



TEACHING
WITH
TOYS



BUILDING
BLOCKS

BIBLE
LESSONS

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CONTENTS

Introduction: Using Building Blocks in Sunday School	4
Lesson #1: How Do the Blocks Add Up?	7
Game #1: Fun with Blocks and Math.....	10
Lesson #2: The Farmer Who Turned into a Pig.....	13
Game #2: Good-Fairy-Give-It-All Game.....	17
Lesson #3: Building Towers, Building Lives	18
Game #3: Build a Tower	21
Lesson #4: Jesus is the Bridge	23
Game #4: Bridge Man's Bluff	26
Lesson #5: In My Father's House are Many Dwelling Places	28
Game #5: Block Pictionary	30
Lesson #6: There is a Temple Inside Us All.....	31
Game #6: Tower Knock-Down	34
Lesson #7: Straight and Narrow... Uh-Oh-Uh-Oh!	36
Game #7: Walking the Straight and Narrow.....	39
Lesson #8: How God Changes Us	41
Game #8: Blind Man's Blocking	43
Lesson #9: A Big Old Pile is Not Actually Chaos!.....	45
Game #9: Relay Building with Teamwork.....	48

USING BUILDING BLOCKS IN SUNDAY SCHOOL

TO TEACH THE FOUNDATIONS OF CHRISTIAN GROWTH

Almost every family with children has a boxful of building blocks among their toys.

Now, Sunday school teachers can put them to good use!

It's a fact that kids learn with more joy and engagement when toys are involved.

Here's your chance to use a classic toy that is perfect for teaching the foundations of Christian growth, which is a building process.

These lessons and games combine building blocks with imagination, critical thinking and, most important, some of the essential concepts of growing in Christ.

Students will find these lessons unforgettable and fun, and they are easy for teachers, requiring few other materials.

INCLUDED ARE NINE BUILDING BLOCK LESSONS AND NINE REINFORCEMENT GAMES!

In all, that's 18 activities which will teach about growth in Christ.

Kids will love these, as they involve plenty of chances to build structures and plenty of chances to knock them down!

For the nine lessons, students will build structures, which you will use in the lesson for teaching.

The games are very diverse, some involve running and relaying and some involve critical thinking.

All are designed to reinforce the lesson's message or introduce a sister concept.

We also include photos of structures that work with each lesson.

Your students can use them for templates of what they need to build, or they can let their

imaginations fly and do their own thing!

All you need to provide are the blocks and a few characters.

Most blocks are sold in packages of 50 to 100, and most of our activities will work with 50.

If you have many students, find a way to throw in a few more.

For characters and any scenery you desire, use what is on hand!

We have used a standard set of building-block trees and animals and characters in some of our accompanying photos.

Feel free to use Weebles, My Little Pony, Lego characters, or even the tall “column blocks” as people.

Use dollar-store silk flowers or contact-paper roads.

Kids will follow right along!

HERE ARE THE LESSON SUBJECTS:

1. Blocks Show How God Relates to Mathematics
2. A Barn Made of Blocks Teaches About Greed
3. Towers Help Us Understand Christian Growth
4. A Bridge Helps us Understand Christ’s Sacrifice
5. Mansions Help Us to Understand Heaven
6. Falling Temples Show that God Isn’t Confined to Churches
7. A Straight and Narrow Road Teaches about Faith
8. Changing Structures Show God’s Way of Building Us
9. Building Shows How God Creates Order from Chaos

HOW TO USE THIS PACKAGE:

Each activity includes **Teacher’s words in Bold** for easy delivery, and very few materials are required other than the blocks themselves.

A materials list accompanies every project.

When you need a roll of tape or a tennis ball, the shout-out is plain to see!

When constructing with blocks while teaching, many teachers opt to split the job with

their assistants, having her build as you teach.

The lessons are also very interactive, often requiring your students to build the structures themselves or to take turns building their own version of a structure.

One game accompanies each lesson for reinforcement.

There is a great variety, but most involve constructing and/or knocking down blocks, and kids get great enjoyment from both!

BUILD WITH BLOCKS AND WATCH CHRIST BUILD SPIRITS

As so much of the Christian walk involves building life experiences, building blocks are probably the ultimate toy with which to teach children.

You will find these lessons give fresh and original perspectives to kids on what they need to do to grow spiritually and what they can look forward to from their heavenly father.

The lessons are great to show how much can be learned with so few materials.

Christianity is simple, and so is this package!

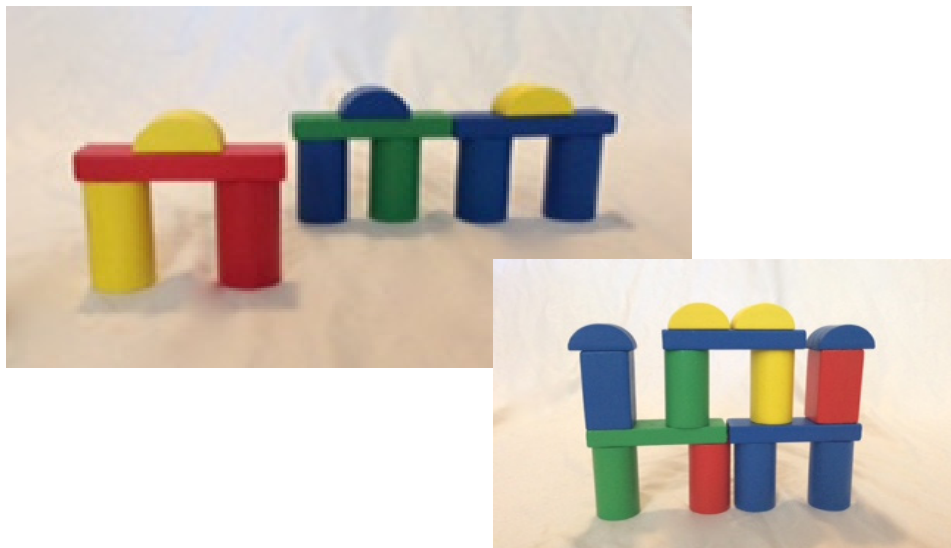
A wise man once said, "Interest is the key to learning."

It's true that toys will generate interest, as fingers play and imaginations flare!

Use our Building Block Lessons to give instruction in Christian growth a fresh and exciting approach - and look for our other toy series using Play-Doh and Lego pieces to teach Bible principles!

LESSON #1

HOW DO THE BLOCKS ADD UP?



Just about every kid can see the relationship between 1/2/4/8/16 if it is spelled out for them. (Each number is double its predecessor.) But often, especially when we are following Christ, truths are missed due to great distractions. This lesson of building five structures with the number of blocks doubling each time will have kids searching for truth in a fun way!

MATERIALS:

- 31 building blocks of different sizes and colors
- Five Ziploc bags
- One tote bag

PREPARATION:

1. Have the blocks in five Ziploc bags:
 - a. Bag #1 will contain one block.
 - b. Bag #2 will contain two blocks.
 - c. Bag #3 will contain four blocks.
 - d. Bag #4 will contain eight blocks.
 - e. Bag #5 will contain 16 blocks.
2. *Do not announce the number of blocks in each pouch, or you will give away the punchline!* Put all the Ziploc bags in a bigger tote bag, so kids cannot see what bag will be used next (or they will all want to build the biggest structure).

