

Small Group Leader Guide



Supplies NOT Included in Activity Bags

1. Take a Snapshot

- solo cups
- permanent markers
- scissors

2. Bible Story Extension and Discussion Questions

- floor tape or cones

3. Verses to Take with You

- Bibles
- index cards
- pencils

4. Make It Personal with Prayer

- pencils
- index cards

Pray for your group before they arrive.

Pray for kids who will visit your group for the first time.

Think about a time when you didn't feel ready for something but had to step forward anyway.

Thank God for giving you courage in that moment! Thank God for sending the Holy Spirit to help you take the first step even when you feel unsure.

Ask God to help the preteens understand that they don't have to feel 100% ready because God will always be with them!

Pray that they would learn to rely on God when they feel nervous or unsure. Pray that the Holy Spirit would help them take bold, confident steps toward new things!

THIS MONTH



Today's Bible Story

Moses

Burning Bush, Plagues, Red Sea
Exodus 3-6:12, 7-12:42; 13:17-14:31

Conversation Starter

When have you tried something new?

Bottom Line

God can give you courage when you don't feel ready.

Memory Verse

**"When I'm afraid, I put my trust in you."
Psalm 56:3**



Inclusive Pro Tips

This leader guide is designed to be inclusive of children with a disability who attend a group with their peers. See highlighted sections below for additional inclusive pro-tips. Check out the Special Needs Resource Kit for more ideas for adapting each segment.

Take a Snapshot

Application Activity



Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ solo cups
- ☐ "Courage Stickers" Activity Page
- ☐ "Verses" Activity Page
- ☐ Pencils or Pens
- ☐ Permanent Marker
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Completed Jar Example



Inclusive Pro Tips

Give one instruction at a time and point to a completed example as you give instructions. Pause for kids to process and respond.

Offer pre-cut verse strips or offer adaptive scissors.

Not every kid will want to share out loud. Let them know it is okay to listen quietly, share with a leader one on one, or think about the prompt.

What You Do

1. Gather the kids in a seated circle.
2. Give each kid a clear plastic jar, a "Verses" Activity Page, and a pencil or pen.
3. Place the scissors and "Courage Stickers" Activity Pages in the center.
4. Show the completed jar example and explain the activity.
 - "Today, you'll create your very own 'Courage Jars' filled with Bible verses and reminders to help you brave the unknown with God, even when it's tough!"
5. Invite the kids to choose six stickers to decorate their jars.
6. Encourage the kids to cut out their verse strips from the "Verses" Activity Page.
7. As they cut the strips:
 - **[MAKE IT PERSONAL]** Share an age-appropriate story of a time you were nervous or afraid to try something new, but God gave you the courage to do it!
 - Encourage the kids to think about a time they needed courage from God.
 - You can prompt kids with examples such as speaking up, trying something new, or praying out loud for the first time.
8. Invite the kids to use the three blank strips to write encouraging statements to themselves.
 - I can do this. God is with me!
 - I can trust God no matter what!
 - I don't have to get everything right because God is with me!
 - God helps me do hard things!
9. Encourage kids to read through the verses and place a star next to the one that stands out.
10. Spark discussion around the verses.
11. Encourage the kids to take their jars home. Whenever they need courage, invite them to grab a verse from the jar, read it, and ask God to give them courage in whatever they're facing.
12. Share with kids that being brave doesn't always mean fear disappears, but we can trust God is with us and He is always good. When anyone chooses to follow Jesus, God sends the Holy Spirit to live in them! God is closer than close! God's Spirit is inside of them, He can help them take the first step, and He will be with them every step after in anything they face.
13. Pass around the permanent marker for kids to write their names on their jars.

Bible Story Extension

Bible Story Review



Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ "Story Scenarios" Activity Page
- ☐ "Courage Cards" Activity Page
- ☐ Cones or Floor Tape



Inclusive Pro Tips

Let kids choose how they will travel. They could walk, roll, crawl, or have a buddy assist them.

Offer additional roles such as cheering for the team or reading the cards to the team.

What You Do

1. Divide the kids into three teams.
2. Use cones or floor tape to create a start and finish line for each team.
3. Place the "Story Scenarios" Activity Page cards at each team's finish line.
4. Give each team a full set of "Courage Cards" Activity Page cards.
5. Explain how to play:
 - Each team is to send one kid at a time to grab one scenario card and bring it back.
 - As a team, they are to read the scenario and choose a courage card that fits. (One of the six cards will fit.)
 - After reading the courage card, each team is to choose the option for the response they want, and they are to perform the action on their choice together. (For example, "Take a step backward," "Move forward," or "Stay where you are.")
6. Continue in this way until each team makes it to the finish line together.
7. Encourage the kids:
 - Moses didn't feel ready, but God was with him every step of the way and gave him everything he needed. When we choose to follow Jesus, God sends us the Holy Spirit to live inside of you. He will help you do what God calls you to do!
 - Remind them that God is always with them—whether they're facing a challenge, making a tough decision, or trying something new.
 - Emphasize that Moses wasn't alone, and neither are they! The same God who was with Moses as he led God's people out of Egypt is with them through the Holy Spirit and will help them have courage in whatever they're facing every day!

Discussion Questions:

Ask the following:

1. When have you tried something new?
2. What are some things that make you feel nervous or unprepared?
3. How do you think Moses felt when God asked him to go to Egypt and talk to Pharaoh?
4. How can trusting God help us take the next step when we don't feel ready?
5. Sometimes we don't feel ready for what's ahead, but God's Spirit is always with us! What's something coming up in your life that you can ask the Holy Spirit to help you with?

