

## **Lesson 91 - Preparing for the New Year**

### **Aim**

- to prepare for the new year
- to learn what is important in our lives

### **Materials**

- Story - Beautiful Hands
- worksheets
- Card, scissors, glue, coloured pencils

### **Lesson Outline**

1. Reflecting on this year
2. Story - Beautiful Hands
3. Discussion
4. Preparing for the new year
5. Activities - New Year's resolution poster, balloon search, jigsaw puzzle
6. Review the lesson
7. Prayer

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### **1) Reflecting on this year**

\* What year is it now? This means there have been 2013 years since Jesus was born. What year will it be next year? 2014. Which year were you born? When is your birthday? How old are you? Every year there are 365 days and 12 months. Who can name the months? What month is it now? When do we celebrate Christmas?

- Soon this year will be coming to an end. In one year a lot of things happen. What do you remember? What did you enjoy the most? Your birthday? The summer? What was the hardest thing you did? What new things did you learn to do?
- In one year your body has grown bigger. How tall are you? What size are your shoes? How big are your hands? Your body grows a little everyday, but that is not the only way we grow. When God looks at us, He looks at our heart and how much that has grown. He wants us to be good children. And your parents want the same. They want you to grow to be good children.
- Here is a story to help us to think about what is important in our lives

### **2) Story - Beautiful Hands**

*A group of girls talk together about who has the most beautiful hands. When an old woman passes by, they ask her the question. Three of the girls have soft hands and look beautiful externally, but she doesn't choose them. Instead she chooses the fourth girl, whose hands are hard from doing lots*

*of work. They are the most beautiful because they are the most helpful. As a reward the old woman gives her a ring made of precious stones.*

### **3) Discussion**

Why did the first three girls think their hands were beautiful?

*1st girl - very soft and white, for she had never done anything but wash them in clear, cold water.*

*2nd girl - very pink and soft for she had never done anything but wash them in strawberry juice*

*3rd girl - smelled like perfume, because she gathered violets and crushed them in her hands*

Why did the old woman think the fourth girl had the most beautiful hands?

*- they were hard working hands. They were the most helpful.*

Why did the old woman not choose the other girls?

*They may have had soft, sweet smelling hands, but they didn't help anyone*

What had the fourth girl been doing with her hands?

*- helping mother and father dry the dishes*

*- sweeping the floor*

*- washing the windows*

*- weeding the garden.*

*- taking care of the baby*

*- carrying hot tea to grandma*

*- showing little brother how to build his blocks and fly his kite*

*- busy making the house a happy home, full of love and care.*

What was the fourth girl's reward?

*- a ring made of precious jewels - diamonds, rubies redder than strawberries, and turquoise bluer than violets.*

What can we learn from this story?

*What we look like on the outside is not what is most important to God, but what we look like on the inside. God looks at our heart. How much do we care about others and how helpful are we?*

*Because the girl used her hands to help others, she was rewarded. In the same way, when you use your hands to help others God's blessing will come to you.*

Look at your hands.

*- What colour are they? How long are the nails? Who has the biggest, the smallest? Look at the teacher's hands? Are they different? Are they hard working? Are they beautiful?*

### **4) Preparing for the New Year**

What can you do to grow your heart next year? How can you use your hands to be a helpful? And help make your home a happy home, full of love and care. One way is to make a new year resolution. This is a promise you make at the beginning of a new year, so you can grow your heart. What new year resolution could you make? Here are some ideas:

- *Brush my teeth twice a day*
- *Wash my hands after going to the bathroom and before eating.*
- *Keep my bedroom tidy. Pick up my toys*
- *Help dry the dishes*

- *Help sweep the floor*
- *Give my parents a hug everyday and say thank them for their hard work*
- *Pray at the start and end of each day*

## **5) Activities**

- Make a New Year's Resolution/Promise - Ask the teacher to write one thing you can promise to do in the new year to help grow your heart. Paste the poster onto card. Punch two holes at the top and thread ribbon through them. Hang it in the wall to remind you of what you promised.
- 2014 jigsaw puzzle - Paste the numbers on one side of card and the pattern on the other side. When dry, cut along the black lines. When finished, mix up the pieces and ask someone to put them back together again.
- New Year Balloons search - Find out which balloon belongs to which year.

## **6) Review the lesson**

Ask each child what they could learn from today's lesson. Refer to the lesson aims:

- to prepare for the new year
- To learn what is important in our lives

## **7) End with a Prayer**

# Beautiful Hands



*From "The Moral Compass- Stories for a Life's Journey" edited by William J. Bennett*

Some young girls were talking by the brook boasting of their beautiful hands. One of them dipped her hands into the sparkling water and the drops looked like diamonds falling from her palms.

"See what beautiful hands I have! The water runs from them like precious jewels," said she, and held up her hands for the others to admire. They were very soft and white, for she had never done anything but wash them in clear, cold water.

Another one of them ran to get some strawberries and crushed them in her palms. The juice ran through her fingers like wine from a wine press until her fingers were as pink as the sunrise in the early morning.

"See what beautiful hands I have! The strawberry juice runs over them like wine," said she, and she held up her hands for the others to admire. They were very pink and soft for she had never done anything but wash them in strawberry juice every morning. Another one gathered some violets and crushed the flowers in her hands until they smelled like perfume.

