

# Small Group Leader Guide

THIS MONTH



## Today's Bible Story

### Ruth

Ruth 1

(Supporting: Ruth 2-4)

## Bottom Line

**God can give you courage when you don't know what's next.**

## Memory Verse

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

## Today's Suggested Schedule

### Greeting & Prayer (5 minutes)

The leader greets the children and asks how they are doing. After a brief time of sharing, the group participates in a short prayer activity to prepare their hearts for the lesson.

### Small Group Activity (20 minutes)

Groups: Creating a safe place to connect

1. Ruth's Journey Relay
2. Courage Crossroads

### Pray & Dismiss (5 minutes)

After small group time, the leader closes in prayer. Then the children are dismissed.



## 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.



## SOCIAL

# Opening Activity



## What You Need

- ☐ A Spinning Wheel
- ☐ Prayer Chart

①

## What You Do

Pray for your group before they arrive -> Pray for kids who will visit your group for the first time. Recall a time when God gave you the courage to do something you didn't think you were ready for. Thank God for sending the Holy Spirit to live inside of you and help you take the next step! Ask God to help the kids trust Him when they feel nervous or unsure. Whether it's a big change or something small, pray that kids would know God is with them even when they don't feel ready.

- Choose a child to spin the wheel.
- Each number matches a prayer prompt on the chart.
- After spinning, the child finds the matching prompt, reads it, and prays.
- Let a few more children take turns spinning the wheel and praying.

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## What You Say

"Prayer is how we talk with God, our loving Father. The Bible tells us to pray without ceasing—talking to Him anytime, anywhere. Whatever you do, begin with prayer. When you do, you can trust that God is in control and working in every situation."

Transition -> Lead your group to the small group activity

## ACTIVITY ONE

# Ruth's Journey Relay

Bible Story Review



## Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

## What You Need

- ☐ "Story Sequence Cards" Activity Page
- ☐ Painter's Tape
- ☐ Basket or Bin



## Inclusive Pro Tips

Consider the needs of your group and adjust the activity accordingly.

Adjust the pace or movement style  
(FOR EXAMPLE, WALKING INSTEAD OF RUNNING).

Allow kids to work in pairs to retrieve their cards.

## ① What You Do

1. Before you begin, tape two start lines on one side of your group space.
2. Place the "Story Sequence" Activity Pages in a basket or bin on the other side of the relay space.
3. Divide kids into two teams.
4. Instruct each team to line up behind a start line.

## Move Together

1. One at a time, a kid from each team is to run to the basket, pick one card, and bring it back to their team.
2. Once all the cards are collected, the teams are to work together to put the story cards in the correct order.
3. The first team to place the cards in order correctly wins!
4. Keep the story cards up on the wall or table afterward so kids can revisit them during dismissal or discussion.

## Story Sequence

- There was a famine in Bethlehem, so Naomi and her family moved to Moab.
- While they were in Moab, Naomi's husband and two sons died, leaving her with her daughters-in-law, Ruth and Orpah.
- Naomi decided to return to Bethlehem after hearing that God had provided food there.
- Orpah went back home to her family, but Ruth refused to leave Naomi, saying: "Where you go, I'll go. Your people will be my people. Your God will be my God." (Ruth 1:16, NIV)
- To help provide food, Ruth went to gather grain in a field that happened to belong to a man named Boaz.
- Boaz showed kindness to Ruth! He told his workers to leave extra grain for her and made sure she was safe.
- Boaz had a special relationship to Naomi's family—he was someone who could protect Naomi's family. He was a family protector! So he later married Ruth.
- Ruth and Boaz had a son named Obed, who became the grandfather of King David. Jesus was later born into this same family line!

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## ACTIVITY ONE

# Ruth's Journey Relay

Bible Story Review



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## What You Say

"Great teamwork, everyone! Ruth had a big choice to make. She chose to leave her home and follow her mother-in-law Naomi to a place she'd never been. She didn't have a job, she didn't know anyone, and she had NO idea what would happen next. The only thing she did know was that God was trustworthy. She had no idea what was going to happen in her life, but she wanted to follow Him.

