

RUN. WITH A PURPOSE

ADVENTURE KIDS MJC 2026 Bible Study

Camp Verse: 1 Corinthians 9:26 (NLT) — “So I run with purpose in every step.”

Running Verse: Hebrews 12:1-2 (NIV) — “*Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus.*”

Wednesday Bible Study – Run with Endurance – Live for Jesus

Scripture References: Paul and Silas in Prison (Acts 16:16–34)

Memory Verses

Philippians 4:13 (NIV) — “I can do all this through him who gives me strength.”

Hebrews 12:1-2 (NIV) — “Let us run with perseverance...”

Learning Outcome:

By the end of this lesson, kids will understand that Jesus gives them strength to endure difficult situations and will recognize how their attitudes, responses, and actions can point others to Jesus, just as Paul and Silas did in prison.

Background for Leaders

Paul and Silas were faithfully sharing the gospel in Philippi when they were falsely accused, beaten, and thrown into prison. Instead of becoming angry or discouraged, they prayed and sang praises to God. Their trust in God during suffering became a powerful witness to the other prisoners and the jailer. When God sent an earthquake and opened the prison doors, Paul and Silas chose to stay and help the jailer, leading him and his family to faith in Jesus.

This lesson reminds kids that following Jesus does not mean life will always be easy. Difficult situations, disappointments, and challenges are part of life. Like Paul and Silas, believers can trust God, choose praise, and continue living for Jesus even when circumstances are hard. God gives His children strength to persevere and opportunities to point others to Him through their attitudes and actions.

Jesus gives us strength to keep going and live for Him, even during difficult times.

Encourage kids to think about real-life situations where they need endurance. Help them understand that perseverance is not pretending problems do not exist—it is trusting Jesus and choosing faithfulness through them.

Purpose is proven through perseverance. Paul and Silas finished strong by relying on God’s strength. Our everyday faithfulness points others to Jesus.

Introductory Activity - Freeze “Earthquake” Dance

Play upbeat worship songs to simulate Paul and Silas singing in their prison cell. Kids dance, clap, and praise God while the music plays. When the leader pauses the music and shouts, “EARTHQUAKE!” everyone must freeze in place like the shaking prison walls.

After a few rounds, say:

“Paul and Silas were not at a party or a celebration — they were in prison! But instead of giving up, they prayed and praised God. Today we are going to learn how Jesus gives us strength to keep going and live for Him every day.”

Bible Story Activity - Listen and Respond

Tell kids:

"During today's story, listen for special words."

Whenever you hear:

- **Paul and Silas** — say: *"Keep Going!"*
- **Prayed** — fold your hands.
- **Praised** — clap twice.

As Paul and Silas ministered in Philippi, a slave girl possessed with an evil spirit began following them. She told fortunes and earned her masters a lot of money. Every day she shouted:

"These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation!"

Finally, Paul turned and commanded the evil spirit to come out of her in the name of Jesus Christ, and the spirit left her immediately.

The girl's owners became angry because they could no longer make money from her fortune-telling. They grabbed Paul and Silas, dragged them before the city leaders, and accused them of causing trouble.

The magistrates ordered Paul and Silas to be beaten and thrown into prison. The jailer placed them in the innermost prison cell and fastened their feet in stocks.

Around midnight, Paul and Silas prayed and sang hymns to God while the other prisoners listened.

Suddenly, a powerful earthquake shook the prison. The doors flew open, and everyone's chains came loose.

The jailer woke up and thought all the prisoners had escaped. As he prepared to harm himself, Paul shouted:

"Stop! Don't harm yourself! We are all here!"

The jailer rushed in trembling and asked:

"What must I do to be saved?"

Paul and Silas answered:

"Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household."

They shared God's Word with the jailer and his family. The jailer washed their wounds, and then he and his household were baptized. He brought them into his home, gave them food, and everyone rejoiced because they believed in God.

Later, the magistrates sent word to release Paul and Silas, and they were allowed to leave prison.

Ask:

"Who noticed Paul and Silas trusting God in prison?"

