



HEROES OF THE FAITH

INTERMEDIATE
Small Group

LESSON 11: INTERMEDIATE SMALL GROUP

Grab the Torch

MAIN IDEA

Running the race of faith requires discipline and courage. We can develop the same commitment and courage as the heroes of faith we've learned about in the Bible.

BIBLE PASSAGES

- Hebrews 11:6
- Romans 3:23
- Romans 6:23
- 1 John 5:1-5

MEMORY VERSE

Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me."

John 14:6, NLT



Prepare your heart to teach.
Plan for the lesson.



Connect with the kids and make them feel heard and cared for. (15 minutes)



Facilitate activity and study to help kids know and love Jesus. (20-25 minutes)



Lead kids to live out the mission of the Gospel. (5-10 minutes)

Prepare



Prepare your heart to teach.
Plan for the lesson.

QUESTIONS

- How can you be praying for the students this week?
- Are there any specific students or requests you can pray for?
- Are there any adaptations that you can make to the lesson this week to better serve the kids in your small group or make your small group more effective?
- How can you connect with the students outside of the club over the next few weeks?
- Is there a sporting event or performance you can go to? Can you plan a casual park or fast-food meet-up with them and their families (as a group or individually)?

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Bible
- Name tags
- Snacks, 1 per child
- Pom pom balls, 2 per small group
- Plastic spoons, 1 per student
- Pens or pencils, 1 per child
- Printouts 2, 4, 5; 1 per child
- Printout 3, 1 per small group
- Memory Verse Cards, 1 per child

Connect



Connect with the kids and make them feel heard and cared for.
(15 minutes)

Small Group Session 1

ICE BREAKER

Distribute name tags and snacks. Choose one of the following icebreaker activities to do together while children eat their snack:

- Option 1: Ask the children to share their highs and lows (the best and worst things that happened to them either today or from the past week).
- Option 2: Ask the children to take turns sharing how they're feeling today using the "How Are You Feeling?" chart (from the CKC Games Bag).

Ask, **As we have been studying the heroes of the faith, which hero of the faith have you enjoyed studying the most so far?**

PRAY TOGETHER

Collect prayer requests from the students. The leader or a student can pray for the entire group or a leader can pair up students and invite them to pray for one another.

INTRODUCTION

Join with another small group, divide students into equal teams, have them line up, and give each player a plastic spoon. Give a pom pom to the first player on each team. When you say, "GO", the students must pass the pom pom down the line using only the spoons. If the pom pom falls, start back at the first person. When the pom pom reaches the last player in line, that player moves to the front of the line, and the passing begins again. When the first person has reached the end of the line and brings the pom pom back to the front, the game is over and that team wins. Depending on the size of your group consider having leaders participate or sit out.

If time allows, you could make it more challenging by having students put the spoons in their mouths to pass the pom pom to each other.

When you are finished, head back into your small groups and have a brief discussion.

Ask:

- **What was the hardest part of this game?**
- **Was it easy to get distracted and drop the pom pom ball?**
- **Was it frustrating having to go back to the first person if the pom pom fell?**

Say, **We have been talking about Heroes of the Faith, and we have studied many people in the Bible who believed in God and followed him. The Bible talks about life as a race of faith. Just like a race or game, it's important to stay focused, or you can get behind or lose where you were. Today we will be discussing how we need to be focused on running the race of faith in our own lives.**

Heart



Facilitate activity and study to help kids know and love Jesus.
(20-25 minutes)

Small Group Session 2

THE RACE OF FAITH

Review the main idea of the lesson with the students.

Say, **It takes discipline and focus to run the race of faith.**

A runner needs to train and stretch, a runner needs a good coach, and a runner needs to throw off things that distract them. (Consider creating hand motions to make this more visual and clear to these younger students.)

DEFINITIONS

DISCIPLINE

Working hard on a regular basis to finish the job

DETERMINATION

Never giving up

Pass out Printout 2. After everyone finishes the maze, discuss as a group:

In the skit for our large group, only one coach got the runner through the race. In life, only one path gets you to heaven!

HELPFUL HINT

Consider rotating questions, one per student, and provide tickets for students as they answer each question. Another suggestion would be to engage students in one of the Game Bags games like Zap where students can engage in a discussion using a game to keep their attention.

