

Character Building from the Bible

COMMITMENT NOT IMPULSIVENESS

Two Lessons:

Nehemiah & Paul going to Jerusalem

Definitions:

Commitment is carefully deciding to do what is right and then sticking to a promise when the going gets hard because you committed yourself to do something.

(Opposite) Impulsiveness is doing whatever you think of doing or feel like doing without thinking about the consequences and without thinking about what you have already promised to do.

Spell the word commitment rhythmically: COM~M IT~ MENT

Other word forms related to the word commitment:

Commitment n. She kept her commitment.

Commit v. (commits, committed, committing) She committed herself to him in marriage.

Committed adj. She is such a committed person.

We speak of keeping a commitment or fulfilling a commitment or honoring a commitment.

Bible Memory Verse (one verse for the two lessons):

Galatians 6, vs. 9

“And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.” (NKJV)

Teach the Bible verse like this:

COMMITMENT, COMMITMENT, COMMITMENT, COMMITMENT

And let us not grow weary while doing good

COMMITMENT, COMMITMENT, COMMITMENT, COMMITMENT

for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart

for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart

COMMITMENT, COMMITMENT, COMMITMENT, COMMITMENT

OT Bible Story: Nehemiah fulfills his commitment to build the wall.

Lesson Scripture: Nehemiah 1, vs 2 to 6, vs 15.

Lesson Aim:

Nehemiah committed himself to rebuilding the broken-down walls of Jerusalem, and despite many discouragements, he did not stop until he fulfilled his commitment by finishing the rebuilding of the walls. My students should follow Nehemiah's example, committing themselves to good, worthwhile tasks and then fulfilling their commitments by finishing what they started out to do.

Beginning the Lesson:

When you believe God wants you to commit to doing something, and you do that—you commit to it, what reasons could there be for stopping short of doing what you committed to? How many discouragements would it take before you gave up? What about if there were very many discouragements, one after another?

What about if you were ridiculed and laughed at for committing to do that thing? Would it be all right to give up then?

What about if it was very, very hard? Could you give up then?

What about if it was actually dangerous? Would that be a reason for giving up on your commitment?

There was a man in the Bible who committed to doing something very important for his people. His name was Nehemiah, and there's a Bible book named after him. He faced all those things. He faced many temptations to act impulsively, thinking of his own comfort for the moment. Instead he committed himself to a good cause and then followed through on his commitment. Let's look at his story and see if he finished the job to which he committed.

Main Points of the Bible Lesson:

- 1. Nehemiah commits himself to rebuild the broken-down walls of Jerusalem.**
 - A. Nehemiah learns of the problem of the broken-down walls. 1, vs.2-3**
 - B. Nehemiah fasts and prays, seeking God's guidance about what he should do 1, vs.4**
 - C. Nehemiah receives permission to leave his employment & go to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls. 2, vs. 5-8**

- D. Nehemiah arrives at Jerusalem & looks over the situation. 2 vs. 11-15**
- E. Nehemiah convinces leaders to also commit to the work. 2 vs. 17-18**

REPEAT RHYTHMICALLY: NEHEMIAH WAS COMMITTED TO BUILDING UP THE WALL.

- 2. Nehemiah keeps at the job in the face of opposition, discouragement & danger.**
 - A. Enemies ridicule him & despise him. 2, vs 19**
 - B. They mock him & spread the poison to others. 4, vs. 1-3.**
 - C. In the face of opposition & ridicule, Nehemiah prays & keeps on working towards fulfilling his commitment. 4, vs. 4-6**

REPEAT RHYTHMICALLY: NEHEMIAH WAS COMMITTED TO BUILDING UP THE WALL, SO HE HELD ON, KEPT ON, HE HELD ON, KEPT ON...ETC.

- D. Enemies conspire to attack. 4, vs. 7-8**
- E. In the face of possible attack, Nehemiah prays, sets a watch, & keeps working on his commitment. 4, vs. 9**

REPEAT RHYTHMICALLY: NEHEMIAH WAS COMMITTED TO BUILDING UP THE WALL, SO HE HELD ON, KEPT ON, HE HELD ON, KEPT ON...ETC.

