



# RUN *the* RACE

Keep on keeping on!

Scripture Verses  
1 Corinthians 9:24-27

## Choose Your Opening

### Option 1: Keep at It

( For this activity, you'll need to create three "determination stations." Use the suggestions below, or come up with your own ideas.

*\*Video Game Station—featuring a game that requires perseverance*

*\*Card-Stacking Station—Provide lots of playing cards*

*\*Free Throw Station—or a trash can and bunch of paper wads)*

Get a child at one of the stations. **Say:** If you are at the Video Game station, you must attempt to get the highest score or win the game. If you are at the Card Stacking station, you must stack as many cards as possible into a tall "house of cards." If you are at the Free Throw station, you must try to score as many baskets in a row as possible.

Every four minutes change stations. When the cycle is done **Ask:**

*\*What was it like to try to better your score, card-house size, or number of shots made in a row?*

*\*Did you ever feel like giving up? Why or why not?*

*\*How is the way you kept at this like the way you must persevere in everyday life? How is it different?*

*\*What kinds of things stop us from persevering in our lives?*

**Say:** Today we're going to explore how perseverance can help us when things get tough.

## Choose Your Opening

### Option 2: One More Time

*( For this activity, you'll need a bag of rice and a bunch of black or other solid-colored plates.)*

Around a table, give each child a plate and a handful of rice. **Say:** I'm going to assign you an item to illustrate using the rice, such as a house with a dog in the yard, an airplane with clouds, or a person holding a balloon. You'll create your illustration by placing the rice, one grain at a time, onto your plate. If you pick up more than one grain of rice at a time, you'll have to start over.

Make the suggestions difficult, yet not impossible, for kids to complete. Then have kids begin their work. After a minute or so, interrupt and **Say:** One more thing...at times, the table will shake, which might mess up your work. Be prepared.

During the next few minutes, watch to see that kids follow your instructions. Bump or shake the table from time to time. It's OK if kids try to save their creations by picking their plates up off the table.

Allow plenty of time for kids to attempt their illustrations, then have kids show what they've done. **Ask:**

\*What was it like to work on this project?

\*Did you ever feel like giving up?

\*When have you felt like that in life?

**Say:** In our faith, as in all aspects of our life, sometimes things get tough or get in our way. Today we're going to explore how perseverance can help us get through the tough times.

# THE BIBLE EXPERIENCE

## When Things Get Tough

*(For this activity, you'll need Bibles, concordances, and small prizes.)*

Give each child a Bible and a concordance. **Say:** You must find a Scripture passage about perseverance. The passage you're looking for contains the word "race." Use our concordances to find it. If you think you've found it, show me, and I'll let you know if you're correct. You must tell me exactly which verse or verses I'm looking for in order to proceed into the next part of this activity. If you find the exact passage, there is a prize for you!

The passage you want your kids to find is 1 Corinthians 9:24:27. Award the prizes to kids as they find the exact passage. **Discuss these questions:**

- \*What does it mean to persevere in faith?
- \*Why does Paul bother to persevere in faith?
- \*What prize is Paul talking about?
- \*When has it been tough to persevere in your faith?

After a few minutes discussion, **Ask:**

- \*How was the search for the passage like the message of the passage?
- \*What happens if we "give up" when things get tough?
- \*How does God help us persevere?
- \*How has God helped you persevere in the past?

**Say:** Paul knew the importance of perseverance even in the middle of difficult times. When we run into problems or difficulties, it's often easier to give up or give in than to strive to "win the race." But we can persevere with God's help and a little encouragement from one another.



### **Why Try?**

*(For this activity, you'll need something to serve as a volleyball net and a beach ball, balloon or other light-weight ball)*

This may require your participation, parents, so make sure there is at least one person on either side of the "net". Begin playing a version of volleyball where kids try to keep the ball in play for as many hits as possible. Count out loud as you keep track.

After each series of hits when there appears to be improvement on a previous score, have kids share ideas on how to persevere in their faith. Have kids think of things they can do on their own, such as pray, study the Scriptures, and go to church; and have them think of things they can do to help others, such as listening to a friend who's hurting.

Play until kids have improved their best volley at least three times. After the game's over, add your own ideas about persevering in faith.

## *Choose Your Closing*

### **Option 1: Running the Race**

*(For this activity, you'll need snacks)*

To close the lesson, have kids run a prayer relay race around the house or other building. Have kids take turns running around the building while silently praying a prayer about perseverance.

To "hand-off" the prayer to the next runner, other team members must first say aloud; "Thanks for listening to my prayer. Now please listen to (name of next team member)'s prayer." The last person on a team must call out "amen" when crossing the finish line.

When everyone has run the race, celebrate and enjoy the snacks together.

### **Option 2: Perseverance Prayer**

*(For this activity, you'll need snacks)*

Gather around. Explain ahead of time that you'll be going around the circle four or more times (as many times as you think would be a bit of a challenge) in a prayer about perseverance. Beginning with you, go around the circle and have everyone add to the prayer. Remind kids that they can repeat thoughts that have been spoken if they can't think of something new, but ask them to try their best to add something new to the prayer.

Suggest that kids ask for specific help with situations they're facing or thank God for times when he's helped them stay "in the race" when things were tough.

Begin the prayer by **Saying**: Dear God, help us persevere in faith...  
Close the prayer with a unison Amen. Enjoy the snacks together!