

Marching Orders

Bible Story: Marching Orders (Israel takes Jericho) • *Joshua 6*

Bottom Line: I can be brave because I know God keeps His promises.

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, we remember God’s promise to Abraham that he would receive the Land of Canaan. But the great city of Jericho was blocking Abraham’s family from moving into Canaan (**Joshua 6**). They simply needed to courageously trust God and the land would be theirs.

Our Bottom Line is **I can be brave because I know God keeps His promises**. God promises to never leave us. God promises to give us hope and a future. Sometimes it’s our fear that keeps us from ever living in the promises God has given us.

The monthly memory verse is: **“When I’m afraid, I will trust in You.” Psalms 56:3 NIV**. Many of God’s followers will tell you their greatest adventure started when they trusted God into a decision they were afraid of. And in the end, they never regretted living courageously and believing God’s promises.

WRAPPING UP THE STORY / REVIEW

MC: “From the outside, it might seem like what Joshua and the Israelites did wasn’t very courageous. I mean, how much courage does it take to blow a trumpet or carry an ark, right? But you have to remember that the walls of the city were guarded, which means there were people stationed at the top of the walls. That means at any time, the Israelites could have been killed from above. Nothing about God’s plan made sense, when you think about it. Obeying God’s seemingly crazy plan was the courageous thing to do, and their obedience and courage paid off.

“You know, God may ask you to go through things or do things that you don’t understand, but when you remember His promises, you can be brave. Of course, the trick there is that you have to **KNOW** God’s promises to be able to remember them! And God’s promises are all found here (*hold up the Bible*), so the best thing you can do to prepare yourself for whatever wall **YOU** will face is to read your Bible and memorize God’s words. Then you can call on those promises when you’re facing something scary.

“So, the next time you’re feeling scared to do something you know you should do, think to yourself—
[Impress] “I can be brave because I know God keeps His promises.

“Sometimes, when you’re really scared of something, you can forget about God and all that He’s promised. But those are the times you need to remember Him the most. That’s why you should read the Bible. Find out what God has promised. Find out how much He loves you and how you can trust Him no matter what. Memorize your favorite verses so you can remember them when you feel afraid. You probably won’t have to face all of your fears at once like [Small Group Leader’s name] did earlier, but even if you do, you can face it all with courage because you can trust that when God makes a promise, He keeps it always and forever.

“So the one thing to remember today is—
[Impress] “I can be brave because I know God keeps His promises.

Optional Discussion Questions

If you lead, consider asking these discussion questions:

- Who do you know who continues to do the right thing, even though they may not always seem to be rewarded for it? (*Parents, teacher, pastor*)
- What is something you’ve done in the past that you didn’t get the chance to see the results of until a long time had passed? (*Practiced an instrument, planted a garden, learned karate*)
- Why do you think some people give up on being faithful or courageous? (*They get tired of waiting for something tangible to happen. They start to listen to the wrong people. They become afraid.*)
- What type of jobs have you noticed require people to be able to “hang in there” until they see the results later? (*Farmers, athletes, builders*) How does this require courage? (*They have to believe things will come through like they hope. They trust someone will pay them for their hard work.*)
- Can you name some promises you’ve made to others that you’ve been able to fulfill? How did it make you feel? How might it make God feel to fulfill a promise? (*It felt good to do what I said I would do. God probably likes fulfilling promises.*)

[Personalize] Share about a time when someone came through on something you waited a long time for, as well as how you needed to have the courage to hang in there.

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. All Fall Down (application activity / review the Bible story / great for active learners)**

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

Have kids form a circle. Choose seven kids and take turns with each kid being the leader for coming up with a new way to move creatively in a circle—i.e. bunny hopping, tip-toeing, skipping, spinning, ballet leaping, frog jumping, etc. No matter how the silly the kid leader's moves, no one is allowed to make a sound for the first six times. Anyone who makes a peep must leave the circle until the next round. But, on the seventh time, they have to do their movement while singing, "Ring around the Rosey" the whole time. After they've made it around the circle the seventh time, the kids should all fall down like the walls.

What You Say:

"When the Israelites heard what they were supposed to do to make the walls fall down, they probably thought it was crazy—it didn't make any sense. They probably wondered if it was really going to work or not. In the end, what they found out is that **[Impress]** **I can be brave because I know God keeps His promises.** **[Personalize]** *(Tell kids about a time when God kept His promises in your life, such as His promise to take care of you, to be there for you when you're afraid, to give you peace, etc.)* **[Apply]** This week, if someone breaks a promise to you, remind yourself that that's one thing God will never do."

Pray and Dismiss

What You Need: "God's Promises" (Activity Page)

NOTE: Before the kids arrive, pray that each child will receive the Bible verse promise he or she needs most.

What You Do:

Give each child a "God's Promises" card and help him or her read it, if necessary. Invite the children to color their cards as they choose. As they color, briefly review this week's Bible story and Bottom Line, **[Impress]** **I can be brave because I know God keeps His promises.** Invite the children to tell what their verses promise. Next, have each child draw a rock on his card. Tell the kids that the rocks can remind them of the time God kept His promise to Joshua and the Israelites and made the walls of Jericho fall. It can remind them that God kept His promise then, and God keeps His promises now. Encourage the kids to take their cards home and put them in a place where they will see them often.

What You Say:

"God kept His promise to Joshua and the Israelites. He told them that if they followed His plan, the walls of Jericho would fall and the city would be theirs. God kept His promise then, and God keeps His promises now. **[Apply]** **God always keeps His promises. So if you're ever scared or confused, think to yourself: [Impress] I can be brave because I know God keeps His promises.** Let's pray.

“Dear God, thank You that You kept Your promise to Joshua and the Israelites. Thank You that You keep Your promises to us, too. Help us to remember Your promises that will help us be brave to do what we should do, even when we’re afraid. In Your Name, we pray. Amen.”

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