Day 1 Bible Study

Theme: Run the race -- even in the face of obstacles.

Supplies Needed: Computer, Projector, Screen, Paper Plates (1 per child), yarn (about 2 feet per child), hole-puncher, markers/colored pencils/crayons

Scripture: “Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Hebrews 12:1-2

Our Bible reading today says, "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us."

Questions to Ask: Have you ever run a race? Have you ever won a medal or a trophy for running a race?

It is a thrill to run a race and hear the voices of the people who are watching as they shout words of encouragement. It is an even greater thrill when you finish the race and win a medal or a trophy.

Show Video: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t2G8KVzTwfw

The Story behind the video:
Several years ago when the Olympics were held in Barcelona, Spain, the world saw one of the greatest moments in Olympic history. Derek Redmond, a young man from Britain, had dreamed all his life of winning a gold medal in the 400 meter race. He had worked hard to get to the Olympics and his dream was within his reach. He was in the semi-finals and was running the race of his life. He could see the finish line just ahead as he rounded the final turn. Suddenly, he felt a sharp pain in the back of his leg and he fell to the track with a torn muscle in his right leg.

As the medical attendants ran toward him, Derek struggled to his feet. He started to hop toward the finish line on one foot in an attempt to finish the race. Suddenly, a large man came out of the stands, pushed aside a security guard and ran to Derek's side. It was Jim Redmond, Derek's father. "You don't have to do this," he told his son. "Yes, I do," said Derek. "Well, then," said his father, "we're going to finish this together."

And they did. They stayed in Derek's lane all the way to the end. At first, the crowd watched in silence. Then they rose to their feet and cheered -- and wept.
Derek Redmond didn't win the gold medal, but he walked away with the incredible memory of a loving father who, when he saw his son in pain, left his seat in the stands to help him finish the race.

Read Hebrews 12:1-3 from The Message.

“Heavens and earth will pass away, but My words will never pass away. Do you see what this means—all these pioneers who blazed the way, all these veterans cheering us on? It means we’d better get on with it. Strip down, start running—and never quit! No extra spiritual fat, no parasitic sins. Keep your eyes on Jesus, who both began and finished this race we’re in. Study how he did it. Because he never lost sight of where he was headed—that exhilarating finish in and with God—he could put up with anything along the way: Cross, shame, whatever. And now he’s there, in the place of honor, right alongside God. When you find yourselves flagging in your faith, go over that story again, item by item, that long litany of hostility he plowed through. That will shoot adrenaline into your souls!”

Question 1
Say, “What are the actions taken by athletes when preparing for their sport?” Give students moments to respond. Encourage your class to give specifics, like get in shape, lose weight, exercise muscles, study the sport, practice, practice, practice, choose healthy foods, get plenty of sleep, focus on the sport and remove obstacles, think positive thoughts, watch others who are successful in their sport, etc. Share some of the previous ideas to complete the list they provide.

Say, “Why does Paul suggest that believers should follow the example of an athlete preparing for his sport?” After students respond, point out that Paul encourages those who want to run the race set before them to prepare in the same way athletes prepare.

Question 2
Say, “What does Paul say about sin in these verses?” Students should respond that Paul encourages believers to set aside sin which so easily snares or entangles them and keeps them from running the race. Point out that Paul calls for believers to run, not crawl or walk the race. Ask, “Why is it that believers find themselves crawling or walking the race? Say, “With the power of God, you can decide to confess sin, get forgiveness for sin, and run the race.”

Question 3
Say, “What kinds of obstacles get in the way of a student who wants to run the race and be faithful to God in school?” After students share their responses, say, “in what ways, have you seen God provide help to deal with some of these obstacles you’ve shared?” When students have responded, invite a student leader to lead a prayer giving thanks to God for His faithfulness to help with challenges they face.

Question 4
Say, “What actions does the letter to the Hebrews suggest for us as identified in verse 2 and 3?” Point out the following:
A. Those running the race need to fix their eyes on Jesus!
B. Those running the race should remember that Jesus finished the race.
C. Those running the race need to remember the obedience of Jesus as He lived, sacrificed, endured, and finished the race.
D. The life and race of Jesus serves as help and encouragement for each of us who run the race.
E. When facing obstacles and before getting discouraged, remember Jesus.