LESSON:

Let's have some fun today playing with building blocks!

Bring Bag #1 out of the tote and take the block out. Ask one student to “create a structure” using one block.

Bring out Bag #2 and ask a student to create a structure using two blocks.

Bring out Bag #3 and ask a student to create a structure using four blocks.

Bring out Bag #4 and ask a student to create a structure using eight blocks.

Bring out Bag #5 and ask a student to create a structure using 16 blocks.

When all the structures are standing side by side:

You all took turns building the five structures. You did not confer with each other when you made them, did you? They all look different, don't they? Yet these structures are all fundamentally related to each other. In what ways are they related?

You will hear a lot of different answers. Embrace each as a chance to talk about the nature of God and the teachings of Jesus:

They are all built with blocks. Yes, and these are a lot like the parable of the talents. To some people, God gives only one talent. Point at the one-block structure. **He only has expectations of that person that involve one talent. To some people he gives lots of talents—or lots more opportunities in life.** Point to the 16-piece structure. **For example, wealthy people often get to go to better colleges. They get to go to camps and distant places to experience life and fine-tune some skills. God will often hold them more accountable for more spiritual returns.**

The structures get progressively bigger. The block structures are a lot like a spiritual life. We start out small, and as God helps us grow and change, he allows for more complications, but also more strength and more dimensions in our characters.

Allow them to discuss other ways they relate. If someone discovers the 1/2/4/8/16 relationship, say you will come back to it.

There is one fundamental way that all these blocks relate. It's more fundamental than the fact that they are all blocks or that they get progressively bigger. It has to do with mathematics. Who knows what it is?

If they don't get it finally, ask them to count the blocks in each group. At that point someone should come up with it.

In each group of blocks, the amount used to build the structure *doubles*. It's like when you take a standardized test. You often have a section on mathematical relationships. If you saw the mathematical statement 1-2-4-8-16, you would get it fairly quickly that each of the numbers doubles from the one before it.

We are seeing a lot in these buildings. They were fun to make and they are related in several ways. But it's easy to miss one of the most fundamental things of all.

Mathematics, in this case, is a lot like God's plans for our life. We are looking for the color and the shape of things. We are looking for sense and often not finding it. We could not see how the 16-block structure related to the two-block structure. We only saw blocks, shapes, and colors.

We can easily miss the fact that when looking at our lives, God is at the foundation. He is in charge. He gives us the basics, the essential parts of himself. How we build and what we do together with God is what gives us our individuality. But he has given us the essentials, and the essentials don't change.

Math is a little like God. It's the underlying truth that exists in everything we make and everything on earth that God makes. Math, like God, doesn't change, no matter what the circumstances. Knock over the eight-piece structure. We can knock this over and build it up in any number of ways. It is still going to have eight pieces. God's will, God's nature, and God's love are still there.

When in life you encounter problems, and life doesn't make sense... Start building the eight-piece structure again... remember that no matter what is being built, God is always behind it all; he always has your long-term best interests at heart. At the end of the construction of your life, you will be like a beautiful building. The only way we can have problems is if we work *against* what he is building, and we knock it down. Knock a few blocks off your structure.

In which case we can always apologize and get back on track. Put the pieces back.

God is the ultimate builder! Remember to thank him for the fact that he does not change, is always there for you and has a big, big picture for your life.

GAME #1

FUN WITH BLOCKS AND MATH

The Bible is loaded with numbers! To get your students familiar with some, here are 10 Bible word problems that can be solved with blocks! Some are easy, some are more challenging. Use easy ones for younger kids and harder ones for older children!

MATERIALS:

- 30-60 blocks
- Candy prizes (optional)
- Cell phone or iPad with a Bible app (or a hard-copy Bible)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Divide the class into teams to work on the math problems.
2. If one team doesn't derive the right answer, the other team gets to try.
3. Don't allow the teams to work on the same problem at the same time unless you double the blocks. You will need about 30 blocks for the easy problems and nearly 60 blocks for the hard problems to have two teams working simultaneously.
4. If you have reluctant math students, offer candy prizes for added incentive.

MATH PROBLEMS: EASY

1. Mark 6:37-38 tells how many loaves and how many fish Jesus used to feed the multitude in this miracle. Look it up. Put up one type of blocks for the loaves and one type of blocks for the fish. How many items are there altogether? (*seven*)
2. According to Mark 15:25 and Matthew 27:45, Jesus was placed on the cross at the third hour of the day (9 a.m.) and died at the ninth hour (3 p.m.). Put nine blocks on the table. Subtract three. How many hours was Jesus on the cross? (*six*)
3. There were six people involved in the Transfiguration of Christ. Place six blocks on the table. Subtract one each for Moses, Elijah, and Jesus. How many disciples were there?! (*three*). Look up Matthew 17:1 to see which disciples they were

4. How many books are in the “Pentateuch” part of our Bible? Here are their names. Put one block on the table for each one: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. How many blocks do you have laid down? (*five*)

MATH PROBLEMS: DIFFICULT

1. How many chapters are in the Gospel of Matthew? Lay that number of blocks down. How many chapters are in the Gospel of Mark? Take away that number of blocks. How many blocks are left will tell you how many more chapters Matthew has than Mark. How many blocks remain?

Answer: $28-16=12$

2. Look up a list of the books of the New Testament. Lay one block on the table for each book. Lay them out in columns of nine blocks each. Do not count them individually. Multiply the number of columns by the number of rows. How many books are in the New Testament?

Answer: You should have nine complete rows of three blocks each if you have counted right. The number of books in the New Testament is $3 \times 9 = 27$

3. How many disciples did Jesus have? Lay a block on the table for each one. Look up a list of the Old Testament Minor Prophets’ names (hint: they are the last books of the Old Testament, starting after Daniel). Take away one block for each name. How many remain? Add on one block for each of the tribes of Israel, found in Genesis 49:28. How many blocks do you have?

Answer: (12. Twelve is a very important Biblical number that is often repeated! All of these groups contain 12; $12-12+12=12$ blocks)

4. Some very famous passages for Christians are found in the book of Romans. Look up Romans 6:23 in the New International Version. Lay out one block for each word in that verse. Look up Romans 3:23. Take away one block for each word in that verse. Look up Romans 5:1. Add a block for each word. How many blocks do you have?

Answer: Romans 6:23: *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord* (20 words). Romans 3:23: *For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God* (12 words). Romans 5:1: *Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ* (18 words). $20-12+18=26$ blocks

5. Count the number of verses in Amos Chapter 6 and lay out that many blocks. Add blocks that equal the number mentioned in Luke 19:19. Take away blocks equaling number mentioned in 2 Chronicles 7:8.

Answer: Amos = 14. Luke = 5. Chronicles = 7. $14+5-7=12$ blocks

LESSON #2

THE FARMER WHO TURNED INTO A PIG



This lesson is more of a story where you're going to use a barn that your students construct. The lesson is a necessary one - on storing too much and sharing too little!

