



**RUN
THE
RACE**

**LESSON 5
I CAN ENCOURAGE THOSE IN THE RACE WITH ME!**



Power Phrase

I can encourage those in the race with me!

Memory Verse

1 Thessalonians 5:11a, “Therefore encourage one another and build one another up.”

Supporting Doctrines

For supporting doctrines, see our Statement of Faith at www.novoministries.org/statement-of-faith.

Goals

The child will...

- Understand that God has placed people in his life who can encourage him!
- Realize life is not a competition, but an opportunity to do life with other people!
- Choose to be encouraged and encourage others to honor God in all they do!

Reminders

The theme of this series is Run the Race. Throughout the series there will be discussions, activities, and challenges physically. These are important because they will help the children better understand the application to their spiritual “race.” This week we are focusing on how our course as Christians is not a competition and how we can and should encourage others along the way.

Acknowledgements

We want to express our gratitude to the volunteers who contributed ideas toward the development of this lesson: Kristn Punjabi, Barbara Bingham, Dustin Gier, Ashley Robinson, Passion Bradley, Jewell Jackson, Daniel Weaver, Janna Smith, and Kelly Anderson. All of our contributors work with the children of Oklahoma City’s inner city. Thank you for the time you have invested in these children.

The stories and photos shared in the Gospel Presentation activities are used by permission of the individuals.

Additional Resources

All Large Group or Small Group activity visuals or supply items followed by an asterisk (*) may be downloaded for printing at www.novoministries.org/resource.

Cain's Jealousy of Abel (Bible Story — Genesis 4:1-16)

Visuals

- Bible Story Visuals*, “Cheer” and “Boo” signs*

Supplies

- Bible, Bible Insert for Large Group*, toy microphone, “press” card or badge

Captivate #1 - News Flash!

- Recruit a child or leader to be the reporter covering a news report on the Bible Story. Give her a toy microphone or a hair brush to use as a microphone. You also could have her wear a hat with a “press” card tucked in it or a “press” badge. Try to give the volunteer time to practice beforehand.

Captivate #2 - Cheer!

- Choose one child to hold the “Cheer” and “Boo” signs. Throughout the Bible Story, have the child hold up the sign that fits with what is being said. This will help the children focus on the story and also identify the positive and negative aspects of the story.

Introduction

- When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, they had to leave the Garden of Eden. God made clothes for them out of animal skin for them to wear. Later, Adam and Eve had two sons. Their first son was named Cain, and their second was Abel.

Story

- Retell the story from Genesis 4:1-16.
- See Bible Story Script.

Conclusion

- Cain allowed his jealousy and rivalry of his brother to cause him to sin. Instead of being proud of his brother and learning from his choices, Cain got angry and hated his brother. Cain's life was forever changed because of the wrong choices he made. God wants us to make the right choices and encourage each other!

Testimony

- Share a time you allowed jealousy to cause you to make a wrong choice.
- Share a time you were able to encourage someone else and help him be successful..

Challenge

Visuals

- Key Point Visuals*, Power Phrase Visual*, Memory Verse Visual*

Supplies

- Bible, Bible Insert for Large Group*

Introduction

- In our Bible Story, we learned how jealousy and anger can destroy us. Cain was jealous of his brother Abel. Their relationship shouldn't have been a competition. Both of them should have been sacrificing their best to God because they wanted to honor Him. But Cain let his jealousy of Abel cause him to sin. He hated his brother so much that he killed him.

Key Points

It's not a competition!

- Those who are true believers have an opportunity to support other Christians. We shouldn't see them as competition and try to be better than them. We should help and encourage each other so we all can honor God in what we do!
- Life isn't a competition among those who love God, because God loves all His children the same.
- Galatians 6:4-5, "But let each one test his own work, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbor. For each will have to bear his own load."
- Colossians 3:23, "Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men."

We're on the same team!

- Being a part of God's team means we put others before ourselves. We don't see other believers as competition but instead as our teammates. Our goal is to help them be successful.
- Philippians 2:3-4, "Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others."

We are stronger together!

