

WEEK

ONE

SOCIAL

Opening Activity

What You Need

☐ No Supplies Needed



Inclusive Pro Tips

For an option with less movement, offer pictures of water, fire, and staff for kids to point to.

① What You Do

Pray for your group before they arrive → Pray for kids who will visit your group for the first time. Think about a time when you didn't feel ready for something but had to step forward anyway. Thank God for giving you courage in that moment! Thank God for sending the Holy Spirit to help you take the first step even when you feel unsure. Ask God to help the preteens understand that they don't have to feel 100% ready because God will always be with them! Pray that they would learn to rely on God when they feel nervous or unsure. Pray that the Holy Spirit would help them take bold, confident steps toward new things!

1. Invite the kids to form groups of two.
2. Tell the kids they will play a game called "Staff-Fire-Water" (like Rock-Paper-Scissors).

How to Play:

1. To begin each round, kids say, "Staff-Fire-Water, Go!"
2. On "Go!" each kid should do one of the following motions:
 - Staff: Hold out a fist like gripping an imaginary staff. (Staff beats water.)
 - Fire: Wiggle fingers like a flame. (Fire beats staff.)
 - Water: Move a hand in a wavy motion like water. (Water beats fire.)
3. Each pair will play best out of three rounds to determine a winner.
4. Switch pairs and play again if time allows.

② What You Say

"That was so fun! We used a staff, fire, and water to play this game. Any guesses about how these things relate to today's Bible Story? **(INVITE RESPONSES.)** **[TRANSITION]** In today's true story from the Bible, we'll hear about someone who wasn't sure he was ready for what God was asking him to do. But God gave him something He can give us all—**COURAGE!** God helped him use a staff, fire, and water in an EPIC way to lead His people. Let's go!"

Transition → Lead your group to the Large Group area.

GROUPS 2/5

Bible Story Extension



Bible Story Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ "Story Scenarios" Activity Page
- ☐ "Courage Cards" Activity Page
- ☐ Cones or Floor Tape



Inclusive Pro Tips

Let kids choose how they will travel. They could walk, roll, crawl, or have a buddy assist them.

Offer additional roles such as cheering for the team or reading the cards to the team.

① What You Do

1. Divide the kids into three teams.
2. Use cones or floor tape to create a start and finish line for each team.
3. Place the "Story Scenarios" Activity Page cards at each team's finish line.
4. Give each team a full set of "Courage Cards" Activity Page cards.
5. Explain how to play:
 - Each team is to send one kid at a time to grab one scenario card and bring it back.
 - As a team, they are to read the scenario and choose a courage card that fits. (One of the six cards will fit.)
 - After reading the courage card, each team is to choose the option for the response they want, and they are to perform the action on their choice together. (For example, "Take a step backward," "Move forward," or "Stay where you are.")
6. Continue in this way until each team makes it to the finish line together.
7. Encourage the kids:
 - Moses didn't feel ready, but God was with him every step of the way and gave him everything he needed. When we choose to follow Jesus, God sends us the Holy Spirit to live inside of you. He will help you do what God calls you to do!
 - Remind them that God is always with them—whether they're facing a challenge, making a tough decision, or trying something new.
 - Emphasize that Moses wasn't alone, and neither are they! The same God who was with Moses as he led God's people out of Egypt is with them through the Holy Spirit and will help them have courage in whatever they're facing every day!

GROUPS 3/5

Discussion Questions

Bible Story Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

☐ No Supplies Needed


Inclusive Pro Tips

Read each question twice and give the kids time to process before prompting them to respond.

Reduce the number of questions.

Provide a small ball to toss from kid to kid as each kid shares.

Provide fidget tools for every kid to hold while discussing.

Offer sentence starters to support students who struggle to express their ideas. Example:
 "I ____." "I feel nervous when I ____."

① What You Do

Ask the following:

1. When have you tried something new?
2. What are some things that make you feel nervous or unprepared?
3. How do you think Moses felt when God asked him to go to Egypt and talk to Pharaoh?
4. How can trusting God help us take the next step when we don't feel ready?
5. Sometimes we don't feel ready for what's ahead, but God's Spirit is always with us! What's something coming up in your life that you can ask the Holy Spirit to help you with?