MATERIALS:

- All your blocks
- Bag of candy
- A farmer, two poor people, and two friends (use Lego characters, Weebles, My Little Pony characters, or even the tall, skinny blocks as people! Kids will roll with what you tell them are people.)

PREPARATION:

Dump the blocks on the table, but not the candy or the characters.

LESSON

I need everyone to design me a barn. Who wants to give it a try? Let students take turns creating a barn out of your blocks. Herald all attempts. If you have more than four students, divide them into teams. After the last student or team has constructed a barn, use that one for your story.

Thank you very much! Now, I'm going to tell you a story about the farmer who owns this barn. Put your farmer character in the middle of the farm. **He had a lot of friends.** Place your two friends off to the side. **He started out as a very nice man who had fairly good crops.** Place a few pieces of candy in front of him. **He was kind to all the poor people and very generous with his farm's food.** Put the two poor people off to the other side.

Pretend you are using the farmer's voice. **"Why, you don't have enough to eat! Here! Take some of my food!"** Have him push some candy over to the poor people.

Slightly shake the poor people as they say, **"Thank you! You are nice!"**

Slightly shake the friends as they say, **"Wow, he is a good guy! We like him. We trust him."**

Because he was so generous, God was pleased. God blessed his crops. Put some more candy in the barn. **His wealth and good fortune began to multiply.**

The farmer at first thanked God. Slightly shake the farmer as he says, **"Thanks, God, for blessing me! Wowee!"**

But after a while, other thoughts started to creep up on him as his crops got more and more successful. Drop more candy in or behind the barn.

Slightly shake the farmer:

"Gee. I must be a really gifted farmer. It's obvious by the size of my crops that I am more gifted than my friends."

"Gee. These poor people are getting on my nerves. They must not be trying as hard as I am, or they would not be so dang poor!"

God allowed for it at first. Drop more candy into the farmer's now-mounting pile. **Everyone can make mistakes.**

Slightly shake the farmer: **"Gee. I am better than all these people. I will not give to the poor anymore to teach them a lesson. They should be working harder, and why is it my fault if they are lazy?"**

The poor people were not lazy. They were sick, or confused, or God had not given them the particular gift of generating food. Turn the poor people away and have them walk into your lap. **They went without or went elsewhere for help.**

The farmer's friends started to feel differently too.

Slightly shake one friend. **“Gee. He used to be so nice! But now, all he thinks about is making money. He doesn’t have time for me.”** Have the friend walk off into your lap.

Slightly shake the other friend. **“Gee. He used to be nice, but now he brags all the time and shows off. Who needs that?”** Have the friend walk off into your lap.

Put more candy in the farmer’s barn. **At first, the farmer said, “Well, I don’t need these people. They were a burden to me. The poor were a pain, and my friends just didn’t deserve me. I’m just smarter than everyone else.”**

And he went about his business of building his crops. Drop the last of your candy into his mound.

But the truth is, the farmer was lonely. His heart didn’t leap with the joy of giving anymore. He missed his friends, with whom he used to laugh and have great times.

The only thing he had was a feeling of great achievement while looking at all his crops. However, there was no one to enjoy that feeling with. There was no one patting him on the back anymore; nobody saying “good job!” or “thanks, you’re really kind and good!”

The farmer got bitter. One day he turned to his crops and said, shake the farmer slightly, **“You evil crops! You have ruined my life! I don’t like you anymore. I will get rid of you!”**

And then it dawned on him. He didn’t have to destroy his crops. The crops weren’t the problem. *His attitude was.*

Bring some of his store out where the poor people used to be.

Shake the farmer slightly. **“Um, poor people? Hello? I have more stuff for you! Hel-lo! I get it. I was being a jerk. You are not untalented; you are just not as blessed. It’s my job to bless you. Hel-lo?”**

Bring the poor people back onto the table slowly. **“Really? You want to give us something? You were pretty mean for a while.”**

Shake the farmer. **“Now, I want to give you twice as much as before. Here, it’s yours. It was God’s blessing to me, and I know he wants me to bless others as well as myself. “**

Shake the poor people: **“Wow! Thank you! We’re glad you are your nice old self again!”**

Farmer: **“Um, old friends? C’mon over! Let’s have a party in *your* honor. You have harder lives. God did not give you all the blessings he gave me.”**

Bring the friends back on the table. Shake the friends. **“Wow, maybe he’s decided he’s *not* all that. And maybe he’ll be back to his old self. Okay! We’ll come to your party!”**

Put some candy in front and have all the people gather around.

The farmer learned a great lesson. Having a lot of stuff doesn’t make you happy. Having a lot of LOVE does! Let’s all be part of the farmer’s party and share in the love! Pass out some candy to all.

GAME #2

GOOD-FAIRY-GIVE-IT-ALL GAME

This fast-paced game of getting rid of all your blocks by giving them to others will have kids laughing and learning about charity at the same time!

MATERIALS:

- Six blocks per student
- Masking tape

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Have students sit in a circle in the play area. Run lines of masking tape between them so that you have what appears to be pie slices, one triangle, or slice, for each student to sit in.
2. Give each student six blocks.
3. When you say “go!” they will try to “give unto others” by getting rid of blocks in their triangle faster than they can collect them.
4. They must pick up the blocks and put them in another person’s triangle. They may not throw them. They may not sweep them.
5. After two minutes, say “stop!” The student with the least number of blocks will get the point.
6. After three to six rounds, whoever has the most points wins.

CONCLUSION

Let’s think. If all those blocks had been five-dollar bills, would you have thrown them away so quickly? You may not have wanted to at first, but what is the lesson we learned from the farmer? What happened to his life when he had all the success, but was too greedy to share? *He lost all his friends and got sad and lonely.*

If your blocks had all been five-dollar bills, you would have just raised hundreds of dollars for charity in those three minutes! How would that have felt? What charity do you wish it was? Take answers.

Let’s remember the farmer and ask God to give us a very special gift—that of a giving and charitable heart. Will you promise to ask for that this week?

LESSON #3

BUILDING TOWERS, BUILDING LIVES

Building blocks are a perfect metaphor for our Christian growth and how God sometimes uses challenging circumstances to make us bigger and better people. Build a tower with your students using a four-tier structure like the one above to help kids memorize Romans 5:3-5, a very important Scripture about how God “builds us up!”

MATERIALS:

- Enough blocks to build a tower that is four levels high with a topper (see our photo above)



LESSON

Have you ever had a problem that didn't seem to get any better? No matter how many ways you tried to solve it, it always stayed with you? Take answers from kids.

Did you wonder, during those times, where IS God? Why is he allowing this?

Almost everybody goes through times in life where they wonder why God is allowing their problems to persist. Today, we are going to look at one of the answers.

I'll start with the story of a butterfly and a farmer.

One day, a farmer saw a butterfly trying to break out of its cocoon. The butterfly struggled and struggled, and he felt sorry for it. So, he went over and gently pulled away at the cocoon with a couple of sweeps, and accomplished for the little butterfly what it would have taken hours to do.

