

LESSON SNAPSHOT

BOTTOM LINE:

God will always take care of us.

OBJECTIVE:

Kids will learn that even when life is crazy or scary, we can keep our focus on God and trust that He will take care of us.

KEY PASSAGE:

Exodus 17:10-16, Joshua Defeats the Amalekites

MEMORY VERSE:

"Guide me in your truth. Teach me. You are God my Savior. I put my hope in you all day long." Psalm 25:5 (NirV)

SUMMARY:

Sometimes the river waters are calm, but watch out because they can turn into raging rapids without a moment's notice. Moses raised his staff while Joshua fought the Amalekite army. As long as Moses kept his arms up, the Israelites were winning; but anytime he lowered his arm, things turned in the Amalekites favor.

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Thank you for the way you are always looking out for us.

*In Jesus' name,
Amen*

MEMORY VERSE

“Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long.” Psalm 25:5 (NIV)

“Guide me in your truth. Teach me. You are God my Savior. I put my hope in you all day long.” Psalm 25:5 (NirV)

LARGE GROUP:

Have the kids read the verse together. Read it normally, then in a whisper, then really, really loud!

SMALL GROUP:

Ask the kids what they think the writer was trying to say when he wrote these words. Then ask them how this verse is connected to today’s story.

SKIT

DOWN THE RAGING RAPIDS

ITEMS NEEDED:

Two jungle explorer outfits

CHARACTER BREAKDOWN:

2M

CHARACTERS:

Gibert - An experienced explorer

Austin - A reluctant explorer

Gilbert and Austin enter.

GILBERT: Well, Austin, we made it. We're in the jungle. What do you think?

AUSTIN: This is the jungle?

GILBERT: Of course it is. Don't you see the tangle of trees? Don't you smell the lush plant life? Don't you hear the calls of the animals?

AUSTIN: Sure, I hear them. I was just hoping Guns N Roses would be here to welcome us.

GILBERT: Listen, buddy, we're headed deep into the jungle. Now we can chop our way through with machetes and take a chance a jaguar tries to eat us.

AUSTIN: I don't want to be eaten by a jaguar.

GILBERT: Or we can raft down the river.

AUSTIN: Well, that sounds more my speed.

GILBERT: Of course, the river's not going to be easy either. There are lots of rapids and whirlpools that will try to tip us into the water.

AUSTIN: Really?

SKIT

GILBERT: And there are man-eating fish and snakes in the water.

AUSTIN: You know, I really didn't want to go to the jungle. I wanted to visit my auntie in Cleveland.

GILBERT: Where do you think you're going, Austin?

AUSTIN: Northeast Ohio to see my auntie.

GILBERT: Austin, as long as we stay focused and keep our eyes on where we are going, we will be safe as kittens.

AUSTIN: You mean kittens surrounded by kitten-eating snakes?

GILBERT: It's just like we learned in church. Life can change so fast, we have to keep our eyes on who?

AUSTIN: Jesus!

GILBERT: And when we keep our eyes on Jesus, He can lead us through anything.

AUSTIN: You're certainly right about that. Jesus led me through an incredible ordeal in 3rd grade.

GILBERT: Oh no! What was it? Did you lose your grandma? Your dog? Your grandma and your dog?

AUSTIN: I had to learn fractions.

GILBERT: Fractions are the worst.

AUSTIN: They are. But Jesus led me through fractions, just as He will these rapids!

GILBERT: That's the spirit! Come on, Austin, the rapids are calling us!

AUSTIN: You sure it's not the man-eating snakes?

GILBERT: What does it matter? We'll keep our eyes on Jesus, and He will see us through.

OBJECT LESSON OR KIDS SERMON

ITEMS NEEDED:

A life jacket

Why do we wear life jackets on a boat? Because you never know what's going to happen on the water. Doesn't matter if it's a raging rapids, the gentle waves on the ocean, or a calm lake in the summer. Even the best of swimmers can have a bad day in the water. You always take precautions, and you can't take off your life jacket for a minute. Always be safe, and always be prepared.

Life can ebb and flow just like the raging rapids of the jungle. One minute all is well, and the next – turmoil. When hard times come, Jesus is our life jacket. When we put Jesus first on the good days, we will know He is right beside us in the bad days. Jesus will keep us close, and He will see us through those rough times.

Knowing Jesus doesn't mean we won't go through the rapids. It means we won't go through them alone! Keep your eyes on Jesus every day, and you'll be prepared for any struggle.

LARGE GROUP GAME

ARM YOUR FLOATIES

ITEMS NEEDED:

Two sets of arm floats

INSTRUCTIONS:

Choose two players for this game. Each player will get given one uninflated set of floaties. On your signal, the players will race to see who can inflate their floaties and put them on their arms the fastest. First person to finish the task wins.

