



STICKING TOGETHER

LESSON 121 → Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 2:1-4

Tobias wanted to go his own way.

Tobias fumbled restlessly with his backpack. It was hard to sit still while Mr. Kilpatrick finished his talk.

“... and we must all stick together. Your parents have given me the responsibility for this hike, and it’s very important that each of you stay with the group and follow my directions,” Mr. Kilpatrick went on.

Tobias sighed. He had stayed up late last night studying the map, so he already knew this trail well. In fact, he thought, I’m sure I wouldn’t have a bit of trouble getting to the falls by myself. This business about always sticking together sort of bothered him. He was sure he didn’t

need to hear it, although some of the younger kids probably did.

Suddenly he realized that all of the kids were hustling to get their gear on and some were already on their way down the trail. Tobias scrambled to his feet. Boy, that’s what I get for daydreaming, he chided himself. Now I’m stuck at the back of the pack.

Tobias soon forgot his annoyance. A gray squirrel scurried by, causing a ripple of laughter among the happy group, as the early morning sun filtered through the trees. Every breath of the clean, pine-scented air made him glad he had been included.



UNITY GIVES US A GOOD FEELING.

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!
— Psalm 133:1

Then, just to the right of the trail, something caught his eye. Could this be a bear track? What other animal would leave a print that big? He put his pack down, and bent over to examine it more closely. Yes, he was sure it was a bear track. And there was another one!

Wow . . . this was a real discovery! I'm going to look around here and see if I can find some more, he thought to himself. I can catch up with the others. They'll never miss me.

He poked around in the brush for quite awhile. Then, suddenly, he realized the rest of the group had been out of sight for a long time. Since he hadn't found more tracks, he decided he'd better hurry and join the others. Then an idea came into his head. He would take a shortcut across the valley and catch up with the group on the other side! In just a few minutes he was out of sight of the trail, but he was sure he could find his way, so on he went.

Absorbed in his thoughts, Tobias never saw the half-buried tree root that caused his fall. One moment he was peering ahead intently, trying to get his bearings, and the next thing he knew he was sprawling on the ground.

"Oh, no!" he groaned, grabbing his ankle. "Oh, it hurts!" He rubbed it gently for a few moments, then cautiously got to his feet and tried to put his weight on it. A wave of pain shot through him, and he sank back to the ground. "I'll never be able to walk on it," he moaned. "It must be broken." He looked around him, then managed to crawl a few feet to a heavy stick. "Maybe I can use this for a crutch."

The next couple of hours blurred into one long agony. Each step was torture. It didn't help Tobias, that Mr. Kilpatrick's words kept re-echoing in his mind, ". . . we must all stick together . . . all stick together . . ." If only he had paid attention. All that advice this morning had been meant for him, but he had ignored it. Surely the group had missed him by now, and they were probably all worried.

"O God, please help me get back to them," he whispered. Then, just when Tobias felt so exhausted he could hardly take another step, he heard a shout. "Tobias, Tobias, can you hear us? Tobias, where are you?"

It was Mr. Kilpatrick.

With a groan of relief, Tobias sank to the ground. "I'm here. Right over here," he cried, and in a few moments the group gathered around him.

"Tobias, what happened?" Mr. Kilpatrick's voice was filled with concern. "Are you all right? How did you get separated from the group?"

Supporting Tobias, the group slowly made its way through the woods. At last they came to the spot on the trail where Tobias had seen the bear track, and the group had found his pack. By that time, Mr. Kilpatrick had the whole story. As the group assembled on the trail, he looked at them and said sadly, "Well, kids, I'm really sorry that our trip has to end this way, but we're going to have to go home now. I know it is disappointing to all of you. We've spent several hours back-tracking and looking for Tobias, so we wouldn't be able to make it to the falls before late afternoon even if we did go on. Tobias is in need of attention, so we'll just have to head back in."

