

3-13-2022, COTR Texarkana

Title: The Test of Success

Purpose: Explore the Biblical principles responsible for success and failure and provoke people to follow the Biblical pattern of success.

Truth for Today: Humble people who seek the Lord and find lasting success; proud people experience a crash landing.

Text: 1 Corinthians 10:11, 2 Chronicles 26

Topic: Success, Failure, Mentor, Humble, Proud

Series Title: Mentor Me

Series Purpose: Provoke people to learn and apply life lessons, good and bad, from Biblical characters.

## The Test of Success

### I. Introduction

- A. New series: Mentor Me. It's about learning life lessons from Biblical mentors.
- B. Def. mentor: a trusted counselor or guide; a tutor or coach.<sup>1</sup> Mentors teach us and give us advice.<sup>6</sup> Historical characters in the Bible are some of the most reliable guides for mentoring we can find. They show us what to do and what not to do from God's perspective. Context: ancient Israel's wrong choices, [1 Cor. 10:11 (NLT) These things happened to them as **examples for us**. They were written down to warn us who live at the end of the age.] We can learn from their choices, good and bad, and know what behavior to imitate and what to avoid.
- C. Today we'll learn about the secret of success from a king named Uzziah. He climbed the ladder of success from obscurity and reached the pinnacle of success. Then something happened and he crashed, finishing his life in the shadows. He'll show us what to do and what not to do in our journey toward success.
- D. Title: The Test of Success
- E. Truth for Today: Humble people who seek the Lord and find lasting success; proud people experience a crash landing.

### II. Mentor me, king Uzziah (Read the biography 1<sup>st</sup>, then go back and comment)

- A. 2 Chron. 26 (NCV) 3 Uzziah...became king...<sup>4</sup> **He did what the Lord said was right, just as his father Amaziah had done.** <sup>5</sup> **Uzziah obeyed God** while **Zechariah** was alive, because **he taught Uzziah how to respect and obey God.** And **as long as Uzziah obeyed the Lord, God gave him success.** <sup>6</sup> Uzziah fought a war against the Philistines...<sup>7</sup> **God helped Uzziah fight the Philistines...** <sup>8</sup>...**He was very powerful, so his name became famous...** <sup>10</sup> He...dug many wells, because he had many cattle... He had people who worked

his fields and vineyards... 11 Uzziah had an army of trained soldiers...15...Uzziah made cleverly designed devices. These devices on the towers and corners of the city walls were used to shoot arrows and large rocks. So **Uzziah became famous in faraway places, because he had much help UNTIL he became powerful.** 16 **But when Uzziah became powerful, his pride led to his ruin. He was unfaithful to the Lord his God; he went into the Temple of the Lord to burn incense on the altar for incense.** 17 Azariah and eighty other brave **priests who served the Lord** followed Uzziah into the Temple. 18 **They told him he was wrong...**Only the priests...should burn the incense, because they have been made holy. Leave this holy place. **You have been unfaithful, and the Lord God will not honor you for this.**” 19...**He was very angry with the priests.** As he was standing in front of the priests, **a skin disease broke out on his forehead.** 20 ...Uzziah also rushed out, because **the Lord was punishing him.** 21 So King Uzziah had the skin disease until the day he died. He had to live in a separate house and could not enter the Temple of the Lord.

1. [Pr. 16:18 (NCV) **Pride leads to destruction; a proud attitude brings ruin.**] Pr. 18:12 (NCV) **Proud** people will be ruined, but the **humble** will be honored.]

### III. Mentoring lessons from King Uzziah

- A. What is success? Uzziah’s success. [Vs. 5 the Lord, God gave him **success**....8...He was very powerful, so his name became **famous**... 10 He...dug many wells... He had people who worked his fields...11 Uzziah had an army of trained soldiers...15... Uzziah made cleverly designed devices... (NLT) His **fame** spread far and wide...and he became **very powerful**.
1. God can be the source of success, for Uzziah and us, [Proverbs 10:22 (NCV) **The Lord’s blessing brings wealth**, and no sorrow comes with it.]
2. Everyone wants to be successful in life. Picture Books: The secret to Success. Success includes power, fame, property, economic prosperity, and skill. We all want nice houses, a Ford truck, money in the bank and a private place to hunt ducks and turkeys. This is temporary success but there’s a more profound, eternal type of success, accomplishing God’s will/ purpose for our life. E.g., [Acts 13:36 (ESV) For David, after he had **served the purpose of God in his own generation**, fell asleep...] [Daniel 12:13 (GNB)...Daniel, **be faithful to the end. Then you will die, but you will rise to receive your reward at the end of time.**”] This success is more valuable than houses and trucks. Accomplishing God’s will/ purpose has eternal value. Earthly success is over when we die.

