



HEROES OF THE FAITH

Large Group

LESSON 11: LARGE 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.



Introduce the story of the Gospel.
(10-15 minutes)



Play large group games.
(25 minutes)

Prepare



Prepare your heart to teach.
Plan for the lesson.

QUESTIONS

- How can you be praying for the student this week? Are there any specific students or requests you can pray for?
- Are there any changes and additions needed for the Large Group Lesson?
- Is there anything specific you need to communicate to the small group leaders?

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Bible
- (Optional) Plastic devil horns, 1 pair
- (Optional) Plastic angel halo
- (Optional) Winter coat, gloves, boots, backpack with weights or rocks, running shoes
- Printout 1, 3 copies

Large Group



Introduce the story of the Gospel.
(10-15 minutes)

INTRODUCTION

Welcome the students to Crossroads and tell them you are glad they came this week.

(Optional) Go through the “Who is Jesus” call and response.

(Optional) As a group, say the memory verse for this week.

Open with prayer for the students.

The Bible talks about us being in a spiritual race—the race of the life of faith.

What kinds of training do you think would help us run better in the spiritual race?

Say, **Today for our lesson we will have some of our leaders help with a skit.**

SKIT:

HELPFUL HINT

Consider using the Gospel Hand when presenting the Gospel to student.

Have three leaders perform the skit in Printout 1.

Read 1 John 5:1-5 out loud.

Everybody has sinned. The Bible says that everyone has sinned and fallen short of God’s standard (Romans 3:23). Sin comes easy for us, but it’s not good to sin. In our skit the runner was encouraged to just give up running and sit on the couch and watch TV. With sin, it’s easier to just give up and give in to temptation, but there are always consequences for sin.

- **What are some examples of sin?**
- **Why is sin such a big deal?**

Sin leads to death, and sin separates us from God (Romans 6:23). Sometimes we might think that sinning is fun, or we sin to impress others, but sin doesn’t bring joy and complete happiness.

With sin, we can’t live a completely happy life. We can’t be the person that God wants us to be.

If we choose to let him, God can take away our sin by placing the punishment for our sins on Jesus, who died on the cross. By dying on the cross Jesus took the punishment for our sins, but 3 days later, God raised Jesus from the dead!

If you believe in Jesus, that he died on the cross for your sins and rose again from the dead, God takes away your sin, and you can live a full and happy life like God wants. When you believe in Jesus, you are now a child of God!



“Who is Jesus”
Call and Response

WRAP IT UP

Say, **Today we are considering a very important question—whether or not we are in the race just like in the skit. All the heroes that we considered this year have gone before us, and now it is our turn to “grab the torch”. But in order to carry the faith forward, we must first be a runner in the race. In small groups, we will talk more about what it means to be a runner in the race of faith.**

Close in prayer.

Games



Play large group games.
(25 minutes)

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- List of heroes (biblical, historical, or real-life) relevant to the previous lessons (Joseph, Moses, Elijah, Peter, John, Mary, Paul) (written or in a hat for random selection)
- (Optional) Timer to keep rounds quick
- (Optional) Small whiteboard or paper to keep track of points
- Small, soft object to act as the “hot potato” (a ball, bean bag, or stuffed toy)
- Music (this could be on a phone, speaker, or played live on an instrument)
- Prepared questions or topics (these can be based on the lesson or themed around “Heroes of the Faith”).

LARGE GROUP GAME: HERO CHARADES

Materials: A list of heroes (biblical, historical, or real-life) relevant to the previous lessons (Joseph, Moses, Elijah, Peter, John, Mary, Paul) (written or in a hat for random selection), (Optional) timer to keep rounds quick, (Optional) small whiteboard or paper to keep track of points

Object of game: Guess which hero is being portrayed

How to play: One student from the first team draws a hero’s name from the list (or hat). They must not show the name to their teammates.

If using a timer, give the actor around 1-2 minutes to act out their hero. You can adjust the time based on the group’s age or skill level. The student silently acts out clues about their hero. They can: Mimic the Hero’s Actions (for example, if they’re acting as David, they might pretend to sling a stone at Goliath); Use Props or Gestures (Encourage creativity!) (for instance, they might pretend to part the Red Sea for Moses or kneel in prayer for Daniel).

Speaking or mouthing words and pointing to people or objects in the room is not allowed. They can use their whole body to act out characteristics or stories that relate to their hero.

While the actor is performing, their team members try to guess which hero they are portraying. They can call out as many guesses as they like within the time limit. If the team guesses correctly within the time limit, they score a point. If they don’t guess correctly, no points are awarded.