GROUPS 4/5

Verses to Take with You



Memory Verse Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ Index Cards
- ☐ Coloring Supplies

Inclusive Pro Tips



Write the verse on the card in advance for each group.

Offer to do this activity as a large group with the Small Group leader as the guide.

① What You Do

1. Divide the kids into groups of three and give each group a Bible. (A group of four is fine!)
2. Lead them to look up Psalm 56:3 using the Bible Navigation tips.
3. Repeat the verse several times together.
4. Give each group an index card.
5. Set out the coloring supplies.
6. On one side of the index card, invite the kids to write Psalm 56:3.
7. On the other side, instruct the groups to come up with their own words to create a new way to rewrite Psalm 56:3.
8. If the kids need help getting started, share a few examples:
 - "When life feels shaky, I'll choose to trust You."
 - "God's got me even when I'm nervous."
9. Invite the kids to decorate their cards with symbols that will help them remember the verse.
 - Kids might draw a storm cloud, a heart, a cross, or an anchor.
10. Bring the groups together.
11. Invite the groups to share their new sentences with the entire group.
12. Repeat Psalm 56:3 together again.
13. Ask:
 - What stands out to you about Psalm 56:3?
 - Why do you think David needed to say it?
 - How was David's heart reminded of the truth when he said this truth?
14. Explain to the kids that Psalm 56:3 isn't just a cool verse—it's God's Word! God can speak to us through it! He can encourage our hearts with it! They can speak it out loud as a reminder that no matter what's going on, whether they're worried, or things feel uncertain—they can trust God! He is with them and He will help!

*Finding verses with 4th-5th graders

- ① Ask kids to tell you if the book of the Bible they're looking for is in the Old Testament or New Testament. If it's in the Old, instruct kids to flip slowly, starting at the front of the Bible and heading toward the back, until they find the book they're looking for. If it's in the New, instruct kids to start flipping from the back, going forward to find the book they're looking for.
- ② When they find the book, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers.
- ③ Once they find the chapter, explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Tell kids to find the verse within the chapter they've already found.

GROUPS 5/5

Pray and Dismiss

Prayer Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Pens or Pencils
- ☐ Index Cards



① What You Do

1. Gather the kids in a seated circle.
2. Give each kid a pen or pencil and an index card.
3. Say something like:
 - "Has something ever come up that made you feel just . . . not ready? Maybe it was your first basketball practice on a new team, or perhaps you needed to apologize to a friend, but you felt nervous about it and didn't know how they would respond."
4. Invite the kids to write down one thing they don't feel prepared for.
 - This could be an upcoming event, a conversation, a doctor's appointment, etc.
5. As the kids finish, direct them to place their cards in the center of the circle facedown.
6. Explain to the kids that they're placing their cards in the center as a way of saying, "God, I'm giving this to You, and I trust You with it!"
7. Ask if anyone would like to pray for the group.
8. Close the group in prayer, asking God to remind the kids that He's always with them. Ask God to give them the courage to do hard things!

Inclusive Pro Tips



Give concrete examples of what makes kids feel unprepared both verbally and visually.

Allow kids to hold on to their cards instead of placing them in the center.

Invite kids to draw instead of writing.

WEEK

TWO

SOCIAL

Opening Activity

What You Need

- ☐ Pieces of Floor Tape or Floor Dots



Inclusive Pro Tips

To modify movements, allow the kids to choose how far or fast they move. Or, invite them to point instead of moving.

Keep the energy of this game pressure-free and fun!

① What You Do

Pray for your group before they arrive → Pray for kids who will visit your group for the first time. Thank God for each preteen in your group and for the ways He is working in their lives. Recall a time when you felt afraid but chose to trust God. Thank Him for giving you courage when you needed it most. Thank God for sending the Holy Spirit to help us be brave, even when others around us are afraid. Ask God to help you remind the preteens that they don't have to face fear on their own because He is always with them. Pray that they would learn to focus on God's presence and His promises instead of their fears! Pray that the Holy Spirit would give them the courage to do what's right, even when it feels scary.

