



Letters About Perseverance

Lesson Aim: To know keeping our focus on Jesus will strengthen us to never give up.

THE WORSHIP

Who God Is: The Spirit Who Guides Us

THE WORD

New Testament Letters: Hebrews 12:1-2

What He Has Done: God led the writer of Hebrews to write about persevering by focusing on Jesus.

Key Verse: Hebrews 12:2

THE WAY

Christ Connection: Deuteronomy 11:18-19

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." Matthew 7:7

Unit 5: The Promise of Guidance			
	Bible Story	What He Has Done	Aim
22	Letters About Love, 1 Corinthians 13:1-7; 1 John 4:11-12	God led Paul and John to write about love.	To understand the characteristics of love such as patience, kindness, and perseverance.
23	Letters About Unity, 1 Corinthians 12:12, 17-18, 26	God led Paul to write about unity.	To learn about unity and the body of Christ.
24	Letters About Forgiveness of Sin, Romans 3:23; 7:19; 1 John 1:9; Galatians 5:22-23	God led Paul and John to write about Jesus saving us from sin.	To know we are all sinners in need of God's forgiveness.
25	Letters About Forgiving Others, Colossians 3:12-13; 1 Corinthians 13:5	God led Paul to write about forgiving others.	To know God calls us to forgive others as He has forgiven us.
26	Letters About Peace, Philippians 4:4-9	God led Paul to write about peace of mind.	To know God can give us peace of mind in all circumstances.
27	Letters About Perseverance, Hebrews 12:1-2	God led the writer of Hebrews to write about persevering by focusing on Jesus.	To know keeping our focus on Jesus will strengthen us to never give up.

TEACHER'S ENCOURAGEMENT

This week, read 2 Timothy 4:7-8. Please join us in praying, "Lord, You are the author and perfecter of our faith. Strengthen the children so they can run the race You have set before them. Amen."

Teacher Tip: For Prophets & Promises Lessons 22-31 (Units 5-6), place your Bible in a mailbag along with any supplies needed for THE WAY, as a visual reminder of the letters of the New Testament.

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**THE WORSHIP
THE WORD &
THE WAY**

Segment	Minutes	Activity	Supplies
THE WELCOME	Up to 15	Meet & Greet	None
		Game: Race to the Cross	Floor tape or chalk, freestanding cross, blindfolds (one for every two children)
THE WORSHIP	Up to 20	Worship Sheet music and recordings for Bible Memory Verse Songs available at ResourceWell.org	Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse Song: "Yahweh Every Day: Ask, Seek, Knock" Other Bible Memory Verse Song Suggestions: "Praise the Lord, O My Soul" "The New Testament Overture" "Where the Spirit of the Lord Is" Additional Hymn Suggestion: "I Love You, Lord" "Open the Eyes of My Heart, Lord"
		Worship Scripture Reading: Matthew 6:31-33	Bible
		Offering	Baskets
		Worship Illustration	Lesson 27 Mail Call script or storybook
THE WORD	Up to 10	New Testament Letters: Hebrews 12:1-2	Bibles, Bible Story Scripture reference poster, mailbag containing teacher's Bible and supplies for a finish line (e.g. string, crepe paper roll, toilet paper)
THE WAY	Up to 25	Discuss the Word	Bibles, Christ Connection Scripture reference poster, mailbag (contents listed above under THE WORD)
		Christ Connection: Deuteronomy 11:18-19	
		Golden Bowl	
	Final 5	Final Five Minutes	Treasure Treat—New Testament Postcards and eyes (or glasses or binoculars) stamps or stickers (available at ResourceWell.org), Daily Ways, basket, paper, pencils, crayons or markers, prayer notebook, Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse Song "Yahweh Every Day: Ask, Seek, Knock"
GOT TIME?	Up to 10	Snack: Focus Food Snack	Donuts (or any snack with a hole in the center)
	Up to 10	Game: Break Free!	Cross, five favorite items children typically enjoy (toys, candy, ball, game pieces, etc.)
	Up to 15	Craft: Care Package—Gold Medal Followers	See craft for supply list.
	Up to 10	Game: New Testament Line	27 sheets of paper, marker, clothesline or thin cord, 27 clothespins or paperclips, "The New Testament Overture" song, Bible
	Up to 10	Bible Memory Verse Activity: Ask, Seek, Knock!	Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse poster, optional: Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse Song
	Up to 15	Bible Memory Verse Activity: Race to Repeat	Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse poster, Bible
	Up to 5	New Testament Letters Review	New Testament Letter themes printed on footprint-shaped paper

RESOURCES: Supplemental materials are available at ResourceWell.org.



