

Finishing the Race

Teacher Lesson

Where will you be 5 years from now? 10 years? 20 years? The Lord has given us an assignment to run the race and finish strong. We are all still running this race. How will we set the example for others?

Anyone who has children or has worked with children can testify that they see everything; the good, the bad, and the ugly. How can we use these situations to help them see the Lord replenish our strength as we run the race.

- Read Jeremiah 29:11-13. God tells us He has a plan for our lives. He goes a step further and assures us that the plan is a good one! It is easy to get distracted and discouraged when things do not seem to be going the way we would have planned, but He tells us not to worry. His plan for our life is good. What do you feel the Lord is sharing with you? Pray and ask the Lord to open your eyes to the plans He has for you.
- Read Hebrews 12:1. This verse refers to the witnesses mentioned in Hebrews 11. These witnesses found themselves in situations that required great faith and persevered. They were far from perfect, but they ran the race of faith and ran it well. These people are examples to us today because they have been where we are now. Their experience allows us to relate to them even today. The second part of verse one challenges us to prepare to run the race. This consists of two steps. First, we must rid ourselves of anything that might hinder us from running at our full potential. We cannot let ourselves be fooled into thinking that all hindrances are bad things. Our family is a wonderful blessing, however, we must declare that nothing is important enough to stand in the way of serving the Lord as He has called us to do. Secondly, we must flee from sin that can easily trip us up so that we can run the race He has prepared for us. What hindrance do you struggle with?

Title: Finishing the Race

Age Group 1ST- 6TH Grade

Teaching Aim

I can finish the race God has for me.

Biblical Truth:

Jesus has already won the race; He gives me strength to keep going.

Bible Passage: Hebrews 12: 1-3

Memory Verse Hebrews 12: 1

- Read Hebrews 12:2. While we are blessed to have people in our lives who can help us in our race, scripture tells us to run "fixing our eyes on Jesus". He has given us the perfect example. How will you "fix your eyes on Jesus"? Do you have daily quiet time? Reading scripture?
- Read Hebrews 12:3. Jesus has already run the race and has proclaimed victory. As believers, we can share in that victory. Do not let yourself loose endurance, seek Him to recharge and continue in the race He has set before you. How will you seek Him this week?
- This lesson will encourage students to continue pushing forward in the race to complete their education. You will find hints in this guide to help tie in the importance of education in the lives of your students.

Preparing the room

It is important that students know as soon as they walk into the room that today's lesson is important. Taking the time to prepare the room specially for this lesson will help communicate this to the class.

- Do your homework. During the days leading up to this lesson, ask your students what college they are interested in. Ask students what colleges they have heard of. Once you have a list of these schools, go online and research mascots and school colors. Contact the schools and let them know your students are interested in one day attending their school and ask them to donate pennants, pens, or t-shirts.
- Contact local community colleges and ask them for additional giveaways. Many schools have exhibit booths they set up at large conferences, ask if they have a representative that might be willing to set up a booth at your church.
- Use pins or painters tape to display the college paraphernalia.
- Contact recent college graduates and ask them to loan their cap and gowns to put on display for the kids in your class. Be sure to label them carefully in order to return them to the correct owner. Do not put these up on the walls, drape them over chairs or tables, they will be used in the lesson.

Items to collect

- Cap and gowns
- College paraphernalia
- Poster board cut out into pennant shapes
- Markers for pennant decoration
- Construction paper
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- Digital camera
- Wrapping paper
- Tissue paper
- Non perishable snack items
- Pencils
- Pens
- Blank cards
- Tape (to wrap box)

Before session: work with church families to collect items needed for care packages and identify students to receive the care packages assembled in the Missions Motivator section of the lesson.

Early Arrivers

Class begins as soon as the first student arrives. It is important that all preparation is done prior to the arrival of the first student so that they begin learning as soon as they enter the room. They need to know that you have been waiting just for them!

Items needed:

- Poster board pennants
- Markers
- Glue
- Scissors
- Construction paper

Welcome the students at the door. It is important that you are ready and waiting at the door for the first student to arrive.

Explain to the students, as they arrive, that today they will be decorating their own school pennant. They may choose to use a local high school mascot, a college mascot, or even their own school mascot. Remind students to write their name on the back of their pennant.

Students may use the materials collected to work on this project.

helpful hints

- Several discount stores carry precut blank pennants.
- Cover tables with disposable table covers or wax paper for easy clean up.
- Have stencils available for tracing and precut shapes ready for gluing, some students may be less confident in their artistic abilities.
- Have a section of the room ready for students

Missions Motivator

Students will pack and prepare care packages for high school or college students in the church or community.

Before session: work with church families to collect items needed for project and identify students to receive care packages.