1. Before you begin, mark small lines in your group space for each kid to stand on.
→ *NOTE: You can also use floor dots. The kids just need a marked place to stand.*
2. Instruct the kids to stand on a piece of floor tape or on a floor dot.
3. Say, "We're about to play a fun game, and listening is key! I'll call out several actions for you to do, and you are to move in that direction! If you make a wrong move, sit down until the next round!"
4. Challenge the kids by speeding up the actions you call out!
5. Reset and keep playing quick rounds so no one sits out too long.
6. Gather the group to discuss.

Actions to call out:

1. "Front"
2. "Back"
3. "Left"
4. "Right"
5. "JUMP!"
6. "Touch the ground."

② What You Say

"That was so fun! It took some serious focus to make the right move. Sometimes life feels like this—when we're unsure which way to go or wonder if we'll make the right choice. **[TRANSITION]** Well, today's true story from the Bible is about Joshua and some spies who went into an unknown land. Most of them focused on their fears, but two of them put their focus on God, and it made all the difference! Let's go hear the story!"

Transition → Lead your group to the Large Group area.

GROUPS 1/5

Take a Snapshot

Application Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ "My Journey" Activity Page
- ☐ Coloring Supplies
- ☐ Pencils
- ☐ Device for Playing Music



Inclusive Pro Tips

Some kids might not work well with soft music playing—that's okay! Opt out of playing music if this is the case.

Allow kids to keep their reflections private if they choose to do so.

① What You Do

1. Give each kid a "My Journey" Activity Page and a pencil.
2. Set out the coloring supplies.
3. Use the device to play soft worship music in the background while kids work on the activity.
4. Walk through the page one prompt at a time.
 - Mountain: Think about a challenge you've faced that felt hard—something that felt too big to face alone. Write about it or draw a picture in this box.
 - Bridge: Think of a time you did something brave and knew God was with you and was helping you. Use this box to praise God for being with you and giving you courage!
 - River: What's something coming up where you need to ask God for courage? Maybe you're trying out for a new sport, or you want to stand up for a friend being picked on. Ask God for help in this box.
5. Fill out a "My Journey" Activity Page with the kids.
6. Give the kids time between each prompt to process and reflect.
7. Once everyone is finished, lead them to form groups of two or three to discuss their "My Journey" Activity Page together.
8. **[MAKE IT PERSONAL]** Share an age-appropriate time when you had to be brave and trusted the Holy Spirit to help you. Maybe you wanted to try out for a new sports team, or perhaps it was leading this Small Group!)
9. Point out 2 Timothy 1:7 on the Activity Page.
 - Ask: What do you think this verse is saying?
 - "Whenever you feel fear, that fear is not from God! It's like a shadow trying to dim your light. God Himself lives inside you through His Spirit, and He gives us power and love!"
 - "God's Spirit gives you power. The kind of strength you need to do what's right, even when it's hard."
 - God's Spirit gives you love. The kind of love you need to care about others and put others first.
 - God's Spirit gives you self-control. The kind of wisdom you need to know when to take the brave step, and when to wait."
10. Explain that when someone chooses to follow Jesus, God sends the Holy Spirit to live in them, so they can be closer to God, and help them be more like Jesus.
11. Encourage kids that God knew life would be scary at times, but He is with them all of the time and can help them be brave, no matter what they're up against.

Note → Look for opportunities to have conversations about what it means to make a decision to follow Jesus! **(IF YOU NEED HELP WITH WHAT TO SAY, ASK YOUR MINISTRY LEADER.)**

GROUPS 2/5

Bible Story Extension



Bible Story Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

☐ No Supplies Needed

① What You Do

1. Gather the kids together.
2. Ask:
 - Why do you think Joshua and Caleb were brave when almost everyone else was scared?
3. Explain how to play.
 - "I'm going to read some scenarios from the true story in the Bible about Joshua and the spies. I'll give you two possible choices. You'll give your most honest answer of what you would do, and travel to that side of the room." (Point to the left for A, and to the right for B.)
4. Read each scenario twice and give kids a chance to respond.
5. After each round, ask a few kids why they made their choice and thank them for sharing.
6. Continue until all the scenarios have been read.
7. Tell the kids that we won't always want to do what's right. But the right thing is always the choice that God would want us to make.
 - Whether it's standing up for a friend or walking away from a group of people gossiping, God can give them courage when others are afraid to do the right thing.
8. Encourage the kids that just like Joshua and Caleb, God is with them and can help them be brave. Even if everyone around them is afraid, nervous, or doing the wrong thing, Jesus is with them, and the Holy Spirit can fill them with the courage they need!
9. Ask:
 - Was there ever a time you had to be brave when everyone else was not?