Getting started

THE WELCOME

To spark anticipation, encourage arriving children to meet and greet one another with today's question.
Meet & Greet Question: What is a prize you would like to win?

GAME: RACE TO THE CROSS

Purpose: Children will compete in a relay race to help them discover how living life following Jesus can be compared to running a great race.

Supplies: Floor tape or chalk, freestanding cross, blindfolds (one for every two children)

Prepare: Stand the cross in the center of the play area. Use floor tape or chalk to create four start lines equidistant from the cross.

Let's have a race to see which team can get to the cross the fastest. But be careful! This race has an extra challenge!

Directions:

1. Form four teams of equal number. Small groups may choose to form two teams.
2. Have children on each team stand in pairs behind their team's start line.
3. Give a blindfold to the first pair on each team.
4. On your signal, one child in each pair puts on the blindfold.
5. The other child in each pair leads his or her blindfolded teammate to the cross.
6. The blindfolded child must gently touch the cross before being led back to the start line.
7. Pairs switch places and repeat before handing the blindfold to the next pair in line.
8. The goal is to be the first team to complete the relay race. Continue playing until all the teams are finished to determine which team is in second, third, and fourth place.

Was it harder to find your way to the cross when you couldn't see where you were going? (Children respond.) **Today, we will read what some of the New Testament letters say about following Jesus being similar to finishing a race. Let's learn more about that!**

Limited Space? Teams play one at a time. The team to complete the relay in the fastest time wins. Or, play the game as a marbles race: players (with and without blindfolds) shoot the marble toward a smaller cross or a piece of tape in the shape of a cross.



The Spirit who guides us

THE WORSHIP

Teacher Tip: To help children identify time set aside for worship, designate a special corner or area for singing, collecting offering, and watching the worship illustration. Play music as children move to the designated area.

Today, we worship the Spirit who guides us to keep following Jesus. The Holy Spirit can help us keep our thoughts focused on Jesus everywhere, every day. He can help us to never give up.



As we sing, pray, and give our offering, let's ask the Holy Spirit to help us keep our thoughts on Jesus, His love for us, and His kingdom. Sing: "Open the Eyes of My Heart, Lord" while collecting the offering.



Read Matthew 6:31-33.



Sing the Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse Song, "Yahweh Every Day: Ask, Seek, Knock."

Sing: "Where the Spirit of the Lord Is."

You may also choose to sing songs that focus on Jesus.



Perform the Mail Call script or read storybook: Prophets & Promises Unit 5, Lesson 27.



Letters about perseverance

THE WORD

Additional Supplies for THE WORD and THE WAY: Place the teacher's Bible and supplies for a finish line (e.g. string, crepe paper roll, toilet paper) in a mailbag.

Teacher Tip: As you move from worship to instruction, change rooms or locations within a room to help redirect the children's focus to the Bible story. During this transition time, have each child write his or her name on a card and place it in the Golden Bowl.

Before we read God's Word, let's go over our Class Covenant. A covenant is an agreement. Just as God made a covenant with His people, I ask each of you to make this covenant promise with me today. Listen as I read our Class Covenant: "I will keep my eyes on my teacher, my mouth in control, my ears on God's Word—knowing God is my goal."

Last time, we found letters about peace. We learned God can give us peace of mind even when our problems don't go away. Today, we have letters from the New Testament that encourage us to persevere in following Jesus. That means to never give up in following Him. It is wonderful to follow Jesus, but it is not always easy. It means choosing every day to do things His way instead of our own way. The writer of the letter to the Hebrews knew believers would need encouragement to keep following Jesus. The letter explains that following Jesus is similar to finishing a race.



If you brought your Bible, open it now and share with others. Hand out spare Bibles. **Today's Scripture verse is behind the curtain** (or secret door, secret window, etc.). Child reveals the Bible Story Scripture reference: Hebrews 12:1-2.

Before we read, let's stand and ask God to open our eyes, ears, hearts, and minds to His Word today. Who would like to pray that for us? Child prays aloud. **Be seated. Let's read our first letter about focusing on Jesus.** Read Hebrews 12:1-2.

The writer of Hebrews says we are "surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses." These witnesses are all those who are now in heaven. They have already finished their race and are cheering for you as you go through your life focusing on Jesus.