The farmer went off to farm, but when he came home in the afternoon, he spotted the little butterfly on the table in the backyard. It was dead.

His wife came out, and he told her what had happened. She scooped up the little butterfly and said sadly, “Never help a butterfly out of a cocoon, hon. The *struggle is how he builds his strength to fly.*”

Take your bag of blocks and put them up on the table.

Sometimes the reason God doesn't seem to be helping us is that he wants us to fight the problem to grow stronger, more enduring, more persistent, more trusting, and more hopeful. It's like Paul says in Romans 5:3-5:

We rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit...

God helps build us up by allowing us to fight a circumstance. And it's a lot like us as we build this tower.

Have students join in, creating the bottom layer of the tower, using 10 blocks. Call it the **suffering layer**. Have students repeat before and after they build the bottom layer: ***Romans 5:3-5: We rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces...***

Have students join in creating the second layer of the tower using eight blocks. Call it the **endurance layer**. Have students repeat after they build the second layer. Point to the bottom and second layers as you repeat the words *suffering* and *endurance*: ***Romans 5:3-5: We rejoice in our suffering, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces...***

Have students join in creating the third layer of the tower using six blocks. Call it the **character layer**. Have students repeat after they build the third layer. Point to the bottom, then second and third layers as you repeat the words *suffering* and *endurance* and *character*: ***Romans 5:3-5: We rejoice in our suffering, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character...***

Have students join in creating the fourth layer of the tower using four blocks. Call it the **hope layer**. Have students repeat after they build the fourth layer. Point to the bottom, then second and third and fourth layers as you repeat the words *suffering* and *endurance* and *character* and *hope*: ***Romans 5:3-5: We rejoice in our suffering, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope.***

Have students top off the tower with two blocks—one shaped like a triangle on top of a tall and narrow or “column” block. Have them repeat, ***and hope does not put us to shame. Romans 5:3-5: We rejoice in our suffering, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope.***

Have them repeat the entire Scripture several times.

Is God testing you to make you stronger? Count your blessings. If the only solution to your problem is persevering until you have endurance (point to the second layer) **and character** (point to the third layer) **and hope** (point to the top layer), **rejoice.**

God is making a strong tower out of you.

He may test your endurance with some trying circumstances. He *will not* put you to shame. He may allow humility to be part of your learning process, but he *is not trying* to put you to shame. He is trying to make a warrior, or a strong tower, out of you.

There is often no way to make a trial fun. However, we can look to the future and trust that we will be strong towers of strength when our relief finally comes.

GAME #3

BUILD A TOWER

Engage students in a race to see which team can build the tallest tower. *It must stay standing!* They may learn a great lesson from this - that it doesn't pay to rush - and God never rushes while he's making strong towers out of us!

MATERIALS:

- All your blocks

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Divide students into two teams.
2. Empty all your blocks on the floor between them.
3. Tell students that to win, they must have the tallest tower.
4. When you say "Go!" both teams will build for 60 seconds. The team with the highest tower wins this round.

MID-GAME DISCUSSION

God wants to make strong towers out of all of us, and of course he wants us to stand tall. However, there is a difference between a *tall* tower and a *strong* tower, isn't there? What is the difference? A strong tower isn't nearly as likely to fall over.

What would happen if we put more of our energy into make the tower *strong*, while also making it *tall*? It would be less likely to fall over.

In this next race, let's try to find a balance of strong and tall to build our tower, like God uses in growth for us.

Say "Go!" and let them repeat the race. The team with the tallest strong tower will win that round. Award a point.

Allow the teams to compete several times until they have a game plan for creating a stronger tall tower.

CONCLUSION

When God uses the circumstances of our lives to make strong towers, he takes his time. If God wanted to do fast work only, people might be designed to live only 10 years instead of 70 or 80. Let's also remember, when we have tough circumstances, and we are being made into strong towers, that God knows what he's doing!

As Apostle Paul said in Philippians 1:6, the God "who began a good work in you *will carry it on to completion* until the day of Christ Jesus."

LESSON #4

JESUS IS THE BRIDGE



This lesson will use blocks to demonstrate the four spiritual laws to kids. As they build, they will have a better understanding of how Jesus is the bridge between us and God, and how to use him to cross over!

MATERIALS:

- All your blocks
- Two shoe boxes or other boxes

LESSON

Today we are going to use blocks to solve a very big problem that exists in today's world. It has to do with us and God. Does anyone know what the Four Spiritual Laws are? Some kids should have heard of them but few would be able to repeat them.

The Four Spiritual Laws help us understand challenge between man and God and how God has solved the problem! We are going to learn the four spiritual laws using building blocks and boxes.

Stand your shoe boxes up on the table on end, so they stand tall, side by side.

Spiritual Law #1: God loves mankind and created man to be his friends.

Use a tall pillar block and a short pillar block to represent God and man. Put them side by side with one on each box.

Spiritual Law #2: Man decided to do wrong things and that made God sad, because he couldn't be close to man anymore.

Move the boxes a couple feet apart with God on one and man on the other.

God is too good. He wants to be close, but we still do wrong stuff and think wrong thoughts, all of us sometimes.

As Isaiah 59:2 states, "...your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God..."

Point to the table between the boxes.

Picture this separation as a very deep canyon.

Point to the man.

If we try to leap to God, using our own strength, we will fall into the deep canyon. None of us is strong enough or smart enough to make it back to God.

Shake the little man and have him say, **"Sorry, God! I really miss you!"**

Shake the God and have him say, **"I know! I miss you too! I am going to solve this, little man! I am going to find a way to bring you back to me!"**

Shake the little man. **"That's great! It's no fun being separated from you!"**

Spiritual Law #3: God made a way to be close to man again. He sent Jesus to stand in our place and die for our sins. Anyone who believes Jesus took away their sins - past, present and future - can get back to God again. But that's the only way God provided. You can't get back to him just by trying to be good. You're just not that good.

It would be like this little man trying to leap across the vast canyon. He just isn't that powerful. He'll just fall in the canyon.

As Jesus said in John 14:6, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; *no one comes to the Father, but through Me...*"

Point to God and to the little man. **Now, you'll notice that we do not have a character for Jesus. We have God and we have man. Some people picture Jesus as actually being a *bridge*, one that goes between God and man. So, we are going to make Jesus to look like a bridge. Let's build a bridge.**

Let the students use all the blocks to build a bridge that runs between the two boxes.

Jesus is the bridge between God and man. Now, man can come back to God by relying on Jesus.

Have the little man jump down off the box and go to God's place to embrace God.

Shake them both in one hand: "**Hooray! Thank you for sending Jesus, God! Thank you that I can come back to you again!**" In God's voice: "**You're welcome!**"

Spiritual Law #4: We must individually receive Jesus as Savior and Lord. Send the little man piece back across the bridge a couple of times. **Everyone can come to God through Jesus. But you have to make the decision to come through Christ. It's a decision.**

As the Apostle John said in John 1:12, "...as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to all those who believe in His name."

Put the little man back in his former spot and walk him slowly across the bridge again.