- We are stronger when we work together. We can encourage one another and challenge each other when we struggle. We can help each other and work together.
- Proverbs 27:17, "Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another."
- Ecclesiastes 4:9, "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil."

Challenge (continued)

Conclusion

Cain was more concerned about his competition with his brother than disobeying God with the sacrifice he brought. He allowed his jealousy and anger to cause him to sin. God doesn't want us to compete with each other but to encourage one another. We should encourage those in the race with us! 1 Thessalonians 5:11a, "Therefore encourage one another and build one another up."

Invitation

For the unsaved child:

- Do you want the support of other Christians? Do you want people in your life who can help you love and serve God? You can become a Christian by asking Jesus to forgive your sins and be the Lord of your life. God sent His Son to die on the cross so that you can receive forgiveness for your sins. We have all sinned, and sin separates us from God (Romans 6:23a). Sin is anything we think, say, or do that breaks God's Law. Jesus paid the price for our sin; He became our Substitute (2 Corinthians 5:21).
- Invite the children to stay behind and talk to a leader if they have any questions or would like to ask Jesus to forgive their sins and be the Lord of their lives.

For the saved child:

- Do you encourage those around you, or do you compete against them? How can you honor God with how you treat other people?
- Encourage children to stay behind and talk to a leader if they have any questions.

Teamwork (Arriving Activity)

Visuals

- Picture of kids playing basketball*

Instruction and Application

- As the children arrive, show them the picture of the children playing basketball. Ask them what would happen if each of the players were only concerned about himself and didn't work together as a team. What if they would never pass the ball to anyone else? What if they spent the whole time criticizing and blaming one another for not winning? How successful would they be?
- Today we will learn how we are called to encourage one another and work as a team. If we have asked Jesus to be the Lord of our lives, we are on God's team. We should work together to encourage each other.
- Review the Memory Verse with the children. 1 Thessalonians 5:11a, "Therefore encourage one another and build one another up."



Building Blocks (Memory Verse)

Visuals

- Memory Verse Visual*, Illustrated Memory Verse Visual*, Picture of a child building something with blocks*, Stoplight Visual*

Supplies

- Bible

A.G.A.I.N. Acrostic

A — Attention Grabber (Grab their attention with an interesting introduction and don't let go!)

Show the children the picture of the child building something with blocks. Ask if they have ever built something. What did they build? Did it take a long time? Did anyone help them? Ask the children if they have ever had someone come along and smash what they had worked so hard to build. How did it make them feel? Our verse today tells us that we should encourage one another and build each other up. That means we should help one another and not cause damage in any way. Our words and actions can be hurtful to others. We should always try to say and do things that are positive and caring for others.

G — God's Word (Show them that the concept you are teaching them comes from the Bible.)

1 Thessalonians 5:11a, "Therefore encourage one another and build one another up."

A — Awareness (Make them "aware" of the words and concepts.)

Encourage one another — be positive, support, give advice

Build one another up — build up their confidence and hope

I — In Their Lives (Teach them to apply the lesson "in their lives.")

Unsaved child (questions to ask an unsaved child)

Do you want to be a part of God's team and have other people who can encourage and support you? Do you want to ask Jesus to forgive your sins and be the Lord of your life?

Saved child (questions to ask a saved child)

How do you encourage and build up other people? Do you ever tear others down and discourage them?

N — Number of Times (Repeat the content again and again until the children understand it.)

Read from Scripture. Repeat after me. Play the Memory Game three or four times.

Memory Game

Play Stop and Go. Use the Stoplight Visual. When the Stoplight Visual is on green, have the children say the Memory Verse together; when it is on yellow, have them talk slowly; and when it is on red, stop.

