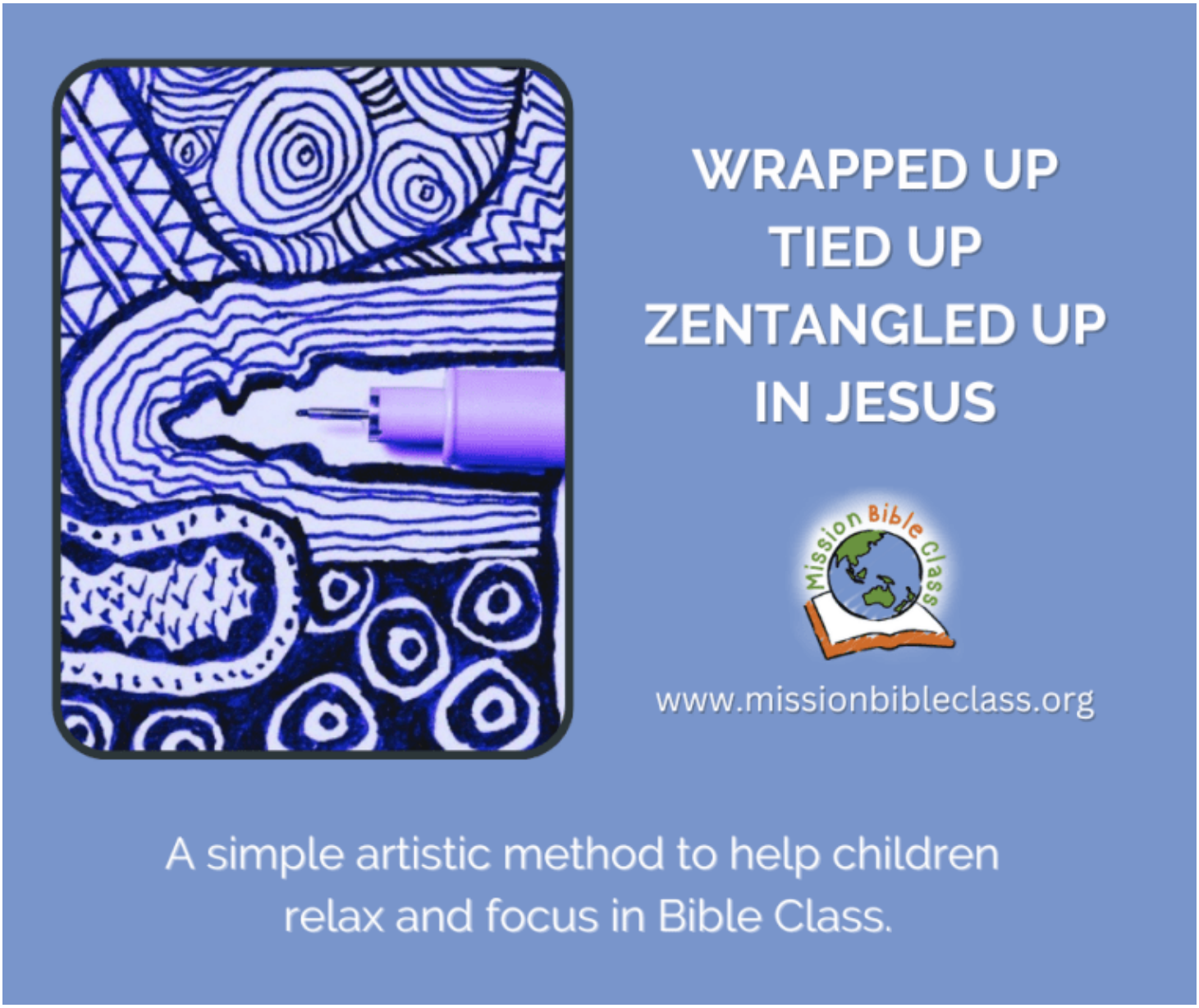
Wrapped Up, Tied Up and Zentangled Up in Jesus



Recently a group of children got me tangled up in something new.

I was teaching a small group of 9-12 year olds on Sunday mornings for Bible class. I asked the children what ideas they had for helping us learn. Their suggestions are what led us to begin “tangling” in Bible Class.

I had first been introduced to the idea quite some time ago but I had not thought of using it for my Bible class. After learning a bit more about it I realised that the children were “on to something”.

> Zentangle is a method of drawing that is so simple and repetetive that it frees your mind up to relax and focus. Doodling is more freeform and flowing but Zentangle usually follows patterns.

Don’t make the same mistake I did and think that Zentangle is somehow related to “Zen Buddhism”. As I learned more I found out that it is actually an artistic method created by Rick Roberts and Maria Thomas. They describe the actual process of drawing “tangling”. They added the word “zen” to describe the calm effect tangling produces as you do it.
You can read more about how it began here.

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How We Tangled in Our Class

Since we working our way through some great Old Testament lessons from the Tower of Babel all they way through the Life of Joseph I wanted to emphasise “FAITH”

Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph had great faith.



Here’s What We Did

1. **Prepared a Poster:**
   The children could have draw their own letters but, for this first attempt, I decided to pre-print the word FAITH on a paper using big letter outlines. I searched for a suitable font and found one similar to Janda Manitee Bubble . Create your own or use this one in A4 size or this one in letter size (USA)
2. **Drew a free-flowing grid to create drawing spaces:**
   The tangle designs can be done inside the letters or outside, in the white space. I decided to go with the white space outside the letters.
   To help the children get started I went ahead and drew out a wavy sort of grid so they would immediately see the small areas to add designs to. By doing this free-hand I was able to create a totally unique pattern for each child.
3. **Provided each child with a pen:**
   People take Zentangling to all sorts of levels and spend lots of money on special paper and pens. In our case I just handed each child a fine line black pen. We used fine line Sharpee pens.
4. **Started tangling:**
   Each child selected a FAITH poster and began filling each of the “squares” with a unique design. As we all “tangled” we talked about faith. We weren’t about finishing the project by the end of class. We just set them aside to be picked up and continued the next time we met.

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What I learned about using Zentangle in Bible class

1. Amazingly, this method really did bring calm to the classroom.
2. Fidgeters stopped fidgetting and were able to draw and participate in conversation all at the same time.
3. The conversation while tangling flowed naturally. The children were relaxed and calm and just chatted about what faith meant in their lives and then about life in general. Even shy children contributed to the conversation since they did not feel undo attention was on them.
4. I provided some patterns that I found online but the children in my class were quite happy to come up with their own designs.

Links to Videos and Patterns:

I wasn't concerned with following strict guidelines for Zentanglel so I was able to find lots of patterns and examples online. A simple online search for "zentangle" will lead you to a number of different examples. Here are a few simple ones that I found.

- Video (6 minutes): Zentangle Art for beginners
- Video (Just under 21 minutes): 24 Doodle Patterns, Zentangle Patterns, Mandala Patterns
- Video (5 minutes 21 seconds): 15 Zentangle Patterns | Part 1 | Tutorial
- Video (22 minutes 43 seconds): 24 Zentangle patterns
- Blog Post with Patterns: 100+ Fun, Easy Patterns to Draw

And just for fun I'll leave you with the song that I couldn't get out of my head while writing this post!!

Lyrics:

I'm all wrapped up, all tied up, all tangled up in Jesus.
I'm all wrapped up, all tied up, all tangled up in God.
I'm all wrapped up, all tied up, all tangled up in Jesus.
I'm all wrapped up, all tied up, all tangled up in God.

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