

Small Group Leader Guide

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. Label It! Story Review
2. Courage or No Courage

Pray & Dismiss (5 minutes)

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



THIS MONTH



Today's Bible Story

Joshua and the Spies

Numbers 13-14

Bottom Line

God can give you courage when others are afraid.

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.



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 color 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.

②

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

Label It! Story Review

Bible Story Review



Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Name Labels
- ☐ "Story Script" Activity Page
- ☐ "Well Done" Stickers



Inclusive Pro Tips

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

Instead of big physical movements, invite the kids to recap the story with hand motions as you read.

① What You Do

1. Give each child a name label and have them stick it on their shirt.
2. Make sure each child knows which role they are pretending to be.
3. Group the kids who are the "spies" together and the kids who are the "Canaanites" together.
4. Say: "We're going to act out our Bible story today! When you hear your character's name and I nod to you, it's your turn to do what I say in the story."
5. Read through the Story Script Activity Page, nodding to the kids when it's their turn to act.
6. After each child has acted out their part, give them a "Well Done" sticker.
7. When the story is finished, lead the group in a short discussion with these questions:
 - > What did you learn from this story?
 - > Who was brave even when others were scared? (Joshua and Caleb!)
 - > Why were Joshua and Caleb brave? (They knew God was with them and He is the biggest!)

② What You Say

"Wow! You all acted this story out like pros! Did you notice something super-cool? Joshua and Caleb saw the same stuff the other spies saw—the big cities, the strong people—but they didn't freak out. Why? (INVITE RESPONSES.) Well, Joshua and Caleb put their focus on something different than the ten spies did.

"Instead of thinking and thinking about how big and strong those giants were, they thought instead about how big and strong and powerful God is. And when they remembered that the biggest One, the strongest One, was with them, it helped them be brave!

"The biggest One and the strongest One is with you too! He is actually inside of you! When you choose to follow Jesus, the Holy Spirit comes to live inside of you! And He can help you have courage for the big things you're facing. Remember, [BOTTOM LINE] God can give you courage when others are afraid."

Make It Personal → Tell your few about an age-appropriate time you were scared, but you chose to focus on the truth that God, the strongest, lives in you, and that truth helped you be brave.

ACTIVITY TWO

Courage or No Courage

Application Activity



Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

☐ Floor Tape☐ A big checkmark & a big "X"

Inclusive Pro Tips

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

Allow kids to point or give thumbs up/down instead of moving to either side of the tape line.

Allow additional time to process. Pause after each scenario and ask follow-up questions if necessary. For example, "Is that courage? What do you think?"

① What You Do

1. Use floor tape to mark a line down the center for your small group area.
2. On one side of the line, tape a big checkmark. (This means, "Yes, that's courage!")
3. On the other side, tape a big "X." (This means: "Nope, not courageous.")
4. Explain how to play:
 - You will read a scenario aloud to the group.
 - If someone thinks the kid is showing courage, they are to jump to the checkmark side.
 - If someone thinks the kid is not showing courage, they are to jump to the "X" side.
5. Read each scenario twice before allowing the kids to respond.
6. Continue in this way until all scenarios have been read.

Scenarios:

1. "Your friend dares you to walk along the top of the playground. It's not safe. She says you're afraid, but you ignore her."
2. "A kid sees someone getting picked on at lunch...and doesn't do anything to help."
3. "You find a cool purple pencil on the floor. Later, someone says they lost theirs, and you give it back, even though you're anxious."
4. "You don't want to go to P.E./gym because it's new and scary, so you tell your grown-up won't try it."
5. "You're nervous to play piano at your recital, but you still do it, and it goes great!"
6. "Your friends are being silly when the teacher leaves the room. But you stay quiet and keep reading like the teacher asked."
7. "You're at the pool. Your grown-up is in the pool, ready to catch you. It's a big jump, but you go for it!"
8. "You forgot to bring back a book you borrowed. You tell the teacher the truth and apologize."

End by explaining how, when we ask God for courage, he gives us strength to face difficult things--just like the tape gave the beach ball strength.

ACTIVITY TWO

Courage or No Courage

Application Activity



Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Floor Tape (Pre-prepared line)
- ☐ A big checkmark & a big "X"

Inclusive Pro Tips



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

Allow kids to point or give thumbs up/down instead of moving to either side of the tape line.