Story Scenarios

1. You hear rumors about giants in the land.
 - A. Focus on God and the truth that He is with you.
 - B. Focus on the giants and start to panic.
2. Your friends start saying: "There's no way we can do this."
 - A. Speak up and remind them that God is with us, He is the strongest, and He can help us be brave enough to do hard things.
 - B. Stay silent because you're afraid of standing out.
3. You notice how good the land is—just like God said!
 - A. Celebrate and tell everyone the good news.
 - B. Worry about all the challenges ahead.
4. Most of the people want to quit and go back to what's easy.
 - A. Trust that following God is always better, even if it's hard.
 - B. Agree with the crowd because it's safer.

Inclusive Pro Tips



To adapt the movement in this activity, have the kids show a thumbs-up for "A" and a thumbs-down for "B" instead of moving around your group area.

GROUPS 3/5

Discussion Questions

Bible Story Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

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Live for God

What You Need

☐ No Supplies Needed


① What You Do

Ask the following:

1. What are people afraid of?
2. Why do you think most of the spies were too afraid to move forward, even though God had promised them the land?
3. Can you recall a time you believed something was possible when others were afraid or unsure?
4. What's something you feel nervous about or unsure you can do?
5. How can remembering that God is the strongest help you face what you are facing?
6. When you choose to follow Jesus, the Holy Spirit lives in you! What do you think it means to know that God is with you?

Inclusive Pro Tips



Be sensitive to kids who may need extra time to process their thoughts and respond. Be patient and create a safe space where everyone has a chance to share when they're ready.

Frequently check for understanding during discussion by asking questions like, "Can someone share in their own words what we're talking about?"

GROUPS 4/5

Verses to Take with You



Memory Verse Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Bible marked at Psalm 56:3
- ☐ Plain Paper
- ☐ Pencils



Inclusive Pro Tips

Invite kids to create motions or actions for the verse instead of verbalizing.

Break the verse down into smaller chunks verbally and visually with small sketches to illustrate the words. Say the verse together in chunks.

Invite the kids to echo the verse, as the Small Group leader says the verse in chunks.

① What You Do

1. Open the Bible marked at Psalm 56:3 and select a kid to read it to the group.
2. Repeat the verse together several times.
3. Divide the group into teams of 3-4 kids.
4. Give each group a piece of paper and a pencil.
5. Explain the challenge:
 - "Your group's challenge is to work together to create a song or rap using Psalm 56:3. You can add claps, dance moves, or whatever helps you remember the verse in your own style!"
6. After the teams are finished, gather the entire group and let them share their song or rap.
7. Ask:
 - When is a time you might need to remember this verse?
8. Explain to kids that the Bible is God's Word. God gave it to us so we could learn who He is. And He meets with us in it.
9. When they follow Jesus, the Holy Spirit helps them remember verses like this and can give them the courage they need.
10. Encourage the kids to keep practicing Psalm 56:3 at home! Whether they're feeling nervous or trying something new, this verse reminds us that we can ALWAYS put our trust in God.

Preteen

Small Group

September — Week 2

GROUPS 5/5

Pray and Dismiss

Prayer Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ "Compass Prayer" Activity Pages
- ☐ Clipboards
- ☐ Plain Paper
- ☐ Pencils

Inclusive Pro Tips



Invite kids to draw instead of writing full sentences.

① What You Do

1. Before you begin, spread the four "Compass Prayer" Activity Pages out (North, South, East, West) so they visually form a compass around your group area.
2. Give each kid a clipboard, a piece of plain paper, and a pencil.
3. Instruct them to draw a compass shape on their page like this, "+"
4. Starting with "North," lead your group to travel to each "Compass Prayer" Activity Page, read the prompt, and respond to it on their paper.
5. Encourage them not to rush, this is a personal moment for reflection and connection with God!
6. Close in prayer.



WEEK

THREE

SOCIAL

Opening Activity

What You Need

- ☐ Offering Container
- ☐ Device for Playing Upbeat Music



Inclusive Pro Tips

This activity can be done sitting down or standing up. Have the kids participate in whatever way works best for the group.

