

Theme Verse

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.”

Hebrews 12:1-2a

Whether it is a gold medal, a touchdown, a walk-off home run, a goal, or a three pointer at the buzzer, every athlete that competes is reaching for the top prize in their sport. However, in every contest, there are road blocks to achieving the desired result. There are opponents, a time clock, field or court conditions, coaching decisions and even referees that seem to keep the athlete from achieving success.

However, the greatest challenges to achieving success in sports actually come from within. The lack of self discipline, poor choices, or fear live large in the stockpile of reasons athletes do not succeed.

Happiness, fulfillment, the perfect job, family, friends, acceptance to the right school, or getting an “A” in a class are things we search for in life to satisfy the longings found inside each human soul. Just like in sports there are things in life that seem to be road blocks to our success. Personal relationships, health issues, bosses, geographical obstacles, and financial limitations are some of these issues.

The writer of Hebrews knew that the road to success in life is based on having the right goal. He illustrates life with the athletic metaphor of a race and encourages the reader to break free in the race of life by throwing off all that hinders and the sin that entangles. The writer also knows that when you break free from something, you need to know what you’re breaking free toward. So, he encourages his readers to “fix our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.”

Since the day in the Garden of Eden when man chose his own way, God has always been in the business of helping people break free from the “sin that so easily entangles;” and achieve a fulfilled life in Him.

The Breaking Free series is the story of the reconciliation of God to man; a story of breaking free from the things that hinder and the sin that so easily entangles us. When we break free from these things, it allows us to please God and gives us the best chance for a fulfilled and eternal life.

There have been many heroes in the Bible who



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have set examples for us to follow as the author of Hebrews outlines in the chapter just previous to our verses. The Bible is a book about real people, not just heroes who did everything right. Even the failings of the heroes in the Bible are exposed so that we might learn from them.

Learning takes place in two ways: positively and negatively. When the hero does it right, we need to learn from them and do it the same as them. When the hero fails, we learn from their failure by not doing it that way.

Our five lessons will describe things that hinder people from achieving success, both in sports and life. They will encourage the listener to break free to a higher, godly standard; which can be achieved with God’s help. By remembering what God’s Word says, we have the perfect role model in Jesus.

Each of the five lessons begin with the admonition, Break Free from _____ to _____:

1. Blame to Responsibility
2. Lies to Truth
3. Weak Relationships to Strong Relationships
4. Fear to Faith
5. Temporary to Eternal

These lessons are taught in sports camp through a host of learning methods. Kinesthetic learners will experience the concepts in their sport or activity by integrated drills and experiences. Music, chosen for these lessons, will emotionally and spiritually be connecting the truths to the hearts of the participants. Church volunteers will share a personal experience with the children on how they understand these concepts in their lives. Strong teaching of God’s Word will be augmented by scripture memorization.

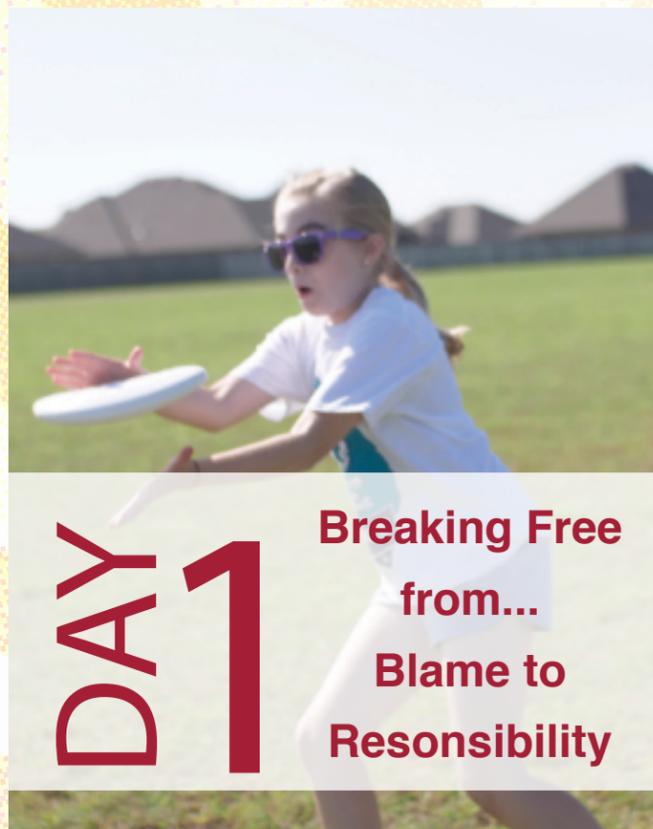
Christian children hearing the lessons will be encouraged to grow in their faith by living out their Christianity in a way that their actions will be opposed to world views of behavior. The non-Christian child will be given a clear biblical world view of proper behavior and how to achieve a relationship with Jesus Christ.

