

GO FORWARD WITH COURAGE

All Activity Sheets

KEY WORDS

COURAGE BE WITH LEAD LEADER

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

Numbers 27:12-23

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To help the students know that, just as God gave Joshua the courage to be the leader of his people, he will also give them the courage to do whatever he asks them to do.

MEMORY VERSE

“The Lord your God will be with you wherever you go” (Joshua 1:9b, NIV*).

PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

This session has two possible applications for children. First, the Bible story shows us how God strengthened Joshua to make him the new leader of the Israelites. He commanded Joshua to be strong and brave. Then he endowed him with those qualities with the promise that he would be with him and make him successful. God will not ask the children to become leaders of the nations. But, sometimes he wants the little ones to do some things that require courage. For example, in this era it takes a lot of courage to face a friend and tell him he is making a wrong choice.

This session will assure our children that God is on their side, helping them do the right thing. Second, it will help the children to respect and obey their leaders. Unfortunately, many of the authority figures that children have today mock and disobey leadership. It is not unusual for television shows to portray parents and other adults as unwise people or even worse. Possibly, older siblings speak disrespectfully about their teachers or those who exercise authority.

This session will show our children how God’s children should treat leaders: with respect and obedience. Ask God to help the children learn and remember the Bible stories you teach them. God gave us these stories so we can learn what he is like and help us build our faith.

BIBLICAL COMMENTARY

Read Numbers 27:12-23. The expression “passing the torch” evokes memories of the Olympic competitions in which a lit torch is passed from one runner to another. It also refers to the transfer of leadership from an old leader to the next generation. Moses’ 40-year leadership of the Israelites would soon be over. Because of his disobedience when bringing water from the rock for the people in the desert (Numbers 20:1-13), God denied him entrance to Canaan. However, Moses saw the land from Mount Nebo before he died.

Joshua was the man that God chose as the new leader. He had really demonstrated his courage and faith in God. He had served as Moses’ assistant during the 40 years in which they had wandered in the desert. In a special ceremony, the transfer of Moses’ leadership to Joshua was made public. In biblical times, the laying on of hands indicated that one person became a substitute or representative of the other. This practice was also followed by the transfer of the blessing to the other person or of sins to a sacrificed animal.

Joshua would be, in many ways, a leader like Moses. However, there were also important differences. Moses had spoken face to face with God. Joshua’s dealings with God were through Eleazar the priest, who had sought Jehovah’s direction through the Urim and the Thummim. Those were special stones that were used to determine what God’s point of view was.

Read Joshua 1. As this chapter begins, Moses was dead and Joshua assumed total leadership of the people. The chapter points out several things about his leadership:

1. Joshua’s leadership was a position of responsibility. Moses had brought the people out of Egypt. Joshua was in charge of taking them into Canaan. 2. Joshua would not lead them alone. God had once again promised that he would give the land to the people. While they would have to fight to win it, they could only do it knowing that victory was assured. God also promised that he would be with Joshua as he had been with Moses in every situation (v. 5-9). The command given in verse 9 emphasizes that point. “For the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”

3. Joshua would need great faith and great courage, both necessary characteristics for both a military and a spiritual leader. On three occasions God commanded Joshua: “Be strong and be (very) brave” (v. 6,7 and 9). Twice this command was in reference to taking over the land of Canaan. But in verse 7, God told him: “Be strong and very courageous. Being careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you.” Will we faithfully seek to do God’s will? When we do, we will discover that God has prepared the way to success. While teaching our children, you can also count on God, knowing that he will fulfill the promise of Joshua 1:9.

INTRODUCE THE LESSON

Prepare in advance the teaching materials you will use for this lesson and try to have your room ready before your students arrive. Remember to welcome visitors and collect their information to contact them during the week.

Follow the leader

Take the children outside or to a large open room where they have space to move. Choose one of the children to be a leader. Tell the children to do everything the leader does. Explain that they can walk, run, jump, jump on one foot, etc. The leader can also make gestures with their hands or any other movement with their body for the group to follow. After a few minutes, change and let another child be the leader. Continue the game until most have been the leader. Have the children sit in a circle and discuss the game.

Say: “Sometimes it is hard to make people follow us. Today’s Bible story tells us how God called a leader to do a difficult task. Let’s find out what he was commanded to do and what God promised him.”

Review of the biblical story of the last session

Ask for a volunteer to summarize the story of the last session. If the child forgets or omits any detail, another can raise her hand to assist, or go to the front and stand next to the child who is speaking and say: “I remember that: ...” and tell the part that she omitted or forgot. Once she finishes remembering the whole story (you can interrupt by asking appropriate questions from the last session, so she remembers), say: “In our last session we learned that Joshua and Caleb were the only two spies who obeyed God and entered Canaan. In this session we will hear more about Joshua. I wonder what happened to him later.”

