

3-6 | September 7

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.

Monthly Memory Verse: *When I'm afraid, I put my trust in you.* Psalm 56:3 (NIV)

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!

1. Opening Activity

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Invite the kids to form groups of two.
- Tell the kids they will play a game called “Staff-Fire-Water” (like Rock-Paper-Scissors).

How to Play:

- To begin each round, kids say, “Staff-Fire-Water, Go!”
- On “Go!” each kid should do one of the following motions:
 - **Staff:** Hold out a fist like gripping an imaginary staff. (Staff beats water.)
 - **Fire:** Wiggle fingers like a flame. (Fire beats staff.)
 - **Water:** Move a hand in a wavy motion like water. (Water beats fire.)
- Each pair will play best out of three rounds to determine a winner.
- Switch pairs and play again if time allows.

What You Say:

“That was so fun! We used a staff, fire, and water to play this game. Any guesses about how these things relate to today's Bible Story? *(Invite responses.)* **[Transition]** In today's true story from the Bible, we'll hear about someone who wasn't sure he was ready for what God was asking him to do. But God gave him something He can give us all—COURAGE! God helped him use a staff, fire, and water in an EPIC way to lead His people. Let's go!”

Inclusive Pro Tips:

- For an option with less movement, offer pictures of water, fire, and staff for kids to point to. You can draw them on the whiteboard.

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

2. Take a Snapshot

What You Need: “Courage Jar” activity page; “Courage Stickers” Activity Page; “Verses” Activity Page; pencils or pens; permanent marker; scissors; glue sticks; and a completed jar example

What You Do:

- Gather the kids to have a seat at one of the floor tables.
- Give each kid a “Courage Jar” Activity Page, a “Verses” Activity Page, a “Courage Stickers” Activity Page, a pair of scissors, and set out the glue sticks, markers, crayons/color pencils.
- 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!”
- Invite the kids to use the stickers to decorate their jars.
- Encourage the kids to cut out several verse strips from the “Verses” Activity Page and glue it to their jar.
- 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.
- 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!*
- Encourage kids to read through the verses and place a star next to the one that stands out.
- Spark discussion around the verses.
- Encourage the kids to take their jars home. Whenever they need courage, invite them to choose a verse from the jar, read it, and ask God to give them courage in whatever they’re facing.
- 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.
- Remind the kids to write their names on their papers.

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.

3. Bible Story Extension

What You Need: “Story Scenarios (x2)” Activity Page, “Courage Cards (x2)” Activity Page, floor tape

What You Do:

- Divide the kids into three teams.
- Use floor tape to create a start and finish line for each team.
- Place the “Story Scenarios” Activity Page cards at each team’s finish line.
- Give each team a full set of “Courage Cards” Activity Page cards.
- 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.”)
- Continue in this way until each team makes it to the finish line together.
- 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!

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.

4. Pray and Dismiss

What You Say:

“God, You are SO amazing! Thank You for helping Moses when he didn’t feel ready. Thank You that You reminded him that You were with him, and that gave him courage. Help us remember that You are the biggest, and You are with us in all things! This week, when we’re feeling scared or nervous, may Your Holy Spirit help us to know that You are with us, to trust You, and to take brave steps even when it’s hard. We love You, God, and we pray these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.”