As you prepare to teach these lessons to others, may you find yourself breaking free from the things that hinder in your own life and fixing your eyes on Jesus.

Blessings,
Tim Conrad

2018 WEEKLY OUTLINE

DAY	THEME: Break Free from...	KEY POINTS	BIBLE STORY	SPORTS STORY
MONDAY	Blame to Responsibility	1. Blame is a result of poor choices. 2. God helps us take responsibility for our choices.	Adam and Eve: The Fall Genesis 1-3	Don Denkinger
TUESDAY	Lies to Truth	1. Lies always lead to more lies. 2. God allows consequences for our lies.	Jacob Steals the Blessing Genesis 25-27	Helen Maroulis
WEDNESDAY	Weak Relationships to Strong Relationships	1. Getting advice from friends with experience can help you succeed. 2. God’s advice will always help you succeed.	Rehoboam Chooses Poorly 1 Kings 11-12	Jordan Spieth
THURSDAY	Fear to Faith	1. Fear disappears when you focus on the right goal. 2. God is never more than an arm’s length away.	Peter Walks on Water. Mathew 14	Christian Pulisic
FRIDAY	Temporary to Eternal	1. Most things in life are temporary. 2. God wants us to care about things that last forever.	Peter and Jesus Fishing John 21	JJ Watt

**BIBLE STORY**

Adam and Eve: The story of the Fall-Genesis 1-3.

THEME VERSE

Hebrews 12: 1-2a

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KEY POINTS

1. Blame is a result of poor choices.
2. God helps us take responsibility for our choices.

SONG LIST

1. Breaking Through
2. Shout
3. Dance
4. You Rock my World
5. You Are My All in All
6. Jump

SPORTS STORY

Don Denkinger

LESSON FOCUS

American cultural logic of the 21st century demands that people look for someone to blame when something does not go as planned. Individual responsibility is virtually non-existent. Someone should be held responsible for “my” plans, “my” life and “my” whatever not turning out the way it was envisioned. Athletes tend to blame the referee or the opponent that cheated to gain victory. Children blame their siblings or their friends at school. Adults blame neighbors, circumstances or others when things do not turn out right. The blame game is played by everyone!

OPENING RALLY

Hello my name is _____ and it is so great to have you here at _____ church’s sports camp – Breaking Free.

This week, we are going to fill three hours and fifteen minutes every day with as much fun, learning and enjoyment as possible. Each of you will learn more about the finer points of your sport! Where are my soccer players? Where are my basketball players? Where are my cheerleaders? Where are my Team 45er’s?

Everyone may be in different sports, but we will all be learning about our theme this week together: Breaking Free. In fact, let’s learn about it by singing together!

Introduce your interns and have them lead the music.

Song #1 -

Song #2 -

We all need to break free from the things that hold us back. Today we are going to cover one of the things that keep us from accomplishing our goals. We will talk about blaming others.

Many times when we have made poor choices or we do not get our way, the first thing we do is blame others.

Whenever things do not go the way we planned, we automatically look to blame someone and not take the responsibility ourselves. In sports, who do we love to blame?

The referee, that is right. But many times, it is really not the ref that we should blame, but our own poor choices or actions.

Each day we are going to tell you a true sports story that illustrates our theme for that day. Today our story takes place in Major League Baseball. Let’s go to the World Series!

DON DENKINGER- PROFESSIONAL BASEBALL UMPIRE

Break Free from Blame to Responsibility

Don Denkinger was an umpire in Major League Baseball. For 17 years, he was an umpire that nobody knew; but on an October night in 1985, his name would be famous and he would be blamed the rest of his life for a poor choice.

The Cardinals entered that game having won three games and the Kansas City Royals had won two games. In the World Series, you need to win 4 games to be World Champions of Baseball. It was the 9th inning and Denkinger was the first base umpire. His main responsibility would be to call runners out or safe. And when he made those calls, he would signal his decision, his choice.

I want you today to become umpires and understand what happened. When the runner is out, the umpire makes this signal. (demonstrate the signal) When the runner is safe, you make this signal (demonstrate the signal)

Let's practice- (Set up a baseball first base and someone runs to base and the leader throws the ball. The campers all signal the call- out or safe)

Okay, back to our story. Don Denkinger is the umpire at first base and it is the 9th inning and the last at bat for Kansas City and they are behind 1-0. Three more outs and the Cardinals have won 4 games and are the champions for the 10th time in their history! During the season, the team had won every game. They were ahead in the 9th inning 97 games and 97 wins. Surely, they could do it again.