Allow kids to answer:

- The other prisoners
- The jailer
- The jailer's family

Then say:

"That's right! People were watching Paul and Silas. Even though they were in a difficult situation, they chose to pray, praise God, and trust Him. Because of their actions, the jailer and his family heard about Jesus and believed in Him. When we trust Jesus during hard times, other people notice too. Our attitudes, responses, and actions can point others to Jesus."

"Paul and Silas had a choice in prison. They could have complained, quit, or become angry. Instead, they chose prayer, praise, and trust. We face choices like that every day too."

Bible Learning Application Activity – Praise or Pout?

"Sometimes things are hard, unfair, or disappointing. Paul and Silas were put in prison, but instead of complaining and giving up, they chose to pray and praise God. They trusted Him during a difficult time.

Our running verse says:

‘Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus.’ — Hebrews 12:1–2

Just like runners keep moving during a hard race, we can keep trusting Jesus during difficult times.

Today we are going to play a game called *Praise or Pout?* I will read different situations kids might face every day. Some situations may make us want to complain or have a bad attitude, but God can help us choose praise, trust, prayer, and kindness instead.

Remember — choosing praise does not mean pretending hard things are easy. It means we choose to trust God and respond in a way that honors Him.

After each situation, decide: Would you choose to praise or pout?"

Praise or Pout? — Activity Instructions

How to Play

1. Choose one side of the room as **PRAISE** and the other side as **POUT**.
2. Read one situation card aloud.
3. Kids decide how someone might respond:
 - **Pout** = complain, get angry, quit, or have a bad attitude
 - **Praise** = trust God, pray, show kindness, keep going, or honor Jesus
4. Kids move to the side they choose.
5. Ask:
 - "Why did you choose that response?"
 - "What would help someone choose praise instead of pout?"
6. Remind kids:

"We all feel disappointed sometimes, but Jesus helps us choose attitudes and actions that point others to Him."

Sample Situations

1. Your team loses a game.

2. Your little brother knocks over your Lego creation.
3. Someone says something unkind to you.
4. You did not get picked first.
5. You have to clean up a mess you did not make.
6. You are nervous about trying something new.
7. Someone forgets to include you.
8. Your family is going through a hard time.
9. A friend shares with you when you are sad.
10. You get to go to the movies.

“Paul and Silas chose praise in a very hard situation. When we trust Jesus and choose attitudes and actions that honor Him, other people can see Jesus through us.”

Memory Verse Activity - Strength Relay

Read together:

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." — Philippians 4:13

Place conversation cards around the room.

One child chooses a card and answers the question.

After answering, ask:

"How can Jesus give you strength in that situation?"

Then the child takes one lap around a simple marker, cone, or chair and returns.

The entire group says the memory verse together – Philippians 4:13

Repeat with several children.

Sample Conversation Starters

- What is something difficult you have done before?
- When is it hard to obey God?
- What makes you nervous?
- When do you need courage?
- How can you encourage a friend?
- When is it hard to keep trying?
- What is something new you are learning?
- When do you need patience?

Say:

"Just like runners need strength to finish a race, Jesus gives us strength to keep following Him every day."

"Paul and Silas trusted Jesus during a very difficult time. Philippians 4:13 reminds us that Jesus gives us strength too. Whatever challenge we face, we can keep trusting Him and living for Him every day."

Prayer Activity – Keep Your Eyes on Jesus

Say:

"Our running verse tells us to run the race God has marked out for us and keep our eyes on Jesus. After each statement, everyone will say: 'Help us keep our eyes on Jesus.'"

Kids' Response:

"Help us keep our eyes on Jesus."

Leader: When life is hard...

Kids: "Help us keep our eyes on Jesus."

Leader: When we need courage to do what is right...

Kids: "Help us keep our eyes on Jesus."

Leader: When others are watching our words and actions...

Kids: "Help us keep our eyes on Jesus."

Leader: As we run the race You have marked out for us...

Kids: "Help us keep our eyes on Jesus."

Leader: Jesus, help us run with endurance and live for You every day.

All: Amen.