

“CLING WRAP SIN”

(March Lenten Lesson)

For The Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta

By Sally Ulrey

Key verses: Hebrews 12:1-3

Objective: To begin to work at getting free from the obstacle of sin in our lives, so we can run freely toward God.

The Set up: Minimal

The Plan:

- **Hook:** Cling Wrap Freeze Tag (30 mins)
 - Have the kids wrap each other up in cling wrap, and then try to play freeze tag
- **Book:** Cling Wrap & Sin—Heb 12:1-3 (5 mins)
 - Compare the properties of Cling Wrap to that of sin, and look at Scripture for instructions about what to do about sin
- **Look:** Obstacles Discussion (10 mins)
 - Discuss the obstacles to our faithful relationship with God
- **Took:** Cling Wrap Scriptures (5-10 mins)
 - Write a Scripture to take home on a piece of cling wrap, symbolizing that this is what should really stick in our minds
 - Optional closing activity: watch & respond to music video about “throwing off” and “running with perseverance”

The Supplies:

- Copy of lesson
- CLING WRAP (about a roll for every 3 people)
- Sharpies
- Bibles
- Scissors
- Whiteboard/Flip Chart & markers
- (Optional): Play a music video from the internet (requires A/V equipment and internet connection)

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Cling Wrap Freeze Tag (Hook, 30 mins)

In this section, youth will wrap each other up in cling wrap and attempt to play a game (freeze tag is a good one). Whatever the game, the point is that the cling wrap is an obstacle to their being very successful at the game.

- **Wrap the Youth up in Cling Wrap.**
 - Basically, you are wrapping their arms down next to their sides, so wrap from shoulders to about knees. They should be a little bit snug, but not so much as to cause discomfort (no pain or loss of circulation). You need to start pretty loose with the wrapping, because it will get tighter as the wrapping goes on. Do about 10 layers or so.
- **Explain & Play.** Explain the rules of whatever game you have chosen to have them play, and give them time to play it.
 - Be prepared for them to bump into each other and fall over. They will need help getting back up, so have several leaders on hand to help.
 - Alternately, you could have the youth play another game, like have them pretend to be worms, and have a race across the floor.
 - The point is still the same: being tangled up in cling wrap is a definite obstacle.
- **Observe.** As the leader, make some observations about times you noticed that the cling wrap was particularly impeding.
- **Mini-Discussion.** After you settle them back down (I usually leave them in their wrappings for this discussion part, just to drive home the point of how hard it is to function in that stuff), lead a mini-discussion on the obstacles the cling wrap created:
 - Ask them to share funny stories of when they were having a tough time (like, they fell over and couldn't get up, etc.)
 - Ask them how this way was different than playing freeze tag without cling wrap
 - Share your own observations about how the cling wrap hindered their ability to play
- **Free them!** Cut them out of the cling wrap, but have them each keep a half-sheet/notecard-sized piece
- **Timing:** the wrapping should take about 10 mins, and then give them 10+ mins to play the game, and 5-10 mins to debrief the activity

Transition: Here are some characteristics of cling wrap.

- (1) It's virtually invisible, or at least hard to see.
- (2) It's sticky and tangle-y (like, has anyone ever been able to use this without it getting all tangled up?)
- (3) When we're all wrapped and tangled up in it, it makes our ability to move freely much more difficult. It's a definitely an obstacle and a hindrance to accomplishing a task.
- (4) And it's surprisingly strong and hard to get out of, especially when there's a lot of it. We need help.

Sin is like that, too. Sometimes, it's hard to see in our lives. It tends to stick to our lives. When we get all tangled up in it, it trips us up, and makes it hard to accomplish our task of loving God whole-heartedly. And once we're stuck in it, it can be really hard to get out of on our own.

Well, Scripture has something to say about that...

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Cling Wrap Sin (Book, 5 mins)

In this section, we take a look at some advice God gives in dealing with sin. The main point is that it's work and it takes perseverance. We just gotta keep at it. Throw it off, and then keep working to keep it from letting it stick again.

- Read the passage (below for your reference).
- Call attention to the words "perseverance," "endured," "not grow weary"
- Talk about how the context of dealing with sin involves work. Get rid of it, then keep working to keep it from sticking.
- The work is worth it, because we get to be FREE, free to move into God's love.

Hebrews 12 (NIV)

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, ²fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Transition: We're going to take a look at our own sin, the things that are obstacles, the things that get us all tangled up, that keep us from accomplishing the "task" of following God whole-heartedly.

Obstacles Discussion (Look, 10 mins)

In this part, they will brainstorm some obstacles to following God whole-heartedly, the cling wrap—the things that keep them from running toward God easily. Then, they'll discuss life application questions in small groups.

Brainstorming (5 mins)

- Brainstorm obstacles to following God whole-heartedly.
 - Discussion may include fear of what others will think, sins of commission (things that are hard to keep from doing), sins of omission (things they forget to do for God), the cost (a radical change in behavior means putting a lot of extra energy in), time, the distractions of life, other priorities, etc.
- Brainstorm things that will help them “persevere,” “endure,” “not grow weary,” and “not lose heart”
 - Discussion may include thinking about Jesus and what He went through, being around other encouraging Christians, participating in church activities that help them focus on Jesus.

Discussion Questions (5 mins)

(These can either be done with the entire group while you facilitate, or the questions can be printed up ahead of time as handouts or projected, and they can do this in small groups)

1. Which of the obstacles we brainstormed do you personally deal with that keep you from God?
2. What are some things you will try this week to throw them off?
3. What will you try that will help you persevere in continuing to follow God?

Cling Wrap Reminder (Took, 5-10 mins)

This is the reminder to keep persevering after they leave, to keep fixing their eyes on Jesus.

Take home Scripture Reminder (5 mins)

- Have them write “Throw off sin that entangles,” and “Run with perseverance” or “Fix my eyes on Jesus” on their piece of cling wrap with the sharpies
- Encourage them to place this somewhere that will help them remember this truth.

Optional Closing Activity (5 mins)

Show this music video (requires A/V equipment and internet connection)

The point is to depict what it might mean and look like to “throw off” and “run” to God.

“I Will Not Forget You” Music Video by Ben Pasley and Enter the Worship Circle

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZzIWTUpqIMg>

Close in prayer, asking God to help us throw off the obstacles and run with perseverance to Jesus.