Lesson Theme: Christians are called by God to “run the race” to the finish.

Run the Race Lesson 10 minutes

Tell the story using the script that follows. You can make the signs (see PowerPoint) to use during the lesson. Let this lesson be “your story”! At the conclusion of the presentation tell the children that if they want to know more about following Jesus they are welcome to talk to you or one of the other teachers.

Lesson requires:
- Pair of tennis shoes
- Bible
- Chair (if possible)

Lesson Script Example:

Leader: (Start putting on tennis shoes). Are we ready to run the race? Let me ask that again, ARE WE READY TO RUN THE RACE!!! Race, I am ready, I want to run the race. Now I am not talking about any race, I am talking about the race that God talks about in the Bible. Did you know that God talks about races? Yes, He does. In fact, let me read what God says in the Bible in Hebrews 12:1… “let us run with endurance the race that God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, on whom our faith depends from start to finish.”

Did you hear the word race? I heard it. Let us run with endurance the race. Not walk, run. Run with endurance. Endurance is the power and the strength to do it. So who is the us in this race? All of us who have made the decisions to follow Jesus. What is the decision? (The decision is to become a Christian). I give myself daily to God and follow Jesus.

That verse also says the race that God has set before us. That means that God has given all of us a race to run…all those who have made the decision to follow Jesus. I want to finish my race, don’t you want to finish your race.

So how do we run this race? Back to the verse we go. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus. Jesus is the answer. How do we know what Jesus wants us to do?
Remember the verse said to keep our eyes on Jesus. Eyes- see, we can see/read the Bible. When we read the Bible, God tells us what He wants us to know. We need to seriously study God’s word, the Bible, every day.

Let’s see, we now have the: **Who**- everyone who has made the decision to follow Jesus. **How**- focusing my eyes on Jesus – read my Bible daily. Next the verse says “on whom our faith depends.” Faith, what is faith? **Faith**- believing in Jesus, a firm commitment to Him and His ways. We trust Jesus to help us and to give us directions in our race. We are assured that Jesus is reliable. An example is: we think chairs are reliable, we trust that they will hold us, so we sit in them, fully trusting that they won’t let us fall. That is the same with Jesus. When we have Him in our lives, we can know, trust, and depend that He is in control.

The last of the verse tells us the when: “from start to finish.” We want to start this race with Jesus and end with Jesus. I want to be faithful from the beginning to the end of the race.

So what kind of race is it? (a race of being faithful to Jesus.) I want to say I have run this race, kept my eyes on Jesus, kept the faith and finished the race. Do you want to finish the race this way too? Okay. Tighten your shoe laces; we are at the start of our race, let’s run the race that is before us.

*If you want to know more about the decision to follow Jesus ask me or one of the teachers, or the pastor.*

**Connection**  
20 minutes

And let us run with endurance the race that God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, on whom our faith depends from start to finish.  
*Hebrews 12:1, 2 (NIV)*

**Instructions:**
Divide the verse into four phrases and divide the children into four groups. They can stay in place if needed. Have the first group say the first phrase as they run in place. (It does not have to be a fast run). Then the second group says the second phrase and runs in place. The third group does the same. The fourth group does the same. Go through it several times until each group knows the verse.

To make it harder you can have the first group say the entire verse and keep running while the second group says it. Continue this until the verse is said by )all four groups. Also you could have them jog the first time, run fast the next time or slowly run.
Craft Activity Requires:
- One pennant per child out of stiff felt (see PowerPoint for pattern)
- Markers-sharpies
- Glitter glue pens, sequins
- Ribbon or yarn 13 inches for shoe lace
- Glue
- One shoe pattern on card stock per child (see PowerPoint for pattern)
- Hole punch (use to pre-cut holes in shoes for shoelaces)
- Fun foam crosses and Bibles (can be purchased at craft store or children could draw their own)
- Hebrews 12:1 typed in native language, one per child – this is for younger children

Instructions:
(look at PowerPoint for example) Children decorate their pennants by coloring and drawing with markers. Glue on crosses and Bibles. Lace the shoe and glue it on the pennant. Glue the memory verse on, or have the students write it on. Continue to encourage the students to run the race God has called them to.

Game
20 minutes
Gunny Sack Race

Gunny sack activity requires:
- Two gunny sacks, can be ordered from “Oriental Trading Company”
  OrientalTrading@cms.oriental-trading.com
- Area for relay race

Directions:
This is a relay race. Divide the group into two equal teams. Divide each team into two parts. Have one half part of the team at the beginning of the race and the other half at the end of the race. The children will be hopping in the sack only one way.

Part of “running the race” is loving and serving other people. One of the ways we can serve is through Living Water International – sharing a cup of water in Jesus’ name.