Allow additional time to process. Pause after each scenario and ask follow-up questions if necessary. For example, "Is that courage? What do you think?"

②

What You Say

"Great job, friends! You jumped, you thought, and you used your courage muscles!"

"Here's something big I want you to remember: We all have chances every day to be brave. Sometimes being brave feels easy, and sometimes it's hard. And that's okay. You never have to be brave all on your own! When you choose to follow Jesus, God gives you a gift called the Holy Spirit to live inside you. That means God is ALWAYS with you. He is the biggest and can give you the strength and the courage to face whatever hard thing you're facing.

"Even when everyone around you is scared or isn't making the right choice—you can do things differently! So this week, when you face situations where you might be the only one choosing courage, ask the Holy Spirit to remind you that God, the biggest, is with you and ask Him to help you take that big, brave step! Nothing is too big for God, and He lives inside of you, so [BOTTOM LINE] God can give you courage when others are afraid!"

Pray and Dismiss



Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

☐ No Supplies Needed

"God, thank You for creating us, loving us, and caring for us no matter what!"

"This week, when (KID'S NAME) is afraid, help (KID'S NAME) remember You are with them, You are the biggest, and You face everything with them! Help (KID'S NAME) be brave."

(REPEAT THE LINES ABOVE FOR EVERY KID AROUND THE CIRCLE.)

"We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

Transition -> As adults arrive to pick up, encourage the kids to share today's Bible Story and the truth that God, the biggest, goes with us to face everything. He can give us courage when others are afraid!

Inclusive Pro Tips



When you pray, use simple and clear words so the kids can understand. Offer an opportunity for the kids to respond "Amen" with you at the end.

ACTIVITY ONE

Joshua and the Spies

God's people had to travel through the wilderness to get to the Promised Land.

During their journey, God led His people to a mountain. God called Moses to the top of Mount Sinai. *(To the kid playing Moses:* Climb up the mountain, **Moses!**)

While **Moses** was on the mountain, God gave Moses rules to help the people know and follow God. Those rules are called the Ten Commandments!

After two years of traveling in the wilderness, God's people reached the edge of the land God promised them. The land was also called Canaan! God told **Moses**, "Send some men to check out the land of Canaan. Send one leader from each tribe."

Joshua, **Caleb**, and ten **spies** snuck into the land and searched all over for 40 days. *(To Joshua, Caleb, and the spies)* Go ahead and search, Joshua, Caleb, and the other ten spies. But be very careful and very quiet.

As they searched, they discovered two BIG things—the food growing in the land was amazing, and the people of the land were strong and lived in strong cities. *(To the Canaanites)* Canaanites, stand up just as tall as you can and show us your muscles.

After 40 days, the spies came back to the camp where God's people were to report on what they found. The **spies** said: "The land is awesome! Look at these huge grapes!" *(To the spies)* Repeat after me, spies. And pretend like you're carrying huge grapes. *(When you say the lines, feel free to break them into two groups! "The land is awesome!" / "Look at these huge grapes!")*

The **spies** also told everyone: "The people are so big!" *(To the spies)* Repeat that with me, spies. *("The people are so big!")*

(To the Canaanites) Canaanites, stand up just as tall as you can and show us your muscles again!

But then the **spies** said. "We can't attack those people. They are stronger than we are." *(To the spies)* Say that again with me, spies. *(When you say the lines, feel free to break them into two groups! "We can't attack those people." / "They are stronger than we are.")*

But **Caleb** and **Joshua** focused on something different. They said: "God is with us! He is the biggest! With God, we will take the land!" *(When you say the lines, feel free to break them into three groups! And repeat them twice, if you want! "God is with us!" / "He is the biggest!" / "With God, we will take the land!")*

Instead of listening to Joshua and **Caleb** and trusting God, the people were afraid. God was so hurt.

God's glory appeared, and God said, "How long will these people refuse to believe Me? I've done so many amazing things for them! But they still don't trust Me."

Moses asked God to forgive the people. God did forgive them, but there was still a consequence. Because they didn't trust Him, God told them, "Not all of you will enter the land I have promised to make your home. Only **Caleb** and **Joshua** will."



Moses

Joshua



Caleb

SPY 1



SPY 2



SPY 3



SPY 4



SPY 5



SPY 6



SPY 7



Canaanite 1

Canaanite 2



