

Go the Distance

Bible Story: Go the Distance (Peter and John Are Taken to the Sanhedrin) • Acts 3:1–4:21

Bottom Line: Keep going even when it gets tough.

Memory Verse: *Let us not become tired of doing good. At the right time we will gather a crop if we don't give up.* Galatians 6:9 (NirV)

Life App: Determination—Deciding it's worth it to finish what you started

Basic Truth: I need to make the wise choice.

Social: Providing Time for Fun Interaction (Small Groups, 15 minutes)

Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Get ready to experience today's story.

Before kids arrive, take a few moments to pray for them. Pray for the kids who are in the middle of trying to keep going when something is harder than they thought it would be. Ask God to help those kids stick with it, whether it's a sport, an instrument, a new skill, or simply being kind to a sibling. Pray that God would guide you as you help kids think through practical ideas to keep plugging away.

1. Early Arriver

Made to Connect: an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

What You Need: Paper clips

What You Do:

- Clip four or five paper clips together to begin forming a chain.
- As kids arrive, encourage them to grab some paper clips and add them to your chain.
- Ask:
 - Have you ever been tempted to give up when something got hard?
 - What made you decide to keep going or not keep going?
- Encourage your few to attempt to add every single paperclip to the chain, as you continue to talk about times you were tempted to give up.

2. Moves Unstuck

Made to Move: an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

What You Need: Music

What You Do:

- Kids will be playing “freeze dance.”
- Encourage kids to show off their coolest moves until you hit pause on the music.
- Then they should freeze however they are posed (even if it's an awkward or difficult position).
- When you un-pause the music, they can get back to dancing.
- Continue to play as time and interest allow.

What You Say:

“I knew we had a pretty cool group here, but I had no idea you all had those kinds of moves in you! Did anyone get stuck having to freeze on a super hard move? *(Allow time for responses.)* You all did an amazing job at remaining frozen! ***[Transition]*** Today in Large Group, we’re going to learn about some people who really could have gotten themselves stuck but instead, they decided to keep going. I wonder how they did it. Let’s go find out!”

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect (Small Groups, 25 minutes)

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible story applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

1. Holy Spirit Power**[Talk about God | Bible Story Review]**

Made to Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

What You Need: “Holy Spirit Power” Activity page, tape, ball

What You Do:

- Recap the Bible story using the questions below.
 1. Who did Peter and John run into when they approached the temple? *(A man lying on a mat)*
 2. Why was the man lying on a mat? *(He wasn’t able to walk)*
 3. What did Peter say they could do for the man? *(Heal him by the power of the Holy Spirit)*
 4. What happened to the man? *(He was healed and was able to walk)*
 5. How did the man respond once he was healed? *(He started walking and leaping and praising God!)*
 6. How did the religious leaders respond because of the man’s healing? *(They did not like it)*
 7. What happened to Peter and John? *(They were arrested)*
 8. What did the religious leaders ask Peter and John not to do? *(Speak about Jesus)*
 9. Did Peter and John stop talking about Jesus? *(No)*
- Once you have reviewed the story, teach kids the motions on the “Holy Spirit Power” Activity Page.
 - Help (hand on forehead like you’re feeling faint)
 - Heal (both arms up showing muscles)
 - Captain (salute)
- Go through the motions a few times, until kids seem familiar with them.
- Then post the Activity Page on a nearby wall, for kids to refer to during the game.
- Divide your group into two teams.
- Instruct kids to choose one person from each team to go first.
- Those kids should stand a couple feet apart, facing each other.
- Place a ball in the middle of the first two kids.
- They will compete against each other to be the first to grab the ball in the middle.
 - Start by calling out various motions, in random order, for example: “Captain, captain, heal, power!”

- The two kids who are competing will quickly do the motions you call out.
- But when you call “Power!” kids must attempt to grab the ball in the middle before the other person does.
- The kid who grabs the ball first stays in the middle, and the other kid is out.
- Keep the pace as quick as possible and make sure everyone gets to have at least one turn in the middle.
- Play as time and interest allow.

What You Say:

“I can tell you all were really paying attention to today’s story! Peter and John were faced with challenging people and really tough situations, but the Holy Spirit helped them **[Bottom Line] keep going even when it gets tough.** How do you think they felt when they got arrested? *(Allow time for responses.)* What about when they were ordered not to preach in Jesus’ name, but they did it anyway? Do you think Peter and John were scared or nervous that they’d get in trouble? But what kept them going? *(Allow for a few responses and discussion.)* Don’t ever forget that God sent us a Helper that we can call on to help us when we want to quit and give up.”