B. Lesson #1: The right mentors will help me be successful

1. Vs. 4 He did what the Lord said was right, **just as his father Amaziah had done.** 5 **Uzziah obeyed God** while **Zechariah** was alive, because **he taught Uzziah how to respect and obey God.**
2. Who mentors/ influences me? It can be a life coach, a friend, a movie star, a sports figure, an actor, a politician, or a Bible believing spiritual leader. Some mentors lead us in the right direction and some lead us in the wrong direction. Being influenced by the wrong person can cause heartache. [1 Corinthians 15:33 (NIV) Do not be misled: “**Bad company corrupts good character.**”]
3. We all need people spiritual people who we’ve invited in our life to show us the right way and confront us when we start to get off track. [Galatians 6:1 (NLT)...if another believer is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should **gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path.**] Joshua had Moses; Elisha had Elijah; Timothy had Paul.

C. Lesson #2: Seeking the Lord and obeying God are the keys to lasting success.

1. Vs. 5 **He sought God** during the days of Zechariah, who instructed him in the fear of God. **As long as he sought the Lord, God gave him success.** (NLT) And **as long as Uzziah obeyed the Lord, God gave him success.**
2. What does it mean to seek God? It means to include God in your plans and decisions. We seek God by learning the Bible, godly counsel, and prayer before making decisions. Whatever God says, do it. [James 1:22 (NLT) But don’t just listen to God’s word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves.]

D. Lesson #3: We fail the test of success when we become proud.

1. Vs. 15 [So Uzziah became **FAMOUS** in faraway places, **BECAUSE** he had much help (*NLT the Lord gave him marvelous help*) **UNTIL** he became powerful. 16...when Uzziah became powerful, his **PRIDE** led to his ruin. He was **UNFAITHFUL** to the Lord his God...]
2. What happened to Uzziah? What changed? Why did he lose everything he’d worked his whole life to obtain? [Vs. 16 But when Uzziah became powerful, **his pride led to his ruin.**] Pride made him think his success was because of himself. He no longer put God 1<sup>st</sup> and thought he was above God given boundaries.
3. Pride is easier to see in others than myself.<sup>2</sup> Proud people are arrogant, bigheaded, cocky, overconfident, have huge egos, brag a lot, think the world revolves around them, snobby, condescending, think the rules don’t apply to them and proud people think they’re better than other people because of their skills, accomplishments, possessions, or position in life.

a. Proud people can be painters, plumbers, physicians, pastors, or parishioners.

4. Contrast: Proud people live like they don't need God. Humble people realize all they have, and all they can do is because of God...Proud people depend on themselves; humble people depend on God...Proud people take all the credit for their success; humble people give God credit...Humble people seek the Lord for direction and answers; proud people don't...Proud people say me, I, and mine a lot. Humble people talk about God a lot...Proud people look down on people who are a different race, poor, less educated. Humble people have compassion for and value all people...The source of a proud person's worth is tied to their looks, possessions, and abilities. A humble person's finds his worth from God...Proud people take God's glory; humble people give God glory.

- IV. Conclusion: Lesson #4: How do we stay humble and pass the test of success? We all want to be successful and not crash when we obtain it. The Bible tells us how.
- A. Seek God and do what He says, [2 Chronicles 26:5 (NIV)...**As long as he sought the Lord**, (*NCV obeyed the Lord*) God gave him success.] Try to include God in every decision. Pray about it; go to the Bible for direction; seek godly counsel.
- B. Think, talk, and act like this, [Acts 17:28 (NLT) For **in him (Jesus)** (*NCV by His power*) **we live and move and exist...**] Everything I am, everything I have and everything I can do is because of Jesus. Think, talk, and act like it.
- C. Replace self-confidence with God confidence, [Phil. 4:13 (NLT) For **I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.**] Proud people live by the 1<sup>st</sup> 1/2 of the verse, "I can do all things". Humble people live by the 2nd part, "I can do all things through Christ"
1. Start/ end day: everything I will do/ did is because of you.
- D. How to stay humble. Picture<sup>7</sup> Judson Cornwall. Compliments and a bouquet of flowers.
- V. Response
- A. Prayer
- B. Souls
- VI. Bibliography/ Resources: Logos Bible Software and Library, Platinum Edition, was used to prepare this message.
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2. Cowen, G. (2003). [Pride](#). In C. Brand, C. Draper, A. England, S. Bond, E. R. Clendenen, & T. C. Butler (Eds.), *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (p. 1327). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.
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