



COMMITMENT | WEEK 1 | MAY 1-2, 2021

## 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Lesson

# Over and Over

**Life App:** Commitment—Making a plan and putting it into practice

**Bible Story:** Over and Over (Training to Win the Prize) • *1 Corinthians 9:24-25*  
(*supporting: Matthew 22:36-40*)

**Key Question:** How does practice help?

**Bottom Line:** Keep practicing what matters most.

**Basic Truth:** I am loved by God no matter what so I can love God, love others, and love life.

**Memory Verse:** “Training the body has some value. But being godly has value in every way. It promises help for the life you are now living and the life to come.” 1 Timothy 4:8, NIV

**KID CONNECT:  
10 MINUTES**

**LARGE GROUP:  
30 MINUTES**

**SMALL GROUP:  
20 MINUTES**

## LEADER BIBLE STUDY

*Growing in faith is not something that happens by merely cramming more information about the Bible into a child's brain. All of that knowledge in their head means nothing if we don't help kids experience what that knowledge can do in their hearts. To fully experience faith, we want kids to practice their faith. And that takes commitment.*

*God keeps all His promises and puts His plans into action. Because God has followed through on those plans, we get the chance to be with God forever. We reflect God's commitment to us when we can make a plan and stick to it. This month, we'll help kids discover that one of the best plans they can make is to commit to an ongoing relationship with Jesus. Commit to practicing faith by reading God's Word, praying to Him consistently, talking about Him with friends, and living out that faith every day.*

**Key Question:** How does practice help you? Preteens are starting to understand that faith is more than what happens at church. Our relationship with Jesus should be part of our everyday world.

Like anything, if we want to get better at it, we need to practice. Through this question, we help lead preteens discover the value of practicing and how that relates to growing in their faith.

We kick off the month with something Paul wrote in **1 Corinthians 9:24-25**. *So run in a way that will get you the prize. All who take part in the games train hard,* (NIV). Paul used running in a race as a way to talk about our relationship with God. A growing relationship with God isn't something that happens overnight; we need to practice it. The verse sets up the rest of the month for how we can practice our faith.

**Bottom Line: Keep practicing what matters most.** What matters most? We think it's a growing relationship with Jesus. When it comes to getting things done, more often than not, you need a plan. The same is true in your relationship with Jesus. We hope kids learn some practical steps to make a plan to prioritize growing an everyday faith in Jesus and living out that faith every day.

## KID CONNECT

### WELCOME TIME

(VIDEO: INTRO MUSIC)

*Play* intro music and greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group.

### OPENING ACTIVITY:

(Two Markers)

#### What You Do:

- Divide your group into two teams.
- Instruct both teams to line up on one side of your small group area.
- Place the two markers several feet away from the teams.
- When you say, "Go," the first kid from each team will run to the other side of the markers, lay down on their backs, fold their hands across their chests, and get up without moving their arms.
- Once the first kid stands up, instruct them to run back and tag the next kid in line.
- Make sure the kids know that this will take practice!

#### What You Say:

"Wasn't that tough? It took some practice to stand up without using your hands! *[Transition]* Today in Large Group, we'll hear about something else that requires practice! Let's go!"

## LARGE GROUP

### COUNTDOWN AND WELCOME

(VIDEO: COUNTDOWN, SLIDE: KIDCITY EXPECTATIONS)

*Show* the countdown video as you transition to Large Group. Set it to end as the session begins. *The Large Group Leader has lots of energy as he or she welcomes everyone to KidCity. The LGL is relatable and inviting. LGLs can talk about something that happened culturally throughout the week like a big sports game, movie opening, a viral video on YouTube, holiday, etc. The LGL tells them how excited he or she is that they're there and briefly runs through what they can expect. This is especially helpful for first-time guests to make them feel like they know what's happening.*

**HOST:** Welcome everyone! I'm so glad you are able to come hang out with us in KidCity today. My name is [INSERT NAME]. We are going to have a lot of fun today by playing a game, singing some incredible songs that worship God, and then we are going to hear an amazing true story from God's Word, the Bible.

But first, let's quickly go over our KidCity Expectations (rules) so we can make sure that we make the most of our time today: *(Don't dwell on these too long, but make sure you review them briefly so we can set everyone up for success.)*

1. Be Kind – We need to be kind with our words and actions to our friends, leaders, and the space that we are using.
2. Be Safe – Make wise choices with your actions and words.
3. Have Fun – Participate in what we are doing! It's no fun just sitting there..

Let's kick off today by playing a game!