Let's see what happened:
Play video or describe quickly what is in the video.

First batter up in the 9th was Jorge Orta. He hit the ball down the first base line and the Pitcher Todd Worrell covered first while the first baseman picked up the ball and threw it to Worrell. Orta arrived almost the same time, it was close- Denkinger watching closely signaled safe.

The only problem was everyone was sure he was out. All the Cardinal players could not believe it. They argued and yelled. But when an umpire makes the call in Baseball in 1985, there was no replay, it was a final decision. Orta was ruled safe, when it was clear that he was really out. Denkinger had made a mistake and everyone knew it.

It would not have been a problem if the Cardinals had gone on to win the game and the Series but that is not what happened, Kansas City went on to win that game and tie the series 3 games each and then win the final game the next day and deny the Cardinals the Championship. The Kansas City Royals were the World Champions and every Cardinal fan blamed Don Denkinger.

The Call stayed with him the rest of his life. Everywhere he went, people would ask him about it.

Don Denkinger did the right thing. He did not blame anyone for his mistake. He took responsibility for it and admitted he missed the call.

He said "My job is predicated on being right all the time, and I like to be right all the time. But we're only human, and now it's history. I can't change anything. Even admitting I was wrong doesn't change anything."

Don Denkinger broke free from Blame and took Responsibility. We need to do the same.



COACHES HUDDLE

LIFE STORY

Tell a story from your life when you blamed someone or something for a problem when you should have taken responsibility. You could also relate to a story when you did not blame someone or something and instead took responsibility.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Ask the children who they blame most for their problems in life.
2. Ask the children to discuss why people blame others for problems.
3. Ask the children to discuss why taking responsibility is better than blaming others.
4. Ask the children who they can change faster themselves or someone else.

SPORTS STORY

Discuss the sports story in more detail.

SITUATIONS

Anthony was quick with his hands. In the semi-final of the big Christmas tournament, he was guarding Alex, the best player on the Cardinals. With just seconds left and the game tied, Alex drove to the basket and attempted the winning shot. Anthony reached for what he thought to be "all ball" and deflected it away from the basket. The referee called a foul on Anthony. Alex would have a chance to shoot free throws to win the game. How would you respond if you were Anthony?

HALF-TIME RALLY

Song #3

Song #4

THEME INTEGRATION

Create a drill where there are multiple options to score. Arrange to let someone play by a different set of rules to gain the advantage in defense. See if the offensive player, who had options to score elsewhere, blames the person for cheating or takes the opportunity to score at a different goal. Call the players together and discuss the options the offensive player had to either take responsibility or blame the opponent.

ADAM AND EVE BLAME GOD!

Song # 5

All week, we will be talking about things that can cause us to be unsuccessful in sports and in life. There are things that hold us back, things we need to break free from and things to break free towards. There is a reason we have to teach you these things. There is a reason we have to prepare lessons for you and warn you about these things. That reason is because at the beginning of time, when God created humans, something happened that caused every person to be enslaved by the things we are talking about this week.

The things we do wrong are called sin. They are not what God intended for us to do. We need help to do what is right because we tend to do what we want. We do not like it when we do not get our way.

Who gets their way all the time? No one!

Who blames someone else when we don't get our way? Everyone!

The right thing to do when we do not get our way is to take responsibility for the situation and attempt to change it in a positive way.

The wrong thing to do when we do not get our way is to blame someone else and try to get someone else to be responsible.

Today we are talking about breaking free from blaming others and taking responsibility for ourselves. Everyone who has ever lived from the beginning of time has looked to blame someone else for their problems. How do I know this to be true? The Bible records it. It happened with the first two humans and it has happened down through history. But let us see how it happened in the beginning.

INTERACTIVE IDEAS

1. Have participants stand and be a part of creation.
2. Think of the unique things in the regions of the country you are in that God created. (animals, plants, eco systems, elevation, etc)

FAST FACTS

- God created everything that has ever existed.
- Adam and Eve were placed in a perfect environment. They had never made a wrong choice or sinned.
- Adam and Eve were told they could eat anything in the garden except fruit from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.
- The serpent, influenced by Satan, tempted Eve to eat the forbidden fruit.
- Eve gave the fruit to Adam, and he ate it too.
- They immediately realized they had sinned and saw they were naked.
- Adam blamed Eve, and indirectly God, for giving the woman to him.
- Eve blamed the Serpent, and indirectly God, for creating the snake.
- God stepped in and gave them clothes. This began His plan of salvation, which would lead to His Son dying on the Cross.