Example (Gospel Presentation)

Visuals

- “What’s the Solution?” and “What to Do Now?” Foundational Gospel Truths Visuals*, Picture of Charlotte Smith*

Supplies

- Bible, paper, writing tools

Instruction and Application

- Charlotte Smith grew up in a family who really loved Jesus. Her father was a pastor. There were many generations of believers in her family for her to learn from. Charlotte asked Jesus to forgive her sins and be the Lord of her life when she was a young girl. She was always very bold to talk about Jesus and she was not afraid to share her love for God with others.
- Charlotte was very involved in sports in high school. She played basketball and competed in track and field. She saw sports as an opportunity to talk about God with those around her. After high school, Charlotte played basketball in college and then professionally for 15 years. She was involved with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes as well as leading Bible studies with her teammates.
- When Charlotte was put on the injured reserved list one year, many told her she should demand to be traded and fight for her rights. Charlotte chose to do what was right even through those adversities. A trainer told her one day that she had been an example to them by how she handled her difficult circumstances.
- Charlotte understood the value of being a team player both on the court and off. She also chose to be a witness for God in every circumstance.
- Charlotte realized that Jesus was the only solution to her sin. He died on the cross for her so that she could be forgiven. Use the “What’s the Solution?” Visual to review.
- Just like Charlotte, we need to GROW to be like Jesus and show God’s love to those around us. Use the “What to Do Now?” Visual to review.

Discussion

- Older Team: Have the children discuss difficult things they have faced and how God can bring healing. Discuss how God can use their stories to help others and bring Him glory.
- Younger Team: Have the children sing “Read Your Bible, Pray Every Day.” Talk about how they can GROW to be more like Jesus.
- Quiet Team: Have the children draw a picture or make a card to encourage someone they know who is going through a difficult time.
- Quiet Team: Have the children write the word GROW vertically on their papers. Then have them write ways they can GROW to be more like Jesus.
- Active Team: Have the children in pairs play Rock, Paper, Scissors. The winner shares what it means to her that Jesus died on the cross for her.

Flashback (Review Questions)

Supplies

- Review Questions*

Large Group Story Review Questions

- Who were Adam and Eve's two sons? (Cain and Abel)
- What kind of offering did Abel bring? (The best from the herd)
- What kind of offering did Cain bring? (The extras, but not the best from his crop)
- Who's offering did God prefer? (Abel's)
- What should Cain have been more concerned about? (Bringing his best for God)
- What was Cain's reaction? (He was jealous and angry.)
- What did Cain do? (He killed his brother Abel.)
- When God asked where Abel was, what did Cain say? (He said he didn't know; he wasn't his brother's keeper.)
- What did Cain do when he realized what he had done? (He fell to the ground and cried.)

Discussion Questions

- Why are people so competitive with each other and want to find wrong in what others do?
- How can we respond when others are competitive and want to tear down those around them?

People Chain (Craft)

Visuals

- Craft sample*

Supplies

- People Chain Template* (one per child), scissors, coloring tools

Instruction and Application

- Give each of the children a People Chain Template. Have them fold the paper accordion style. Next have them cut out the person with the paper still folded. Then have them stretch the paper out so they can see the chain of people holding hands. Finally, they can color each of the people.
- Remind the child that we learned that we can encourage those in the race with us. We are in it together. It's not a competition. They can ask Jesus to be the Lord of their lives and live for Him. Review the Memory Verse with the children. 1 Thessalonians 5:11a, "Therefore encourage one another and build one another up."



What's The Point? (Application Activities)

Supplies

- “What’s the Point?” card*, paper, writing tools

Activity #1

- Give each of the children a “What’s the Point?” card. Remind them of the physical goal you set to reach by the end of the curriculum series. Have the children discuss how their weekly challenge went the past week and what improvements they have seen. What difficulties did they run into? Remind them that through training, discipline, and hard work we can reach our goals. Discuss how the physical challenge will help them reach their long-term goal. Set a new physical challenge for the coming week.

Activity #2

- Have the children discuss what they learned about how they can encourage others in the race! Have them write things they can do this week that will help them encourage others.

Now What? (Additional Activity)

Supplies

- Additional Activity #1: Coloring Page*
- Additional Activity #2: Crack the Code Activity Page*
- Additional Activity #3: Crossword Activity Page*
- Additional Activity #4: The Big Take Away Key Chain*

Instruction and Application

- These activities are to be used with your team as time fillers while reinforcing the lesson concepts. The children can take these home each week or do them while they are listening to you teach during Small Group. These activities require little to no explanation and can be great for moments when you are transitioning or don't have time to start another activity.

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