

Perseverance

Quarter 7 • Lesson 5

Focus on Character Development

1. **Connecting:** Play a game to learn what perseverance is.
2. **Teaching:** Hear and discuss Bible verses about perseverance (James 1:2–4; Hebrews 12:1).
3. **Responding:** Learn an object lesson to help remember the importance of perseverance.

SUPPLIES

- Bible
- Seeds (1 seed per child)
- Optional Supplies:*
- Pencils
- Large pieces of paper (2 for each group of 8 children)
- Crayons
- Memory Verse Poster
- Student Pages

Teacher Devotion

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.

Hebrews 12:1

What is perseverance? Perseverance is continued effort to do or achieve something despite difficulty, failure, or even opposition. Think about your own past. Was there a time when you had to persevere in the face of difficulty, failure, or opposition? If possible, write it down. How did God use that time to change you? How did God meet you in that situation?

Next, think about a difficult situation or task you are facing now. Often we ask God to take away difficult things. (Sometimes this is a good prayer!) However, this week, change that prayer. Rather than ask God to take away a difficult thing, ask Him to help you run the race with perseverance so that you may be made mature and complete. Ask Him to change you.

Family Connection: Let the families of the children know that you are starting a 4-week unit about perseverance, which means trying hard and not giving up, even when what you are doing is difficult. Encourage families to share examples from their own lives of perseverance. When have they persevered in the face of difficulty, failure, or opposition? What was the result?

LESSON TIME

1. Connecting: Play a game to learn what perseverance is.

Let's play a game that will help us learn a new, important word. The word is "perseverance." After the game, let's see if you can guess what the word means.

Form groups of 8 children. Choose a child from each group to be "IT." That person will stand outside the circle. The rest of the children in each group will link arms in a tight circle.

The child who is "IT" is going to try several different ways to get into the centre of your circle. Those of you in the circle will try to prevent him from getting into the circle, no matter what he says or does.

Tell the children who are "IT" that they will try to rejoin their circles by following your directions. Give a direction and pause for the children to try to get into the circles. Repeat for each direction.

Direction 1: Plead, beg, bargain, or promise. Say whatever you can to get your group to let you rejoin them.

Direction 2: Try to physically force your way into the circle without hurting anyone.

Direction 3: Try to join any other group by both pleading and physically forcing your way in. Do not hurt anyone.

- **The person who was trying to get into the circle was showing perseverance. So what do you think perseverance is?**

Let children share their ideas.

Great ideas! Perseverance is trying and not giving up, even if what you are trying to do is hard. When you persevere, you keep trying hard even if you fail or face obstacles or it is difficult.

For the next 4 lessons, we will learn about perseverance. Today we will read several Bible verses that help us understand perseverance better.

2. Teaching: Hear and discuss Bible verses about perseverance (James 1:2–4; Hebrews 12:1).

Listen carefully as I read a passage from the Bible. What does it say about perseverance?

Read James 1:2–4 from your Bible.

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance.

Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

James 1:2–4

Listen as I read these verses from another version of the Bible that might be easier to understand.

*My brothers and sisters, you will face all kinds of trouble.
When you do, think of it as pure joy. Your faith will be put to the test.
You know that when that happens it will produce in you the strength to
continue. The strength to keep going must be allowed to finish its work. Then
you will be all you should be. You will have everything you need.*

James 1:2–4, NIV

- **According to this passage, what happens when we persevere in doing difficult things?**

We get stronger and grow in ways that will help us.

- **James tells us to “consider it pure joy” when we face difficult times. Does this surprise you? Why or why not?**
- **Why do you think James says this?**

Now listen as I read another Bible verse about perseverance.

*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.*

Hebrews 12:1

- **What does this verse compare the Christian life to?**

A race.

- **How do you think the Christian life is like a race?**

Running is hard and tiring. Even the best runners sometimes feel like giving up, but they continue running anyway. When they continue running until the end, they receive a prize. Sometimes life is very hard. Sometimes following Jesus and choosing to follow His ways is very hard. It takes perseverance to keep trying in every situation. In the end, it is worth it! Those who love and follow Jesus have the most wonderful prize at the end—eternal life in heaven with Jesus!

Read Hebrews 12:1 again.

*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.*

Hebrews 12:1

- **What does this verse tell us about perseverance?**

We can learn perseverance from those who lived before us. With God’s help, we can persevere!

- **What have you learned about perseverance today?**

Allow children to share their ideas. Make sure these main points are covered: Perseverance is trying and not giving up, even when it is hard. When you persevere, you become more mature. Life is like a race, and it is important to persevere!

Working hard at something is a difficult thing to do! Sometimes you might not notice any improvement right away. You might be tempted to quit and give up. But perseverance is good because it can help you grow stronger.

Share the following stories about children who are showing perseverance. Ask the children to suggest possible results of perseverance in the life of each child when he or she is an adult. There are many possible answers.

Story 1

A 9-year-old girl is not good in math. But every day she tries to get better. She spends twice as long on her math homework as anyone else in her class.

- **How will her perseverance now help her as an adult?**

Story 2

A 12-year-old boy broke his left leg in 3 places. It healed, but he had become used to protecting it. So even though the leg has healed, he walks with a severe limp. It hurts and makes him tired. But he is determined to force himself not to protect his leg. So day after day, he tries not to limp.

- **How will his perseverance now help him as an adult?**

Story 3

A 10-year-old girl lost her mother. She has to take care of her 2 younger sisters. Sometimes she does not want to. Sometimes she gets mad at them. Because she is so tired, she sometimes wishes she had died instead of her mother. She washes and cooks and walks to get water and cooking fuel. Day after day it is the same thing. But she continues doing everything because it is the only way her younger sisters will survive.

- **How will her perseverance now help her as an adult?**

Congratulate the children for their ideas of how perseverance will help in all these situations.

3. Responding: Learn an object lesson to help remember the importance of perseverance.

Listen to these verses that can encourage you when you face difficult things and need to persevere.

If you are using the Memory Verse Poster, show it to the students.

*God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."
So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid."
Hebrews 13:5–6*

- How might these verses help you persevere when you go through difficulties?
- Why do you think that God does not just take all our difficulties away?

God uses our difficult times, when they happen, to make us stronger. As we grow stronger, we learn to trust Him more because we see that He is faithful even in hard times. We also learn that He gives us the strength to persevere.

Give each child a seed and have her hold her seed carefully.

- What type of seed is this?

Call on 1–2 children to share their guesses. If their guesses are wrong, tell the class what type of seed it is.

Hold up a seed as you talk.

Isn't it amazing that this tiny little seed can turn into a big, strong oak tree? This tiny seed must overcome many obstacles before it becomes a full-grown, strong plant. It must overcome things such as strong winds, powerful storms, drought, and birds or animals trying to eat it. Every time you see a big, strong tree or plant, you are looking at a tiny seed that persevered and did not give up. Take your seed home with you. Set it somewhere you will see it often. Let it remind you to persevere in everything you do, even the difficult situations and tasks.

Optional: If you are using the Student Page, give the students time to complete it. There is space for the children to respond to what they have learned by drawing.

Teacher Tip: This week, pray daily for your children by name. Ask God to help each child in the difficult things he will encounter.

Close class by praying this blessing based on Hebrews 12:1 over the children:

Blessing: God loves you and will never give up on you! May He help you run the race with perseverance. May you keep trying when things get hard, and may you never give up!

Lead the children in singing this quarter's song, if possible.

"Raise a Hallelujah" by Bethel Music https://youtu.be/JvXBf_dEiHU