"See what beautiful hands I have! They smell like violets in the deep woods in the springtime," said she, and she held up her hands for the others to admire. They were soft and white, for she had never done anything but wash them with violets every morning. The fourth girl did not show her hands but held them in her lap.

An old woman came down the road and stopped before the girls. They all showed her their hands and asked her which were the most beautiful. She shook her head at each one and then asked to see the hands of the last girl, who held hers in her lap. The last girl raised her hands timidly for the old woman to see.

"Oh, these hands are clean indeed," said the old woman, "but they are from hard toil. These hands have been helping mother and father dry the dishes, and sweep the floor, and wash the windows, and weed the garden. These hands have been taking care of the baby, and carrying hot tea to grandma, and showing little brother how to build his blocks and fly his kite. Yes, these hands have been busy making the house a happy home, full of love and care." Then the old woman fumbled in her pocket and brought out a ring set with diamonds, with rubies redder than strawberries, and turquoise bluer than violets.

"Here, wear the ring, my child. You deserve the prize for the most beautiful hands, for they have been the most helpful." And the old woman vanished, leaving the four girls still sitting by the brook.

# My New Year Promise

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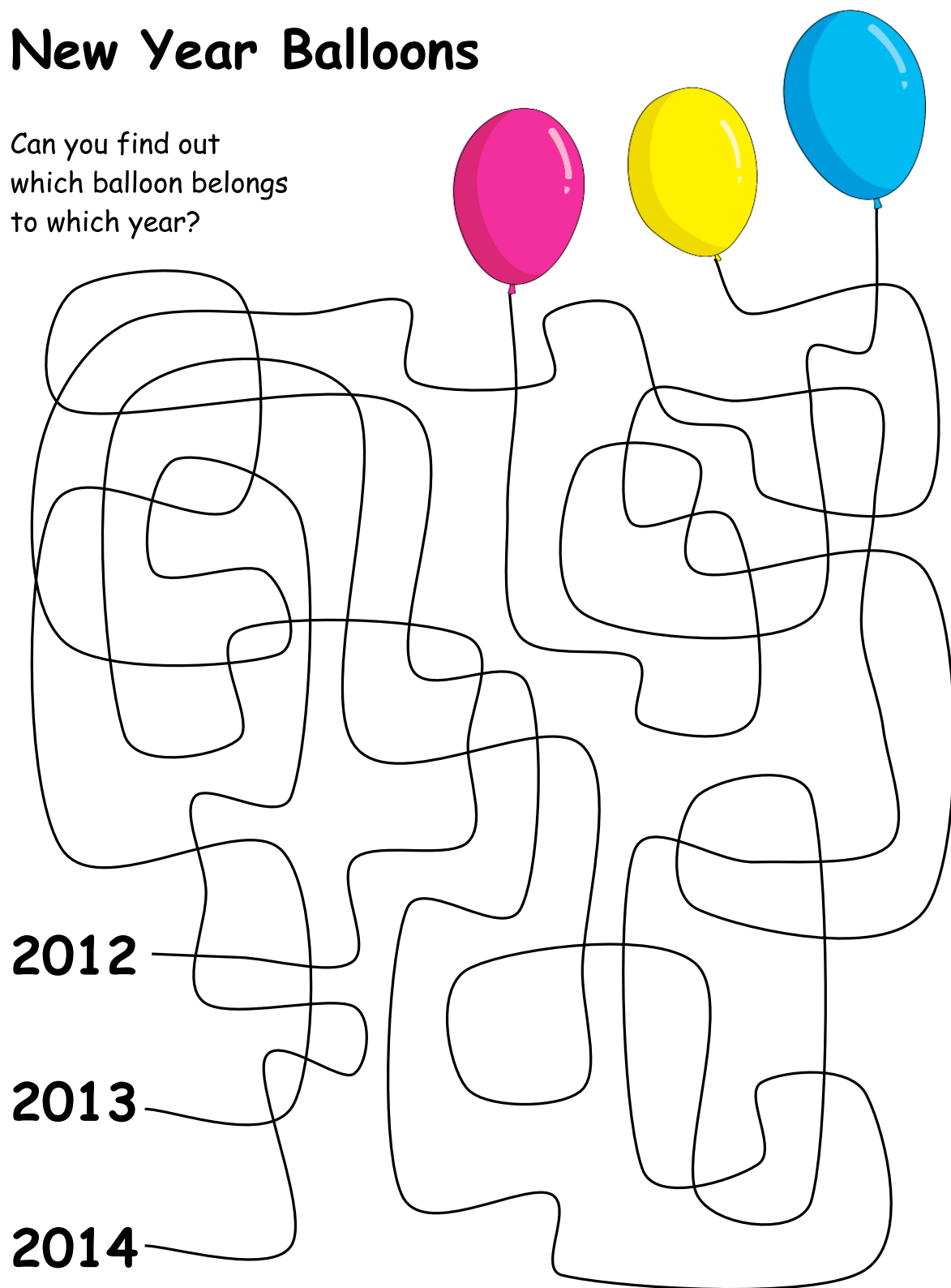
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# New Year Balloons

Can you find out  
which balloon belongs  
to which year?



# Jigsaw Puzzle

