



Go the Distance

Bible Story: Go the Distance (Peter and John Are Taken to the Sanhedrin) • Acts 3:1–4:21

Bottom Line: Keep going even when it gets tough.

Memory Verse: *Let us not become tired of doing good. At the right time we will gather a crop if we don't give up.* Galatians 6:9 (NirV)

Life App: Determination—Deciding it's worth it to finish what you started

Basic Truth: I need to make the wise choice.

Story: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways (Large Group, 35 minutes)

Engage kids' hearts through a dynamic and interactive Bible story, worship, and prayer experience in a Large Group setting.

Host enters.

Opener

HOST: “Hi, folks! Welcome to another incredible day in [your environment’s name]! My name is [your name], and I’m so excited you’re here today. We’ve been talking about determination this month and how we can get UNstuck!

“Determination is deciding it's worth it to finish what you started.

“It can be tough for us to get unstuck from some sticky situations, but God is always there to help us.

“I’ve got another sticky game for us today that I think you’re going to love!

Pick up the box full of action figures.

“Our goal is to get these action figures to stick in the hula hoop net on the other side of the stage.

Two volunteers bring out the hula hoop with a “net” made of tape. They stand a pre-determined distance from the tape line, and hold the hoop between them. (These can be pre-selected adults, like Worship Leaders, or you can recruit a couple of Small Group Leaders to help in the moment.)

“But, to make things a little more interesting, you can’t just toss them over. You’ve got to throw backward—like this! (*Demonstrate.*) Pretty tough, huh? I wonder if any of us can successfully get one of our action figures to stick to the tape. It’ll be fun to try!

“If you want to play, go ahead and line up. If you want to watch, that’s totally cool, too. We’ll go until everyone that wants to play gets at least one throw.

Wait for kids (and Leaders) to come up to the stage. Have them line up behind the tape line.

“Let’s get started. Ready, set, toss!

SFX: Fun music

The two adults should hold the hula hoop in place while the kids (and Leaders) try to toss the action figures backward into it—one at a time.

Recruit a Leader (or two) to retrieve action figures that have missed and bring them back to the starting line. That way you won’t run out.

Keep things moving quickly while reacting to each throw (“So close! Good try!”). If someone does “land” an action figure successfully, cheer for them like crazy!

Make sure everyone in line gets to throw at least once. If no one is successful the first time through, keep bringing the volunteers with the net closer and closer to the throwing line until someone eventually “lands” one that sticks.

“That was really fun! You all did great! Let’s give them a round of applause as they head back to their seats.

Dismiss the kids (and Leaders) to their seats.

“We’ve got a great story about determination coming up. But before we get to that, let’s all sing, dance, and praise God with our worship team!”

Worship Leaders enter as Host exits.

Worship

Storyteller enters as Worship Leaders exit.

SETTING UP THE STORY

STORYTELLER: “Hi, everyone! I’m so excited to continue God’s Big Story with you.

“We left off last week when the church was just starting to grow—after Jesus died, rose from the dead, and went to heaven. We saw how God sent the Holy Spirit to the believers. When Peter spoke to a big crowd about Jesus, THREE THOUSAND people put their faith in Jesus on that day alone!

“Every day, more and more people were choosing to believe. And the believers were sharing their lives together. They helped each other by sharing their homes and their food so that everyone had what they needed.”

I CAN WALK!

STORYTELLER: “One day, Peter and John were going to the temple.

“Let’s see . . . I’ll need two volunteers to play Peter and John.

Choose two older boys and give them the “P” and “J” nametags.

“A man who couldn’t walk was being carried to the temple gate.

Choose another boy (who is likely to be a ham on stage).

"Let's see, [kid's name]. We need to get you over to the temple gate. *(Nod toward the main doorway of the room.)* Can I get three Small Group Leaders to help me really quick?"

Pull out the sheet. Choose three Small Group Leaders who can help you carry the boy (on the sheet) over to the doorway.

"Every day, someone would put this man at the gate, and he would beg from people who were going into the temple courtyards."

"The man who couldn't walk asked Peter and John for money. *(To the kid)* Can you hold out your hand, [kid's name]? *(Pause for response.)* Good job."

"Listen to what Peter said to the man."

Open the Bible to Acts 3:6 (NirV) and read.

"I don't have any silver or gold. But I'll give you what I do have. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, get up and walk."

"Peter helped the man up, and suddenly, the man felt strong. He jumped up on his feet and started to walk! He was so excited that he jumped for joy as he praised God! *(To the kid)* All right, [kid's name], let's see you jump and say, 'God is awesome!'"

Give the kid volunteer some time to do this. Then bring all of the volunteers back to the stage.

PETER'S MESSAGE

STORYTELLER: “People began to hear what had happened, and soon a big crowd gathered. *(To audience)* Can you all be the crowd? *(Pause.)* Great! Peter spoke to the people.

Give the megaphone to Peter and have him hold it up. Open the Bible to Acts 3:12 (NirV) and read.

“Fellow Israelites, why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us? It’s not as if we’ve made this man walk by our own power or godliness. The God of our fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, has done this.

Take the megaphone back from Peter.

“The people must have been shocked and amazed. Maybe they did this.