You are Moses. You see the burning bush and God tells you to go to Pharaoh.
What would you do?

Moses tells you that God is going to set you free! But, Pharaoh just made your work even harder.
What would you do?

You're at the Red Sea. Pharaoh's army is behind you, and the sea is in front of you. Moses tells you God will save you.
What would you do?

A kid in your class is being made fun of, and you can do something about it.
What would you do?

It's your first time praying out loud in your Small Group, but you feel nervous.
What would you do?

You accidentally hurt a friend's feelings, and they are upset.
What do you do?

- 1** "God's Spirit is with me even when I feel unqualified." You trust that God will help you and go to Pharaoh.
(Move forward!)
- "This is too scary! I'll make excuses." You tell God you're not a good speaker and try to avoid going.
(Stay where you are.)
- "Maybe someone else should go." Ask God to send someone else instead.
(Take a step backward.)

- 2** "The Holy Spirit reminds me that God keeps His promises." Keep trusting God, even though it's hard.
(Move forward!)
- "Maybe Moses was wrong about God and His help." Doubt that God is really going to help.
(Stay where you are.)
- "Complain and get mad at Moses." Let frustration take over and stop believing.
(Take a step backward.)

- 3** "God's Spirit gives me courage to step forward." Trust God and start moving, even if it doesn't make sense.
(Move forward!)
- "Maybe we should just surrender." Be afraid and think about giving up.
(Stay where you are.)
- "Run in circles, panicking!" Freak out instead of trusting.
(Take a step backward.)

- 4** "The Holy Spirit gives me the courage to stand up for others." Speak up and show kindness.
(Move forward!)
- "I don't want to get involved." Ignore it and hope it stops
(Stay where you are.)
- "Laugh with the others so no one picks on me." Join in instead of standing up.
(Take a step backward.)

- 5** "God's Spirit helps me pray, even when I'm nervous." Pray even if your voice shakes!
(Move forward!)
- "Stay quiet and hope someone else does it." Let fear hold you back.
(Stay where you are.)
- "Say 'I forgot!' to avoid it." Find an excuse not to pray. (Take a step backward.)

- 6** "The Holy Spirit helps me admit when I'm wrong." Apologize sincerely and ask for forgiveness
(Move forward!)
- "Pretend it didn't happen." Act like nothing's wrong and hope they forget
(Stay where you are.)
- "Blame them for overreacting." Get defensive instead of making things right.
(Take a step backward.)

Verses to Take with You

Memory Verse Activity



Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ Index Cards
- ☐ Coloring Supplies

Inclusive Pro Tips



Write the verse on the card in advance for each group.

Offer to do this activity as a large group with the Small Group leader as the guide.

What You Do

1. Divide the kids into groups of three and give each group a Bible. (A group of four is fine!)
2. Lead them to look up Psalm 56:3 using the Bible Navigation tips.
3. Repeat the verse several times together.
4. Give each group an index card.
5. Set out the coloring supplies.
6. On one side of the index card, invite the kids to write Psalm 56:3.
7. On the other side, instruct the groups to come up with their own words to create a new way to rewrite Psalm 56:3.
8. If the kids need help getting started, share a few examples:
 - "When life feels shaky, I'll choose to trust You."
 - "God's got me even when I'm nervous."
9. Invite the kids to decorate their cards with symbols that will help them remember the verse.
 - Kids might draw a storm cloud, a heart, a cross, or an anchor.
10. Bring the groups together.
11. Invite the groups to share their new sentences with the entire group.
12. Repeat Psalm 56:3 together again.
13. Ask:
 - What stands out to you about Psalm 56:3?
 - Why do you think David needed to say it?
 - How was David's heart reminded of the truth when he said this truth?
14. Explain to the kids that Psalm 56:3 isn't just a cool verse—it's God's Word! God can speak to us through it! He can encourage our hearts with it! They can speak it out loud as a reminder that no matter what's going on, whether they're worried, or things feel uncertain—they can trust God! He is with them and He will help!

*Finding verses with 4th-5th graders

1. Ask kids to tell you if the book of the Bible they're looking for is in the Old Testament or New Testament. If it's in the Old, instruct kids to flip slowly, starting at the front of the Bible and heading toward the back, until they find the book they're looking for. If it's in the New, instruct kids to start flipping from the back, going forward to find the book they're looking for.
2. When they find the book, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers.
3. Once they find the chapter, explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Tell kids to find the verse within the chapter they've already found.

Pray and Dismiss

Prayer Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Pens or Pencils
- ☐ Index Cards



What You Do

1. Gather the kids in a seated circle.
2. Give each kid a pen or pencil and an index card.
3. Say something like:
 - “Has something ever come up that made you feel just . . . not ready? Maybe it was your first basketball practice on a new team, or perhaps you needed to apologize to a friend, but you felt nervous about it and didn’t know how they would respond.”
4. Invite the kids to write down one thing they don’t feel prepared for.
 - This could be an upcoming event, a conversation, a doctor’s appointment, etc.
5. As the kids finish, direct them to place their cards in the center of the circle facedown.
6. Explain to the kids that they’re placing their cards in the center as a way of saying, “God, I’m giving this to You, and I trust You with it!”
7. Ask if anyone would like to pray for the group.
8. Close the group in prayer, asking God to remind the kids that He’s always with them. Ask God to give them the courage to do hard things!

Inclusive Pro Tips



Give concrete examples of what makes kids feel unprepared both verbally and visually.

Allow kids to hold on to their cards instead of placing them in the center.

Invite kids to draw instead of writing.