Some kids might not enjoy the physical aspect of a handshake. Kids can create no-contact handshakes using fun movements like waves, snaps, or facial expressions.

① What You Do

Pray for your group before they arrive → Pray for kids who will visit your group for the first time. Thank God for the people in their lives who have helped them. Recall a time when someone showed up for you when you needed it most. Thank God for placing people in your life to help you. Thank God for sending the Holy Spirit to give you the wisdom to know when and how to step in for others. Ask God to help the preteens understand that they don't have to be afraid to help others because He is always with them. Pray that they would understand that helping isn't about getting recognition but it's about showing God's love. Pray that the Holy Spirit would help them become more aware when someone is in need and have the courage to step up and take action!

1. Greet each kid by name with a fist bump, high five, smile, or wave as they arrive!
2. Invite any kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
3. Divide the kids into groups of two—it's okay if there's a group of three.
4. Encourage them to create a "secret handshake."
5. Suggest some of the following movements to include:
 - High five
 - Fist bump
 - Elbow tap
 - Spin
 - Finger wiggle
 - Clap behind the back
6. Play some upbeat music in the background to keep the energy high!
7. Gather the group together to discuss.

② What You Say

"It was so fun watching you all come up with 'secret handshakes!' Speaking of secrets, **[TRANSITION]** in today's true story from the Bible, we'll discover a woman named Rahab who took a huge risk to hide some spies from God's family and keep them a secret. God helped her make a brave choice to help others! Let's go find out what happened!"

Transition → Lead your group to the Large Group area.

GROUPS 1/5

Take a Snapshot

Application Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Index Cards
- ☐ Pencils
- ☐ Timer



Inclusive Pro Tips

Offer verbal examples for kids to imagine what to draw.

Allow kids to participate verbally.

Draw visual examples and allow kids to copy or point to the example they choose.

① What You Do

1. Divide the kids into groups of three. It's okay if there's a group of two.
2. Give each group six index cards and one pencil.
3. Explain how to play:
 - "We're going to look for real ways to live for God by being brave and helping others."
 - "I'm going to read a scenario where someone needs help. You'll have 60 seconds to come up with a way to help, and one of you will draw it with your eyes closed!"
4. After reading each scenario (from the "Help Scenarios" listed below), start the timer for 60 seconds. The groups must quickly discuss it and choose one person to draw their response with their eyes closed.
5. Before reading the next scenario, invite groups to share their solutions and drawings!
 - *NOTE: This game is fun, fast, and not a drawing contest. Have fun with it and make sure there isn't any pressure on how kids draw!*
6. Continue until all the scenarios have been drawn.
7. **[MAKE IT PERSONAL]** Share an age-appropriate example of a time God gave you the courage to help someone. Maybe it was a time you spoke up for someone who was hurting. Or maybe you included someone new.
8. Explain to the kids that they don't have to be brave alone. God is always with them. And when someone chooses to follow Jesus, God sends the Holy Spirit to help them! The Holy Spirit will nudge them throughout the day, sharing ways to be kind like He is, and then He'll give them the strength and courage to do it!
9. Encourage kids to pray to God and ask Him to help them be brave and show love to someone who needs help.

Help Scenarios:

- A kid in your class is getting picked on at recess by another group of kids.
- You hear a rumor being shared about someone, and you know it's not true.
- A new kid at church or school doesn't know anyone and sits by themselves.
- You notice your teacher seems overwhelmed.
- Someone in your friend group gets left out of a game.
- Your sibling (or cousin) is really scared about something.

GROUPS 2/5

Bible Story Extension



Bible Story Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Bowl
- ☐ "Five Words" Activity Page

① What You Do

1. Before you begin, place the ten cards from the "Five Words" Activity Page in the bowl.
2. Gather the kids together.
3. Explain how to play:
 - Each kid will draw a card with a word from today's Bible Story (such as a person, place, or object).
 - On their turn, they'll tell the group five things about that word (words that describe a person, or what color something is, what it does, what it's near, what it's made of, or who used it).
 - For example, if the word is "Rahab," someone might say, "Brave, woman, Jericho . . ."
 - Give the kids a chance to try and come up with their own five words before offering help.
 - Encourage the rest of the kids to guess what the word from the Bible Story is from the kid's five things.
 - Once a card is guessed correctly, ask: "How does this word relate to today's Bible Story?"
4. Continue until all the cards have been guessed.
5. Tell the kids that Rahab took a huge risk helping the spies. Even though she wasn't a member of God's family like the two spies, she chose to trust God, and God gave her courage!
6. Explain that when they choose to be brave and help someone else (maybe a kid getting picked on or someone who sits alone at lunch), others can see God's love and kindness at work!