### LARGE GROUP GAME

#### EXERCISE OF THE INSANE

(2 Backpacks Filled with Books, 4 Laundry Detergent Bottles, Pillows, 2 Bike Pumps, Balloons)

*LGL enters wearing a headband and carrying a water bottle. He has just finished his morning workout.*

**LGL:** "Good morning everyone, and welcome to KidCity! Whew, what a workout! I love getting up early and getting my reps in. Anyone out there like sports? Anyone in training or practicing something right now? Sports? Dance? That sort of thing? *(Pause for a few responses.)*

"Awesome! Well, I certainly love the chance to work out! And like many of you, some of that had to change with all that was happening in the world. For a while there, I couldn't go to the gym, so I couldn't get time on the weights or the track. I had to alter my aerobics. I had to replace my routine. I had to pivot my practice. Yet I still had to stay committed to it, or else I wouldn't see any results! I had to make a plan, put it into practice. Simple as that.

“It’s just that, you know, with my new plan, I couldn’t leave my house so I had to get a little . . . creative in the quarantine.

“I’m wondering if you want to join me in a little competition using some of the workouts I came up with! Anyone up for it? I call it—*Exercises of the Insane!*”

### **(SLIDE: EXERCISE OF THE INSANE)**

*Move to each area for each explanation.*

“On the surface, this might seem like a simple relay style race. Look easy? Not so fast, kids. Each step has an exercise so cunning, so shredding, so ridiculous that it will drive grown men insane!

“Area 1 – **The Pack Mule**. Stack of books? Check. Backpack? Check. You have to lift one of these backpacks filled with books, put it on, then duck walk to Area 2.”

“Area 2 – **More Gain More Pain**. We’ve got two bottles of laundry detergent here, and it’s your job to do five curls with each arm! If you can’t do them individually, it’s 10 reps with both arms!”

“Area 3 – **Pillowtop Speed Bag**. Grab your Small Group Leader, stuff these pillows in his or her shirt, and punch them like a speed bag for 15 seconds!”

“Area 4 – **Bike Pump Blowout**. The grand finale! Take the bike pump and pump up the balloon until it explodes!”

“We’ll need two volunteers to start with—and the first one to blow up the balloon, literally, is the winner! Are you ready? Are you set? Let’s go!”

### **(AUDIO: UPBEAT WORKOUT MUSIC)**

*Run the game. Keep the energy up in the Large Group by getting them to cheer on the volunteers. When the first balloon pops, declare a winner.*

“Great job, and let’s give a hand to our volunteers! That’s what I’m talking about, kids, going all out, no quit, gung-ho, total commitment! Before we get into all of that, let’s commit our hearts to worship. Let’s sing!

## **WORSHIP**

### **(VIDEO: WAVEWALKER, GOD IS ON THE MOVE)**

## **INTRODUCE THE SESSION**

### **(SLIDE: LIFE APP)**

**(No Supplies)**

**LGL:** It’s May! We are winding down on the school year and now is the time to finish strong, bear down, and commit to finishing out the school year on a high note.”

“This school year has been quite something, hasn’t it? Virtual learning, then in-person, then back to quarantine . . . things planned then cancelled, masks during lunch, 7 to 14 days in isolation—it’s all been so much. This pandemic has literally changed the way most groups gather, and even more than that, it’s altered how most groups practice and compete, hasn’t it? Think about it—sports haven’t been able to practice the same. Middle school and high school sports have been cancelled all over the country. Theater, choir, or band can’t hold rehearsals the same way they used to. For some, it’s even changed the way you do homework!”

“This ‘new normal’ isn’t easy. It’s way harder than before. All of your preparation and practice might end up with the final game, the final performance, or the final show being cancelled.”

“Has that happened to you? Have you worked on something, practiced a ton only to have it cancelled? *(Have a few kids share.)*

“What about the flipside of that? Have you ever stuck with something all the way through, practiced and practiced until you could actually accomplish what you set out to do? *(Have a few kids share.)*

“Sticking with something isn’t the easiest thing. Practicing is sometimes *super* boring. You might get frustrated if you can’t get it right away. If this pandemic has taught us anything, it’s that patience, practice, and commitment can help us see things through to the end.

That’s what we are talking about all this month. Our Life App is Commitment.

**(SLIDE: LIFE APP) “Commitment is making a plan and putting it into practice.”**

Let’s see how Commitment plays out when we are talking about our faith in God. Let’s watch the So&So Show...

## **BIBLE STORY**

**(VIDEO: SO & SO SHOW; SLIDES: KEY QUESTION, BASIC TRUTH)**

**(VIDEO: THE SO & SO SHOW)**

“When you practice loving God and loving others, when you get a plan and stick to it, when you keep the important things important, you’ll start to live out what Paul was writing about in his letter. You’ll run the race to win the prize. And that prize? Eternal life with God! Pretty sweet prize if you ask me.

“The cool thing is that God is with you the whole way. It’s not always easy to love others, but God can help you be patient as you practice loving others . . . and you can trust God. No matter what.

“Honestly, you might already be doing some of these things. Or you might just be getting started. Wherever you land, wherever you are in your relationship with Jesus, remember that we’re all training together. Even me. I never stop practicing how to hear, pray, talk, and live for God. When we do these things, we really live out our Basic Truth.

**(SLIDE: BASIC TRUTH)** “I am loved by God no matter what so I can love God, love others, and love life.”

Think on this...