VARIATION:

This can also be a team game. Give each player a partner to help blow up one of the two floaties to be put on their arms. Or instead of arm floaties, have them blow up an inflatable ring.

WHAT'S THE POINT?

God protects us, just like floaties can help protect us in the pool.

LARGE GROUP LESSON

BOTTOM LINE:

God will always take care of us.

OBJECTIVE:

Kids will learn that even when life is crazy or scary, we can keep our focus on God and trust that He will take care of us.

KEY PASSAGE:

Exodus 17:10-16, Joshua Defeats the Amalekites

INTRO:

When you live in the city or even the suburbs, it's hard to imagine there are still untamed places left in this world. When all we see is pavement and brick houses and strip malls and high rises, it's hard to imagine a place where danger lurks around every corner, in every tree, behind every leaf.

Humankind has tamed a great deal of planet Earth, but the jungle remains one of the wildest and most mysterious places on Earth. In spite of all our technology and advanced knowledge of science, including drones and satellite mapping, there are parts of the jungle that remain untouched and unexplored by civilized man. The few brave men and women who choose to explore these spaces often do it at great risk, and those who survive come away learning not only about the jungle, but about themselves. That's why we've chosen the jungle for the theme in this series. We're going to go to some of the less-explored places of the Bible, to stories not often read aloud, and see what we can learn about God and ourselves.

We are plunging right in this morning by taking the fastest route into the jungle – the river. At first glance the river may seem like the safest place in the jungle. There are no big cats watching from the trees, no deadly insects waiting to strike, no poisoned plants lying in wait. But the river has its own dangers even more sinister than the tangle of trees. The river is home to giant anacondas and man-eating piranhas, and the river is full of water hazards like waterfalls and rapids. The rivers of the South American rainforest nearly claimed the life of the great Teddy Roosevelt on his trip down the so-called River of Doubt. The former president survived the harrowing journey, but he was never the same.

The rapids of the jungle river are very much like navigating our ordinary lives. All may

LARGE GROUP LESSON

seem calm at the moment, but you never know what lies around the next corner. Is it a rapid? Is it a waterfall? On the river, you must be vigilant, always looking ahead, always keeping an eye out for danger. As followers in Christ, we must always stay focused on Jesus.

Today's scripture shows us that when we keep our focus and refuse to get distracted, God will give us victory. It's a challenge to persevere, to never grow tired, and always lift our eyes to the Lord.

READ EXODUS 17:10-16

MAIN POINT:

The Israelites were locked in a deadly battle with the Amalekites. It was kill or be killed on the battlefield, and as long as Moses kept his focus on God, the Israelites were winning. When Moses' arms got tired, the battle turned against them. Moses relied on his servants to keep his arms lifted, and Israel won the day.

It's not easy to keep our focus on God, but when we learn to focus on God in the good times and the good days, it will be easier to do so on the bad ones. We can also rely on our fellow believers to lift us up and help us stay focused on Jesus. Life can get pretty crazy, and even scary, but we know God will take care of us. We need to stay focused on Jesus, and have faith He will lead us through.

DRIVE IT HOME:

The battle against the Amalekites is a great visual example of how we can survive tough times. We see that when Moses lifts his hands to the Lord, the Lord turns the battle in Israel's favor. As soon as his arms start to grow tired and sink, the battle turns against them. God wants us to rely on Him. He wants us to keep our eyes on Jesus in the hard times, and He wants us to have faith that He will take care of us. No matter how tired we are, we can persevere knowing God will give us victory.

There's a second lesson in this story too. When Moses started to weaken, what did he do? He relied on others to help him stay focused on the Lord. Two men lifted his arms for him, and God gave Israel victory. God never intended for any of us to ride the rapids of life alone. Not only will He be with us, He surrounds us with Christian friends to support us. We need to rely on those friends to pray for us and lift us up, and we need to do the same for them when our friends go through hard times.

There's a story in the New Testament that matches up very well with the battle against the Amalekites. It's the story of Peter walking on water. When Peter kept his eyes on Jesus, he could walk on water. As soon as he looked at the waves, Peter started to sink. We need to stay focused on Jesus in tough times. We need to lift our arms to Heaven, and when we start to tire, rely on our brothers and sisters to lift us up.

LARGE GROUP LESSON

Life is like a river in the jungle. Sometimes it's smooth as glass. Sometimes the bottom drops out. Sometimes we get thrown against the rocks. Let's keep our focus on Jesus and trust that He will protect us. God will guide us through the rapids, and lead us safely through the jungle.

CLOSE WITH A SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Thank you for the way you are always looking out for us.

In Jesus' name,

Amen

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (K-2ND)

ICEBREAKER:

Have you ever been on a raging rapids ride at an amusement park?

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY:

Psalm 25:5

Ask the kids what they think the writer was trying to say when he wrote these words. Then ask them how this verse is connected to today's story.

