

The Old Man and the Sea

Bible Story: The Old Man and the Sea (Moses and the Red Sea) • *Exodus 14*

Bottom Line: I can be brave even when things seem impossible.

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 was up against an impossible task: on one side was the Red Sea on the other side was the Egyptian army coming after the Israelites (**Exodus 14**). Only God could save them. Moses stood strong in the face of fear and trusted God with the outcome.

Our Bottom Line is: **I can be brave even when things seem impossible.** We often find ourselves in situations that feel impossible. For kids, it might be moving to a new town or parents divorcing. It’s hard to know what’s going to happen and how everything will be okay. But we can have courage because we trust God.

The monthly memory verse is: **“When I’m afraid, I will trust in You.” Psalms 56:3 NIV.** The story of Moses teaches us that God can make a solution even when we can’t see the possibility. And when we bravely follow God into that solution, we can see God do amazing things that we never imagined.

WRAPPING UP THE STORY / REVIEW

MC: “Only a short time before, stuck between the Egyptian army and the wide Red Sea, moving forward had seemed impossible. But God had protected His people and given them the courage to keep going. God was bigger than the impossible for the Israelites, and He’s bigger than whatever seems impossible in our lives too! Because I know that **[Recycle] I can trust God no matter what, [Impress] I can be brave even when things seem impossible.**

“What seems impossible for me may be different than what seems impossible for you. Maybe your family is about to move, or your best friend is moving away. Or maybe someone you love is really sick, or your parents are fighting. All of those things seem so scary and even impossible to survive. But here’s the thing: they’re not, because God is bigger than all of them. That doesn’t mean He’ll make them go away. Your friend still might move, and your loved one may not get better. But you can keep moving forward and stay brave because God is with you and He’s bigger than anything you might face. You can trust Him and be brave even when things seem impossible.

“‘When I’m afraid, I will trust in you.’ Who knows what seemingly impossible things you or I might face this week, but I can tell you that whatever they are, God can help you find the courage to face them. That’s why the one thing to remember is this—

[Impress] “I can be brave even when things seem impossible. Just ask God for help the next time you’re impossibly scared. Because you know what? We’re all going to be scared at some point. And being scared doesn’t mean you can’t have courage. In fact, courage is ...

“... being brave enough to do what you should do, **EVEN WHEN** you’re afraid. Like, I know right now I should go backstage and get Hercules so I can put her back in her crate and get her back to my friend. So, here goes nothing.

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. An Alternative Ending (review the Bible story)**

What You Need: Bibles, large paper, tape, paper & markers

What You Do:

Hand out three of the poster board pieces to your group members. Instruct the students to draw on each piece of Large paper a part of the Bible story that took place just before God parted the Red Sea. They are working on what will become a three-piece storyboard to represent the events that happened in today’s Bible story before God parted the Red Sea. For example, they may first brainstorm and choose to recap the plagues on the first piece of poster board, Pharaoh letting the people go on the second piece, and Pharaoh chasing the Israelites to get them to the edge of the Red Sea on the third piece. If you sense that some students may be sensitive about their art skills, tell the whole group to use stick figures and cartoon-style speech bubbles. Display these somehow, by taping them to a wall or setting them up on chairs like easels.

Next, hand out paper and tell kids that they all have the chance to draw or write out an alternative ending to the story as if it ended a different way than God parting the Red Sea. Some ideas may include giving the Israelites super powers, changing the Egyptians into slugs or zapping all of the Israelites into a submarine. As students finish their drawings, have them tape their pictures to the final large piece of poster board. When everyone is done, have each student share their alternative endings. Finally, have a volunteer read Exodus 14:21-22.

What You Say:

“It’s easy to come up with different ways we’d do things if we use a little imagination. But this isn’t science fiction or a comic book—it’s history. It’s something amazing that really happened because of God’s power and wisdom. God knows what we need and when we need it because He can see the big picture all at once. **[Apply] You can trust that He is there for you even when you can’t see or feel Him close. God told Moses what to do in a scary situation, even when Moses couldn’t see the ending. And Moses trusted Him. Even when you can’t see a happy ending, God will guide you too if you trust Him when you’re afraid.** We’re learning all throughout this series what it means to have courage, and because **[Recycle] I can trust God no matter what, [Impress] I can be brave even when things seem impossible.”**

Optional Discussion Questions

If you lead, consider asking these discussion questions:

- What is one of the first memories you have of seeing someone be courageous?
- When have you been through a situation where you first felt like you had everything under control, only to later feel like everything was falling apart and you were doomed? *(School project, friends who were close but then turned on me, parents divorcing)*
- What are some things you’ve been through that on the first day seemed impossible, but after you were brave you found you got stronger or it got better? *(Moving and making new friends, swimming, diving, trying a new sport, singing in front of others)*
- Some people demand to see a huge miracle from God before they will trust in Him. Do you think this should be the case? In other words, does God have to do something spectacular for you to trust in Him?
- What do you think was one of your most courageous moments? What made it courageous? **[Personalize] (Answer the questions yourself.)**

Pray and Dismiss

What You Need: Markers and paper (or ½ sheets of paper)

What You Do:

[Apply] Sit in a circle and guide students to create prayer cards that describe something people their age need God’s help to be courageous in, such as going to a new school, dealing with teasing, or facing challenging times in their family. (If you think your group will be more authentic and open, tell them not to write their names down.) After everyone is done, have kids place their cards facedown in the center of the circle. Mix up the cards and

ask kids to each grab one. Challenge kids to pray that prayer every day this next week, starting today.

What You Say:

“We will all face situations that seem impossible. God can work in every circumstance, though. That’s why **[Impress] I can be brave even when things seem impossible.** By turning to God for help, you can be brave enough to do what you should do, even when you’re afraid. Let’s pray now by going around and reading what’s on each of our cards and trusting it to God.”

Give each child a GodTime cards and suckers as adults arrive to pick up.