Fixing our eyes on Jesus

THE WAY

Living each day following Jesus is like running in an exciting life-long race toward heaven. When we keep our eyes on Jesus, we are sure to finish the race! To understand more about the race, let's run a race right now.

- Remove the finish line supplies from mailbag.
- Choose two volunteers to hold up the ends of the finish line at one end of the play area.
- Choose two more volunteers to be runners. Start them at the opposite end of the play area.
- Instruct the first runner to keep his or her eyes on the finish line. Instruct the second runner to keep looking behind as he or she runs toward the finish line.
- On your signal, have both runners run the race.

What happened to the two runners in this race? (Due to a forward focus, the first runner should have run the race more quickly and with less stumbling.) **When you run, where is the best place for your eyes to look?** (Children respond.)

Living your life focused on Jesus is like a race, but it is not a physical race with just one winner. We don't need to have a strong body or be a fast runner to be in this race. To finish this race and win the prize, all we have to do is fix our eyes on Jesus, because He has already marked out a race for each one of us. What do you think it means to "fix our eyes on Jesus"? (Children respond.) **It is to always be focused on doing things His way, on loving Him and everyone He has made.**



Connecting the Old Testament, the New Testament, and Us

CHRIST CONNECTION

Knowing what the Bible says about who Jesus is and what He has done helps us know how to follow Him. Nearly 1,500 years before the letter to the Hebrews was written, Moses taught the Hebrews about focusing on God's Word, the Bible. In Bible times, some people wore a small scroll of Bible verses attached to a headband to help them remember to focus on God's Word.



Everyone, place your Bible on your lap. Choose a child to reveal the Christ Connection Scripture reference: Deuteronomy 11:18-19. **Let's find this scripture.** Read Deuteronomy 11:18-19.

Singing a Bible verse with music, reading the Bible with your family, hearing the story at church, and coloring pictures of the Bible story are just a few of the ways to remember God's Word. What is your favorite way to learn God's Word? (Children respond.)

Close your eyes and picture yourself in a life-long race where you are keeping your eyes fixed on Jesus by praying to Him, learning about Him in the Bible, and doing things His way instead of your own way. Picture Jesus standing at the finish line cheering for you. The prize is being with Him in heaven. Before you open your eyes, let's pray that Jesus will help you keep your eyes fixed on Him each day. Lead children in prayer.

THE WAY *continued...*



Revelation 5:8

GOLDEN BOWL

Teacher Tip: Write the names of classmates, local church leaders, and children in other nations or others who need prayer on small pieces of paper. Place the papers in a golden bowl.

Revelation 5:8 says our prayers are like sweet smelling incense in the golden bowls at God's throne. I'm going to lift each one of your names to God's throne as you pray for each person silently. Then, we will pray the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13) aloud together. Let's pray.

Lord God, we lift up to Your throne the name of each child here. We trust You to watch over us and our needs, the ones we say aloud and the ones hidden in our hearts. First, we lift up to You ____, ____, ____. Read names in Golden Bowl.

Now, we pray the prayer Your Son taught us: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.



When only 5 minutes remain, begin this segment.

FINAL FIVE MINUTES

TREASURE TREAT: Today, your Treasure Treat is a New Testament Postcard with a stamp (or sticker) of eyes (or glasses or binoculars) to remind you to focus on Jesus. Place the stamp or sticker in the corner box on the back of the postcard. **On your postcard, list where to find today's New Testament letters in the Bible.** The scriptures are listed in the Daily Way. **Read the scriptures again to help you answer the postcard question.**

DAILY WAY CHALLENGE: Did anyone bring in a completed Daily Way from last time? Praise or reward those who return a Daily Way. Distribute Lesson 27 Daily Way 5-day Bible study. **Complete this week's Daily Way at home and let God speak to you through His own words in the Bible. Join the Daily Way Challenge by returning your completed Daily Way.**

Teacher Tip: Collect Daily Ways in a basket or other container and periodically reward children as a group for completing the challenge.

OFFERING OF ART: Until it is time to be dismissed, make an Offering of Art. For your offering, draw your favorite thing about today and something special about the letters from the New Testament you just learned.

PRAYER REQUESTS: As children work on their Offering of Art, ask how you can pray for them this week. Write their prayer requests in a prayer notebook.

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE SONG: Play the Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse Song, "Yahweh Every Day: Ask, Seek, Knock," in the background as children wait to be dismissed.



If time remains, choose from the connected activities below.

GOT TIME?