SMALL GROUP GAME/ACTIVITY:

Have the kids sit in the floor arranged like they are in a rafting boat, and have them act out what it would be like to take a trip together on raging rapids.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Read Exodus 17:10-16

Who led the attack against the Amalekites?

What did Moses do during the battle?

What happened when Moses' arms got tired?

Who really defeated the Amalekites in this battle?

How does this story teach us that God will be with us in tough times?

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Be near us in hard times, and let us know You are by our side.

*In Jesus' name,
Amen*

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (3-5TH)

ICEBREAKER:

Have you ever been on a raging rapids ride at an amusement park?

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY:

Psalm 25:5

Ask the kids what they think the writer was trying to say when he wrote these words. Then ask them how this verse is connected to today's story.

SMALL GROUP GAME/ACTIVITY:

Have the kids sit in the floor arranged like they are in a rafting boat, and have them act out what it would be like to take a trip together on raging rapids.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Read Exodus 17:10-16

What did Moses do during the battle?

How did the others help Moses?

What does this story teach us about God being with us in tough times?

How can we support each other in tough times?

When life gets tough, what can we do to rely more on God?

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Be near us in hard times, and let us know You are by our side.

In Jesus' name,

Amen

POWERPOINT REVIEW GAME

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. What army was Israel fighting in this battle?
A. The Philistines
B. The Amalekites*
C. The Egyptians
2. Who led the attack on Amalek?
A. Moses
B. David
C. Joshua*
3. What happened whenever Moses' arms began to fall?
A. The Amalekites started to win the battle.*
B. The Israelites started to win the battle.
C. The sun started to go down.
4. Who gave Israel the victory over Amalek?
A. God*
B. Moses
C. Joshua
5. We can trust God to be with us in _____.
A. good times
B. bad times
C. Both A and B*



MAKE IT STICK

5 Simple Ways You Can Make This Lesson Stick With your Kids

Unexplored Bible Stories Lesson 1

THIS WEEK'S LESSON: RAGING RAPIDS



IN THE CAR:

Ask your child what they learned about this week on the drive home:

Sometimes the river waters are calm, but watch out because they can turn into raging rapids without a moment's notice. Moses raised his staff while Joshua fought the Amalekite army. As long as Moses kept his arms up, the Israelites were winning; but anytime he lowered his arm, things turned in the Amalekite's favor. Exodus 17:10-16, Joshua Defeats the Amalekites



HANGING OUT:

Make this week's lesson real:

Share a time in your life with your kids that you found difficult, and tell them how you got through that time. Ask them how they know God will be with them in difficult times.



AT DINNER:

Here are some great discussion starters:

- Why did Moses have to keep his hands in the air during the battle?
- How did God help Israel to defeat the Amalekites?
- Will God always be with us, even in hard times? How do you know?



AT BEDTIME:

Quiz your child on this week's memory verse:

"Guide me in your truth. Teach me. You are God my Savior. I put my hope in you all day long." Psalm 25:5 (NirV)



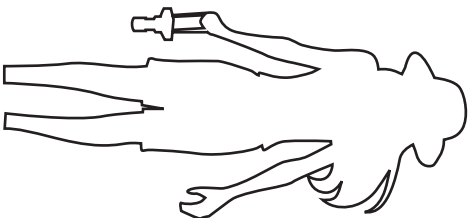
PARENT TIME:

What you need to know:

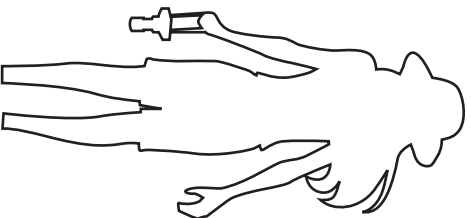
Just as the jungle and the raging rapids of a river can be a challenge, life can get pretty tough. Thankfully, we know God will always be with us. God will give us strength, and He will give us family and friends to help carry us through. If you are in a tough time right now, pray that God will help you to come out the other side stronger in your faith.

CRAFT ACTIVITY

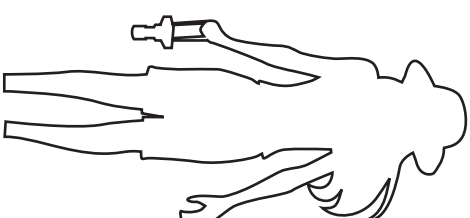
Have the kids cut out bookmarks in the shape of rowing paddles as a reminder of this lesson. You might have them write a reminder of the message on the paddle as well or the new memory verse.



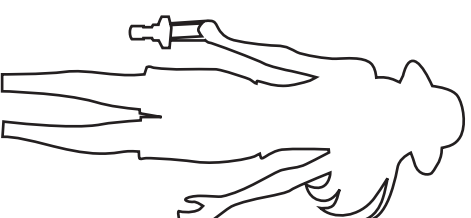
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