
You Can't Do it Alone

Sunday School Lesson from John 1:10-18



You Can't Do it Alone. For kids, a new year might not mean much more than having a new date to write down or purchasing a new wall calendar. However, a new year is a great time to explore some important Biblical truths. As we see people making New Year's resolutions to improve themselves, we recognize that on our own power, we can do nothing. Only through Christ can true change take place from the inside out. God welcomes us into His family, making us a new creation cleansed from sin and inviting us to new life in Him.

Lesson focus: This lesson looks at a few important verses to consider how we are made new in Jesus. It can be important to make goals or to use a new year as an opportunity to do things better, but we cannot simply change ourselves by sheer will power. Flipping a calendar to January does not automatically alter the way we are. But God can transform our hearts and lives through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Passage: John 1:10-18

Target Audience: Kindergarten-6th grade

Materials Needed: Construction paper; glue; markers or crayons; tape; scissors; decorative supplies; yarn/string; paper straws; popsicle sticks; envelopes; paper plates; toilet paper or paper towel rolls; Bibles.

More Teaching Ideas:

- Watch the teaching example of this [children's sermon lesson](#) and related [Bible craft ideas](#)
- Compare our previous [John 1:10-18 Sunday School Lesson](#)
- Compare an alternate [children's sermon](#) and [kids church ideas](#) on this passage
- Download our [New Year coloring pages](#) or purchase our [4-Week New Year's Curriculum](#)

Games and Activities to Introduce the Lesson

Lesson Opening: This lesson involves making goals and resolutions for a new year, and being made new through Jesus Christ. Kick off with some New Year type activities.

- New Year's Goals charades: have students take turns acting out things that people might choose as New Year's resolutions. Allow other students to guess what they are pantomiming.
- Noise maker relay: to get into a festive and celebratory spirit, start with a relay race in which students take turns going back and forth across a room. At one end of the room, feature several noise making instruments. As students return to the line to tag the next teammate, allow them to play/shake/rattle the instrument of their choosing. The winning team will not only complete the run fastest, but make the most noise! (Sorry, teachers.)
- Freeze dance: Play fun and festive music, pausing at intervals for students to freeze in place. Choose whether to select kids to be "out" or simply let everyone play multiple rounds.
- Who am I? Choose a theme (Bible characters, holiday characters, etc.) and provide each child with a post-it note that has a character name or item name on it. Place the post-it on the backs of children so they cannot see them. Have students walk around and ask others questions about who or what they are, trying to determine what the post-it says about them.
- Snowball fight! On scraps of white paper, have students write down things that they want to leave behind in transitioning to a new year, or even things that they might regret. Split your student group and have kids line up on either side of a designated line (this can be done inside or outdoors). Have children throw their paper balls onto the other side of the line, competing to see which group has *fewer* paper balls on their side at the end of a given time period. After a winner is determined, throw the paper balls away to do away with the old year.

Invite students to consider any traditions they might do to celebrate a new year. Is it a special occasion, or just another day off school? Should we make goals for ourselves as a new year approaches?

Sunday School Lesson (John 1:10-18) You Can't Do it Alone!

Bible Lesson: This lesson contains a few passages that focus on how we are made new in Jesus. To illustrate the transformation that comes through Christ, it might add a fun touch to change something about the students as you read each passage. This could be as simple as rotating chairs or location in the room, or altering a part of an outfit. Read the passages or have students take turns reading them.

The first passage describes how we are born again into God's family as followers of Christ. God makes us new and gives us a second chance at life in and through Him.

He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. 11 He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. 12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. -John 1:10-13

Talk a little (or a little more) about New Year's goals and resolutions...people have all sorts of things they might wish to pursue as goals to improve themselves. But on our own power, we often fail. We cannot make ourselves better. We also can't make God love us or accept us. He already does! The only thing we need to become His children is belief. We believe and receive His power, and become adopted forever in to His family.

Ask: What are some things you can think of that are changed or made new? How can someone or something change? (Consider simple things like plants and animals, or even cooking procedures or recycled products.)