The Bible is clear on who the first humans were and how they came into existence.

Read Genesis 1:1

POINT OF EMPHASIS

The Bible says that in six days God created everything that has ever existed. We are not going to argue whether God did it in six days or whether He did it through evolution or any other means, this is not the point of our lesson. People argue about this all the time. Reality is that God is all powerful and can do anything He wants. He has the power to make things, period. The important thing to remember is that God created everything that has ever existed.

He made the sun.

Susie stand up and be the sun. Give us a big smile. (Hands by face with big smile)

He made the plants.

John stand up and be a tree. (Arms outstretched)

He made the birds.

Tommy stand up and flap some wings.

He made the fish.

Sally stand up and make a fish face. (Squeeze face and lips)

He made man and woman.

Timmy and Sadie stand up and be the perfect man and woman. (Strike a pose)

God did all these things and saw that it was good.

Thanks everyone, have a seat. Give them a round of applause!

It was perfect. There were no problems, no sickness and no issues. He took man and placed him in a perfect garden called the Garden of Eden. There was only one rule.

God told man that he could eat any plant and fruit he wanted except for the fruit from one tree in the middle of the garden; the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil.

Pretty nice and pretty simple – eat anything except the fruit of that one tree. So Adam and Eve enjoyed the beautiful place God had made for them. Every evening, God would come to earth and spend time with them and they enjoyed each others company.

Well one day (we do not know how long it was from the time God created Adam and Eve), an amazing thing happened. Evidently, one of the incredible things in the garden was that snakes could talk.

I told you it was amazing!

The snake was actually being influenced by Satan, the enemy of God. Satan does not want us to obey God. The snake said to the woman, “Did God actually tell you that you could not eat from any tree in the garden?”

The woman said, “No, we can eat from any tree except the one in the middle of the garden.”

The snake replied, “God did that so you would not be like him. If you eat that fruit, you will be like God.”

Eve took some of the fruit, ate it, and also gave it to her husband, Adam.

When they ate the fruit something happened. They changed. They felt ashamed. They knew they had disobeyed God and they realized they were naked so they made some clothes out of leaves and hid from God.

When God arrived at the usual meeting place, Adam and Eve were not there.

Read Genesis 3:9-13

Here comes the blame game. Adam said, “The woman you put here with me gave it to me.”

So God asked Eve what was up. Eve said, “The serpent (basically saying the animal you created) deceived me.” Eve blamed the serpent, and indirectly God, for creating the snake.

This brings us to *our first key point* today:

BLAME IS A RESULT OF POOR CHOICES.

Adam and Eve were trying to blame God for their own mistakes. When our choices create a poor outcome, we immediately try to shift the responsibility away from ourselves.

When an athlete gets in trouble, who is the athlete trying to blame? They blame the referee, the opponent, the coach or whoever can be blamed to take responsibility away from themselves.

When you get in trouble for a poor choice, who do you blame? Maybe you blame a brother or sister, your parents, or your even teacher?

God understood the situation in the Garden of Eden and did what we are supposed to do when there is a problem: take responsibility.

God knew from that moment every human was going to want to blame someone else for their problems and He knew that the only way to fix the problem was to fix it Himself.

Which brings us to *our second key point*:

GOD HELPS US TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR CHOICES.

When God realized what Adam and Eve had done, He began to deal with the situation by taking responsibility. He made them some clothes out of animal skins and began to set in motion a plan to help every person deal with their sin problem. At the right time, years later, He would send Jesus to earth to die for man's sins.

APPLICATION

When a situation arises at school or at home and it seems unfair, do not play the blame game. If you did something wrong, own up to it, say you are sorry and try to change your behavior the next time.

If you lose the game, do not try to blame the referee or your opponent. Take responsibility to change what failed. Keep strong in what you did right and give your opponent a compliment.

When something is not right, do not stand around and judge or blame others. See what you can do to fix it. That is what God did. He did not make Adam and Eve sin, or does He make us sin or do wrong things. But He decided that He would send His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross and pay the penalty for every sin ever committed by anyone

Remember our *key points*:

1. BLAME IS THE RESULT OF POOR CHOICES.
2. GOD HELPS US TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR CHOICES

Song # 6

PRAYER TO END CAMP

Dear Father, we know we don't like to take responsibility when we mess up. Please help us to not blame someone else. Help us to take responsibility like You did in helping Adam, Eve, and all mankind to take care of our sin problem. We love you. In Jesus' name, Amen.