

Be Prepared

Bible Story: Be Prepared (Moses' Calling / 10 Plagues) • *Exodus 3:1–4:17; 7-12*

Bottom Line: I can be brave even when I don't feel ready.

Memory Verse: "When I'm afraid, I will trust in you." *Psalms 56:3*

Life App: Courage—being brave enough to do what you should do, even when you're afraid.

Basic Truth: I can trust God no matter what.

FOR LEADERS ONLY

GOD VIEW: the connection between **COURAGE** and
God's character, as shown through God's big story

In the beginning of their relationship with Jesus, the disciples might not have been the most courageous bunch you've ever seen. Remember when the storm blew up and even the most seasoned fishermen woke Jesus in a panic (Mark 4)? But Jesus wasn't scared. He knew the power and reliability of God. Time and again Jesus showed His disciples that God would provide whenever they needed Him. As they learned to trust God, the disciples' courage grew—to the point that Peter and John boldly testified before the Jewish government (Acts 4) about Jesus' life and resurrection.

Courage is being brave enough to do what you should do, even when you're afraid. Peter and John were facing imprisonment—or worse—but they had courage to speak openly about Jesus because they knew God would give them the words they needed. We can also face potentially scary situations because we trust God will take care of us.

Courage is not the absence of fear but how you respond in the face of fear. When we approach situations, we can remember that God is bigger than anything we face. If we're afraid we'll be all alone, He will be with us. If we're afraid we're not good enough, He'll provide the gifting we need. And when we can't understand what's going to happen, we can remember that God sees everything that's happening and wants what's best for us. Then we can move forward courageously.

This month, let's think about how:

- (1) *God desires a relationship with us. Being courageous demonstrates trust and builds that relationship.*
- (2) *The Bible challenges us to respond to life with courage even when what we face doesn't make sense.*
- (3) *As we trust God and show courage, we become more like Jesus who was brave enough to say and do what God asked—even when He faced death on the cross.*

This week, we're discovering:

In this week's Bible story, Moses gives excuse after excuse for why he's not the person God should use to rescue the Israelites (**Exodus 3:1–4:17; Exodus 7–12**). Even though Moses is frightened, he trusts God and confronts Pharaoh after each of the plagues to help God rescue the Israelites.

Our Bottom Line is: **I can be brave even when I don't feel ready.** Sometimes we're asked to do something we don't feel good enough to do. In those moments, being scared is OK. But we prove our faith in God by our response. God will fill in where we think we don't measure up. Courageously taking a step shows we believe God has everything under control.

The monthly memory verse is: **"When I'm afraid, I will trust in You." Psalms 56:3, NIV** True courage is having faith in God even in the presence of fear. We choose to show courage because we trust that God will take care of us.

WRAPPING UP THE STORY / REVIEW

MC: “So check it out. Here’s something really cool. The story we heard today is from the Book of Exodus.

“We’re still toward the beginning of God’s Big Story for His people, in this section here, called The Lost Tribes (*point to timeline*). But even though God’s people did not always follow Him, God was letting them in on a big part of His plan. He had a plan to send The Promised One, Jesus, to show the way. Jesus gave His life to rescue those who believe in Him. You see, God’s plan was always to rescue the Israelites. And eventually His plan was to make a way for all people—even you and me—by sending Jesus, who the Bible calls the Lamb of God. Just as the Israelites believed that God had a plan and they accepted it and obeyed by painting their doorframes with the lamb’s blood, when you and I believe that Jesus died for our sins and we accept Him as our Savior, we too can be saved. We can live with God forever, because God has always had a plan to save us! Because of that plan, I know that **[Recycle] I can trust God no matter what.** I can trust Him to lead me, to guide me, to protect me, and to save me. And because God is always with me—

[Impress] “I can be brave even when I don’t feel ready. Moses was nervous a lot, never felt up to the task, and questioned God. But God gave him everything he needed to do the job God had for him. Just like that, you and I can know that God has given us all that we need to follow Him. Whether we FEEL ready or not, God has made us ready for whatever plan He has for our lives. We can trust Him, so we can be brave.”

MC: “Wow. That was an amazing story. I can’t believe how Moses was such a chicken about doing what God asked him to do. I mean ... (*hang your head*) I see where this is going. I wasn’t exactly the picture of courage earlier today, was I? And here’s the other thing: I had hoped to go backstage and get ready for this while you guys were listening to the story, but since I had to play the part of Moses, I didn’t get a chance. So I STILL don’t feel ready.

“But here’s the thing. Moses didn’t feel ready, yet God used him in a HUGE way. So, you know that? I’m gonna be brave. That doesn’t mean I’m not afraid. Having courage doesn’t mean you aren’t afraid. Just look at Moses. Moses didn’t know how everything would work out, so he trusted God with his fear, despite all the times Pharaoh said no. Being scared is okay. But avoiding the things God wants you to do is not. The true measure of how courageous you are isn’t how scared you feel, it’s what you do when you feel scared.