- F. Tribe of Judah was discouraged by amount of rubbish. 4, vs. 11**
- G. Nehemiah strengthens his defenses, remembers God’s power, & keeps on working on his commitment. 4, vs. 13-14, vs. 16-20**

REPEAT RHYTHMICALLY: NEHEMIAH WAS COMMITTED TO BUILDING UP THE WALL, SO HE HELD ON, KEPT ON, HE HELD ON, KEPT ON...ETC.

- H. When he was almost finished, his enemies try to trick him, thinking to harm him. 6, vs. 1**
- I. Nehemiah refuses to get in their trap. 6, vs. 3**
- J. Enemies try FIVE TIMES to trap him. 6, vs. 5**
(Students repeat on their fingers, TRAP HIM, TRAP HIM, TRAP HIM, TRAP HIM!)
- K. Enemies threaten to wrongly accuse him. 6, vs. 6-8**
- L. Enemies plot to kill him, but he refuses to flee in fear, continuing to work on fulfilling his commitment. 6, vs. 10-11**
(Students say, “No! I’m committed! I can’t run away!”)

**REPEAT RHYTHMICALLY: NEHEMIAH WAS COMMITTED TO BUILDING UP THE WALL,
SO HE HELD ON, KEPT ON, HE HELD ON, KEPT ON...ETC.**

- 3. Nehemiah fulfills his commitment and completes the work. 6 vs. 15 He finally succeeds by God’s help because he was never impulsive, working only when he felt like it. He was truly committed to the work.**

**REPEAT RHYTHMICALLY: NEHEMIAH WAS COMMITTED TO BUILDING UP THE WALL,
SO HE HELD ON, KEPT ON, HE HELD ON, KEPT ON...ETC.**

Application to the students’ lives:

What are some important commitments in our lives now? (Schooling, family. You make a commitment to Ghana every time you say the Pledge to the Ghana flag. Maybe you have made a commitment to Jesus.)

What are some important future commitments?

(Possibly higher education, employment, marriage, family)

Possible songs:

**When you’re committed to something good,
then you HOLD ON, yes, you HOLD ON.**

**Nothing good is easy, but if you’re committed,
then you HOLD ON, yes you HOLD ON.**

You just hold on, yes you HOLD ON.

Activities:

Play “Zonk.” Prepare 8 cards. On the face of each card, put a numeric value, 100-500. On the other side, put one of the 4 review questions listed below, or one of the situations where the students decide if the character is Committed or Impulsive. Divide into two teams and take turns answering questions. When all cards are gone, the team with the highest points wins.

Suggestion: Much time is often wasted in asking questions by searching for just the right person to ask a question while many students try to get your attention. Choose and name or point to a student quickly. If that one does not know, move on to another student quickly so that time is not wasted. Or, if the teams choose someone to try to answer, they send their contestants forward at the beginning of the game and you just ask the next person in line.

Card 1: 500 points. The word “commitment” is a noun. Give one of the verb forms.

(Correct answers: Commit, commits, committing, committed)

Card 2: 400 points. The opposite of “committed” is uncommitted or _____?

(Correct answer: Impulsive)

Card 3: 300 points. Name some of the obstacles or problems Nehemiah faced in building the wall. (Correct answers: Opposition from enemies, being ridiculed, being threatened, people trying to trick him so as to hurt him)

Card 4: 200 points. Tell a problem Nehemiah faced that you would find discouraging and tell why.

Card 5: 500 points. Kofi joined the math club at school but he often missed meetings to do things with his friends. Committed or Impulsive? Why? (Correct answer: Impulsive)

Card 6: 400 points. Kwame got married, but when he lost his job, he left his family and never came back. Committed or Impulsive? Why? (Correct answer: Impulsive)

Card 7: 300 points. Yaa did her homework faithfully every day, paid attention in class, and studied hard. Committed or Impulsive? Why? (Correct answer: Committed)

Card 8: 200 points. Mary joined the choir and she was careful to attend every practice and to be on time. Committed or Impulsive? Why? (Correct answer: Committed)

NT Lesson: Paul Commits Himself to Go to Jerusalem

Lesson Scripture: Acts 20:22-23, 36-37, 21:10, 21:15, 27-33, 22:24

Lesson Aim: By God’s leading, Paul committed himself to go to Jerusalem to observe the Feast of Pentecost, even though he knew it was very dangerous to do so. Ultimately, he was arrested, beaten, and imprisoned, but this resulted in many opportunities to tell rulers about Jesus. Like Paul, we should commit ourselves to do all those good things we believe God wants us to do. Then we should fulfill those commitments, no matter what hardships we may face along the way.