- **In our maze and in life, we have to go through Jesus' death on the cross to get to heaven. What are some other paths people follow to try to get to heaven?** (Try to do good things and be a good person, go to church enough, say a prayer over and over, give to the needy, etc.)
- **In the skit for our Large Group, only one coach got the runner through the race. In life, only one path gets you to heaven! Why is Jesus the only way to get to heaven?**
- **Have you decided to believe in Jesus and take the path to heaven?**

Say, **We're not just people who run—we're runners in a race! A race has a beginning and an end, and there's a path to follow all the way through. There are rules to help everyone stay on track, and sometimes you even need to sign up and pay to join the race.**

- **In our faith, what would be the starting line? What would be the finish line?** (Spiritual birth, physical death)

- **What is the clearly marked course and rules?** (The Bible)
- **What would be the registration form?** (Choosing to follow Jesus)
- **What would be the registration fee?** (Faith in God)

Read Philippians 3:12–14 out loud, or have a student read for the group.

What comes to mind when you think about running a race?

Running a race requires effort, practice, and focus. In our walk with God, we also need to keep going, even when it's hard, just like in a real race.

Read Hebrews 12:1-2 out loud for the group:

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God's throne.

Show the students Printout 5.

Say, **When we learn what distracts us and what can help us focus, it will allow us to run the race well.**

Why is overcoming distractions so hard?

ILLUSTRATION: RUNNING THE RACE OF FAITH

Show kids Printout 3.

Imagine you're in a big race! You're standing at the starting line, feeling excited and ready to go. You know where the finish line is, and there's a path marked out just for you to follow.

Now, this race is special because you're not running alone—Jesus is running with you! He's right there by your side, cheering you on. He even helps you when you get tired or when you trip and fall. He shows you the way when the path gets tricky, and he encourages you to keep going, even when it feels hard.

Just like in a real race, you have to follow some rules to stay on track. The rules are like the things Jesus teaches us: to be kind, to love others, to tell the truth, and to do what's right. If we listen to Jesus and follow his way, we'll finish the race strong.

And here's the best part—when you cross the finish line, Jesus is waiting there with a big smile and open arms, so proud of you for keeping your faith and never giving up! The race of faith isn't about being the fastest; it's about trusting Jesus and taking one step at a time with him every day.

The life of faith is compared to a race, and in a race, we need to focus on where we are going and what we are doing. If you don't focus, it would be easy to get tripped and fall.

- **When you are running a race, why is it important to not look back?**
- **Why is it important to keep our eyes on the finish line in a race?**
 - **So that we don't end up somewhere we don't want to go!**
 - **It is the same when we follow Jesus—we have to focus on Him.**

When we are at Crossroads Kids Club or church, it might seem like the life of faith is easy. We see clearly where we need to go and what we need to do, but when we leave there are a lot of distractions.

- **What is something that distracts you from spending time with Jesus?**
- **What do you think is the prize you get when you run the race of faith?**

Hands



Lead kids to live out the mission of the Gospel.
(5-10 minutes)

Small Group Session 2

WRAP IT UP

In the race of faith, Jesus is like our finish line. We need to keep our eyes on Him to stay focused and run well. He is our example of how to live and the one who helps us when the race gets hard.

Ask, **What happens when you get tired during a race? What do you do?**

In our faith, we need not give up. It's okay to get tired or feel like quitting sometimes, but we can pray, ask for God's help, and encourage one another to keep going.

Read Isaiah 4:31 out loud or ask a student to read for the group.

- **How can you run your race of faith this week?**
- **What are some things you can do to keep following Jesus?**

Help them think about practical ways to focus on Jesus—such as praying, reading the Bible, or showing kindness to others.

Faith is an exciting, active journey where Jesus is with you every step of the way!

Pass out Printout 5 to students. This is a practical item you can give kids to help them stay focused on Jesus this week. This simple, personalized tool will encourage them to think about small, daily actions they can take to stay on track in their walk with God, just like a runner needs a good daily practice to stay in shape for the race.

RESPONSE & REFLECTION

Print out and practice the memory verse (John 14:6).



Bible Memory Verse
Games