From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. 17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. 18 All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; 19 that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. -2 Corinthians 5:16-19

Note again that we do not make ourselves new. God does the transformational work in us. Because of the work of Jesus, we are given opportunity to become new in Him. Whether it's a new year, a new day, or a new season of life, we can always start fresh when we return to God. We can repent of mistakes we have made and recognize that He has power to change our lives. These verses also remind us of what is most important to focus on: Jesus Christ. We tend to think that material things are essential, or even that our bodies are the most important thing to worry about. But this passage emphasizes how we should focus on God first and foremost. Being reconciled to Him (brought into His family and bought by Christ's blood) is the most essential first step to being made new.

Ask: What do you think it means that God's love can help us start over? Have you ever had an argument with a friend or family member, and had to start things over again?

Go on to again stress that God is doing this work for us. It's fine for us to make goals or want to do things differently, but we will fail if He is not at the center. And when He is at the center, we can give God the glory and credit when things go well! We boast of Jesus and His power...

But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. 15 For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. 16 And as for all who walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God. -Galatians 6:14-16

Jesus does the work for us! He makes us new when we let Him. Explain that we might not exactly "feel" any different, and sometimes the process of change takes time. But our faith comes from God. We can't do things just on our own power and efforts. We need God's help, and with it anything is possible!

Ask: What would you like to be better at? Why is it hard to achieve goals sometimes?

Remind children of the precious truth we find in Philippians 4...on our own we might not succeed, but God gives us all we need. He strengthens us through Jesus Christ!

I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. 13 I can do all things through him who strengthens me. -Philippians 4:12-13

A new year is a great time to think about what might lie ahead in our lives, and to hope for great things. But it's important to look to God first. If we do make resolutions, they should be with Him in mind. If we want to develop better habits or make progress in a certain area, that's great! But we remember that all things come through prayer, trusting in the Lord to give us strength and ability to be made new in Him! As we celebrate change and potential, give thanks to God for all that we now have and will have in the year ahead. Happy New Year!

Close with prayer, thanking God for making us new in Him. Ask for help as we pursue Him and seek to focus our goals on Him first and foremost, and not on ourselves.

Craft: Create some fun crafts that celebrate the new year or honor how we can focus goals on Christ first and foremost. Adjust to suit your group's needs!

- Make a promise box or "pop-up promises" goal sheet. Write down several goals on a long strip of paper (or on separate pieces of paper), and fold the sheet accordion style. Decorate the envelope or a small shoe box. Place the list of goals into the envelope or box to recall things that can be improved upon or done well.
- Happy New Year "cracker": place confetti, small toys or treats within a paper towel or toilet paper tube. Decorate and wrap the tube, placing ribbons on the ends. Crack open the tubes to celebrate a new year and reveal the treasures inside.
- New Year noisemaker: decorate paper plates with stickers, streamers, or verse captions. Place dry noodles, beans, or rice within and carefully staple shut. Attach the plates to a string or popsicle sticks to make a maraca/tambourine style noisemaker.
- Bible Bookmark: Make a special bookmark as part of a goal to read the Bible more regularly.
- New life butterfly: Create a butterfly craft as a symbol that we have new life in Jesus, just as a butterfly gains new life through metamorphosis.

God Bless ^{OUR}



Mandy Groce '12

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Craft Ideas for New Year and Strength in Christ

The start of a new calendar year is a time that finds many people making goals and resolutions for themselves. As Christians, we recognize that striving for improvement is wonderful, but that we can do nothing without Jesus and the true change made by the Holy Spirit's presence in our lives. These crafts celebrate the ringing in of a new year, and the importance of focusing hopes and expectations on Christ. A noisemaker allows joyful enthusiasm and reminds children to focus on Jesus. A "pop up scroll" displays prayers, goals, and ideas for a new year.

Bible Verses or Craft Captions to Consider... (John 1:10-18)

But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. -John 1:12-13

All things are possible through CHRIST!

Goals are popping up! Check inside!

Focus on Christ in the new year!

The year is new... it's 2022!

Celebrate! Rejoice! Make a joyful noise!

