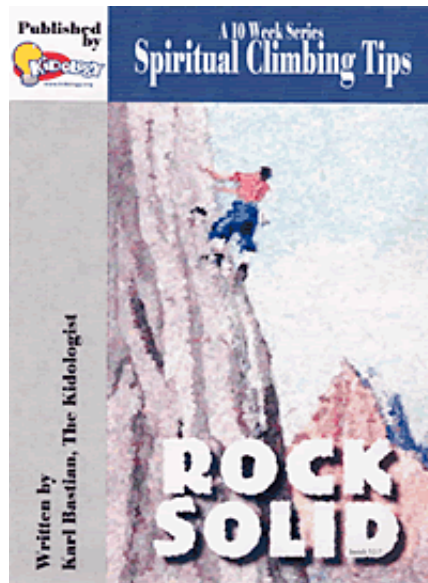


ROCK SOLID

CLIMBING SPIRITUALLY WITH GOD

WRITTEN BY KARL BASTIAN



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INTRODUCTION

Our spiritual growth and pilgrimage has a lot in common with rock climbing! This unit teaches children **Ten Spiritual Climbing Tips** – ten principles that will help them have a successful climb whether they are climbing a real mountain, or going to great heights for God in their everyday life.

This material provides you an overview from which you will be able to create your own complete lessons. There is a lot here to help you bring these lessons to life in your ministry! When combined with your own creative ideas, this packet will produce a fantastic teaching unit!

Set the Tone

For this unit to be most effective, it is recommended that the room be decorated to the theme. Set up some Christmas trees (without decorations) to produce a forest look. Add a tent, sleeping bag, and other climbing & hiking equipment. Bundles of climbing rope are essential, and real climbing gear such as harnesses are a plus if available. Leaders should dress to the theme as well! They should look like they are on a hike or climbing expedition. Hiking shorts, gear on their belts, canteens, flashlights, cool hats, etc., should be worn.

Lesson Components

Here are the components that you will see in each lesson. You do not need to use all of them, pick and choose what will work for you in your setting. Some you may need to adapt to your situation and resources. Feel free to use your own creativity and be flexible with this material. It is intended to be a guide, not an ultra-detailed curriculum. Each section gives general descriptive ideas, not word for word dialogue to read or memorize.

- **Puppet Introduction**

I used a puppet to introduce these lessons. The routines are not scripted, but rather provide a general idea of the puppets situation – interact with the puppet as though he/she were real. (Lots of help on Solo Puppeteering is provided at the end of this packet.) You have a few options: you can create a puppet to introduce these lessons very much in the same manner I did, or you can write a short puppet script and have two puppets interact and accomplish the same basic idea. You could also skip this option and begin with the skit.

- **Climbing Skits**

Each lesson comes with a skit to introduce it. An overview of the skit is described. Your actors will need to add their own creativity and lines based on their personalities to complete the skit. I do it this way because I have found that often scripted line-by-line skits comes across stiff and stale, as the actors are more concerned with reciting memorized lines than getting into character. (Scripts work great with musicals and plays that have lots of rehearsals, but there are ten skits and usually there is not as much time for the actors to learn them.) Let the actors learn the basic idea of the skit and the main point, practice several times, and have fun getting into character and arriving at the conclusion. Skit can be used at the beginning to introduce the Tip, and be referred back to later, OR use it in the middle of your lesson to provide a change of pace. Use it right before you teach the tip of the lesson.

- **Climbing Tip**

Each lesson includes a Climbing Tip, with hand motion tips to go with each. As the lessons progress you will be able to review the previous tips just by doing the hand motions with the

children. You will be amazed how well they will learn all ten tips. You can teach the tip right at the beginning of your teaching time, or teach a little bit and then tell them what it is. Be sure to have them repeat it several times as you perform the hand motion that goes with it.

- **Lesson Ideas**

Here you will find several ideas for communicating the Climbing Tip of the lesson. You do not need to do them all, but pick and choose which you are comfortable with and be sure to add your own creativity and stories that fit.

- **Hiking Equipment (Object Lesson)**

Each Climbing Tip features an object lesson using a piece of hiking/climbing equipment. Show the object, ask what it is and how it is helpful to a climber, and then explain what it represents in a Christian's climbing adventure.

- **Verse**

Each lesson has a verse to go along with it. It is recommended you make an overhead or PowerPoint of the verse to help teach it. I had a rock puppet made and named him Rocky. (Ingenious, huh?) I bought a CD of the theme music from the movie Rocky and recorded 40 seconds of the main theme. As soon as I went to get Rocky, the music would start. The kids loved it! I used Rocky to teach the verse that goes with the lesson. If you can't get a Rocky puppet made, be creative! Perhaps you could make a large rock made of rolled and spray-painted paper, then give it a mouth so it can talk. Another option would be to get a big rock and paint it with a face and let it talk. Or, come up with your own creative way to teach the verse.