Romans 10:9 says, "...if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved."

Confessing with your mouth and believing with your heart is like walking across the bridge. Walk the character across again.

If you believe that Jesus is God's son and you confess it and talk like you believe it—walk the character across one more time—your friendship with God begins immediately. He will start to work on your heart and your spirit so that when you get to heaven, you can stay there forever with him!

Let's repeat the spiritual laws together.

#1: God loves mankind and created man to be his friends.

#2: Man decided to do wrong things and God couldn't be close any more.

#3: God sent Jesus to die for our sins, and he serves as a bridge between man and God

#4: If you believe and confess that Jesus is God, you can use him as a bridge. You can cross and come back to God and begin eternal life with Jesus!

Think of yourself as crossing the bridge and becoming friends with God. How many of you can picture yourself joining with God in friendship?

GAME #4

BRIDGE MAN'S BLUFF

You need to cross the bridge of Jesus to get to God, according to the third spiritual law. But there are distractions in life! This game of carrying blocks on heads across a bridge will have your students become aware of how they need to keep their chins up and their eyes on God when living the Christian life!

MATERIALS:

- Small table
- Masking tape
- 16 blocks

PREPARATION:

1. Create two “lanes” down the middle of the classroom, which will be two “bridges,” one for each team.
2. Place the table at the end. Place a pile of eight blocks at the beginning of each bridge.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Divide students into two teams.
2. Have the first two students balance a block on top of their heads.
3. When you say “go,” they will have to walk to the other end of the bridge without the block falling off. If it falls off, they have to come back to the starting line, put the block back on their head, and start again.
4. When a student reaches the finish line, he must put his block on the table and run back to tag the next player before he can go.
5. The next student does the same. Keep repeating, with students taking turns, until all eight pieces belonging to each team are at the other end. The student who takes



the eighth block must make a tower out of the 8 that remains standing. It can be like ours in the photo above, beside the little tree, or something similar. But it must stay standing at the end, even after the last student runs back to his team.

6. The first team to create a standing tower and have all players back at the starting line wins.

CONCLUSION

How easy was it to get all the pieces across the bridge? *Not easy.* In life, we Christians all have to cross the Bridge of Jesus to get to God. We can all do it—so long as we don't get distracted or "out of balance" with the temptations of this world.

Temptations of this world happen to everyone. In this game, they're like turning your chin or lowering your vision while taking a block down to the other end. All your efforts to build start going wrong.

Remember in life to "keep your chin up" and "your eyes on God" while crossing the Bridge of Jesus. Then someday, you can stand before him as strong towers- - ones that will make him say, "Well done, good and faithful servant!"

IN MY FATHER'S HOUSE ARE MANY DWELLING PLACES



Here's another lesson to reinforce how tough times can be seen in a different, and far better, light - if we imagine what we are building for ourselves in heaven. You will be building a "heavenly house" with your students, and every block will represent something to overcome here on earth.

MATERIALS:

- All your blocks

LESSON

One of the last things Jesus said to his disciples was, "In my father's house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you." Who would like to build a heavenly mansion with our blocks?

Let the students take turns building heavenly mansions with your blocks. Based on your number of students, you can divide them into groups of three, or into pairs, or let each child build one, using all your blocks.

Leave the last one standing for the lesson.

In my father's house are many mansions. That is a cool statement, isn't it? Have you ever wondered what your house will actually look like in heaven? Take some answers.

Our mansions in heaven are something we can think about when things are not going to well down here. Because whatever we overcome here on earth will be like a brick or several bricks in our heavenly home.

Point out individual blocks as you give examples:

***This one is for all the times you gave others their way and didn't complain.**

*** This one is for all the times you stuck up for a kid who was bullied.**

*** This one is for helping your mom and dad without complaining.**

*** This one is for persevering in math when you really wanted to quit.**

*** This one is for the charities you supported.**

*** This one is for being kind to animals.**

*** This one is for your support of elderly people.**

*** This one is for all your prayers for others.**

Heaven is not described much in the Bible. It's as if God knows we won't be able to understand it. But he does want us to know that it is better than we ever imagined. 1 Corinthians 2:9 says, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."

And he also wants us to know that he rewards our good behavior. All those who are saved will be welcomed into the kingdom of heaven. But our response to the hardships in life, and the ways we are able to grow, will be like the pieces of our heavenly home.

What is a challenge you recently came through or repeatedly have to go through?

Take answers. Triggers: Someone being mean to you; overcoming a fear; learning a hard subject; having an illness or injury; having to move; losing a pet; parents splitting up.

How has that made you a bigger or better person? Take answers. How can problems like that bring you closer to God and Jesus? Take answers.

Let's remember that Jesus has gone to prepare a place for all of us. Let's remember what we want it to look like, and think of ourselves adding a pond or a garden or a beautiful room each time we come through a challenge. Only then are we bigger and more spiritual people.

GAME #5

BLOCK Pictionary

Here's a way to step up the game of Pictionary, while your students are imagining things that will be in our heavenly homes. Kids will have to draw with blocks to get others to understand their subject, and the team that gets the most guesses wins.

MATERIALS:

- Blocks, 30 or more
- Pencil or pen
- Sheet of printer paper
- Scissors
- Basket

PREPARATION:

1. Cut the printer paper into 10 pieces and write the following words, one on each piece: Chair, bed, sunshine, flowers, river, angels, birds, trees, smiles, houses.
2. Fold all papers and put them in the basket.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Divide the class into teams.
2. Have one team member from the first team step forward and pull a paper out of the basket. She will have two minutes to make the item out of blocks. In the interim, students from both teams can begin to guess what the item is.
3. The first student to guess before the two minutes is up gets a point for her team. If no one guesses, no one gets the point, and a member of the other team gets to go next.
4. Repeat until all 10 items have been pulled and the basket is empty. The team with the most points wins.

CONCLUSION

We don't know a lot about heaven. It's as if God realizes we will not understand until we get there. It's a little like describing the color "orange" to a blind man. However, we can accept Jesus' words as absolutely TRUE! In God's house are many dwelling places. We will enjoy being there with him!

LESSON #6

THERE IS A TEMPLE INSIDE US ALL

This lesson in building a temple will help kids understand what Jesus meant when he said his people would worship him “in spirit and in truth.” Our church buildings are fine places to gather for worship, but we should worship God in our hearts - in our rooms, schools, places of business, and in nature—not just in church.

MATERIALS:

- Blocks
- Character of Jonny (use a Lego or other people toy, or use one of the block pillars as a person)



LESSON

I need some kids to build me a temple or church. Who wants to join in? Keep two blocks for yourself—a square and a triangle, and make a little house with a roof. Have the kids build a temple on the table. They can use our picture or create their own. Explain that a temple has lots of pillars. Let them imagine and construct. Put the house right next to the temple.

Let me tell you about Jonny. Move your character of Jonny in front of the temple. **He lived right next door to a big church. He felt very special, living there. The door to the church was always open. Jonny would often go in the church to color and draw with his marker pens.** Place Jonny somewhere in the temple structure. **It was quiet. He felt much more inspired than he did at home, where the rooms were small.** Put him behind the house structure.

