

Back to School...Sharpen up! Pencil Object Lesson for Kids (Proverbs 27:17)

🌱 ministry-to-children.com/pencil-object-lesson/

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Whether or not it is back to school or class testing time, pencils are always valuable tools for demonstrating principles of Christian living. To emphasize the pencil parables, start by giving each child an unsharpened pencil and a piece of paper. Ask them to do something simple, like write their names.

Why doesn't the pencil work? It has not been sharpened! Well, how can that be fixed? Talk about how we can sharpen a pencil quite easily, whether we use a handheld, hand-cranked, or electric sharpener. Then we can use the pencil in various ways—writing, drawing, filling in bubbles on a test sheet...

Explain that our lives can be sort of like these pencils. God wants to use us in all sorts of wonderful ways to serve Him and His people. But we first must be “sharpened” for His purposes. How does this happen? Well, most importantly, we can sharpen ourselves through the sword of the Bible and the power of prayer...

For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

-Hebrews 4:12

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. -Philippians 4:6

And sometimes, God uses other people to help sharpen our “points”:

As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another. -Proverbs 27:17

Once we develop our faith and trust in God, He can use us to do remarkable things. It would be silly to sharpen a pencil and set it aside, but when we use it, the purpose of the lead is fulfilled. But invite kids to think again about the pencil... Once it is sharpened, will it stay that way forever? Of course not. Eventually, the point will dull, or the tip might even break. We need to continue sharpening a pencil in order to keep using it. In the same way, we must continually return to the Bible and to prayer, so that we can remain “sharp” and usable as Christians. We keep close to God by loving Him and communicating through Him, reading His words and talking to Him in prayer. And we also love His children, as Jesus instructed:

As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

-John 15:9-11

Christ here promises that God will keep us close if we remain near to Him. When we do this, we can rest assured that we will stay sharp. Because without God, life is like an unsharpened pencil...it just has no point!

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