



"Wait! This is the Plan?"

The Stacking Nail Demonstration

Bible Verse

"This man Jesus was handed over to you by God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put Him to death by nailing Him to the cross. But God raised Him from the dead, freeing Him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on Him." Acts 2:23-24

"Yet it was the LORD's will to crush Him and cause Him to suffer, and though the LORD makes His life an offering for sin, He will see His offspring and prolong His days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in His hand." Isaiah 53:10

Main Spiritual Point

Sometimes God's plan may seem confusing but His plan is perfect. Jesus being killed on the cross was God's perfect plan.

Science Concept

This little brainteaser is all about engineering a lower center of gravity. The idea has been around forever, but most people still don't know how to do it. Trying to stack nails above the balance point will raise the center of gravity and make the structure unstable. You can lower the center of gravity to make a very stable structure. The challenge is to balance 14 nails on one nail head. The nails can't touch anything except each other, and they all have to be balancing at the same time. Lowering the center of gravity to be below the balancing point allows this structure to be fairly stable, even when it's bumped, blown or tapped.

You will need:

- 14 nails
- Wooden board with 1 nail securely hammered in the middle

Difficulty & Duration:

Simple: 10 Minutes

Tips For Success:

- Allow students to attempt to solve the problem.
- Ask if someone has done this experiment before. If yes, ask those who know the answer to save the answer or solution until everyone else has tried to solve this puzzle.
- Be sure to have the initial nail pounded into the board securely.
- Consider having 4-6 different boards available within each small group, allowing for many hands to attempt solving the problem.

The Stacking Nail Demonstration: What to Say to Kids

1. One nail is placed in the middle of this board, and I'm holding 14 more. Can you think of a way to stack the 14 other nails onto the nail head in the middle of the board? Here are the rules: The nails can't touch anything except each other, and they all have to be balancing at the same time. Give it a shot.

2. Pretty hard, right? You may even think it is impossible. Sometimes the plan to solve a problem does not seem clear or that any idea or plan would ever work. What if I were to tell you that there is a special plan that will allow this all to work perfectly? Before I tell you the solution to this puzzle, let's think about the plan of God.

3. God made the entire world and placed Adam and Eve in the garden. It was perfect. Then came the problem. The problem of sin. Right after Adam and Eve sinned, God promised He would fix the problem. The Lord God even said to the serpent, "Cursed are you! A woman will have a baby and he will crush your head and you will strike His heel." By saying this, God gave us a huge hint about His plan.

4. His plan did not totally make sense at first. Jesus came down from heaven and was born to a woman named Mary. He gave Mary a huge hint when the angel said, "And you will have a son and you must name him Jesus, because he will take away the sins of his people."

5. One of the clues as to how God would fix the sin problem was found in the book of Isaiah, chapter 53, as God was speaking about Jesus. Read Isaiah 53:10. "Yet it was the LORD's will (or plan) to crush Him and cause Him to suffer, and though the LORD makes His life an offering for sin, He will see His offspring and prolong His days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in His hand."

6. Wait. Who is being crushed here Isaiah 53? Why was God pleased to crush His Son?

7. Read Isaiah 55:8-9 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts." What do you think this means?

8. Let's take a look at our nails. (If your group has not already solved the puzzle, begin to lay out the nails and carefully reveal the plan of how to stack the 14 nails on the head of the first nail.)

9. You see, this is a lot like God's plan. What makes no sense to us, makes perfect sense to God. What we never would've thought of, God had in His mind from the very beginning. You see the Bible says that God had planned in His mind to crucify Jesus before the world was ever made. He knew this plan. This was His plan from the beginning. His plans are perfect.

10. Just like many people can try many different plans to successfully stack the nails, there is only one way to solve the nail problem. In the same way, humans try lots of ways to get to rid of their sins and get to heaven. What are some ways people try to get to heaven apart from Jesus?

11. Peter said in Acts 4:12 "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved." How is this verse like our nail puzzle?

12. Read John 3:16. Read John 14:6. Have you trusted Jesus as the one and only way to be forgiven of your sins? You can be forgiven, even today! Confess your sin to God, ask Jesus to forgive you and become a child of God today! Read John 1:12.