**(SLIDE: KEY QUESTION)** “How does practice help you?”

“If we look at Jesus’ life when He was on earth, He practiced faith skills. He knew the Bible and how to apply it to His life, He prayed to God all of the time, and He DEFINITELY lived out His life in a way that showed love to God and to others. He can help us do the same.

“Take a look at our memory verse for this month—1 Timothy 4:8.

## MEMORY VERSE

**(SLIDE: MEMORY VERSE)**

*Training the body has some value. But being godly has value in every way. It promises help for the life you are now living and the life to come. (NIV)*

Choose daily to keep practicing what matters most.

## PRAYER

“Friends, let’s pray together.

‘Dear God, we want to thank You for the words Paul wrote in his letter. We are still learning from them, thousands of years later! God, please help us run the race well and practice what matters most. Help us grow stronger in our relationship with You, so we can love You and love other people every day. We know we can only do that with Your help. We love You, and we pray all these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.’”

## DISMISS TO SMALL GROUPS

## SMALL GROUP

**Life App: Commitment—Making a plan and putting it into practice**

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*(Supporting: Matthew 22:36-40)*

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## BIBLE STORY EXTENSION

**(Bibles, Foil, Paper Cups, Pipe Cleaners, Tape, Scissors)**

**What You Do:**

- Review today’s scripture by reading 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 together, asking kids to listen for (and remember) one or two key words that stand out to them.
- When you’re finished reading, let them share the words they chose.
- Ask:
  - Why did that one word stand out to you?
  - Use the word you chose in a sentence that summarizes today’s lesson.
- As kids share and discuss, remind them that Paul (the Jesus-follower who wrote 1 Corinthians – a letter to the people living in Corinth) is not simply giving athletic advice; he’s talking about a *way of life*.
  - His advice is to focus on the *final* finish line, life forever with Jesus.
  - Every step along the way is important as we run the race of life and live out what matters most.
- Refer back to Large Group, asking kids if they remember the four important ways we can get in shape for the Love-God-Love-Others Marathon known as LIFE!
- Let kids share what they remember about the following areas of importance:
  - Hear from God.
  - Pray to God.
  - Talk about God.
  - Live for God.
- Assign each kid (or work in pairs if preferred) one of the commitment points above (Hear, Pray, Talk, Live).
- Set out the supplies.
- Challenge kids to each create a tin foil trophy or crown that represents their assigned important commitment.
- When finished, give kids an opportunity to display their crowns or trophies and share as you ask:
  - Why would you say the area of commitment your crown or trophy represents is important?

- o How can we go about practicing these important areas today and in the week ahead?
- o One definition of commitment is making a plan and putting it into practice. What is your plan when it comes to putting into practice the things that matter most?
- o If we feel lazy about our commitment to following Jesus, what should we do?

## DISCUSSION

Ask the following questions and lead the group to discuss:

- What makes us feel like quitting something even though we know it's important to keep practicing and get better at it?
- What can you do or remember when you want to quit practicing something important?
- How does practice help you?
- What are the benefits of staying committed to the things that are important and matter most? What are some consequences of not sticking with something important?
- How would you define COMMITMENT?

## TAKE A SNAPSHOT

(Index Cards – 2 per kid, Pens/Markers)

What You Do:

- Give each kid two index cards and a pen.
- Ask them to write on one card something they feel is really important to practice.
- On the other card, have them write something they feel is less important.
- As kids work, write a few cards of your own to add to the mix.
- Include silly, as well as, serious ideas, such as the following:
  - o Whistling
  - o Being kind
  - o Flying a plane
  - o Braiding your hair
  - o Training a dog
  - o Brain surgery
  - o Learning the Bible
  - o Generosity
  - o Yodeling
  - o Running
  - o Loving God
- Collect the kids' cards then shuffle in the ones you're adding.
- Read a card and ask kids to respond by either standing still, running slowly in place, or running in place quickly, depending on how important they feel the activity is.
- The faster they run, the more important it is to them.

*Note: Let kids know that there are no right or wrong answers. Encourage them to "run freely" based on their preferences and choices.*

- After the cards have all been read, ask:
  - o What determines whether something is important enough for you to keep practicing it?
  - o What do you love/not love to practice?



- Would you say there are some things that are important for EVERYONE to practice? What are they?

## PRAY AND DISMISS

(Preteen GodTime Card - 1 per kid)

### What You Say:

“God, we ask that You help us [*Bottom Line*] **keep practicing what matters most**, even when it’s hard. I can’t wait to see each of these kids grow in their relationship with You as they continue to practice hearing from You, praying to You, talking about You, and living for You. Help me do all these things every day, as well. Thank You for sending us Your Son, Jesus, and for loving us so much. It’s in Jesus’ name we pray, amen.”

Pass out the GodTime Cards to each kid. If there’s spare time, encourage kids to start looking over their GodTime card and point out how it relates to today’s lesson.