"She told Naomi: 'Your people will be my people. Your God will be my God.' (RUTH 1:16, NIRV) What a bold, BRAVE, promise! Ruth meant it. And God was so honored by her trust in Him! God took care of everything she needed—He made sure she had food, was safe, and even provided a family protector in Boaz. And guess what? God did something even more amazing! God wove Ruth into Jesus' family tree! Ruth was Jesus great-great-many-times-great grandmother! God was so honored by Ruth's trust in Him that He wrote her into His great rescue plan for the whole world!

"Just like Ruth, you might not always know what's ahead—like a new grade, a new team, or a tough situation at home or school. But just like Ruth, there is something you can know: you can trust God. He is trustworthy, and He goes with you everywhere! And knowing God is with you and goes with you everywhere can give you courage. [BOTTOM LINE] God can give you courage when you don't know what's next!"

Transition -> Share about an age-appropriate time when you didn't know what would happen next. How did it make you feel? Were you nervous, unsure, or even afraid? Maybe it was starting a new job, trying out for a new hobby, or moving to a new place. What helped you get through that moment? Did you ask God to help you remember He is with you? Did you ask God to help give you courage to do the scary thing? How did you see God give you the courage to move forward? [BOTTOM LINE] God can give you courage when you don't know what's next."

## ACTIVITY 2

# Courage Crossroads

Application Activity



## Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

## What You Need

- ☐ "Unknown Scenarios" Activity Page
- ☐ Paper
- ☐ Marker
- ☐ Painter's Tape



## Inclusive Pro Tips

Consider the needs of your group and adjust the activity accordingly.

Read scenarios more than once and allow additional time to process.

For an option with less movement, allow kids to point to show their choice.

## ① What You Do

- Before you begin, use the marker to write "Courage" on one piece of paper and "Fear" on another.
- Tape the signs on opposite sides of the room.

## Imagine Together

- Gather the kids in the center of your group space.
- One at a time, read a scenario from the "Unknown Scenarios" Activity Page.
- Ask kids: "If this happened to you, how would you usually react—with courage or with fear?"
- Instruct the kids to move to the sign that matches their answer.
- After each scenario, pause and ask:
  - "What would make it easier to choose courage in that situation?"
  - "How could you ask God for help since He wants to give you courage?"
  - Continue until every scenario has been read.
  - End by reminding the kids: "God gives us courage through the Holy Spirit. We never face anything alone!"

## ② What You Say

"You know, trying something new can feel a little scary, right? Has anyone ever felt nervous about trying something new? (INVITE RESPONSES.) How about a time you felt afraid but chose courage anyway? (INVITE RESPONSES.)"

"But we don't have to try and be courageous all by ourselves! When we follow Jesus, God Himself moves inside of us through His Holy Spirit. He is closer than close! So He goes with us every step of our lives. He is the strongest, and biggest, and most powerful, and He is always working for good. When we trust and believe that He goes with us, He can give us the courage to face what's in front of us when we don't know what's next. God is the strongest and He goes with us everywhere! And that can help us be brave!"

"So the next time you're at a courage crossroads, remember this: [BOTTOM LINE] God can give you courage when you don't know what's next. You never face anything alone!"

# MONTLY MEMORY VERSE CHALLENGE!



- Have all the kids recite the memory verse out loud together several times.
- Explain that this practice helps everyone learn and feel more confident.
- Ask the kids to raise their hands if they want to try saying the verse on their own.
- Invite one child at a time to come up to the Memory Verse Challenge Spot.
- When a child recites the verse, let them choose a prize from the prize box!
- Please tell the kids if they're not ready this time, that's okay---you can always try again next month!



## ACTIVITY 3

# Pray and Dismiss

## Prayer Activity



## Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

## What You Need

☐ Beanbag


## Inclusive Pro Tips

Consider the needs of your group and adjust the activity accordingly.

If any kids prefer to whisper to you instead of share aloud, allow them to do so. Let them hold the beanbag silently as a reminder that God hears their prayers!

Offer adaptive seating or fidget tools to all kids.

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## What You Say

“God, thank You that we can talk to You anytime, anywhere, about anything. You are always listening because You care so deeply for us! Sometimes, we don’t know what’s going to happen next. When we feel nervous, confused, or even afraid, help us trust that You are with us, You are the strongest, and we can be brave because we go everywhere with You! We love You so much. We pray these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.

As adults arrive to pick up, encourage kids to show them the story sequence cards and share what they remember about Ruth’s story! Encourage them to share that: [BOTTOM LINE] God can give you courage when you don’t know what’s next.”