

Don't Get All Tangled Up In Sin

UPPER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

Theme: Don't get all tangled up in sin

Scripture: Hebrews 12:1-2

Memory Verse: Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus. - Hebrews 12:1b-2a

The Children's Sermon

Hey kids! Today, we're going to talk about something really important from the Bible. It tells us to throw off everything that keeps us from serving the Lord and throw off the sin that gets us all tangled up. You know, like when your shoelaces get all knotted up and you can't walk properly? Sin does that to us, but in our hearts and minds.

If we fix our eyes on Jesus, we're going to keep our feet where they belong and stay on the right path. Imagine you're walking on a narrow beam, like in gymnastics. If you look down or around, you might fall off. But if you look straight ahead, at something that doesn't move, like Jesus, you can walk straight and true.

When we're reading our Bibles, worshiping him, serving others, and telling people about Jesus, we're 'fixing our eyes on Jesus!' It's when we take our eyes off Jesus that we allow sin to get us all tangled up! So this week, let's keep our feet on the right path and fix our eyes on Jesus and throw off that sin that so easily entangles!

Now, let's dive a bit deeper. Imagine you have a big, heavy backpack on. It's filled with rocks, each one labeled with things like "lying," "being mean," "not listening," and so on.

These rocks are like the sins that weigh us down. Jesus tells us to throw off that heavy backpack and be free to run and play and live the way He wants us to. When we fix our eyes on Jesus, it's like He helps us take that backpack off and throw it away.

But how do we keep our eyes fixed on Jesus? Well, it's like when you're learning to ride a bike. You have to keep looking ahead to where you want to go. If you look down at your feet or get distracted by what's around you, you might wobble and fall. So, every day, we can read stories about Jesus, talk to Him in prayer, and listen to what He says in the Bible. This helps us keep looking ahead, keeping our balance, and following the path He has for us.

Sometimes, though, it can be hard to fix your eyes on Jesus, especially when there are so many distractions around us. It's like when you're trying to watch a butterfly or a bird, and it keeps moving. You have to really focus and not look away. The world around us has lots of things that can take our eyes off Jesus—TV shows, games, even what our friends are doing. But remember, when we focus on Jesus, He helps us see what's really important.

Let's talk about what it means to serve others and tell people about Jesus. When we help someone, like sharing our toys or being kind to a new kid at school, we're showing them Jesus' love. And when we tell them about how much Jesus loves them, it's like we're giving them a map that shows them the way to Him. This is a big part of fixing our eyes on Jesus—by acting like Him and sharing His love with others.

But what if you mess up? What if you take your eyes off Jesus and stumble? Does that mean you're off the path forever? No way! Jesus is always ready to help you back up.

Just like when you fall off your bike, you can get back on and try again. Jesus forgives us and helps us to keep going. That's the amazing thing about His love.

So, kids, let's make a promise this week. Let's promise to try our best to fix our eyes on Jesus. When we wake up, let's think about Him. When we're at school or playing, let's remember His love and try to live like Him. And if we start to look away, let's ask Him to help us focus back on Him.

Before we finish, let's pray together.

Dear Lord, help us to fix our eyes on Jesus so we can stay on the right path and serve you this week. When things get tough or we get distracted, remind us of Your love and help us to focus back on You. Thank you for being with us always. AMEN.

Remember, kids, fixing your eyes on Jesus is the best way to live a happy, fulfilling life. He's the best guide we could ever ask for, and He's always there to help us stay on the right path. So, let's keep our eyes on Him and see all the amazing places He'll lead us!

Bible Memory Verse

Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus. - Hebrews 12:1b-2a

You Will Need:

- A large open space (like a church hall or outdoor field)
- Several small objects to serve as 'obstacles' (cones, pillows, etc.)
- A finish line marker (tape, rope, etc.)

Get Ready:

- Set up a 'race course' in your open space using the small objects as obstacles. Place them in a way that requires the children to navigate around them, not too easy but safe.
- Place the finish line marker at the end of the course.

Do This:

1. Divide the children into small teams or have them run the course individually, depending on your group size.
2. Explain that this race is like our life journey. The obstacles represent the challenges we face, but we must keep our eyes on Jesus (the finish line) and persevere.
3. Have each team or child run the course, encouraging them to focus on reaching the end. After everyone has had a turn, gather the children and discuss how focusing on Jesus helps us overcome obstacles in our lives.

Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- A large ball of yarn or string
- Scissors
- Index cards
- Pens or markers
- A "finish line" marker (could be a piece of tape on the floor, a cone, etc.)
- A Bible

Get Ready:

- Write out different "sins" or distractions (like lying, cheating, jealousy, video games, too much TV, etc.) on the index cards, one per card.

- Create a starting line and a finish line in your activity space.
- Cut the yarn or string into long pieces, enough for each child to have one.