SNACK: FOCUS FOOD SNACK

Purpose: Children will eat a snack while personally connecting to the story.

Snack Suggestion: Donuts (or any snack with a hole in the center)

Directions:

1. Serve snacks and drinks.
2. **If you look through the center of this donut, what do you see?** Children look through the hole and describe what they see. **You can't see everything around you. Instead, you can only focus on what is right in front of you! God wants us to focus on Jesus. Instead of looking back at our mistakes or focusing on things around us that we treat as more important than God, we should keep our thoughts focused on Jesus.**
3. Child prays to thank God for the snack.
4. Ask the Snack Discussion Question: **"What is one thing about Jesus you can focus on?"**

GAME: BREAK FREE!

Purpose: For children to know it is easier to follow Jesus when we focus on Him.

Supplies: Cross, five favorite items children typically enjoy (toys, candy, ball, game pieces, etc.)

The letter to the Hebrews says our sins (wrongdoings) can tangle us up and distract us from focusing on Jesus and His plan for us. Even good things can distract us if we treat them as more important than Jesus. Show the five favorite items. These favorite things are good things; they are gifts from God. But, if we focus on them too much and treat them as more important than Jesus, then it is much harder to follow Him and His plan. Let's run a race where we tangle ourselves up in things that distract us and a race where we fix our eyes on Him. The cross will stand for Jesus. Show the cross.

Directions:

1. Discuss each favorite thing and how it might distract us from following Jesus.
2. Place the cross at one end of the play area.
3. Assign different children to hold each of the five favorite items and one to hold the cross. Instruct them to stand in different locations of the play area.
4. Divide remaining children into teams of four. Each team chooses a runner.
5. In the first round, runners must try to keep their eyes on the cross as much as possible. Time each runner as he or she races to touch each favorite item before racing to the cross.
6. In the second round, time each runner as he or she keeps his or her eyes on the cross while running directly to the cross.
7. Announce the differences between the timings.

How did you feel trying to keep your eyes on the cross while heading in different directions to touch the favorite things? (Children respond.) The second race is a picture of how it should be throughout our lives as we follow Jesus. When we keep our eyes on Him and keep thinking about what He would like us to do, it is much easier to follow Him!

GOT TIME? *continued...*

CRAFT: CARE PACKAGE—GOLD MEDAL FOLLOWERS

Purpose: For children to give a gift to encourage others to follow Jesus.

Supplies: Sturdy gold paper, shiny craft supplies (foil, craft jewels, glitter, sequins, shiny stickers, etc.), wide ribbon, crayons or markers, scissors, glue

Prepare: From sturdy gold paper, cut a 3-inch circle. Punch a hole in the top of the circle. Cut a 35-inch length of ribbon. Print on the circle (for younger children) or write where children can see to copy: **Fix Your Eyes on Jesus. Hebrews 12:2.** Choose other believers to be the recipients of the medals. If possible, arrange for the recipients to visit the class, have children hand out the medals after a church service, or give them to teachers or students in a nearby class.

Optional: Allow the children to make two medals, one to keep and one to give away. Encourage children to put the medals around the recipients' necks and explain why they are awarding that person with a medal. Children may sculpt the medals from craft clay or dough or use gold paint. If necessary, allow time for drying before children decorate the medals.

Today, we learned what the New Testament letters teach about perseverance. Perseverance means to not give up. Who should we focus on so we will not lose heart and give up? (Jesus.) We must keep our eyes on Jesus as we follow Him. Just as Paul encouraged the Philippians to forget the past and strain toward the prize in heaven, we can encourage believers today to keep racing toward Jesus. Let's make a medal we can give to other believers to congratulate them for doing a good job following Jesus and to encourage them to keep on following Him. Share information about the care package recipient(s) with the children or let them each choose someone they would like to encourage. Allow them to ask questions so they truly understand where and to whom their gift will be delivered.

Directions:

1. Copy the verse from Hebrews 12:2 onto the circle.
2. Decorate the circles to look like medals using shiny craft supplies and/or gold paint.
3. Thread a ribbon through the hole and knot the ends together.
4. Deliver the gifts!

GAME: NEW TESTAMENT LINE

Purpose: Children learn the books of the New Testament.

Supplies: 27 sheets of paper, marker, clothesline or thin cord, 27 clothespins or paperclips, "The New Testament Overture," Bible

Prepare: Write the name of each New Testament book on a separate sheet of paper. Shuffle the papers. Hang the clothesline in the play area at a low height so children can reach it.