Inclusive Pro Tips



Allow kids to play as "guessers" for the entire game.

The small group leader can quietly offer examples to each kid on their turn.

Preteen

Small Group

September — Week 3

GROUPS 3/5

Discussion Questions

Bible Story Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

→ No Supplies Needed



Inclusive Pro Tips

Allow additional time for kids to process and respond.

Frequently check for understanding during discussion by asking questions like, "Can someone share in their own words what we're talking about?"

① What You Do

Ask the following:

1. When has someone helped you?
2. If you were in Rahab's shoes, what would you have done?
3. Why do you think Rahab was willing to help the spies, even though it was dangerous?
4. What are some truths about God you can remember that can help you when you're scared to help?
5. What does this moment show us about who God is and what He can do through unlikely people?

GROUPS 4/5

Verses to Take with You



Memory Verse Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ "Verse Letters" Activity Page
- ☐ Straws
- ☐ Bowls
- ☐ Floor Tape

Inclusive Pro Tips



Have some kids to be the "verse builders" at the start line while other kids retrieve letters.

① What You Do

1. Before you begin, fill each bowl with one set of cards from the "Verse Letters" Activity Page.
2. Divide the kids into three teams.
3. Give each team a Bible.
4. Lead each team to find Psalm 56:3 using the Bible Navigation tips.
5. Repeat the verse together several times.
6. Give every kid one straw.
7. Tape off a start line for each team.
8. Instruct each team to line up behind their team's start line.
9. Place the bowls several feet away from the starting line, one bowl across from each team.
10. Explain and demonstrate how to play:
 - "Are you ready for a challenge? One at a time, you'll race down to your team's bowl and use your straw to suck up one letter, bring it back to your team, and then the next person goes. Once all the letters are collected, your team is to work together to put them in the order of Psalm 56:3. First team to spell the verse correctly wins!"
 - *NOTE: Encourage kids to use their Bibles to reference the verse.*
11. Continue playing until both teams have successfully placed the verse letters in order.
12. Ask:
 - What words stick out to you in Psalm 56:3?
 - How could remembering this verse help you this week?
13. **Optional: Introduce kids to the following Scripture references.**
 - **Joshua 1:9**—Remind kids that God commands us to be brave and strong, because He is always with us!
 - **Philippians 4:6-7**—Prayer can help them give their fears to God. God can replace their worry with peace and help them be brave!
 - **2 Timothy 1:7**—Share with kids that fear is not from God, courage is!
 - **John 14:27**—Encourage them that Jesus speaks peace directly to our fear. The peace Jesus gives us is different than what the world gives.

*Finding verses with 4th-5th graders

- ① Ask kids to tell you if the book of the Bible they're looking for is in the Old Testament or New Testament. If it's in the Old, instruct kids to flip slowly, starting at the front of the Bible and heading toward the back, until they find the book they're looking for. If it's in the New, instruct kids to start flipping from the back, going forward to find the book they're looking for.
- ② When they find the book, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers.
- ③ Once they find the chapter, explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Tell kids to find the verse within the chapter they've already found.

Preteen

Small Group

September — Week 3

GROUPS 5/5

Pray and Dismiss



Prayer Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

→ No Supplies Needed

Inclusive Optional Supplies

- ☐ Index Cards
- ☐ Pencils

① What You Do

1. Invite kids to form groups of two or three.
2. Explain that prayer is a conversation they can have with God anytime, anywhere, about anything.
3. Encourage the kids to ask each other:
 - Who can you be brave and help this week?
 - How can I pray for you?
4. Give the kids a few moments to pray for each other.
 - *NOTE: You can let them choose to pray silently or out loud.*
5. Close your group in prayer.