Beginning the Bible Lesson:

What would you do if you were sure God was asking you to commit to do a certain thing, but it was very dangerous? What would you do if God showed you ahead of time that you were going to do would be very painful? Would you still commit to do what God was asking you to do? The Apostle Paul faced that very question. Let’s look at his story in the book of Acts in the Bible and see what he did.

Main Points of the Bible Lesson:

- 1. Paul committed to go to Jerusalem for the Feast of Pentecost, even though it was very dangerous. Acts 20, vs. 16**
- 2. Paul was committed even though he knew he might even die there. Acts 20, vs. 22-23, 36-37.**

The group speaks rhythmically: Paul was committed to obey God, no matter what, no matter what!

- 3. Many beg Paul not to go because God has shown he will be bound in Jerusalem & given over to the Gentiles. Acts 21, vs. 10-**

The group speaks rhythmically: Paul was committed to obey God, no matter what, no matter what!

- 4. Paul follows through on his commitment. Acts 21, vs. 15**

Students sing the COMMITMENT song.

5. **In Jerusalem, he is falsely accused and a crowd tries to kill him. Acts 21, vs. 27-33 He is then beaten and arrested. Acts 22:24**
6. **Summary of what happened later:**
7. Nothing in the Bible suggests that Paul ever regretted his commitment to go to Jerusalem. As result of that commitment, he had amazing opportunities to preach Christ to many rulers, & eventually to Caesar, the Roman Emperor himself. In the end, Paul gave his life for Christ in Rome. He joyfully fulfilled his commitment to Christ, even though it meant pain and suffering and even his life.

The group speaks rhythmically: Paul was committed to obey God, no matter what, no matter what!

Application to the students' lives:

Ask for five volunteers to come forward if they can tell one time when commitment might be hard. Bring them forward and let each speak. Finish with this responsive prayer:

Leader:

Students:

Lord, when You show us what to do

Help us be committed!

Lord, even when Your way is hard

Help us be committed!

When we are discouraged, sad & tired

Help us be committed!

Lord, someday when we get married & start a family

Help us be committed!

In our schoolwork now and here today

Help us be committed!

Help us keep on till the job is done

Help us be committed!

(Use the same definitions, Bible memory verse, song & activities as with the previous lesson.)

Zonk Questions:

Card 1: 500 points. Why did Paul commit himself to go to Jerusalem?

(Correct answer: He felt that's what God wanted him to do.)

Card 2: 400 points. How did Agabus warn Paul about what was going to happen?

(Correct answer: He tied himself up with Paul's belt and said God had showed him that this was what was going to happen to the man who owned it.)

Card 3: 300 points. Paul suffered after he was captured in Jerusalem. What was good about it? (Correct answer: He had amazing opportunities to preach Christ to rulers and eventually to

Caesar himself.”

Card 4: 200 points. True or False? Paul died in Jerusalem. (Correct answer. False. He died later on in Rome.)

Card 5: 500 points. True or False? If we are committed to God, He will not let us suffer any pain.” (Correct answer: False. Paul was committed to Christ, and he suffered pain but God gave him amazing privileges like preaching to rulers and even to Caesar.)

Card 6: 400 points. Eric promised God to be an evangelist, so he began by telling his friends, family and neighbors about Jesus. Committed or Impulsive? (Correct answer: Committed.)

Card 7: 300 points. Yawa said she would sweep the classroom every day, but she only did it when the teacher reminded her. Committed or Impulsive? (Correct answer: Impulsive)

Card 8: 200 points. Kwesi promised to pray every day. He forgot several times, so he just gave up. Committed or Impulsive? (Correct answer: Impulsive)