Do the “Home Alone face” (wide mouth, hands on your cheeks). Get the kids in the audience to do it, too.

“Peter went on. He said:

Open the Bible to Acts 3:16 (NirV) and read.

“This man whom you see and know was made strong because of faith in Jesus’ name. Faith in Jesus has healed him completely.”

THROWN IN THE SLAMMER

STORYTELLER: “The religious leaders were angry. *(Look at the adult volunteers.)* Let’s see—Leaders, can you pretend to be the angry religious leaders? I need you to give me your best ‘Grrrr.’

One by one, let the three Leaders say, “Grrrr.” (This should have a silly, not scary tone.)

“These religious leaders weren’t happy with Peter and John, because Peter and John were talking about Jesus, and the leaders didn’t believe Jesus was the Son of God. So the leaders showed up with the temple authorities to arrest Peter and John and put them in prison.

Give Peter and John some “jail bars” to hold in front of their faces so it looks like they’re locked up.

“The next day, a group of religious leaders, including the high priest Annas and his family, gathered together. They ordered the guards to bring Peter and John to them. *(To Peter and John)* Peter and John, you can set down those jail bars. *(Pause for response.)*

“The religious leaders wanted to question how these men had the power to heal someone.

Open the Bible to Acts 4:8-10 (NIRV) and read.

“Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit. (Hand the megaphone back to Peter.) He said to them, “Rulers and elders of the people! Are you asking us to explain our actions today? Do you want to know why we were kind to a man who couldn’t walk? Are you asking how he was healed? Then listen to this, you and all the people of Israel! You nailed Jesus Christ of Nazareth to the cross. But God raised him from the dead. It is through Jesus’ name that this man stands healed in front of you.”

“Peter also explained to the leaders that Jesus is God’s only Son—the Savior of the world.

“He said:

Open the Bible to Acts 4:12 (NIRV) and read.

You can’t be saved by believing in anyone else. God has given people no other name under heaven that will save them.

"The leaders saw how bold and brave Peter and John were. They realized that Peter and John were normal, ordinary men; they didn't have any special training to talk about God. The reason they were so brave was because they had been with Jesus.

"The leaders were stuck. They couldn't say that the miracle didn't happen. Everyone could see that the man had been healed. (*Reference the kid who had been "healed"*). So they gave Peter and John a warning never to speak in Jesus' name again.

"But Peter and John replied:

Open the Bible to Acts 4:20 (NirV) and read.

"We have to speak about the things we've seen and heard."

"The religious leaders couldn't find a reason to keep Peter and John in prison, so they let them go. (*To Peter and John*) Let's see you high-five, Peter and John. (*Pause for response.*)

"Let's thank all our great actors for their amazing work today!"

Dismiss the volunteers to their seats.

WRAPPING UP THE STORY

STORYTELLER: "Peter and John went back to their friends and told them about everything God had done.

"Lots of people who had seen the healed man and heard Peter's message about Jesus put their faith in Him. The number of people who had decided to follow Jesus had grown to about 5,000!

“Things had been pretty tough for Peter and John. They were even thrown into prison—just because they were telling others about Jesus. But they were able to have determination because they knew something important—something that’s also true for us today.

“You can **[Bottom Line]** keep going even when it gets tough.

“Let’s pray and ask God to help us do that.”

Pray

STORYTELLER: “Dear God, thank you for sending Jesus to be our Savior. Thank You for giving us the Holy Spirit when we put our faith in You. It’s so cool to see how Peter and John trusted You. They kept going, even when it got tough, because they knew You were always with them. Please help us to have the kind of determination they did. Help us to keep going no matter what. We love You, and we ask these things in Jesus’ name, amen.”

Host enters as Storyteller exits.

Closer

Optional: Place Today’s Story Image on your timeline.

HOST: “Peter and John were confident and bold! They were sure of what God wanted them to do. The Holy Spirit gave them the courage they needed to take on tough things.

“You see, Peter and John knew it was their job to share the good news about Jesus. They knew that Jesus was the One they had been waiting for—the One whom God had promised from the beginning.

“Remember:

[Bottom Line] “Keep going even when it gets tough.

“When things get tough, you can decide to ***[Basic Truth]*** make the wise choice. You can choose to keep giving your very best effort and decide to finish what you’ve started.

“For example, if you’ve ever tried to learn a musical instrument like piano, it seems like it would be so easy and fun. But it’s actually really challenging—especially at first. You have to practice so much! But if you keep at it, you’ll get better and better.

“The same is true for sports, like soccer or basketball. You have learn the rules and the basics before you can really play your best. You have to do lots of warm-ups and other exercises, too. That can be tough!

“Sometimes things that you try might start out pretty easy and then get harder. When that happens—when you get frustrated—don’t quit!

[Basic Truth] “Keep going even when it gets tough.

“Remember, God is with you—whether you’re practicing piano or learning soccer. He’s also with you if you’re going through something tough at home or at school. He is with you always.

“Let’s take a look at our memory verse before we head to Small Group. It’s Galatians 6:9. Can you say it with me?

“Let us know become tired of doing good. At the right time, we will gather a crop if we don’t give up, Galatians 6:9 (NirV).

“Great job! Have fun talking with your group, and I’ll see you later!”

Dismiss kids to their small groups.