Medals of Honor: before class punch a hole in a paper plate and string with enough yarn that it can go through and tie around the neck (to look like a medal.) Have each child write the memory verse for the day (“So let us run the race that is before us and never give up.” Hebrews 12:1) on it and encourage them to repeat the verse to learn it. Have a leader go around and put the medals around the necks of each child congratulating them on running the race.

Provide enough time for prayer at the end of class, giving the opportunity for those children who may not have received Christ yet to begin running their race with Jesus in their hearts.

THIS BIBLE STUDY INCORPORATES RESOURCES FROM THE FOLLOWING WEBSITES:

http://www.sermons4kids.com/run-the-race.htm
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t2G8KvTtwfw

**If you find yourself with extra time, emphasize learning the memory verse. Have the children repeat the verse after you, leave out some words each time and let them fill in the blanks, add motions and have them do the motions as they speak, etc.**
DAY 2 BIBLE STUDY

Theme: Christ as our firm foundation

**Supplies:** Computer, Projector, Screen, Sand table or bucket with sand on tarp, stones about the size of half your hand, permanent markers

Scripture: Matthew 7:24-27


The Wise and Foolish Builders

24 “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. 26 But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. 27 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

Show Video: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kjoqMrFXx-k](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kjoqMrFXx-k) – Lego Bible story

If possible have a sand table in the room, if not a bucket of sand on a tarp will work. Give children the opportunity to go and play with the sand. Have them run their hands through it and let the sand fall through their fingers.

Teach the children how to make a rain storm using their hands.

11st step – quiet rain: rub both your hands together slowly
22nd step – louder rain: rub both your hands together more quickly
33rd step – rain on the roof: snap fingers on both hands slowly
44th step – harder rain on the roof: snap fingers on both hands more quickly
55th step – hard rain: slap both hands on knees very quickly
66th step – thunder: stomp both feet on the ground

Teach each step individually and then call out commands to make the storm start out small, build, go back down, and build again (or however you want it). This also serves as a listening exercise where the children have to follow commands.

Read the story and have the children act out the parts.

Cast: Wise man, foolish man, wind (2 or 3 children), 2 houses (2 children each with their arms stretched up and touching to make a roof) *The rest of the audience will be the storm and use the technique they just learned for the hand storm.*

“This story is a parable. A parable is a simple story that teaches a lesson. Jesus told parables to help make his instructions easier to understand and remember. This story is in the Bible, God’s Word. (Have your Bible to hold and show the children.)

Taken from: A Child’s Book of Parables
Two men – one smart and one foolish - set out one day to build houses for themselves. After searching for some time, the smart builder found a clear spot on the solid rocky ground. Building on the stone was difficult. It took a long time to complete the house. But when he finished, the man knew his new home was strong and would keep his family safe from the most powerful winds and heaviest rains. The foolish man found a nice spot for his house, too – on a sandy beach. Building on the soft sand was very easy and took very little time. He finished long before the smart builder. He was happy that he had such a nice view of the sea from his house. One day, a big storm came and battered the two houses. The rains fell, the winds blew, and the water rose and flooded the land. The smart builder’s house on the rock did not move an inch. But the house of the foolish builder cracked, crumbled and fell down.

Jesus said that if we hear his teachings and obey them, we are like the smart builder who built his house on the rock. If we hear his teachings and don’t obey them, we are like the foolish builder who built his house on the sand. Jesus is our rock – if we listen to his teachings and try our best to follow them, He will keep us safe.

Which builder would you want to be? It isn’t always easy to do what God wants. Sometimes it seems easier to do things your own way. But in the end, it’s always better to obey God. He always wants what is best for you.”

Give each student a stone about half the size of your hand. Provide permanent markers for them to decorate the stones and write the memory verse (or just the reference if that is all that will fit.) Remind them that Jesus should be the firm foundation we build our lives upon. Memory Verse - Matthew 7:24 “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.”

Provide enough time for prayer at the end of class, giving the opportunity for those children who may not have received Christ yet to ask Jesus to be their firm foundation.

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http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kjoqMrFXx-k

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