After one team has had a turn, the other team sends up their actor to do the same with a new hero. Alternate between teams until everyone has had a chance to act, or until you’ve gone through all the heroes.

Encourage the adult leaders to participate.

LARGE GROUP GAME: HOT POTATO WITH A TWIST

Materials: Small, soft object to act as the “hot potato” (a ball, bean bag, or stuffed toy), music (this could be on a phone, speaker, or played live on an instrument), prepared questions or topics (these can be based on the lesson or themed around “Heroes of the Faith”).

How to play: Tell the students they will be passing the “hot potato” around the circle while music is playing. When the music stops, the person holding the hot potato will have to answer a question or share a fun fact related to the lesson. If a student gets stuck or can’t answer, allow them to either “phone a friend” (ask another student for help) or try a different question. Begin the music, and have students pass the hot potato around the circle. Encourage them to pass it quickly to add excitement. Stop the music after a short amount of time (15-30 seconds). The student holding the hot potato when the music stops must

answer a question. Read out a question or prompt to the student holding the hot potato.

Example Questions:

- “Who showed great faith by building an ark when God warned him of a flood?”
- “How did Ruth demonstrate loyalty and faithfulness?”
- “What can you do to be brave like Daniel?”

The student with the hot potato answers the question to the best of their ability.

If they answer correctly, they pass the hot potato to the next person, and the game continues. If they’re stuck, they can ask a classmate for help, or you can give them a hint to guide them. Start the music again, and the hot potato gets passed around once more. Repeat this process, stopping the music and asking questions each time.

LARGE GROUP GAME: SHARKS AND MINNOWS

Materials: None needed

Object of game: Run to the other side without getting tagged

How to play: One or two students start as “sharks” in the middle of the gym. The rest are “minnows” who line up on one side of the gym or space. When you say “go”, the minnows try to run to the other side without getting tagged by the sharks. If they get tagged, they become sharks. The game continues until one or two minnows remain.

The remaining minnows can be the sharks for the next round or choose other students to be the sharks.

LARGE GROUP GAME: DON’T LOOK BACK

Materials: None needed

Object of game: Be the team to finish running first

How to play: Divide students into teams. Designate a start line and a finish line. Students must run backwards to the finish line, return to their team, and tag the next one in line, until all have run. Repeat the race, this time with students running facing forward. When they return to tag the next one in line, they must shout, “Don’t look back!”



HEROES OF THE FAITH

PRIMARY
Small Group

LESSON 11: PRIMARY 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, **What sport do you like to play or watch and why?**

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.)
- **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.**

Read Philippians 3:12–14 out loud.

- **What do you think about when you hear about running a race?**
- **How is this like our faith in God?**

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

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?**

Ask, **Why is overcoming distractions so hard?**

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 to keep going and not give up, even when something is really hard. It's about trying again and again until you succeed. 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.

- **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!

When we believe in Jesus for salvation and start the race of faith, what are some things that we are leaving behind, some things that we may need to give up?

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



HEROES OF THE FAITH

INTERMEDIATE
Small Group

LESSON 11: INTERMEDIATE SMALL GROUP

Grab the Torch

MAIN IDEA

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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)

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QUESTIONS

- How can you be praying for the students this week?
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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?**
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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.

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DEFINITIONS

DISCIPLINE

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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.

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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

Memory Verse Cards

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

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Printout 1

SKIT

Choose 3 leaders to help with this skit.

CHARACTERS:

- Runner
- "Devil Coach"
- "Angel Coach"

In the opening scene, the future runner is pretending to watch the Olympics on TV. They comment about how fun it would be to become a runner.

Runner: **Wow! I wish I could be a runner, too! You know what? I think I will become a runner. Then maybe I could run in the Olympics, too. I guess I'm going to need to find someone to help me. I need a coach.**

At this point, both coaches magically appear on the scene.

Both Coaches: **Did you need a coach?**

Devil Coach: **Running is hard. Why not just watch it on TV? Besides, you need a lot of equipment. Here, put on this backpack (which is full of rocks). And you need to wear this winter coat. You also need these mittens, and these boots are very important. Now, run to the other end of the room and back.**

(The runner overexaggerates the heavy bag and starts to run in place but gets a major leg cramp. Then they get tired and fall over.)

Runner: **This running is too hard. I think I'll just watch it on TV like the coach said.**

(But just then, the "Angel Coach" will come alongside the runner and help them up.)