Do this:

1. Begin by reading Hebrews 12:1-2 aloud to the group, focusing on the part about throwing off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. Explain that we're going to see what it feels like to try to run a race while we're tangled up in sin.
2. Give each child an index card and a piece of yarn. Have them tie one end of the yarn around their waist and attach the index card with their "sin" written on it to the other end, dragging behind them.
3. Explain that they will race from the starting line to the finish line, but the challenge is to see how these "sins" might slow them down or get them tangled up. They should try to run while dragging their "sin" behind them.
4. After the race, gather the children and discuss how the "sins" affected their ability to run the race. Ask how it felt to be slowed down or tangled up.
5. Conclude by discussing how Hebrews 12:1-2 encourages us to throw off everything that hinders us and the sins that entangle us, keeping our eyes on Jesus. Encourage them to think about what they might need to "throw off" in their own lives to run their race more effectively for God.

Snack Activity: Race to Untangle: The Hebrews 12:1-2

Snack

You'll Need:

- Pretzel sticks
- Marshmallows (large)
- Licorice strings (various colors)

- Small bowls
- A printed copy of Hebrews 12:1-2 for each child

Get Ready: Before the activity, set up a work area for each child with a small bowl, a handful of pretzel sticks, 2 large marshmallows, and several licorice strings. Print out Hebrews 12:1-2 and place a copy at each station.

Do this:

1. Read Hebrews 12:1-2 together. Discuss what it means to 'throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles.' Explain how we want to focus on Jesus and avoid getting tangled up in sin.
2. Instruct the children to create a 'runner' using the marshmallows for the body and head, pretzel sticks for the arms and legs, and licorice strings to represent the sins that can 'entangle' us. They can wrap the licorice around the pretzel stick limbs in different ways to symbolize getting tangled in sin.
3. Challenge the children to carefully remove the licorice 'sins' without breaking their pretzel stick 'limbs,' discussing as they work how focusing on Jesus helps us avoid or escape the 'tangles' of sin. Conclude by enjoying the snack together, reflecting on the importance of keeping our eyes on Jesus, the 'pioneer and perfecter of faith.'

Game Activity: Race to Fix Our Eyes on Jesus

You'll Need:

- A large open space (preferably outdoors)
- Several rolls of streamers or yarn in different colors
- Scissors
- Markers and large sheets of paper

Get Ready: Before the activity, write out several 'sins' (like lying, stealing, being unkind, etc.) on strips of streamers or lengths of yarn. On the large sheets of paper, write 'Jesus' at the top and place them at one end of the playing area. This end is the 'finish line.' The start line is at the opposite end of the playing area.

Do this:

1. Divide the children into two teams and line them up at the start line. Explain that the streamers/yarn represent sins that can entangle us and make it hard to follow Jesus, as mentioned in Hebrews 12:1-2.
2. At the signal, the first player from each team races to the pile of 'sins,' picks one, and reads it aloud. They then must say one way they can avoid or overcome that sin with Jesus' help. After sharing, they tie the 'sin' around their arm or leg and race back to tag the next player in line.
3. The race continues until all players have picked a 'sin,' shared how they can overcome it with Jesus' help, and tied it on themselves. The first team to finish, with all members standing at the 'finish line' by the 'Jesus' sign, wins.

This game helps children understand the importance of recognizing sins that can entangle us and focusing on Jesus to overcome them, as Hebrews 12:1-2 teaches.

Craft Activity: Race to Unravel: Don't Get Tangled in

Sin

You'll Need:

- A ball of yarn or string for each child
- Scissors
- Permanent markers

- Small cards with Hebrews 12:1-2 written on them
- A stopwatch or timer

Get Ready: Before the class, cut the yarn or string into lengths of about 10 feet. On each small card, write Hebrews 12:1-2 or print it out and attach it to the card. Set up a 'starting line' and 'finish line' in your classroom or outdoor space if available.

Do this:

1. Give each child a piece of yarn and a card with Hebrews 12:1-2. Explain that the yarn represents things that can entangle us in sin, and our goal is to stay focused on Jesus and free ourselves from these 'sins'.
2. Have the children tie one end of the yarn around their waist and then gently tangle the yarn around their arms and legs (not too tightly). At your signal, they must race from the starting line to the finish line, trying to untangle themselves as quickly as possible without breaking the yarn.
3. Once everyone has finished, gather the children and discuss how it felt to be tangled and what it took to become free. Relate this to the scripture, emphasizing the importance of 'throwing off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles' and focusing on Jesus. Use the permanent markers for the children to write or draw on their piece of yarn something they want to 'throw off' to focus more on Jesus.
4. Conclude with a prayer, asking God to help us throw off the sins that entangle us and run with perseverance the race marked out for us, keeping our eyes on Jesus.

Prayer Activity: Don't Get All Tangled Up in Sin

You'll Need:

- A spool of yarn

- Scissors
- Paper and pens

Get Ready: Cut several long pieces of yarn, enough for each child to have one. Write Hebrews 12:1-2 on a large piece of paper or a whiteboard for all the children to see.

Do this:

1. Begin by reading Hebrews 12:1-2 together as a class. Discuss what it means to throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles.
2. Give each child a piece of yarn and ask them to gently wrap it around their arm, symbolizing how sin can easily entangle us. As they do this, encourage them to think of a sin or habit they want to let go of.
3. After a moment of reflection, have them write that sin or habit on a piece of paper. Then, lead them in a prayer to ask God for help in throwing off these 'entanglements' as they carefully cut the yarn off their arm (with your assistance) and throw it away, symbolizing their commitment to run the race marked out for them without the weight of sin.