Shake him a little and have him say, “**Gee, this house is so small and so normal. I don’t like it as much here. I don’t feel as close to God here.**”

As Jonny got older, he would go into the church to speak to God. He could go to the altar anytime he wanted. Put Jonny somewhere else in the church structure. **It made him feel very special, that he could get that close to God.**

Sometimes he would sit in the pews, just so he could feel God's presence. Move him to another spot in the pews. **He always felt like God heard his prayers extra clearly. In fact, because of that beautiful church, Jonny started thinking of becoming a priest or minister.**

The church was on an island. Every 30 years or so, there used to be a big storm. The tides would come up with violent waves. Everyone would have to evacuate.

Put Jonny down at the other end of the table.

Often, when people would come back, they found that houses had been knocked over. One time, the whole business district had been flooded. This time a very weird thing happened.

Keep a hand on Jonny's house so that it stays together and knock over the whole temple.

Storms can be like this. They are mysterious. They can leave little things standing...Point to Jonny's house...**And knock down great big things.**

Start bringing Jonny back closer again.

When Jonny's family came back from evacuation, their eyes almost popped out of their heads! Their house was okay. Point to the house and then to the wreckage. **But that great, big, beautiful church was just a pile of rubble.**

Move Jonny around in sad steps. **"What will I do now?" Jonny thought. "How could God have allowed for such a thing? Now, I'll never feel close to God again!"**

And he felt very, very confused.

Have you ever heard of a situation where a church fell down in a flood, or got burned to the ground, or was vandalized? If so, what happened? Let them tell.

Why would God allow his own house to be knocked down or ruined? The answer might lie in a little story about Jesus. One day, he met a Samaritan woman at a well. He told her he was the Messiah. She wanted to know if he would come to dwell on a mountain where her ancestors worshipped. There was a pretty temple there.

Here is what Jesus said: "...a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of

worshippers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshippers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.” (John 4:23-24)

What Jesus meant was that buildings don’t make us spiritual. It’s nice if we live near pretty buildings, especially a church. But if we don’t, *we are just as close to him.*

Take a couple of blue blocks from the rubble, put them off to the side, and put Jonny by them. **At first, Jonny found it very hard to feel God’s presence. But eventually, he found that if he went to the ocean, he could feel God there.**

Take two green blocks from the rubble, put them nearby, and put Jonny by them. **After a while, Jonny could feel God if he went to his favorite field.**

He kept trying and trying. And one day he realized... Bring Jonny to his own house. **that he could hear God perfectly well in his own house and in his own bed.**

He learned something. *God is always with you.* You don’t need a beautiful building. Start passing out bricks from the rubble to your students.

Give a couple bricks to one student: **Here is part of the body of Christ that was poured out for you when Jesus died for us.**

Give a couple bricks to a second student: **Here is God’s watchfulness in that he is always looking out for you.**

Give a couple bricks to a third student: **Here is God’s willingness to speak to your heart and to have a relationship with you.**

Give a couple bricks to a fourth student: **Here is God’s vision, which he is willing to share so that you and he can help make a better world.**

Give a couple bricks to a fifth student: **Here is the hope God gives us for a friendship with him in eternal life.**

And so forth. Church buildings can be really beautiful and inspiring. And Jonny always missed his. But the flood that took the church down actually set him free to realize that because of Christ’s death and resurrection, we can visit with him anywhere, at any time, at any hour, in any circumstance. The real church was right where Jesus told the Samaritan woman it would be – in our hearts.

GAME #6

TOWER KNOCK-DOWN

If anything is as fun as building with blocks, it's knocking the blocks down again! In this game, the kids get to be the storms that knock over structures. As towers topple again and again, it will help them see that the important structures God builds are the ones in our hearts and souls, and not the ones in the streets.



MATERIALS:

- 30 blocks
- Three tennis balls

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Divide the class into two teams.
2. Have one team build a castle with the blocks in the center of the room, away from windows.
3. Rules for building:
 - a. The bottom tier of blocks must be standing up and not lying flat. See the photo above.
 - b. If a block is lying flat horizontally, the block that goes on top may not be lying flat horizontally. See the photo above.
4. Have someone on the other team throw three tennis balls and see how many blocks he can knock over. No hard throws! Use your aim and not your power! However many blocks remain standing is the number of points the building team gets.
5. Have the team switch positions and repeat until everyone has had a turn throwing the tennis balls.
6. The team with the most points wins.

CONCLUSION

These structures are a little like some of the buildings we treasure on planet earth. Whether it's a beautiful church or a historic mansion, the Disney World castle, or the Empire States Building, at some point, they all will come tumbling down, because nothing lasts forever. At least nothing made of brick and wood.

Jesus said in Matthew 6:19-21, "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

What does last forever is our relationship with Jesus and what he inspires in our heart. Let's remember to see his love as the biggest and strongest structure in the universe - one that can't be knocked down.

STRAIGHT AND NARROW... UH-OH-UH-OH!

Here's a chance to introduce your students to one of the Scriptures that can be a bit off-putting, because it makes Christianity sound too difficult to attempt. However, once your students see the real meaning of the "straight and narrow" using building blocks, their faith will grow!



MATERIALS:

- All your blocks

LESSON

Tell students **I need you to build me a very looooong and very narrow path, using the blocks. Make the path as loooong as you want, and as narrow as you can! You need to put a little gate in front of it.** Hold off three blocks: One square block for the gate, and two square pillars which will be the spiritual and physical side of one person.

Once they have completed the road and the gate: **That is just about the longest and narrowest path I've ever seen! Let's look at what Jesus had to say about the narrow path to heaven in Matthew 7:13-14:**

"Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it."

Oh boy, oh boy. That is a tough-sounding Scripture. What do you think it means? You should get all sorts of answers relating to the Christian walk being extremely difficult.

If only a few will find *the road that leads to life*, doesn't that make the Christian walk seem almost not worth trying for? If only a few will find it, does that include *me*? I'm just this normal, average person!

Let's try to send a character on the straight-and-narrow road. Hold up one of the pillar blocks. **You've heard that we all have two natures once we are with Christ: a spiritual nature and a flesh, or physical, nature.** Hold up one pillar **This is Jonny's spiritual nature.** Place the other pillar buttressed up to the first pillar. **This is Jonny's physical nature. The two must coexist together, to make up Jonny, until he reaches heaven. Let's try to set Jonny on the straight and narrow.**

If your students have made the narrowest straight and narrow bridge, they will have places that are only one side of a block wide. Try to balance both sides of Jonny side by side on that one narrow block. The two sides of Jonny will have to share, each balancing half on and half off the narrow side.

Keep placing Jonny on those most narrow parts of the road, balancing him, or even letting one half of him fall off while the other half remains on top. At those points say...

While Jonny is trying to walk the straight and narrow, his flesh is working against his spirit. Sometimes the flesh wins; sometimes the spirit wins. But this adds to the idea that walking the straight and narrow our whole lives is impossible for most of us.