* 2. Even When

[Live for God | Application Activity]

Made to Imagine: an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play and reenactment

What You Need: “Even When” Activity Page, ping-pong ball, objects to carry ball (spatula, spoon, chopsticks, jumbo straw, etc.)

What You Do:

- Instruct kids to sit in a circle.
- Choose one kid to go first.
- Give that kid a ping-pong ball and something to carry the ball with (spatula, spoon, chopsticks, etc.).
- Ask them to carry the ball around the circle.
- After they make it once around the circle, they will tag someone else to be “It.”
- The next person will carry the ball as well but with a different item.
- If/when they drop the ball, give an “Even When” question and talk about how they can show determination even when something tough happens.
 - *Note: It’s okay if a lot of the kids’ responses are simply, “Keep doing the thing you started.” The idea is to get them thinking about all the different opportunities they have to buckle down and show determination.*
- Continue rotating items and taking turns until all kids have had a chance to walk around the circle.

What You Say:

“Isn’t it so hard to continue what we started when things go wrong? How did you feel when the ping-pong ball fell off whatever you were holding it with? *(Allow time for responses.)* I completely agree! **[Make It Personal] (Share a time when you decided to finish something even though you faced a challenge. Talk about what helped you hang in there: a kind friend, prayer, something working out to give you a boost of encouragement, etc.)** Just like I decided to show determination, you can

choose to keep going, too! Whatever hurdle comes your way, it is always worth it to finish what we started. Let's decide that this week, we are going to **[Bottom Line] keep going even when it gets tough.**"

3. Unstuck the Stack

[Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

Made to Move: an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

What You Need: Plastic cups, permanent markers, timer, Bibles

What You Do:

- Divide your group into three teams.
- Provide each team with permanent markers and a plastic cup for each word of your preferred translation of Galatians 6:9.
- Instruct the teams to work together to write the memory verse (including the reference) on the cups, with one word per cup.
- Make sure kids are careful with the permanent markers. Warn them that they may have to stop participating if they don't show self-control as they work.
- Once teams are finished writing the verse, instruct them to stack their cups inside each other in ascending order.
 - The reference cup should be on the very bottom (so it's the outside cup in the stack).
 - The next cup from the bottom should be the first word of the verse.
 - The third cup from the bottom should be the second word of the verse, and so on.
- Ask each team to pick one person to go first.
- When you say, "Go," teams must race to move the reference cup through the stack of other cups until the reference cup is back on the bottom.
 - They'll do this by taking a single cup from the bottom of the stack and placing it on the top (inside the top cup) and continue doing this until all cups have been rotated and they are back at the reference cup.
- While their teammate moves the cups through the stack, the entire group must say the verse out loud.
- The team that gets through the stack fastest, wins!
- Continue playing as teams rotate players, making sure everyone has a turn.

What You Say:

"Well, you could say the odds were definitely stacked against you in this game. See what I did there? But you pushed through and showed determination anyway. Was anyone wishing they could just give up in the middle of the game and be done? *(Pause for responses.)* You know, our verse this month reminds us that we can **[Bottom Line] keep going even when it gets tough.** Whether we are about to finish up the school year, attempting to do all of our chores at hyper speed, or simply showing kindness to our siblings, let's remember that God wants us show determination every day!"

Pray and Dismiss

[Pray to God | Prayer Activity]

Made to Connect: an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

What You Need: Cups from the “Unstuck the Stack” activity, markers, paper, scissors

What You Do:

- Give each kid a cup (it doesn't matter which word is one the cup), a marker, a piece of paper and scissors.
- Kids will cut out several small strips of paper (about the length of their index finger) from the paper.
- Next, they write the name of each person in the group, one on each of the strips of paper.
 - If they have extra paper, they can write the names of family members or friends.
- Tell kids that each day this week, they should pull the name of one person out of the cup and pray for God to help that person have determination, no matter what comes their way.
- When your group is finished, close in prayer.

What You Say:

“God, we want to thank You for not just telling us that we can stay determined in the tough times but also that You help us stay determined through Your Holy Spirit. We thank You for the stories of people like Peter and John who remind us of this truth. Give us the strength to **[Bottom Line] keep going even when it gets tough** and finish our school year strong!”