Inclusive Pro Tips



If kids prefer not to pray out loud, invite them to whisper or pray silently.

Offer index cards and pencils to write or draw who they want to help before sharing.

WEEK

FOUR

SOCIAL

Opening Activity

What You Need

- ☐ Offering Container
- ☐ Floor Tape
- ☐ Prepared Backpacks filled with "travel items"



Inclusive Pro Tips

Pair children with a buddy and participate as a pair.

① What You Do

Pray for your group before they arrive → Pray for kids who will visit your group for the first time. Thank God for each preteen in your group and the unique experiences they are walking through. Thank God for sending the Holy Spirit to guide and strengthen you when you've faced something unfamiliar. Ask God to help the preteens understand that they don't have to figure out life on their own because God is always with them!

1. Greet each kid by name with a fist bump, high five, smile, or wave as they arrive!
2. Invite any kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
3. Designate a starting line and a finish line for both teams with floor tape.
4. Divide the kids into two teams.
5. Instruct each team to line up behind a starting line.
6. Give each team a backpack filled with "travel items."
7. Explain how to play.
 - "Each person on your team will run this relay carrying things you might need for a trip! When it's your turn, you'll put the backpack on, travel to the finish line, and return to your team. The first team to have everyone finish wins!"
8. At your signal, start the relay.
9. Cheer the kids on as they go!

② What You Say

"Whew! Awesome job journeying back and forth with that pretty heavy backpack! **[TRANSITION]** Today's true story from the Bible is about someone who took an even longer journey. They didn't have all the answers, but there was one thing that they did know that was REALLY important. Let's go find out what God wants to show us today!"

Transition → Lead your group to the Large Group area.

GROUPS 1/5

Take a Snapshot

Application Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ "Courage Starters" Activity Pages
- ☐ Pencils



① What You Do

1. Gather the kids in a circle and give each kid a pencil.
2. Place the strips from the "Courage Starters" Activity Page in the middle of the circle.
3. Explain what to do:
 - "Take a moment to reflect on what you discovered today in Ruth's story. Ruth didn't have all the answers, but there was one thing that she did know—she could trust God. Let's create one-liner sentences of encouragement or advice that you could share with someone who's going through something hard, or use it to encourage yourself!"
 - Instruct the kids to finish the statements on each strip with their encouragement or advice.
4. Invite several kids to share what they wrote.
5. Challenge the kids to give a strip to a friend, family member, or someone they know who could use some encouragement!
6. Ask:
 - "What do you hope someone feels when they read your courage strip?"

Make It Personal → Share an age-appropriate time when you had to trust God with something that felt uncertain. What did God teach you during that process?

Inclusive Pro Tips



Encourage kids to build their courage strip with symbols or pictures.

Not every kid will want to share out loud. Let them know it's okay to listen quietly, share with a leader one-on-one, or think about the prompt.

GROUPS 2/5

Bible Story Extension



Bible Story Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Coloring Supplies
- ☐ Pencils
- ☐ Plain Paper

① What You Do

1. Invite the kids to form pairs.
2. Give each group a piece of plain paper.
3. Set out the coloring supplies.
4. Instruct kids to draw two lines across the paper to divide it into four sections.
5. Explain what to do:
 - "You and your friend will tell the story of Ruth through pictures! Think about the moments you remember. What stood out to you? What surprised you? What made you say: 'Ruth's trust in God really helped her be brave!'"
6. Direct the groups to work together to create four scenes from the story of Ruth in the boxes.
 - *NOTE: This is not about artistic skill. Encourage symbols and stick figures!*
7. Once everyone is finished, gather the kids together and have several groups share their drawings.
8. Ask:
 - What do you think it felt like to be Ruth when she had to leave everything and trust God with her future?
 - How do you think God showed up for Ruth?
 - Since God is the same God who showed up for Ruth, what does that mean that you can believe about Him when you are facing something unknown?

Inclusive Pro Tips



Allow kids to draw independently instead of as a group. Give space for individual expression.

GROUPS 3/5

Discussion Questions



Bible Story Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

☐ No Supplies Needed

① What You Do

Ask the following:

1. What is the bravest thing you've ever done?
2. What would you say to a friend who's nervous about something new they have to do? How could you remind them that God is with them?
3. Why do you think quitting or giving up when life feels confusing is sometimes easier?
4. What are some truths you can remember about God that can help you be brave?
5. How can the Holy Spirit help you to be brave this week?