TEACH THE LESSON

God’s courage

Moses had aged a lot. He knew that the time of his death was approaching, and he was worried about the people of Israel. They

had been wandering in the desert for 40 years. Soon they would enter the new land that God had promised them a long time ago. Then Moses said to God, "These people are like sheep. They need someone to guide them or they will continue to wander."

The Lord answered him, "Joshua is the right man for that task. He trusts me, and he obeys me. He will be a wise leader. Have Joshua go with you and the priest, and stand before the people. Put your hands on him and show the people that you are putting Joshua in charge of them."

"I'll do what you tell me," said Moses. Moses gathered all the people together. And with Eleazar the priest, they stood before all the people. Moses put his hands on Joshua and named him as the new leader of the people. Soon Moses died.

Not long after, God spoke to Joshua. "Joshua," said God, "you must lead the people through the Jordan River to the new land that's called Canaan. I will keep the promise I made to Moses that I would give this people the promised land. I'll be with you. I command you to be strong and brave. Do not fear or be dismayed, for I, Yahweh your God, will be with you wherever you go."

Joshua gave the order to the people to prepare to cross the Jordan and go to the new land. Would the people obey? For many years Moses had been their leader. However, all the people agreed to obey Joshua as they had obeyed Moses. They trusted and believed that God was with Joshua just as he had been with Moses. Anxiously the people waited for Joshua's next orders. Soon they would enter their new land.

CONNECT THE LESSON

Follow the leaders

Distribute Student Activity Sheet #233-A and #233-B to the students. Explain the instructions for each activity sheet. When the students have completed Student Activity Sheet #233-A, say: "God chose Joshua to be the leader of his people. The people promised that they would obey and follow. Who are the leaders we must obey today? (Parents, teachers, pastors, grandparents, government people, etc.) What should we do to respect them?" (Obey them, be kind, pray for them.) Give each child a cardboard plate. Tell them to draw the face of one of the leaders they should follow or obey. Let them decorate the plate by drawing the face with markers, and then gluing strings or yarn to make the hair. Tell each person to glue a wooden stick (ice cream stick, popsicle stick, etc.) on the underside of the face to hold it. When they are finished, ask them to take turns holding their "face" in front of their face and telling the rest of the group whom they drew.

Ask each child: "What things can you do to respect this leader? How can you follow him or her?" Let the children share their ideas. Say: "We obey God by respecting and obeying the leaders he placed in charge of us. Being a leader is not easy. But we can help them by praying for them."

Say: "Think of situations in which you need to have courage to do the things that God wants you to do." (Let the children respond and tell everyone.) Ask: "What can we do when we need courage to do something?" Many times children may not have too many ideas. Give the children the activity sheet for this session from the students' resources and ask them to follow the instructions. Give them crayons or red and green markers. Let them complete the page and discover the word "Pray".

Ask: "When can we pray?" (Anytime we need God's help). Say: "Remember that we can talk to God at any time, anywhere and about anything." Tell them about an experience in which you asked God to give you the courage to do something he wanted you to do. Tell them how God helped you. Ask the children to complete the activity sheet entitled: "Who is he?"

Help the children complete Student Activity Sheet #233-B before they leave, and remind them to make sure they take home their crafts to share with their families and friends.

PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

[Download Additional Memory Verse Activities PDF](#)

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Funny footprints

Before the session, make or find a picture of a small footprint and copy 11 for each child. Print Joshua 1:9 - enough for each child to have a copy. In the group, give each child 11 footprints and one sheet with the verse. Tell them to cut out the verse with the 11 words separated into 11 pieces of paper, and then glue each word on one of the footprints. Allow them to practice putting the prints in order, so that the verse is correctly assembled. Then tell them to mix up all the footprints and stack them all together in front of them. When you give the signal, tell them to start ordering them as quickly as possible until the verse is assembled correctly. The first child who gets it done will lead the group to say the verse. Do it several times.

Give each child an envelope or plastic bag to keep their footprints. Let them write their names on the envelope. Save them for use the following week. Tell them: "This verse tells us that God will be with us wherever we go. It is a special promise for people who are trying to do what God asks them to do. In our Bible story today, Joshua received a special task from God. And we saw how he could do it and how the Lord encouraged him to have the courage to do it."

WRAP-UP

Pray

Finish the session by praying for the children's requests. Pray for courage to face difficult situations and other needs the children have. Also ask God to help them to remember to pray whenever they need courage.

Encourage

Encourage the group to share the lesson with family members and friends.

Invite

Remind the children to attend the next session and that friends are also welcome.