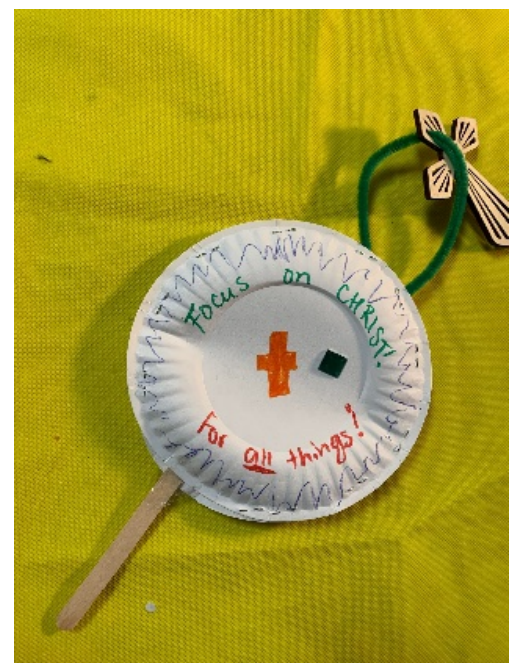
Craft one: “Joyful New Year Noisemaker”

You will need:

- Paper plates (any size)
- Scissors
- Markers and/or crayons
- Construction paper or cardstock
- Stickers and decorations
- Glue, stapler, or tape
- Pipe cleaner
- Popsicle sticks (optional)
- Dry pasta, rice, or beads

Procedure:

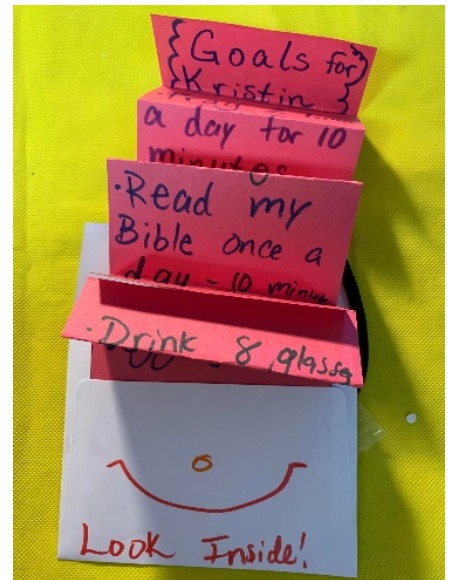
1. Decorate each paper plate with pictures, verse captions, stickers, and more.
2. Carefully place dry pasta noodles or beads inside of a plate and staple the two together, sandwiching the popsicle stick between.
3. Option: add a pipe cleaner or ribbon to hang.
4. Add a cross and extra decorations as desired. Shake and make a joyful noise!



Craft Two: "Pop-up Goal Scroll"

You will need:

- Markers/crayons
- Construction paper or card stock
- Decorations (stickers, etc.)
- Scissors
- Captions/verses
- Envelopes
- Tape or glue
- Balloons (optional)
- Pipe cleaners



Procedure:

1. Write down specific, reasonable goals on a long piece of paper.
2. Fold paper accordion-style (back and forth).
3. Decorate an envelope to tuck goals into. Add verses or captions as desired.
4. Add pipe cleaners or balloons for extra "flair".
5. Tuck the goal list into the envelope and hang as a reminder of how to do all things through JESUS.





Thank you for downloading these free materials. Our team is grateful for your trust and pray that God will bless your ministry.

This resource was prepared by [Kristin Schmidt](#) (pictured right). She serves at the Epiphany Lutheran Church in Castle Rock, CO. She has shared her teaching gifts through *Ministry-To-Children* since 2014 and now serves as our lead curriculum writer.



Every week she writes new [Sunday School lessons](#), [Bible crafts](#), and [children's sermons](#).

Kristin has a professional background in elementary and pre-school education. A graduate of Biola University, she holds a Master of Education and will receive the Master of Theology degree from Concordia University, Irvine, California, in May 2020. Kristin grew up in southern California and lived the past 10 years in Georgia. She is a long-distance runner and voracious reader.

My name is Tony Kummer (pictured below). I started Ministry-To-Children.com in 2007 as a free resource for anyone sharing Jesus with kids. It is my personal honor to share these resources with churches around the world.



[Reader donations](#) and your support at [The Sunday School Store](#) fund these free materials. Please keep us in mind when you are choosing your next children's ministry curriculum.

If you enjoy our material, be sure to [sign-up for my free email newsletter](#) called "Sunday School Works!" Every Tuesday, I send the latest new lessons, crafts, and coloring pages in print-friendly format to make your lesson planning easy.

May God continue to bless your ministry!

Tony Kummer