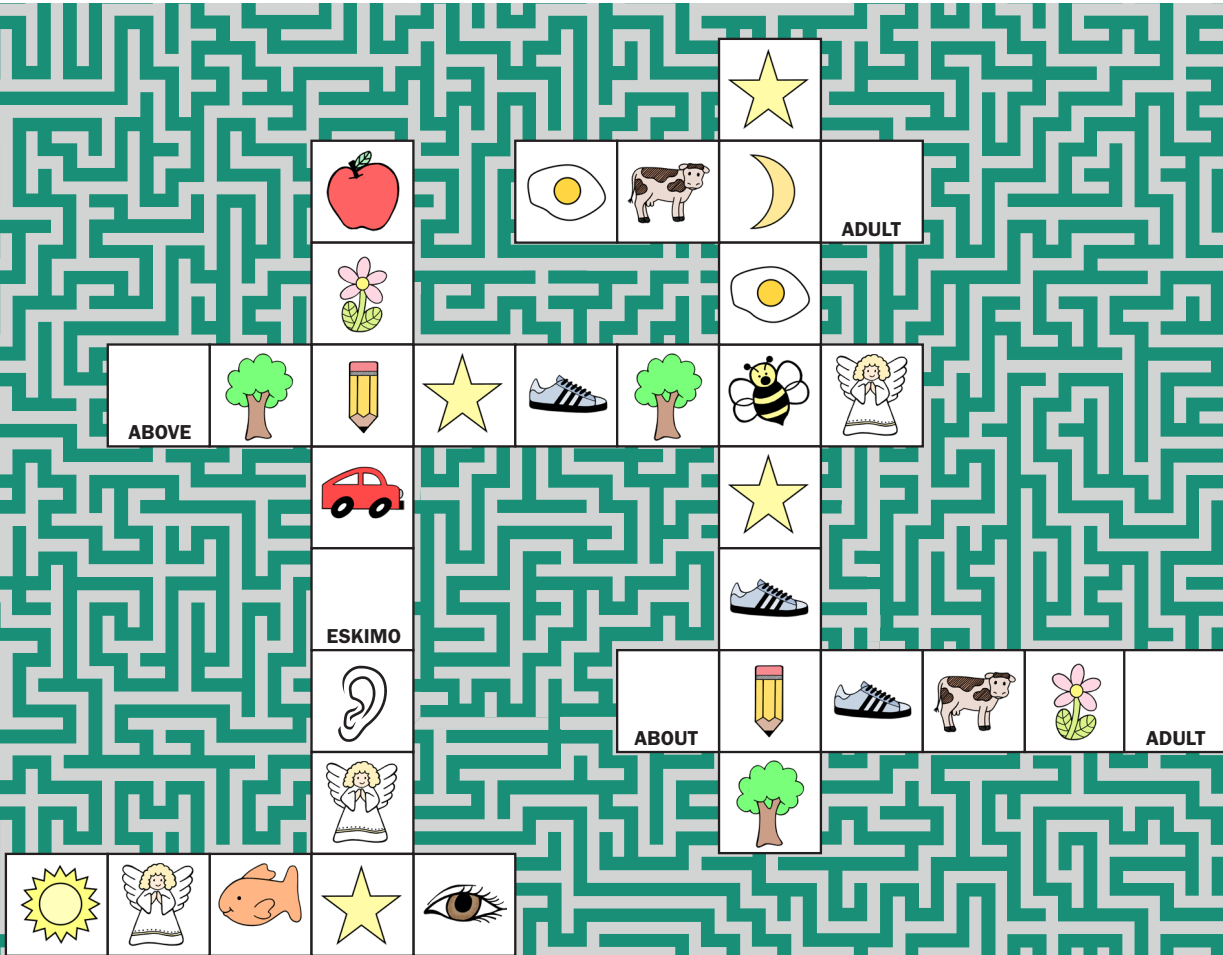
"Sorry, guys," Tobias said, feeling miserable as he glanced around at the concerned faces. "Just because I decided I could go my own way, I ruined the fun for all of you."

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Tobias learned a hard lesson that day. When one person decides to do whatever he wants and go his own way, without regard for how it will affect others, it causes problems. As Christians, we must stand together if we want to insure good success in our work for God. The Bible calls this, "unity." Never forget that unity among Christian believers is vital!

LET'S WORK TOGETHER

Unity means all agreeing on the same thing. This week the key verse tells what it is like when we all work together to accomplish God's purpose. On the grid below write the second letter of the word or picture in that square. Then write each word in the correct order in the key verse below. No fair peeking at the text!



“ _____, how _____ and how _____
 it is for _____ to dwell _____ in
 _____!”

Psalm 133:1