“That’s why our definition of courage this month is being brave enough to do what you should do, even when you’re afraid. Sure, you can run away. You can hide. You can refuse to try new things. Or you can stand firm, take a leap, and trust that God is right there with you. Our Bible verse this month will help us remember that, actually.

“‘When I’m afraid, I will trust in you,’ Psalm 56:3.” (*N/r/v*) So the one thing to remember today is this—**[Impress] “I can be brave even when I don’t feel ready.**

Connecting (25-30 minutes)

Make the connection of how today's Bible story applies to real life experiences through interactive activities and discussion questions.

1. Hop to It! (*memory verse activity*)

What You Need: "Lily Pad Verse" (Activity Page); balls

What You Do:

Divide the group into teams of three. Guide each team to line up at one end of your playing area. At the opposite end, place a set of "Lily Pad Verse" cards opposite each team. Alternate colors so that it will be clear which set belongs to which team. Give a ball to the first child on each team. At your signal, these "frogs" will place the ball between their knees, jump to their team's lily pads, pick up one lily pad each, and then bring the lily pads back to their teams—all the while, hopping and holding the balls between their legs. Play continues until each team retrieves all its cards. When the teams finish, guide them to work together to put the cards in order. Guide the kids to point to the words as you read them aloud together.

What You Say:

"You all made great hopping frogs! What do frogs remind you of from our Bible story today? (*Pause.*) Yes, frogs were one of the signs that God gave to Pharaoh through Moses and Aaron so that Pharaoh would let God's people go. Do you remember any of the other signs? (*Water turning to blood, gnats, flies, the death of the cattle and other animals, sores, hail, locusts, darkness, and the death of all the firstborn of Egypt.*)

"Did Moses want to go to Pharaoh and tell him to let God's people go? (*Pause.*) No, he didn't. He was scared and he didn't feel ready to do what God told him to do. But did Moses finally do what God said? Yes, he did. You know, **[Apply] the true measure of how brave or courageous you are isn't how scared you feel, it's what you do when you feel scared.** Was Moses brave at first? (*Pause.*) No, he wasn't. He was SCARED! But then Moses decided to trust God. What does it mean to trust someone? (*To believe that what they say is true, to believe that they will do what they say they're going to do, to rely on them to help, etc.*) When Moses trusted God, he learned that when you trust God, you can be brave even when you don't feel ready. The same is true for you and me. When I trust God, **[Impress] I can be brave even when I don't feel ready**, and you can, too."

2. Let My People Go (*application activity / review the Bible story*)

What You Need: 10 colors of paper (possibly shredded), Bibles

What You Do:

If the paper isn't shredded yet, have kids help you shred. Explain to kids that the 10 colors of paper represent the 10 plagues God sent Pharaoh. Divide kids into two teams. Have one team form a circle, facing out, around all the members of the other team except one. That one team member will try to high-five his team members in the circle. As soon as a person has been high-fived, she will sit down to indicate she is free. Meanwhile, to make it more difficult, the team members standing in the circle will be throwing the paper confetti into the air and moving their bodies to block the view of the person trying to save his team members. After everyone has been "freed," have the teams switch places.

When you are finished, have the kids help pick up the paper and review the 10 plagues by asking which ones they remember and then reading through them by skimming sub-headings in Exodus 7 to 12.

What You Say:

“Moses didn’t think he was the right person for the job of freeing the Israelites. In fact, he seemed scared, but with God’s help he was able to do it. **[Impress] I can be brave even when I don’t feel ready**, and so can you. When we do this, it will help us know how to live and we will grow like Jesus did. **[Apply] This week, when you are asked to do something you don’t think you are ready for, give it a try anyway.**”

Pray and Dismiss

What You Need: No supplies necessary

What You Do:

Guide the kids to gather around you. Choose a volunteer to come and stand in front of you. Direct him to cross his arms over his chest, pretend he’s frozen, and fall backward into your arms. If he hesitates before falling, encourage him by promising that you will catch him. Guide the kids to cheer his bravery. As time allows, invite other volunteers to do a “trust fall,” too.

What You Say:

“You were very brave! At first, you may have felt scared and not ready to fall backwards into my arms. But when you decided to trust me, you showed great courage! We can show courage when God asks us to do things that feel scary, too. We can show courage by trusting God and doing what He says. This is what Moses did, and this is what we can do, too. So remember, you can always say, **[Impress] ‘I can be brave even when I don’t feel ready.’** You can say that because God loves you, He is with you, and He will help you. You can trust Him! Let’s pray.

“Dear God, thank You for always being with us. Thank You that we can trust You no matter what. We’re so glad that we can trust You to help us be brave even when we’re scared and don’t feel ready to do the things You ask us to do. We love You so much, Lord. Your goodness to us is amazing and never ends. Amen.”

Give each child a GodTime card and sucker as adults arrive for pick-up.