Angel Coach: **You can do it. I can help. You were doing things all wrong. Yes, running is difficult, but with the proper training, you can do it. First of all, you need to get rid of these rocks in this backpack. Then, take off all this extra stuff. Next, we need to stretch so we don't get cramps, and then we need to pace ourselves.**

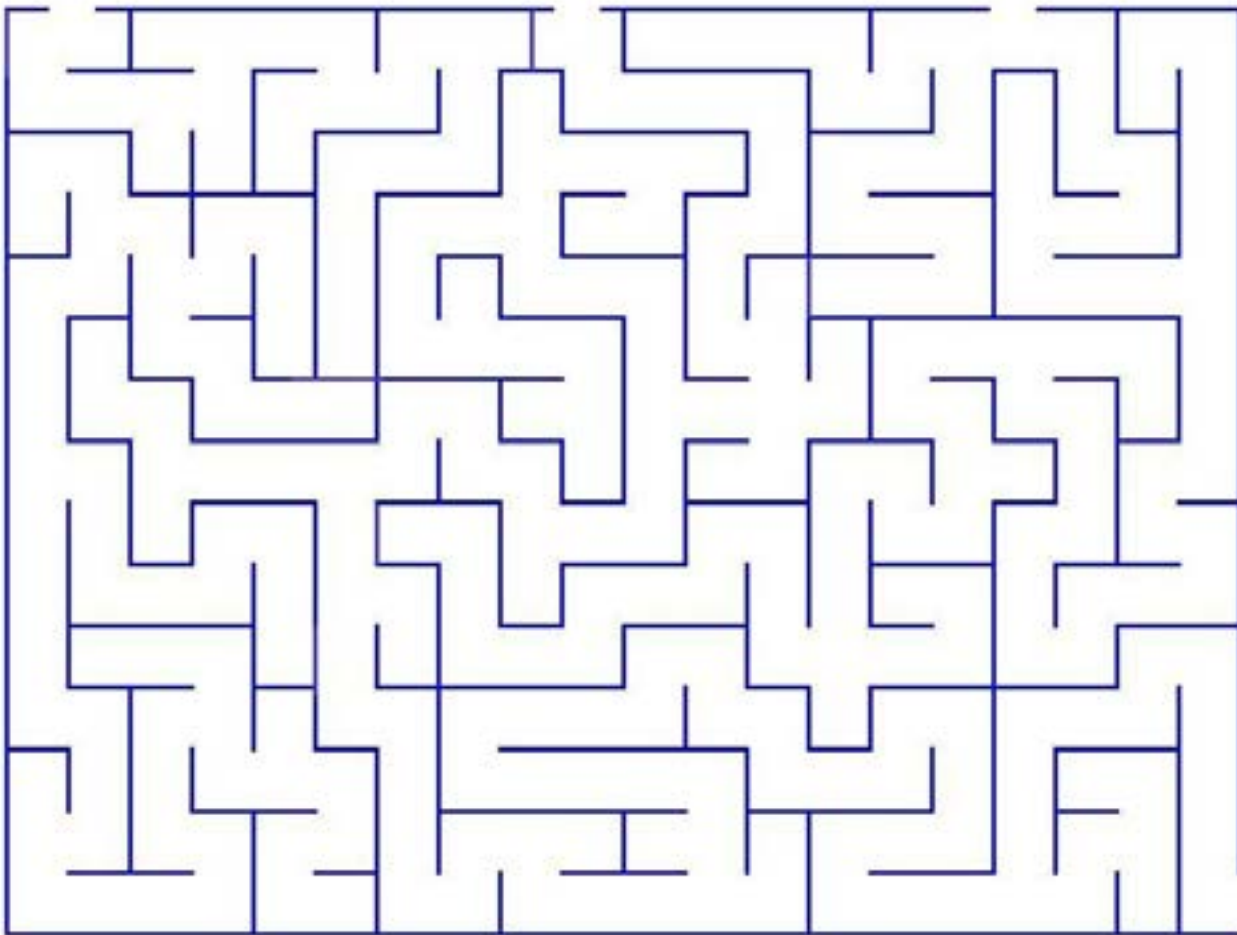
(The coach helps the runner, and together they run across the room and back. The runner is excited about how well things went, and they schedule another practice with the coach.)

(While the runner is trying to run, the "Devil Coach" can make fun of the runner and tell him or her to give up.)

Encourage the students to cheer the runner on to the finish line.

Printout 2

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



HEAVEN



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?

What path are you on?

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

Printout 3



Printout 4

Things that distract me:

1. The movies I watch

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

Things that help me focus:

1. Reading the Bible

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

Printout 5

FOCUS ON JESUS DAILY CHALLENGE:

- Pray for 5 minutes.
- Read a Bible story.
- Tell someone about Jesus (even if it's just saying, "God loves you.").
- Thank God for something He's done.
- Do something kind for someone today.

FOCUS ON JESUS DAILY CHALLENGE:

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