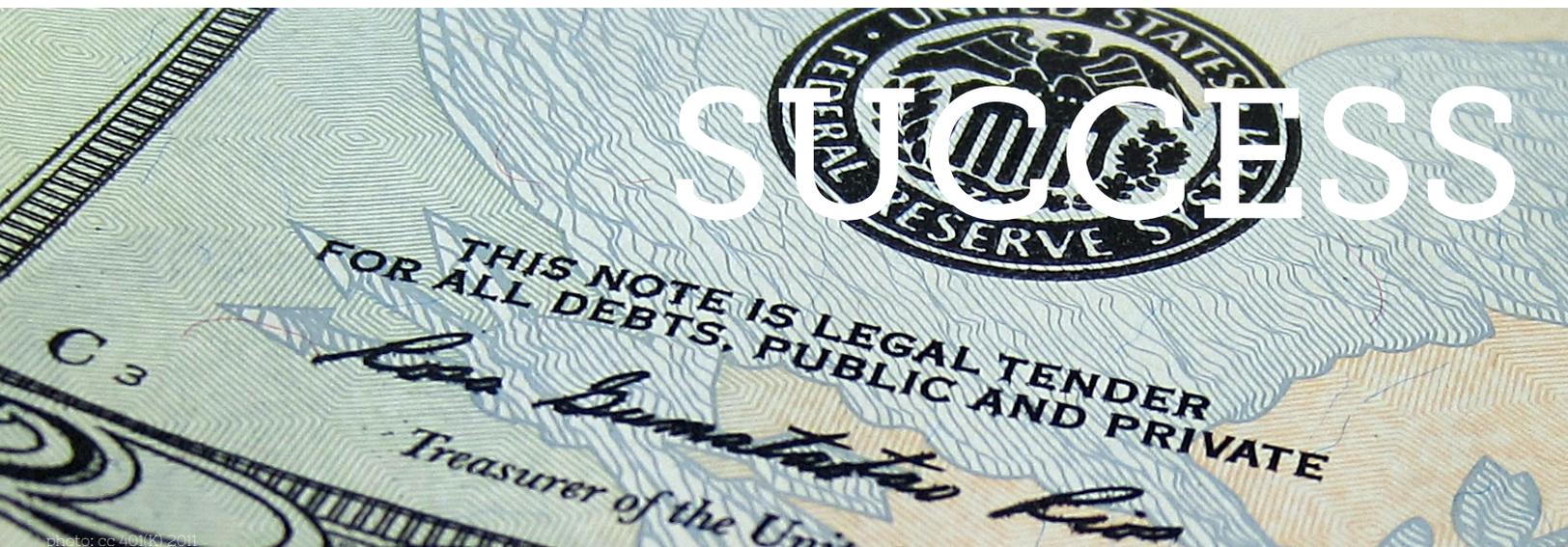


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# SUCCESS



THIS NOTE IS LEGAL TENDER  
FOR ALL DEBTS, PUBLIC AND PRIVATE

## WHAT'S THIS CHAPTER ALL ABOUT?

## Read in Study



Over 85% of the students in campus leadership on 730 campuses are members of Greek-letter organizations.

As Alumni, Greeks give approximately 75% of all money donated to universities; four times more than non-Greek alumni.

Forty-three of the 100 members of the U.S. Senate are members of a fraternity or sorority.

Thirty-Six percent of the House of Representatives are members of a sorority or fraternity.

Of North America's 50 largest corporations, 43 are headed by Greek men and women.

Since the founding of Greek-letter organizations in 1825, all but three U.S. Presidents were Greek.

40 of 47 U.S. Supreme Court Justices have been and are Greek.

63% of all U.S. Cabinet members since 1900 have been and are Greek.

All of the Apollo 11 astronauts were Greek.

Success is not a foreign concept to Greek life. Seeing the above statistics, it's easy to see that Greeks are successful not only on the college campus but in the world post-graduation. In our house, we were encouraged to strive to be successful, as many of our founders had been. To pursue The American Dream - working as hard as possible now so that we can later receive a coveted social status, successful career, big salary, dream house with kids, and a comfortable retirement.

In many ways Christians have resisted the pursuit of success for a variety of reasons. However, if you look back in the Scriptures, you see that our God is one whose people are very successful much of the time. Think about Job - "Seven sons and three daughters were born to him; and he had seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred she-donkeys, and a very large household, so that he was greater than anyone in the East." (Job 1) Even Adam and Eve were told to "be fruitful and multiply" and were given dominion over the land to make it prosper.

SUCCESS IS A  
GOOD  
THING

Then where is the conflict between the world's view of success and the Lord's, if both believe success is a good thing? It comes down to the motives - do we desire success and prosperity to make our name great or to bring glory to God? What does God really have to say about our pursuit of success?

Give them some time to read over silently

## WHAT DRIVES YOUR TIME?

In a recent Poll published in USA today – 81% of Generation Y's most important goal in life was wealth and 54% said being famous.

Pop legend Madonna said in 'Vanity Fair' magazine, "My drive in life is from this horrible fear of being mediocre. And that's always pushing me, pushing me. Because even though I've become Somebody, I still have to prove that Somebody. My struggle has never ended and it probably never will."

In today's world of facebook statuses and twitter feeds, it's easy to feel pressure to become wildly successful and make sure everyone else knows it. There is a craving for others to validate our successes so that we feel a greater sense of purpose and worth. There are a few primary reasons this is a real temptation to each of us:

### Approval and Appreciation

"If I get this award, then everyone will see what a success I am" or "If people see how successful of an athlete I am, people will start to talk about me" or "Since I'm talented in this one area, I need to show off my skills more so that people will notice me."