Inclusive Pro Tips



Read each question twice and give time to process before prompting the kids to respond.

Reduce the number of questions.

Provide a small ball to toss from kid to kid as each kid shares.

Provide fidget tools for every kid to hold while discussing.

Offer sentence starters to support students who struggle to express their ideas. Example: "The bravest thing I did was ____." "I would tell a friend who is nervous to ____."

GROUPS 4/5

Verses to Take with You



Memory Verse Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ Index Cards
- ☐ Markers



Inclusive Pro Tips

If any kids feel anxious about the activity, invite them to help you as a "verse coach" by cheering the teams on.

Write the verse on the cards in advance for each group.

Invite kids to create motions or actions for the verse instead of verbalizing.

① What You Do

1. Give every kid a Bible.
2. Lead them to find Psalm 56:3 using the Bible Navigation tips.
3. Repeat the verse together several times.
4. Divide the kids into two teams.
5. Give each team index cards and markers.
 - *NOTE: The teams will put one word from the Memory Verse on each card. Adjust the number of cards you give each team based on the number of words in your translation. (There are 10 words with "Psalm 56:3" on one card in the NIV. There are 11 words with "Psalm 56:3" on one card in the NIV.)*
6. Give the teams a few moments to write one word from the verse on each card.
7. Explain and demonstrate how to play.
 - "Today, we'll review our Memory Verse with a twist! You'll work together with your team to put the verse cards in order silently. Only one person can touch the cards at a time, and you have to tag the next person when you're ready for them to go!"
8. Once both teams have placed their verse in order, instruct each team to read it out loud.
9. Check for accuracy and celebrate their teamwork!
10. Ask:
 - What does this verse remind us to do when we're scared?
 - Why is it important to remember God's Word when we face something hard?
11. **Optional: Introduce kids to the following Scripture references.**
 - **Ruth 1:16**—Share with the kids that Ruth chose to trust God, even when her future was unknown.
 - **Proverbs 3:5-6**—Ask: "How does this verse remind us of Ruth's choice to trust God?"
 - **Isaiah 41:10**—Encourage kids with this promise from God! Ask: "How does this promise from God make you feel?"
 - **Hebrews 11:1**—Even when we don't know what's next, even when we can't see it, we can have faith in Jesus and trust the plan God has for us

*Finding verses with 4th-5th graders

- ① Ask kids to tell you if the book of the Bible they're looking for is in the Old Testament or New Testament. If it's in the Old, instruct kids to flip slowly, starting at the front of the Bible and heading toward the back, until they find the book they're looking for. If it's in the New, instruct kids to start flipping from the back, going forward to find the book they're looking for.
- ② When they find the book, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers.
- ③ Once they find the chapter, explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Tell kids to find the verse within the chapter they've already found.

GROUPS 5/5

Pray and Dismiss

Prayer Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Bible marked at 1 Peter 5:7
- ☐ Backpack from Opening Activity
- ☐ Index Cards
- ☐ Pencils



① What You Do

1. Gather the kids together in a circle.
2. Set the backpack in the center.
3. Give each kid an index card and a pencil.
4. Invite the kids to write down a worry, fear, or prayer request.
5. You can give a few ideas to spark their thinking:
 - Wondering if you're going to make that sports team.
 - Nervous about standing up for a friend.
 - Worried about what others might think of you when you choose the right thing.
6. Pick a kid to read 1 Peter 5:7 from the Bible.
 - Turn all your worries over to him. He cares about you. 1 Peter 5:7 (NIRV)
7. Ask: "How does it make you feel to know that God cares about the things you're worried about?"
8. Share with the kids that even when they don't understand what's ahead, they can share worries and fears with God because He cares and is with them.
9. Once everyone is finished, invite them to place their index card in the backpack. Encourage the kids that because God is with them and He goes with them in everything they face, they never have to carry anything alone!
10. Close your group in prayer.

Inclusive Pro Tips



Invite kids to draw symbols instead of writing full sentences.

Allow extra time to process and repeat the prompt as needed.