

A NEW LEADER FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

All Activity Sheets

KEY WORDS

TRUST OBEY SUBMIT LEADERS

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

Numbers 27:15-23; Deuteronomy 31:1-8; Joshua 1

MEMORY VERSE

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight" (Proverbs 3:5-6, NIV*).

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To help children trust in God and obey Him, as they trust and obey the leaders that God has given them (parents, teachers, pastors, etc.)

PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

After refusing to trust in God to possess the Promised Land, the Israelites began a pilgrimage of 40 years in the desert. During that time all men over the age of 20 died.

Throughout those years, Moses continued to lead the people of God. When he was old, God told him it was time for the people of Israel to have a new leader. Maybe he was not surprised when the Lord chose Joshua as his successor.

From the time they left Egypt, Joshua had served Moses; he was also the commander in charge of the army of Israel. When others questioned the leadership of Moses, Joshua remained faithful. But, more important than the position he had, it was that he was determined to obey God.

Joshua means "Yahweh saves." When this name is translated to the Greek, it becomes "Jesus," and there is an interesting parallel between this name and the name of the Son of God. Nothing bad is mentioned against Joshua; he was a person of good character and perseverance. He listened to the instructions from God and he complied with what was assigned to him. He wanted to know and do God's will. And, when the Lord needed a new leader for his people, God chose him.

ADAPTATION

For various reasons, respect for leadership is unusual in many segments of modern societies. Often, people see leaders as only seeking their own benefit and not the benefit of those following. But, this is not true of all leaders because God has also placed many good people in leadership. However, a loss of trust is demonstrated often by criticism of leaders and their decisions.

Children have heard this kind of criticism and may have learned these attitudes. Sometimes, they may become disrespectful and lose trust in others. It is not good to tell our children that leaders are always right. However, we must help them understand that it is God, who has given them the authority (Romans 13:1-7). For that reason, Christians are called to treat leaders with respect (Titus 3:1). Even when it is difficult to respect certain persons, we must respect the office they represent. The treatment of leaders in a disrespectful way is being disrespectful to God, since he has established authorities.

We respect the leaders of our church (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13). These people have special responsibilities to help build the kingdom of God. Respect and collaboration with the families of the church helps them to develop their work with greater efficiency.

INTRODUCE THE LESSON

Tell the group: "Moses' death was very sad for the people, but especially for Joshua, who was his servant for many years. However, God had a new leader for them. This lesson will help us understand that God changes leaders. This will help us understand that there may be changes in the church such as pastors or teachers in discipleship groups."

Emphasize that when a leader has to leave the church for whatever reason, God's work continues, it does not stop. The God who made Moses a leader is still alive, and is raising leaders today in the midst of his people, the church.

TEACH THE LESSON

Prior to this session carefully read Numbers 27:15-23, Deuteronomy 31:1-8 and Joshua 1. Be prepared to tell the story in your own words.

If you have access to the history and photos of your local church, bring photos or information from some of the leaders who once were in the church (pastors, teachers, etc.) for this session.

Tell children: "To continue God's work on earth, the Lord needs leaders who are willing to obey and trust him." Ask the group: "Who are some of the current leaders of your church?" (allow several responses)

Also tell the children: You are the future leaders of the church and society. Maybe God wants you to be future pastors and teachers."

Include a personal testimony to enrich the lesson. Be sure the children understand that you love God and you love your group, and that you are serving God by teaching them.

CONNECT THE LESSON

Respect the leaders of God

You will need Student Activity Sheet #121 and a soft item such as a plastic ball. Ask the children, "How did Moses, Joshua, and the people of Israel respect and obey their leaders? (Moses and Joshua obeyed the instructions God had given them. Joshua obeyed what Moses told him to do. The army was in agreement and listened to Joshua.)

Remind them of the promise that the army made to Joshua (Joshua 1:16-17). Ask, "Can you think of some reasons why the army would have difficulty trusting and obeying Joshua?" (He was a new leader. Moses was their leader for a long time and had also been a great leader. They did not know if Joshua would be a good leader.)

Say, "When the army decided to obey their leader Joshua, they obeyed and trusted that God had given them this new leader. How was their obedience to God's plans carried out?" (They served so that the people could enter Canaan, the land God had promised them.)

When we obey our leaders, we are obeying and trusting in God too. We are contributing so that the will of God may be done.

Have the children turn the wheels they made on their activity sheet. Say, "Let's think about ways in which we can trust and obey God, and trust and obey our leaders."

Discuss the three figures that appear in the wheels in Student Activity Sheet #121 using the following questions:

What is happening in this figure?

Are these children obeying their leader?

What makes you think they are not obeying?

(Answers. The children in figures one and two are being obedient. In figure three, you can give several answers as to whether the two children sitting together are obeying or not.)

Have them stand in a circle. Give one of them the soft item/ ball and have them pass it around the circle. When you say "Stop," they must do it. The child that has the item/ ball must suggest a way in which they are able to show respect and obedience to our leaders. Repeat this activity several times. End the lesson by saying that God has given us our leaders, and therefore, we must respect and obey them, because by doing this we are also obeying and respecting God.

Before moving on to another section, review the lesson by asking the following questions:

What promise did God make to Joshua when he chose him as the new leader of Israel? (That he would help him just as he had helped Moses.)

What instructions did Joshua give to the soldiers? (That they should trust and obey the instructions from God.)

What was the answer that the soldiers gave to Joshua? (We will obey you as we obeyed Moses.)

PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

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Use the same text as last week. For this week, cut out the words of the text including the Bible reference. Repeat it several times; then ask for the collaboration of the children. Place all the words in a disorderly manner on a table; have everyone take a word. (If the group is small, they will have to take two. If the group is large, you can do this in groups, so that everyone has the opportunity to participate.)

Then, ask them to stand and put the verse in order, allowing everyone to help verify the correct order. Once you have put it in order, repeat it again. To end, return the words to the table. (You can divide the group into boys and girls, and have a competition to see which group completes the text faster; if you decide to do this, cut out two sets of text.)

WRAP-UP

Pray

Conclude the class with prayer. Remember to thank God for the leaders you have had at the church, for those you have today, and of course, for the children who will be future leaders.

Encourage

Thank each child for attending today's session. Encourage the children to give themselves fully to God and seek God's plan for their lives.

Invite

Give a preview of what is coming up in the next session, trying to make a connection and spark interest in the children so they do not miss it. Challenge them to invite their friends.