Directions:

1. Play "The New Testament Overture" two times. Encourage the children to sing along as they become familiar with the words.
2. Challenge the children to place the New Testament books in order by hanging the sheets of paper in correct order on the clothesline with clothespins.
3. To help the children, play the song while they work or leave a Bible open to the table of contents for them to reference, as needed.
4. After all the books are hung in the correct order, challenge children to recite the books of the New Testament from memory.

GOT TIME? *continued...*



BIBLE MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITIES

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." Matthew 7:7

GAME: ASK, SEEK, KNOCK!

Purpose: Children learn the Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse.

Supplies: Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse poster, optional: Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse Song

Our Bible Memory Verse is the words of Jesus encouraging us to keep praying because God is good and He answers our prayers. What is an example of asking God to give you something? (Children respond.) What is an example of seeking an answer from God? (Children respond.) "The door will be opened to you" is an expression meaning God will make a way for something to happen for you. You can use the word "ASK" to help you remember our Bible Memory Verse:

A stands for "Ask and it will be given to you."

S stands for "Seek and you will find."

K stands for "Knock and the door will be opened to you."

Directions:

1. Children sit in a circle.
2. Lead the children in reciting or singing the Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse.
3. **Let's practice our Bible Memory Verse by going around the circle and each saying the next word in the verse. I will start.**
4. Say the first word of the verse, "Ask."
5. The child on your left says the next word, "and."
6. Continue around the circle until the entire verse is said.
7. As time allows, play again. Challenge the children to recite the verse faster each time.

Option: For older children, use a timer or clock to see how quickly the verse is completed each time.

GAME: RACE TO REPEAT

Purpose: Children learn the Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse.

Supplies: Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse poster, Bible

Directions:

1. Practice saying the Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse together once.
2. Divide the children into two equal teams.
3. Arrange the teams into two parallel lines about 15 - 20 feet from each other, facing each other.
4. Assign each team member with a number, so that each team has a player 1, 2, 3, and so on.
5. Place a Bible in the center of the play area between the two teams.
6. Call out a number.
7. The children from each team with that number races to be the first one to touch the Bible.
8. The child who touches the Bible first earns point for his or her team by saying the Bible Memory Verse correctly. (You may choose to allow children to use the Bible Memory Verse poster or Bible as a reference.)
9. Continue playing by calling a different number in each round until every number is called.

GOT TIME? *continued...*



NEW TESTAMENT LETTERS REVIEW

Prophets & Promises Part One studies the miracles and stories of the Bible from Acts through Revelation. Lessons 22-31 explore several of the themes of the New Testament letters. The previous lesson will always be reviewed briefly in THE WORD segment of each Teacher's Guide. Review recent Bible stories to see the continuing story of who God is and He has done.

New Testament Letters: Letters about Forgiving Others (Circa 33 A.D. - 150 A.D.) Paul wrote many letters about forgiving others. What does it mean to hold a grudge? (Children respond.) What are some of the attitudes Paul listed when he wrote about forgiving others? (Compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.)

New Testament Letters: Letters about Peace (Circa 33 A.D. - 150 A.D.) What does it mean to have the peace of God in your heart and mind? (Children respond.) Peace is a calmness of heart and mind that comes from trusting God, even when facing very hard times. What does Paul tell us to do instead of thinking about our worries? Read the answer in Philippians 4:8.

New Testament Letters: Letters about Perseverance (Circa 33 A.D. - 150 A.D.) The Bible says that life following Jesus is like a running a race toward our prize in heaven. What helps us persevere (never give up) in following Jesus? (Fixing our eyes on Him.) What does it mean to fix our eyes on Jesus? (It is to do things His way, love Him and everyone He has made.)

How to create a display for reviewing the New Testament Letters:

1. Download and print the Bible Timeline for Prophets & Promises (available at www.resourcewell.org).
2. Print each New Testament Letters scroll on sturdy paper.
3. Choose a wall or other visible location to display the timeline.
4. Before each lesson, add the scroll for that lesson to the Bible Timeline using the list below.
5. To review, ask the corresponding questions as you point to the associated scroll.

New Testament Letters (Circa 33 A.D. - 150 A.D.): Letters about Love > Letters about Unity > Letters about Forgiveness of Sin > Letters about Forgiving Others > Letters about Peace > Letters about Perseverance > Letters about Weakness > Letters about Strength > Letters to the Seven Churches > Letters about Jesus' Return