### Emotional and Physical Comfort

"When I get good grades, a promotion at work, or recognized for something I did, I feel less like a failure."

### Security and Control

"If I'm successful, people will finally listen to me and do what I ask" or "If I'm successful in the classroom and get the job I want, then I can make a lot of money and secure the lifestyle I want."

### Influence and Power

"I love the respect I get when I'm leading other people."

Some of you are thinking Madonna is crazy, right? She really does have the success many people dream about. Her dissatisfaction goes to prove that as we continue to meet x, y, or z goals in our pursuit of success, it will never be enough and there will always be something still "out there" and beyond our grasp. So, we can get stuck in this addiction continuing to chase down success to prove ourselves to God and others.

What is your definition of success?

Read questions aloud and discuss

When have you felt successful and why?

# FULLY ALIVE | SUCCESS + GOD

## WHAT DOES GOD SAY ABOUT SUCCESS?

Pick and read one of these Bible passages:

*Pick your favorite 2 or have members of your study look each of them up and share*

2 Chronicles 26:5

Joshua 1:7-8

1 Corinthians 15:10

How is the passage urging you to think differently about success?

*Read questions aloud and discuss*

What is the passage urging you to do?

Through Scripture there are many examples of God's people receiving success. Let's peek at a few examples from two saints lives that show us exactly how God may bring real success in our life.

**St. Francis of Assisi** was born in Italy during 1181, grew up in a wealthy family and was renowned for prosperity, drinking, and partying in his youth. After fighting in a battle between Assisi and Perugia, Francis was captured and imprisoned at ransom. He spent nearly a year in prison awaiting his father's ransom, and during this time, began receiving visions from God. After his release from prison, Francis heard the voice of Christ, who told him to repair the Christian Church and live a life of poverty. So he abandoned his life of luxury and material success and devoted his life to Jesus and His Church, founding a new religious order, and bringing God glory. He was asked to give up his earthly success to bring about a greater good.

**Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati** is a saint for the modern world. Born in 1901 in Turin, Italy, his time on earth was short—only 24 years.. He was described by friends as "an explosion of joy." From the earliest age, and despite two unreligious parents who misunderstood and disapproved of his piety, Pier Giorgio placed Christ first in all that he did. He was handsome, vibrant, and natural. These attractive characteristics drew people to him. He had many good friends and he shared his faith with them with ease and openness. Pier Giorgio was an avid outdoorsman and loved hiking, riding horses, skiing, and mountain climbing. He was never one to pass on playing a practical joke, either. He relished laughter and good humor.

Although Pier Giorgio grew up in a privileged environment, he never lorded over anyone the wealth and prestige of his family. Instead, he lived simply and gave away food, money, or anything that anyone asked of him. It is suspected that he contracted from the very people to whom he was ministering in the slums the polio that would kill him. His parents, who had no idea about the generous self-donation of their young son, were astonished by the sight of thousands of people crowded outside their mansion on the day of their son's funeral Mass and burial. The poor, the lonely, and those who had been touched by Pier Giorgio's love and faithful example, had come to pay homage to this luminous model of Christian living. Pier truly is an example of using the earthly successes for the good of others and to bring glory to God.

What's different about how God used earthly success in these saints' lives?

What does it say about how the Lord views success?

## LET'S GET PRACTICAL

Read I-by-I, open for discussion, ask questions to direct convo

There are many ways we can allow the Lord to redeem our views of success in our lives. Below are a few ideas:

### "Do Everything for the Glory of God."

-1 Corinthians 10:31

Whatever projects, assignments, goals, plans, hopes, dreams, or opportunities that come our way, we can practice filtering them through the lens of bringing glory to God. In time, we will begin to be able to discern if we are chasing our own glory or God's in our desire for success. Also, when we are truly doing it for the Lord, we will work harder and better than if we are simply working for ourselves.

When an opportunity comes your way, examine your motivations and seek ways to glorify God.

### Redeem Your Definition of Success

In God's perspective, success doesn't mean getting everything done perfectly, leading to the perfect results. Take Jesus for example. He was born into a stable, grew up in a middle class working family, lived at home till he was 30 years old, then went and begged for a living while doing ministry for 3 years, culminating in his death on a cross. Not gelling with our modern view of success, right? However, he rose from the dead and broke sin's curse on all humanity, bringing about salvation to all who accept it. That's eternal success!

### Pray the Litany of Humility...if you so dare!

When I find myself clinging to my views of success (power, status, perfection, self-love, etc.) praying this litany really brings my heart back to Jesus and a place of humility, ready to receive the success the Lord desires for me. Try making this litany part of your prayer routine.

#### LITANY OF HUMILITY

O Jesus! meek and humble of heart,  
**Hear me.**

From the desire of being esteemed,  
**Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the desire of being loved...

From the desire of being extolled ...

From the desire of being honored ...

From the desire of being praised ...

From the desire of being preferred to others...

From the desire of being consulted ...

From the desire of being approved ...

From the fear of being humiliated ...

From the fear of being despised...

From the fear of suffering rebukes ...

From the fear of being calumniated ...

From the fear of being forgotten ...

From the fear of being ridiculed ...

From the fear of being wronged ...

From the fear of being suspected ...

That others may be loved more than I,

**Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.**

That others may be esteemed more than I ...

That, in the opinion of the world,

others may increase and I may decrease ...

That others may be chosen and I set aside ...

That others may be praised and I unnoticed ...

That others may be preferred to me in everything...

That others may become holier than I,

provided that I may become as holy as I should...

Amen.