

JUST ① ONE THING

A New Year Devotional for Families



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Materials Needed:

- Bible
- copies of a hollow number one
(one per family member attached)
- scissors
- pencils/pens
- notebook paper for individual notes
(for older children and adults)

Learning Objective:

Family members will examine their life to identify one thing they are holding on to which is keeping them from having a closer walk with God.
This devotional is designed to be parent led.

Target Ages:

Kindergarten –6th grades (Younger children may need extra guidance and help in the “Going Deeper” element.)

Time Needed:

Approximately 30-45 minutes (Dependent on your family’s discussion and the “Going Deeper” element).

At the beginning of each year many people reflect upon their life and what they can do to improve it. We see slogans everywhere motivating people to “be the new you” through weight loss programs, financial planning, exercise regiments and home organization. Yet most of us find by the end of the year we have slipped back into some of our old habits once again. This occurs because people are striving for change in their own strength without seeking the help of the Lord.

As you begin this lesson, get ready! Your family will be encouraged to examine your lives individually, and as a family, to identify one thing you need to give up at the start of this New Year. What is the one thing in your life that is holding you back from having a closer walk with the Lord or having a relationship with him at all? Our prayer is that you will experience a change in your heart and will see that the change you are hoping to make cannot be found in your own strength or will, but can only be made possible with God’s help.

Text:

Luke 18: 18-27



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Getting Started

(Families should work together on discussing these questions.)

1. "What is special about the month we are now in?" It is the first month of a new year!
2. "What year is it?" 2016
3. "Have you heard about making a new year resolution? What is a resolution?" A resolution is a goal. Something you want to do or be by the end of the year.
5. "Do you have some ideas for a resolution you could make?" Take input from family members.
6. "Did you know a resolution can be something you choose to give up, too? For example, you can resolve or make a goal to give up eating candy because it is not good for your teeth. Or you could give up playing video games after dinner because sometimes you end up staying up too late."



What does the Bible say?

(Families should work together on discussing these questions.)

1. "Jesus spoke to a man in the Bible and asked him to give something up so the man could follow Jesus with his whole heart. Jesus wanted the man to resolve to give up this thing so he could fully follow Jesus. Can you guess what that one thing was?" Take input from the kids.
2. "Let's look at the passage where Jesus talks with this man and find out what the one thing is Jesus asked him to give up."
3. "Open your Bibles to Luke 18:18-27 and let's read the passage together."
4. Read the passage out loud together as a family and move into the next part of the devotional.



What does it mean?



(Families should work together on discussing these questions.)

1. "What is the question the man asked Jesus?"

How can I have eternal life?

2. "How did Jesus answer his question?" Reread verses 19-20.

"First, Jesus reminded the man that no one is good and that all people have sinned."

4. "What was the man's reply?"

He said he had kept all the laws Jesus listed and was a good man.

5. "Yet what did Jesus tell the man he still needed to do?" Reread verse 22.

"Jesus told the rich man to give up everything he owned to follow Jesus. This is the 'one thing' the man had left to do before he could have eternal life."

7. Reread verse 23. "How did the man feel about giving up everything he owned?"

He was sad because he was very rich and he did not want to give all of his possessions up to follow Jesus.

8. "Now something I want to make clear to you is that Jesus does not give us a list of things to do in order to get into heaven. There is no to-do list to check off. But you might wonder then why did Jesus ask this man to do something to receive eternal life? Jesus knew that this wealthy man was being held back by his many possessions. His great wealth was the 'one thing' that was keeping his heart hard. Jesus knew this man's heart would not want to follow Jesus until his possessions had been given away."

9. Jesus says in verse 24-25, to be a true follower of Christ and receive eternal life we must give our whole heart to Him. This rich young ruler was willing to give most of his heart and life to Jesus, but not all of it. His wealth was the 'one thing' keeping him from following Jesus with his whole heart. Reread these verses together and move into the "Going Deeper" individual part of the devotional.

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Going Deeper: What is my one thing?



(Family members should work on this personal aspect individually and then come together to discuss what God has shown each person.

Younger children may need help on this part!)

1. Is there one thing holding you back from following Jesus with your whole heart? Maybe you are not a follower of Jesus yet because you do not want to give up your sin and repent? The 'one thing' you need to resolve to do this new year is to give up your sin and believe in Jesus' death on the cross to save you. Your 'one thing' is to give up your sin. This new year may be the year you choose a new life in Christ!

2. For those of you who know Christ with saving faith. You have already turned from your sin, believed in the saving work of Jesus' death on the cross, and you are seeking to live your life in the way Jesus would want you to live. Yet, you may still have 'one thing' in your life that is holding you back in your relationship with Him. Maybe there is something your heart is clinging to which you think is more important than Jesus. Is it getting the lead role in the school play? Is it becoming the player to score the most goals on your soccer team? Is it sneaking extra food from the kitchen at home when no one is looking? Is it not following what your parents say because you think you know better? All of these things can hold you back from having the closest relationship you can have with Jesus. Spend a few minutes in prayer and ask God to reveal to you something that keeps you from being close to Him.

3. What is your 'one thing' today? For the rich young ruler it was holding on to his wealth, which meant he did not receive eternal life. Share your 'one thing' with your family and commit to helping one another over the next year to overcome this 'one thing.'

4. Let's close with one final word from Jesus. Reread verse 27.

Jesus does not leave us to give up that 'one thing' all on our own and by our own strength. He knows we cannot do it on our own, but we need His help. Ask Jesus for help to give up your 'one thing' to Him. Pray for Him to help you stay focused on giving up your 'one thing' this year, so that you can have a closer relationship with Him. None of us can give up our 'one thing' all on our own. We need His help every day.

Join back together as a family.

Just 1



Keeping it in Front of Me

(Come together and do this activity as a family.)



1. Copy an outline of a block number one, it needs to be open in the middle.
One per family member.
2. Family members will write in the middle of their one the "one thing" they need to give up this year so they can follow Jesus with their whole heart.
3. Family members will cut their number one out and keep it between the pages of their Bible or hang it in a visible spot at home as a reminder to them throughout the year.
4. In this activity, it is important to remember and dialogue with each child about their "one thing." Help them to understand why that thing is a hindrance to growth in their relationship with God and how they will need His help to overcome it.



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