LESSON ONE

Starting The Journey (Why I Should Follow Christ)

Puppet Introduction

Puppet is dressed and ready to go hiking/climbing. Talks about how excited it is to go to great heights this week! Leader explains to puppet that this week we are going to be learning **Ten Climbing Tips** that will help us all to go to the heights that God has planned for us. It will not be easy, but it will be well worth it when we get to the top and see the magnificent view.

Climbing Skit

Climber comes out and explains that he is going to be climbing Mt. Extreme, one of the most deadly mountains in the world to climb, but one with the grandest breath-taking view from the top. Next explain that since he has never been up this mountain he needs to choose a guide. He put an ad in the local paper, in a town near the base of Mt. Extreme, for a guide, and some applicants should be coming soon to interview for the job.

- **Guide #1** (never climbed) Shows up, confidently says, “I’ve never even mountain climbed, but there can’t be much to it. Just throw up a rope and climb – duh. Anyone can do it, I’ll show you.”
- **Guide #2** (old man with old equipment) Shows up, “Oh, yeah, I climbed this mountain in 1927, I did. With this here very rope – let’s go, I still know the way like it was yesterday.” Starts to walk one way across the stage, then “OOPS! It’s the other way.... I knew that.” And turns around and goes the other way.
- **Guide #3** (little kid) “Hi! I rule the 64 mountain climbing game – so I’d ROCK at this! Please! Please! Please!” Ask, “But what if you get hurt?” Kid answers, “No sweat, you get three lives, and if you die, just re-set the game.”
- **Guide #4** (Mountain Dew Grunge Dude) “Hey man, like, cool, dude, like, I’ll take you up man – and NO ROPES man – it’s more exciting if you just go with your BARE HANDS dude – and a Mountain Dew, of course! Let’s hit the slopes dude! YEA! This ROCKS!”
- **Guide #5** (experienced climber) “This is a tough climb, we’ll need the right equipment, and good weather. I know the safest route, and I just took another group up last week. You need to be in the best shape physically and be mentally prepared for the challenge. It won’t be easy, but if you set your mind to it, and carefully follow my directions, it is well worth the effort when you get to the top. If you want me to be your guide here is the list of equipment you’ll need, and we leave Saturday at 4 a.m. Call me.” Hands list to climber and exits.

Lesson Ideas: Spiritual Life Is Like Climbing!

For A Humorous Start

Come out all dressed to climb – boots, harness, rope, binoculars, flashlight, etc, but have some funny stuff too! I had a stuffed skunk that was ‘anti-bear equipment’ that I could point at a bear and squeeze! I had a yo-yo, great for those emergency situations when you might need to shoot out and grab a branch. If it’s warm, have a water gun for drinking from, and squirt the kids! Be creative.

- ❖ **BEAR JOKE:** There was this pastor out hiking in the woods. When he rounded a corner he bumped right into a HUGE grizzly bear. As he jumped backwards he fell down a steep hill with the bear chasing after him. He knew he could never out-run the bear, so he prayed, “Dear God, Please make this bear a Christian Bear!” Suddenly the bear came to a screeching halt, right

before the pastor, the bear knelt down on it's knees, folded it's massive paws, and prayed, "Dear God, please bless this food which you have supplied for my supper. Amen."

Look up and Read Habakkuk 3:19

The Sovereign LORD is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, he enables me to go on the heights.

Talk About:

- Sovereign: Means God is in control; you are here because God wants you here.
Be listening for what God has for you to learn this week!
- My Strength: By ourselves we get weak, but God can give us the strength we need!
Feet like the feet of a deer: God can enable you to go where otherwise you'd never get.
- Enables me.... to go on the heights: God wants you to go to great heights in your life, but you must be willing to follow Him and let Him be your guide.

You have a choice: Stay at the bottom, or GO FOR IT!

Jeremiah 29:11 is a good verse to use as well: God has great plans for you!

THE WORLD'S GUIDES:

Friends
Celebrities

Leaders (even Christian)

Parents

WHY THEY ALL FALL SHORT:

They've been around as long as you, and know about as much.

Their lives are not as charmed as you think. So many are empty and disappointed, some commit suicide, can't stay married, and often have life-styles that don't glorify God.

They are human and can let you down and fail. You should only imitate the good in their life as they imitate God.

We must honor them, but they are human too and will make mistakes, only God is perfect and knows enough be our #1 guide.

Climbing Tip #1: Choose Your Guide

Hand Signal: Hands held like binoculars over eyes (make circle with fingers and thumb)

Hiking Equipment: Binoculars

- God is the best guide for He is the only one who can see ahead to the future.
- Binoculars make the small and far away things seem bigger and closer.
- Does God seem small or distant? Perhaps He is not your guide. Perhaps you are following too far behind Him. Or perhaps he is on a completely different trail, and calling you to follow.
- GOD CAN SEE: The past, everything in the present, the future, the hearts and minds of people.
- He is the BEST one to be your #1 Guide.

Verse:

Joshua 24:15 Choose you this day whom you will serve.