What does the straight and narrow mean? Does it mean our actions earn us a way into heaven on our walk with Jesus? Jesus is trying to say that our actions are very, very, very unlikely to earn us a way into God's presence in heaven. He's just too good, and our physical side will knock over our spiritual side too many times.

However, Jesus *still wants us to try to walk the straight and narrow.* Here's how it's *really done.*

Pick up a rectangle block out of the straight-and-narrow road. Stand it up on its side.

Romans 5:8 says, *But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

Knock the block over.

When Jesus ate his last meal with his disciples, he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "*This is my body given for you.*" Lay one of the two pillars making up Jonny on top of the knocked-over rectangle block.

Then he took the cup saying, "*This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.*" Lay the other of the two pillars making up Jonny on top of the

rectangle block, so that you are using it almost like a stretcher for the two pieces of Jonny.

When we become part of the body of Christ—when we give our hearts to Jesus--it doesn't matter how narrow the road is because...

Float the rectangle carrying the two pieces of Jonny just above the road, following it along. **It doesn't matter how narrow the road is when Jesus is carrying you.**

Get the blocks to the end of the road.

The point of Christianity is not to try to earn your way into heaven with good works. You will likely have weak moments and fall—the road is too narrow and the way is too difficult.

The point is to trust Jesus with your heart, soul, and mind, and trust him to get you to eternity. Let's all do good works, because we want to make God and Jesus happy. But let's rely on him to get us down the narrow path. He will be above us, below us, and all around us throughout our lives.

WALKING

THE STRAIGHT AND NARROW

Let kids experience how hard it is to stay on the straight and narrow by walking on a clothesline and picking up blocks along the way to the end of the road. This relay will have them laughing and reeling - and learning that the best balance in the world can't get you into heaven. Only Jesus can!

MATERIALS:

- Two pieces of clothesline about 10 feet long
- A dozen blocks

PREPARATION:

1. Pull the clotheslines straight and lay them side by side on a clear playing field, about three feet apart.
2. Place six blocks along each rope, some on one side and some on the other.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Divide the class into two teams and form lines behind the ends of each rope.
2. When you say "Go!" the first student on each team must walk on top of the rope, stopping to stoop or bend and pick up each of the six blocks.
3. They may hold the blocks in their hands and arms but not put them in pockets.
4. If they step off the rope in such a way that their foot lands on the floor with none of the rope being under it, they have to put all the blocks back near the rope and proceed to the end without their point.
5. If they make it to the end with all six blocks and without stepping off the rope to recover their footing, their teams gets a point. They must put the blocks back on either side of the rope before the next student can proceed.
6. Repeat with the next student coming forward after all the blocks are in place again.
7. The team that wins the most rounds wins the game.

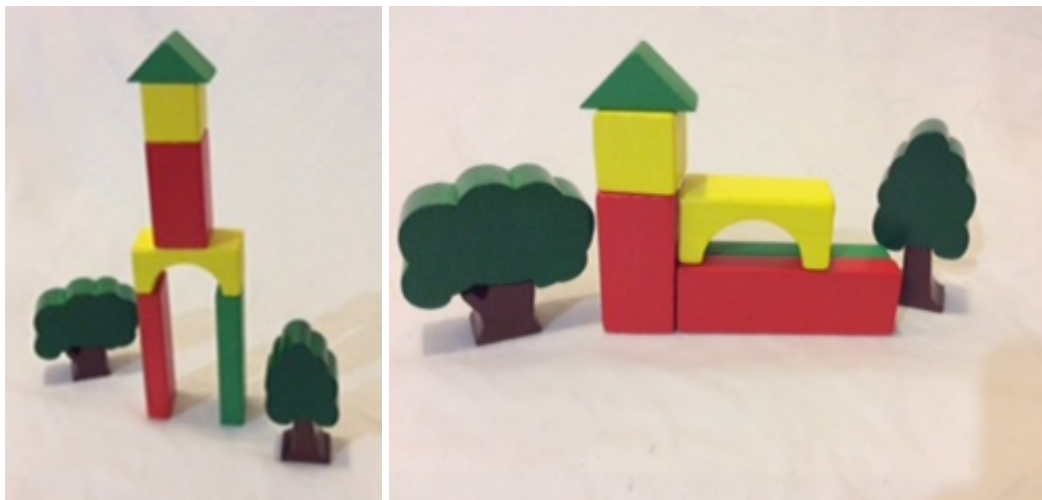
CONCLUSION

How hard was it to stay on the straight and narrow, especially while picking up blocks? *Very hard.* That walk is a little like our lives when we are trying to be perfect using our own efforts. We all “slip up” sometimes. The blocks are a little like the temptations of life, or the hard things in life. They are likely to get us to lose our footing.

The only person who really walked the straight and narrow—the person who never sinned—is Jesus. And once we receive him in our hearts, he carries us on his back.

Let’s thank him that we don’t have to worry about being perfect within ourselves...that we can count on him to get us into heaven!

HOW GOD CHANGES US



Blocks can be moved all around to create different structures. Hence, they are a great way to show how God can begin to “shift” things around in our hearts and our lives to make us into mature Christians. This demonstration, making a house and making various structures out of a pile of the same six blocks, will help kids understand.

MATERIALS:

- Six blocks (use the six pictured above to construct the same designs)
- Cell phone with a photo app (optional)

PREPARATION:

Lay all six blocks flat on the table

LESSON

We only have six blocks here. How many designs do you think we can make? Allow your students to keep rearranging the blocks into different designs. If you have a photo app on your phone, keep taking pictures of the designs that they do so that they are sure not to repeat one. Once the kids feel they have exhausted the possibilities, flatten the blocks and leave them on the table again.

This pile of blocks is a little like us before we come to know Jesus. We don't yet have the added dimensions of understanding truths or of thinking of life as eternal. We don't have the joy of feeling protected and watched, all while God is helping us

grow. Before we know Jesus, our lives are a bit flat. They aren't amounting to much spiritually.

But Jesus begins to build our lives into more meaningful substance.

Create the house like the one above. **The great thing about Jesus is that he treats us all as individuals. We are given individual gifts and talents. He bestows us with individual strengths.**

Point to the house. **He can make one person into a homemaker.**

Switch the blocks around until it makes the tower picture above. **He can make another into an architect or engineer.**

Switch the blocks around until they form a sort of circle. **He can make another into a farmer.**

Even though we are all very different, Jesus gives us the essential basics to become bigger and stronger people once we are part of his kingdom.

Take the blocks out of the circle one at a time, laying them on the table.

He gives us all this love. Move a block in front of you.

He gives us his wisdom. Move another block in front of you, as you start to form a line.

He gives us his protection. Move another block into the line.

He gives us our hope that death will not overcome us or be the end of us. Move another block into the line.

He gives us his magic, of making us into unique and strong individuals. Move another block into the line.

He gives us peace in a world that is filled with unrest and doubt. Move the last block into the line.

No matter who we are or what God is building us into...

Make a small building with the blocks. Move a few pieces around until it becomes another structure. Do it again.

...we can always count on him to have given us all the heavenly basics that we need to become what he wants us to become.

Today, let's thank him for making us uniquely us - and for giving us all the same basic Christian essentials so that we can become the best "us-es" that we can be!

