



"The Bed of Nails!"

The Bed of Nails Devotion

Bible Verse

Paul and his trials in 2 Corinthians 11:23-28

"I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was pelted with stones, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my fellow Jews, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false believers. I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches."

Main Spiritual Point

This Science Devotion is a powerfully poignant reminder that in the abundance of trials, God's amazing power is shown strong.

Science Concept

This demonstration works using scientific principles of surface area and pressure. By varying the number of nails and/or the air inside the balloon, the amount of pressure needed to puncture the balloon will change. Bed of Nails is a fantastic demonstration of how surface area and pressure are related and how the amount of force needed to pop the balloon varies. For younger children, it's also a great way to show them that an initial hypothesis (that the balloon will pop easily because of the sharp nails) is not always correct.

You will need:

- Various weights
- Permanent marker
- 2 medium to large balloons
- Bed of Nails Kit ***

If Building Yourself:

- Wooden base
- "Floating" wooden board
- Two 8.5" wooden rods
- 105 nails

Difficulty & Duration:

Moderate: 15 minutes

Tips For Success:

- Purchase the kit as it is significantly easier, though purchasing will cost more than building from scratch.
- Test this demonstration prior to doing it live with kids!
- Do NOT over inflate the balloon.
- For best results, use a medium or large sized balloon and only inflate it between one-third to one-half.
- Add small weights incrementally. The demonstration has the greatest impact if you add weight after weight and the balloon still does not pop.

The Bed of Nails Devotion: What to Say to Kids

1. Can anyone tell me what the word "trial" means?
2. The dictionary defines the word "trial" this way: When someone experiences suffering or a hard experience; when someone is distressed or goes through a painful set of experiences.
3. The early disciples faced many trials. They went through lots of suffering for their faith. They had hard experiences because they loved God and the bad leaders did not. They were distressed. They were arrested and were placed in jail. They went through painful experiences like having the bad leaders hit their backs with painful rods. These were trials.
4. Here I have a balloon. Here I have a set of nails. Do balloons and nails usually go together very well? What usually happens with blown up balloons and sharp nails?
5. Let's pretend this (1) balloon is Peter and the Apostles and let's write "Peter and the Other Apostles" on our balloon. Let's pretend the (2) nails are the hard things they went through, like in Acts 5:40, when they were hit on the back with painful rods. That hurts! Also, let's pretend these (3) weights were the pressure the bad leaders put on the Apostles to STOP telling others about Jesus. Let's try it.
6. (Place the balloon on top of the bed of nails. Now add the board with the two holes. Now begin to add weights.) The weights will make us think of the pressure the bad leaders put on the Apostles to stop telling others about Jesus.
7. What happened? Did the balloon pop? Now, let's think about the Apostles. They did not "pop." They were not destroyed but Acts 5:41 tells us they actually left the bad leaders REJOICING and jumping for joy!

8. Another great leader and a friend of Peter and the Apostles was a man named Paul. Let's read about Paul and all the trials and hard times he went through because he loved God and wanted to tell others about Jesus. Let's pretend this balloon is now Paul. Let's pretend the nails are the hard things Paul went through and described in 2 Corinthians 11:23-28. As we read, each time we hear a trial that Paul went through, we will add another weight.

9. Read 2 Corinthians 4:7-9. Is a jar of clay SUPER strong? Is it likely to be crushed by pressure? How is a balloon like the jar of clay we read about in 2 Corinthians 4?

10. Have any of you ever gone through a "trial"? How did it feel? What did God teach you through that trial? Do you know someone who has gone through a painful trial that may have been hard and tested his or her faith? Even though hard, how can trials be used by God in our lives as followers of Jesus?

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