

3-6 | November 30

Today's Bible Story: Nehemiah • *Nehemiah 1–4, 6:1-15*

Conversation Starter: What do you need help with?

Today's Bottom Line: God can help you do big things.

Monthly Memory Verse: *Those who trust in the LORD will receive new strength. They will fly as high as eagles. They will run and not get tired. They will walk and not grow weak.* Isaiah 40:31 (NIRV)

1. Opening Activity

Pray for your group before they arrive. Pray for kids who will visit your group for the first time. Recall an age-appropriate story about a time God helped you finish something you started, even when it was hard. Maybe you wanted to give up, but pushed through because you knew God was with you. Ask God to help preteens grow in perseverance and faith in Jesus. Pray they'll understand that the work God has for them matters. Ask God to help the kids learn how to go through all of life with Him so they will do all things together with Him!

What You Need:

- ☐ Offering container
- ☐ "Puzzle Cards" Activity Page x3
- ☐ Timer
- ☐ Pencils

What You Do:

- Welcome kids by name as they arrive with a high-five, fist bump, or a wave.
- Invite any kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
- Divide the kids into three groups.
- Explain how to play:
 - "Your group will get a set of cards with a word on them. You'll have 30 seconds to put together a fun sentence with the letters in each word."
 - For example, if the card says "LAKE" the group might write, "Little artists kept eating."
 - Groups can write their sentences on the back of the cards.
- For each round, one at a time, call out one of the six words.
- Give the kids 30 seconds to write their silly sentence.
- When the time is up, call out the word and instruct each group to share their silly sentence for that word.
- The words are:
 - BUILD
 - PRAY
 - WORK
 - GATES
 - WALL
 - TEAM
- Reset the 30-second timer for each round.
- Gather the kids to discuss.

What You Say:

"Awesome teamwork, friends! You know, every word you just created a silly sentence for has something to do with **today's true story from the Bible. Build, pray, work, gates, wall,**

team? A man named Nehemiah faced tough challenges, but he asked God for help, worked with others, and never gave up hope. Let's go discover how God helped Nehemiah, and how He can help you do big things too!"

Inclusive Pro Tips:

- Let the kids call out their answers each round instead of writing them on the cards.

[Lead your group to do worship and watch today's video lesson]

2. Verses to Take with You

What You Need:

- ☐ Bible x1
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ "Origami Eagle" Activity Page
- ☐ "Origami Eagle Steps" Activity Page
- ☐ Markers
- ☐ Pre-made origami eagle

Inclusive supplies:

- ☐ Several pre-made origami eagles

What You Do:

- Read Isaiah 40:31 aloud for the children or choose one child to read.
- Ask if there are any words that are unfamiliar to them in the verse.
- Repeat the verse together.

Create Together

- Give every kid an "Origami Eagle" Activity Page and a pair of scissors.
- Encourage the kids to cut out the square on the "Origami Eagle" Activity Page.
- Display the pre-made origami eagle so the kids can see the final product!
- Walk through the steps together using the "Origami Eagle Steps" Activity Page.
- Once everyone is done, let them write "Isaiah 40:31" with a marker on their origami eagle wherever they'd like.

Talk Together

- Encourage the kids to set the eagle somewhere at home where they can be reminded that as they keep putting their trust and hope in God, He will give them the strength to do big things!

Inclusive Pro Tips:

- Make several origami eagles to give to kids who might struggle to put the art piece together.

3. Built to Last

What You Need:

- ☐ Solo cups for two teams
- ☐ Bible marked at Nehemiah 2:17-18 and 4:14
- ☐ Timer
- ☐ Scrap paper to make paper fans
- ☐ Example of a paper fan

What You Do:

- Gather the kids on the floor
- Split the kids into two teams
- Give every team a set of solo cups
- Have each kid make a folded paper fan (see example)

Explore Together:

- Say, “Nehemiah trusted God with a BIG job—rebuilding Jerusalem’s walls! But Nehemiah didn’t do it alone, and he didn’t let distractions stop him.”
- Demonstrate and explain how the kids will have 1 minute to build a mini wall using only their cups.
- Set the timer and encourage them to begin.
- Once the timer is up, say, “Let’s see how strong your walls are!”
- Have the teams test the other team’s wall by gently fanning it. (*remind kids to GENTLY fan the wall and not to use the fans to knock the other team’s wall down*)
- If desired, have the kids do another round to try to rebuild a stronger wall together.

Talk Together:

- Call on a child help you read from the marked Bible, Nehemiah 2:17-18 and 4:14.
- Ask: “Who did Nehemiah know was helping him?”
 - *God! He told the leaders and people of Jerusalem all about God’s help!*
- Ask, “What do we discover about who God is in Nehemiah’s story?”
 - *God helps us when we ask.*
 - *God is great and powerful.*
 - *We can do big things with Him.*

What You Say:

“Amazing building skills! Nehemiah wasn’t a builder, and he lived nearly hundreds and hundreds of miles from his homeland. But God gave him a picture in his heart of what to do, and he trusted God to give him everything he needed to take action on it! He spent time pouring his heart out to God, made a plan, and God provided him with all the understanding and resources he needed to do this epic job.

“The whole task of rebuilding the wall was something Nehemiah did with God. Before Nehemiah went to the king to ask for building supplies, he prayed and asked his friend, God, to help. Whenever Nehemiah needed help throughout rebuilding the walls—and it was often, because it was a big job—he prayed. He asked God for what he needed, and God gave it to him.

“Nehemiah knew it was God who was helping him. In Nehemiah 2:8 (NIRV) he said: *God was kind to me and helped me.*

“The two of them did the big task of rebuilding the walls together.

“You might not be building a wall around a city, but you do face big things too. God might want you to help a younger kid, or start something new like a club that helps others feel seen and loved. Or God might want you to use your creativity (like your ideas, or your art) to tell His story in a way only you can!

“When we face big things like this, the same God who went with Nehemiah through every step goes with us. We can trust God to give us the confidence and everything we need—we just have to talk to Him and ask Him for it! So face every big thing in your life together with God. Tell Him how you feel and ask Him to give you courage, understanding, patience, endurance, physical supplies—everything you need at every step—for what needs to be done.

“God wants you to build everything in your life with Him. **God can help you do big things!**”

4. Pray and Dismiss

“God, thank You for being good and powerful! You were with Nehemiah, and we are so thankful You are with us too! You’ve made each of us SO uniquely, and we are so grateful. We want to live for You, God, so help us to do the big things You call us to do. YOU are strong when we feel weak, You are wise when we feel unsure—so remind us of those truths when we don’t feel confident. Help us to trust You and take the next brave step You ask us to do. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus’ name. Amen!”