BLIND MAN'S BLOCKING

Have kids build towers blindfolded and see how hard it is to get a tower to stand tall! The friend that helps center what they stack will help them realize how much they need the vision and guidance of more powerful forces - like God and Jesus and the Holy Spirit!

MATERIALS:

- All your blocks
- Two blindfolds
- Cell phone or other timer

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Form students into pairs.
2. Have them all seated at the learning table with the blocks in the center.
3. Blindfold students on two different teams. Have their partners sit directly across from them.
4. Say "Go!" and start timing.
5. The blindfolded partner must start reaching for blocks and stacking them to make a tower.
6. The seeing partner may do anything but stack the blocks. She can give orders, put blocks in her blinded partner's hands, and straighten out crooked blocks put in place. But the blind partner has to do the actual stacking.
7. If a tower falls over, they must persevere on, the seeing partner telling the blind one what just fell and either fixing or amending it.
8. After two minutes, say "Stop!"
9. Have everyone vote on who has the best tower.
10. Repeat with two other teams, or have partners switch until everyone has had a turn being the blind builder.

CONCLUSION

How hard was it to build when blinded? *Very hard.* **How much harder would it have been without your seeing partner?** *Harder.*

It took a lot of coordination to listen to your partner's voice, trust what your partner said, and take the blocks and directions given.

This is a little like your relationship with Christ. We don't have the "big picture" or the understanding that he has. We have to trust and coordinate our lives with him to build the lives that he wants.

People who try to build eternal and spiritual lives without him have to go it alone—and they have to go it blind! Things are more than likely to topple.

Someday when we get to heaven, our spiritual blindfolds will come off, and we'll be able to see what we have built with our lives. The best way to have a sound structure is to have listened to our partner, Jesus, throughout life on earth.

A BIG OLD PILE IS NOT ACTUALLY CHAOS!



A wise man once noted that “while life is happening, it doesn’t often make sense. Life can often seem like a chaos of good times and bad, good luck and injustices. But when looking back on your life, it reads like a finely crafted novel.” Making order out of chaos with this pile of blocks will help kids see that God really does know what he’s doing, no matter how chaotic life may seem at times.

MATERIALS:

- All your blocks

LESSON

Dump all the blocks in front of you at the lesson table. **Oftentimes, life doesn’t appear to make sense. When Susie was a little girl, her mom died. She had to move in with relatives. Her uncle didn’t really want her and was not always nice. She couldn’t get good grades like her very smart cousins. She didn’t know who she was or who loved her or what she was supposed to become. Life just felt like chaos!**

Push around the blocks in the pile.

“I always remember feeling like the world was spinning too fast. I always felt dizzy. My thoughts were dizzy,” Susie remembers. “Like a dizzy person, I was looking for something to hold onto, something that would keep me from falling into utter despair and confusion.”

Take one of your biggest blocks and put it in front of you as your first foundational piece. **“The thing I found to hold onto was the most important thing my mother used to tell me,” she said. “GOD LOVES YOU. AND HE IS ALWAYS IN CHARGE OF YOUR LIFE, EVEN WHEN YOU CAN’T FEEL IT.”**

No matter what happened, Susie kept telling herself that God is in charge.

Put another foundational piece in front of you. **When her uncle was mean, GOD WAS IN CHARGE.**

Put another foundational piece in front of you. **When she got C’s on her report card, GOD WAS IN CHARGE.**

Put another foundational piece in front of you. **When she missed her mother, GOD WAS IN CHARGE.**

Start building upward. **When she didn’t have enough money to go to college, GOD WAS IN CHARGE.**

Add blocks. **When her cousins got to go to college and she didn’t, GOD WAS IN CHARGE.**

Of course, a few good things happened along the way. Add blocks. **One lady offered Susie a job. Her cousins didn’t even have to work, but Susie held on to her thought: GOD WAS IN CHARGE.**

When the lady died, Susie was devastated, but GOD WAS IN CHARGE.

Add blocks. **The lady left Susie her business, which was making wedding dresses. Susie didn’t know how to run it very well at first. But GOD WAS IN CHARGE.**

Add blocks. **Susie sewed and learned and started to attract people who wanted really pretty and very expensive wedding dresses. Susie donated lots of money to kids who had lost their parents, hoping they would be heartened and realize GOD IS IN CHARGE.**

Susie married a great man and had several children of her own. She loved her kids. For the first time in her life she felt like enough people loved her. Add a couple blocks. **GOD WAS IN CHARGE.**

Susie's cousins didn't do as well in either love or money. When it came time for Susie's aunt and uncle to need care, she had to take them in. She didn't spend time remembering how they had not been fair to her. Add a couple blocks. **GOD WAS IN CHARGE, and he had given her ...**

Step back and show off your lovely tower. ...**a really, really wonderful life.**

In life we will all have struggles. Hopefully we won't have ones as bad as Susie. But no matter what happens, it pays to remember that God is taking the pile of bricks that looks like your life, and he is making a beautiful castle out of it.

Through all your good, bad, fun, lousy, awful, and rewarding times, it pays to remember **GOD IS ALWAYS IN CHARGE.**

RELAY BUILDING WITH TEAMWORK

“...he who began a good work in you will carry it out to completion...” (Philippians 1:6). God builds us into spiritual beings. But he sure wants our help! This game of teamwork in building a strong castle will not only reflect all the people involved in our growth, but also our need to have faith!

MATERIALS:

- 30 Blocks
- Masking tape

PREPARATION:

1. Have a clear playing area for a relay race.
2. Create a start and finish line using masking tape.
3. Put 15 blocks in two piles, one for each team, at the starting line.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Divide the class into teams of three players each.
2. Have one team member for each team go down to the finish line, one team member in the middle, and one at the beginning.
3. When you say “Go!” the team member at the beginning will toss (underhand) a block to the teammate in the middle. The teammate in the middle will get down on all fours, place the block on his back, and walk it to the player at the end, who will put it in place to start building a tall castle.
4. Repeat with each block.
5. As it is the end of these “block” lessons, hopefully your students will have learned the valor of making castles strong, and not just trying to balance piece on top of piece, which definitely makes them crash! *However if you want to give shout-outs to this effect, that may be necessary!*
6. If a castle topples, the whole team must stop and wait for the teammate at the end to rebuild it before moving.

7. When all 15 blocks are in place, the team that finished first gets one point. The team with the tallest standing castle gets two points.
8. If you have enough players for a third team, they can relay the winner. If you have less, or only three, let them keep racing against themselves, changing the positions of the players.
9. The first team to reach ten points wins.

CONCLUSION

In Philippians 1:6, the Apostle Paul says he is confident that “He who began a good work in you will carry it out to completion...” He is talking about God building you up into the strong Christian who can love, succeed, and be a valuable player in the lives of others.

We are a lot like these strong castles, and the race is a little like the way God builds us up. He definitely likes teamwork! He does the building. But he loves parents and friends who are supportive. He needs you to be open to his will!

Remember, as you go through life and God builds you, that you are his teammate. He expects a lot but loves even more!