

**TEXT** I Corinthians 9:24-26; Hebrews 12:1,2; II Timothy 4:7,8

**OBJECTIVE** The students will be able to explain that they must be saved to be in the "race" toward Heaven. They can also explain that there is a reward for those who work for the Lord and finish the race.

**MEMORY VERSE** Ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.  
— I Peter 5:4

# God Promises Us a Reward If We Finish the Race

## MEMORY VERSE IN ACTION

**YE** — Point to an imaginary person.

**SHALL RECEIVE** — Imagine a vertical stick before you. Grab it with both hands and pull to chest.

**A CROWN** — Place an imaginary crown on your head.

**OF GLORY** — Extend left palm up, right finger tips touch left palm, raise right hand wiggling fingers.

**THAT FADETH** — Point with both index fingers to the right, snapping your wrists as you point.

**NOT AWAY** — As you are shaking your head "no," imagine a table before you; with the back of the right hand shoo a fly off the table.

## MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

The crown of glory mentioned in the words of this week's memory verse is the focus of the visual illustration of the Scripture. (See pattern at the end of this lesson.) Cut apart the three sections as indicated by the heavy black lines. Put up the pieces one section at a time as your students learn the verse.

## BIBLE LESSON OUTLINE

**Introduction:** Bring a large trophy to class. Explain that often a trophy is given as the prize to the winner of a race or contest of some type. Often people will put much effort into winning, but usually the trophy is only awarded to the one who comes in first.

1. Paul likens our Christian life to running a race.
2. Explain the importance of running with patience, and what that might mean.
3. To be a part of the Christian race, sin must be put aside.

**Climax:** In the Christian race, anyone who completes the race will win the prize.

**Conclusion:** If we wish to complete the Christian race and obtain the prize, we must get started and keep going until the end.

**Response:** Your students should be able to tell how to

get into the Christian race, and name some things that would help us stay in the race. They will be able to explain what the reward will be for those who finish the race.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Paul said, "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? (I Corinthians 9:24). This prize, or crown (verse 25) also referred to in II Timothy 4:5-8 and James 1:12 was not the regal crown of royalty but a wreath given to a victorious athlete or military leader. These were usually made of leaves and would soon wither. In contrast, the Christian who runs the race with patience (Hebrews 12:1), perseveres under trial (James 1:12), and ultimately finishes the course (II Timothy 4:7), will be given a "crown of glory that fadeth not away" (I Peter 5:4).

Just as an athlete must be willing to discipline himself and suffer hardship in order to win a prize, a Christian must also be willing to "lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and . . . run with patience the race that is set before us" (Hebrews 12:1).

## IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

Bring some information on a marathon that is coming up somewhere. Discuss how a person who wants to win the prize doesn't just suddenly show up on the day of the race. They prepare and work toward that goal, perhaps for years before. To receive the crown of glory and life from Jesus, we have to prepare ahead of time by getting saved and working for God.

Make a crown for each child with his/her name on it. Explain how when we are saved God has a crown just for us. When we work for Him He adds to that crown. Glue sequins on each one according to his/her attendance, bringing his/her Bible and Sunday school paper,

and knowing the memory verse. Talk about other ways we can work for Jesus in our home and neighborhood.

Give each child a crown (see Patterns) to cut out and color. Then give them the jewel shapes and let them draw in each jewel something they can do to help them stay in the race. Some thoughts might be: pray, read the Bible, help others, show love, tell others about Jesus.

Make clear to your class that to be a participant in the race toward Heaven, not just a spectator, we must be saved. To participate in a sport we must practice, learn rules, learn strategy, work on weak spots, etc. Bring things to visualize training and participation in a sport: jogging shoes, sweatshirts, weights, rule book. Compare these to the things we use to help us in our Christian race: Bible, prayer, going to church, witnessing, etc.

## QUESTIONS

What do you have to do to get a crown?

How do you know there are crowns waiting for us in Heaven?

How can we run a "race" for Jesus?

Compare an earthly trophy with a heavenly crown.

How will people feel about us when we are working for a crown in Heaven?

How do people feel about us when we earn a trophy on this earth?

How can we be righteous?

Is it always easy to do things that are right when all your friends do not?

Why does the devil want to tempt us?

Is it a sin to be tempted? Explain.

How can we overcome temptation?

Where would you rather have honor, on earth or in Heaven? Why?

## PRESCHOOL SUGGESTIONS

Give a paper crown to each child in the class (see Patterns). Let them color the crowns. Spread glue on the space drawn to represent jewels and let them sprinkle glitter on it.

Explain to your little ones that when they want something that is in front of them, they must reach out and take it. Illustrate this by passing a plate of cookies or putting out stickers for them. Jesus wants us to take the good things He has for us. These good things might be: learning our Bible story (show picture of a Bible), coming to Sunday school (show picture of children in Sunday school class), learning to share (show pictures of children sharing).

Make a batch of yellow finger Jello and cut into simple crown shapes. Use this as a snack for your children. Recipe for Finger Jello: Bring to a boil 2½ cups pineapple juice (or substitute one 3-ounce package lemon Jello and 2½ cups water). Pour over a mixture of four envelopes of Knox gelatin and ½ cup sugar. Stir until dissolved. Pour into greased 9" by 13" pan. Chill until firm.

Play a simple game with your students. Promise them a small prize (sticker, balloon) if they do something for you: sing a song, answer a question, say their memory verse, etc. Be sure that each child gets a prize. Compare this to the prize we get if we do what Jesus says and make it to Heaven.

## REVIEW IDEAS

Bring an item or items which represent a secular reward: a trophy, laurel wreath, plaque, check, etc. Discuss the effort people will expend in order to receive such an award. However, in most secular events there is only one winner. In the race for Heaven, everyone who starts can be a winner.

Make paper plate puppets. Staple two plates together leaving a 6-inch opening in the bottom. (See Patterns as a suggestion for some possibilities.) to illustrate the different kinds of people who are in the race to Heaven, and those who are just spectators. You might want to use "Sleepy Sam" who has no time to read and pray, "Eager Edwin" who is always looking for ways to serve the Lord and be a better Christian, "Earnest Esther" who likes to tell people about Jesus, "Ornery Oswald" who never minds his Sunday school teacher and causes lots of trouble for others. After each puppet makes his appearance and is described, hold up a sign saying, "Is he in the race?" and have the audience respond.

## COORDINATING SONGS

"Store Your Treasure" — Sunbeam Songs

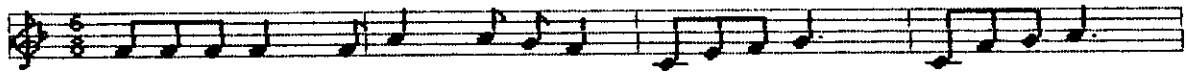
"I'm a Miner" — Sunbeam Songs

"Do, Lord"

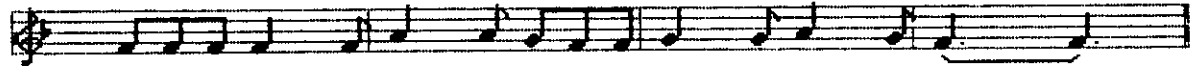
"Precious Jewels"

"I'm Laying up Treasures in Heaven" — Singspiration

## MEMORY VERSE SONG



Ye shall receive a crown of glo - ry, Ye shall receive. Ye shall receive.



Ye shall receive a crown of glo - ry that fad - eth not a - way.

## MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