Items needed:

- Shoe boxes
- Wrapping paper
- Tissue paper
- Non perishable snack items
- Pencils
- Pens
- Blank cards
- Scissors (for cutting wrapping paper)
- Tape (to wrap box)

Explain: Say "High School and College students are running a race to complete their education. We are going to put a care package together for them to let them know we are proud of them and that we are cheering for them".

Direct students to wrap boxes with the wrapping paper provided, wrapping the box top separately so that it can be placed on after the box is filled.

After the boxes are wrapped, have students distribute the items collected into each box. Students may also write encouraging notes to the students. As the students work remind them that we are blessed to live in a country where we are free to get an education.

Encourage students to share about high school or college students they know.

End this activity by praying for each recipient of the care packages.



Examine the Scripture

Students will examine key scripture to identify the importance of running the race the Lord has set before them with endurance.

Items needed:

- 2 Scripture scroll/batons
- Bible
- Tear sheets mounted on the wall
- Crayons or markers

Preparation:

Print Hebrews 12:1-3 on 2 sheets of paper and roll it into the shape of a scroll or baton. Tie a piece of string around it to keep it from unrolling.

Have the class split into two groups. The groups will be racing to the finish.

- Groups will make a line, standing up for the race.
- Students will remove string before starting the race, but keep the scroll rolled up.
- On "go" the first student will unroll the scroll and read the verses out loud.
- Next, the student will roll the scroll back up and pass it to the person next to them like a baton in a race.
- The next student will unroll the scroll and also read the verses, roll it back up and pass it to the next person.
- Students will continue to pass, unroll, read, and roll up the baton until it makes it back to the first person.
- Once the scroll makes it back to the first person, the entire group must sit down to signify they have finished the race.

Explain to the class that the verses they read are located in the book of Hebrews.

Say, "In these verses, God gives us the plan to win the race".

Examine the Scripture cont.

Open your bible and read Hebrews 12:1.

Say in your own words, "Witnesses are persons who saw something or has been through something and talk about it. The witnesses in this verse are the people all throughout the bible who lived in very tough times and saw how God was faithful and helped. By trusting in God, they finished the job He had for them. We could say, just like running a race takes commitment, following God takes commitment. They are examples to us that even though it can be hard, we too, can commit to follow God's plan for our lives."

Say in your own words, "Imagine running a race carrying your best friend on your back, would that be an easy race?"

Ask, "What would make it easier to run that race?"

Explain, just like our friend would make it harder to run the race, there are things that can make it harder to finish the race of getting our education. This does not mean our friend was bad, they were just not helping us win the race. Things like going to soccer practice instead of doing homework or playing with our pet instead of studying for a test can get in the way of winning the race.

Ask, "How can we do good things like go to soccer practice and play with our pets without it getting in the way of winning the race?"

Say in your own words, "Now imagine running that same race with your feet tied together." Explain: When we sin, or do things God does not want us to do, it is like we are tying our feet together to keep us from running the race.

Ask,

"what is sin?"

"What can we do if we find out that what we are doing is not what God wants?"

Examine Scripture Cont.

Read Hebrews 12:2.

Explain: We have someone who loves us and has already run and won the race. Jesus Christ has already lived a perfect life we can always look to as an example.

Ask, "What are some of the things Jesus did that we can also do to help us run the race of completing, or finishing, our education?"

Possible answers

- Respected His parents
- Told the truth
- Worked hard
- Asked God for help

Read Hebrews 12:3

Explain: When we get tired or feel like we cannot do well in school, we can remember that Jesus already won the race! He can give us hope to keep going. Jesus loves us and wants us to remember that while we run the race to get our education.

Application

Prepare: Print out several examples of cheers for students.

Items needed:

- Construction paper (one for each student)
- Pencils (one for each student)

Break students into groups or allow them to work as a class.

Explain: One day you might find yourself tired and tempted to give up on the race. Today we are going to write a cheer that we will post in each of our rooms to help us be reminded that Jesus already won the race and wants us to keep going too!

Pass out the example cheers you have provided for the students. Encourage students to have fun, be silly, and keep the point of the cheer about running and finishing the race!

Students may perform their cheers for the other groups

Extra

Picture Perfect

Allow students to try on the graduation regalia and take a picture of them wearing the cap and gown. Print pictures or email them to parents and encourage them to pray with their child and talk about ways their family can help them run the race.

Ideas to share with parents:

- Set a time for family reading. Students are more likely to succeed if they read at home with their parents.
- Make a daily checklist for homework.
- Meet with teachers on a regular basis to identify any areas that may need extra support.
- Find a "witness". Ask someone who has finished the race of getting their education to mentor the family.
- Talk about college on a daily basis. Remind parents that choices today affect their child's tomorrow.
- Start a savings account for college and watch it grow!

This page may be copied
and used as a pattern for
pennant project.

