



**BIBLE  
FUN  
FACTORY**

**BIBLE LESSONS FOR KIDS** | Volume 5



**THE BOOK OF JOSHUA**

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# BIBLE FUN FACTORY

## BIBLE LESSONS FOR KIDS

### JOSHUA

Welcome to this series of Bible lessons for students in preschool through sixth grade. These lessons introduce characters in the book of Genesis and help children make a personal connection by putting the characters problems into a modern day context. The lessons introduce principles students can use every day at school, at home, and in the neighborhood, while growing in Christ.

In this series of five lessons, Israel is about to become a nation after struggling in the desert for 40 years. Joshua is now a grown man and a strong warrior. Children can admire his strength as **Joshua receives the Promise Land from God** and hope to grow up strong like him. Rahab becomes Joshua's friend and provides an important lesson on how **sometimes it's a good idea to rat out the bad guys**. The Walls of Jericho tumble down, showing how **God expects us to be courageous and persistent**. After that great victory, Joshua forgets to include God in one important decision, which backfires. **God wants to be part of all our decisions**, and the story shows this.

These lessons will help children grow in strength and in their understanding of God's world.

#### Lessons included:

- Lesson 1: Joshua Receives God's Promise
- Lesson 2: Rahab Rats on the Bad Guys
- Lesson 3: Joshua Collapses Walls of Jericho
- Lesson 4: Joshua Forgets to Ask God
- Lesson 5: What's All This Boring Stuff?

A couple notes before you “dig in” to the lesson plans:

We provide more than enough activities to fill a 60 minute class so you can be selective and choose the activities that appeal to you or opt for the activities that match the supplies you have on hand.

The sections written in **BOLD** font type are meant to be a rough “teaching script” for you to use while you are teaching each section. Follow these scripts verbatim or change them to suit your needs!

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# JOSHUA RECEIVES GOD'S PROMISE

After the Hebrews spent 40 years in the desert, they were finally ready to become a nation and to capture land of their own. This week, we will speak to the children about how God will make them big and strong Christians over the course of their lives. **With Jesus in charge, we can look forward to someday being very big, strong Christians. We can begin practicing now!**

## MATERIALS LIST

### Lesson

- Suitcase
- Heavy objects to fill suitcase. Some ideas: Bricks, canned goods, a dozen gallon jugs filled up with water. It should be so heavy that no one can lift it among the children.
- Optional: A strong man who can pick up the suitcase with ease.

### Intro Activity for Younger Children

- Two half-gallon milk containers filled partially with water (caps on tight)
- Water for filling jugs (fill depending on the age/size of your students. They should be able to hold one arm out straight holding the jug, but not for long)
- Prize (optional)

### Intro Activity for Older Children

- Jump rope (optional)
- Stop watch

### Activity, Younger Children

- Empty water bottles with caps—one for each child
- Funnel
- Lemonade mix
- Scoop for mix
- One lemon, cut in long thin strips that can fit through the mouth of the bottle

### Activity, Older Children

- Paper and pencils

### Game, Younger Children

- No materials needed

### Game, Older Children

- No materials needed

## BIBLE READING/STORY: JOSHUA 1

<sup>1</sup> After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' aide: <sup>2</sup> "Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them—to the Israelites. <sup>3</sup> I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses. <sup>4</sup> Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the great river, the Euphrates—all the Hittite country—to the Great Sea on the west. <sup>5</sup> No one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you.

<sup>6</sup> "Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their forefathers to give them. <sup>7</sup> Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. <sup>8</sup> Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. <sup>9</sup> Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go."

<sup>10</sup> So Joshua ordered the officers of the people: <sup>11</sup> "Go through the camp and tell the people, 'Get your supplies ready. Three days from now you will cross the Jordan here to go in and take possession of the land the LORD your God is giving you for your own.' "

<sup>12</sup> But to the Reubenites, the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh, Joshua said, <sup>13</sup> "Remember the command that Moses the servant of the LORD gave you: 'The LORD your God is giving you rest and has granted you this land.' <sup>14</sup> Your wives, your children and your livestock may stay in the land that Moses gave you east of the Jordan, but all your fighting men, fully armed, must cross over ahead of your brothers. You are to help your brothers <sup>15</sup> until the LORD gives them rest, as he has done for you, and until they too have taken possession of the land that the LORD your God is giving them. After that, you may go back and occupy your own land, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave you east of the Jordan toward the sunrise."

<sup>16</sup> Then they answered Joshua, "Whatever you have commanded us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go. <sup>17</sup> Just as we fully obeyed Moses, so we will obey you. Only may the LORD your God be with you as he was with Moses. <sup>18</sup> Whoever rebels against your word and does not obey your words, whatever you may command them, will be put to death. Only be strong and courageous!"

## LESSON (TEACHER WORDS IN BOLD): JOSHUA BECOMES STRONG AND COURAGEOUS

**God gave the Ten Commandments to the Hebrew people while they were wandering around the desert. Does anyone know how long they wandered before Joshua was told they could finally possess a land?**

Forty years.

**Forty years is a long, long time. Let's try to feel in our hearts how long forty years is. Take the time that you have lived now (if your students are, say, third graders). Think of that amount of time over and over and over again—five times. That's how long the Hebrews wandered the desert.**

**Why do you think God had the Hebrews wander the desert for 40 years before Joshua? Why so long?**

Some theories may arise, but they probably won't know how to answer this.

**When Joshua led the army to take Jericho, it would be the first land the Hebrews had owned land ever, and it would be the first time in forty years that they had real homes.**

**The last speech God gave to Joshua before taking Jericho was "Be strong and courageous... because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their forefathers to give them. Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; ..."**

**God says be strong and courageous two times! Let's pretend we're Joshua. Let's be strong and courageous like Joshua was!**

Have your suitcase filled with things that are extremely heavy. It should be so heavy that no one can lift it among the children.

**We're going to carry all these 'belongings' into the Land of Jericho, which the Lord will give us. Let's go! Who will agree to take this bag with lots of our stuff in it?**

Have students come up one at a time and try to lift the heavy bag. If a student is actually able to lift it, draw applause and ask him if he can carry it many miles across the desert?



He'll answer no.

**We would like to be big and courageous like Joshua. The problem is, we're not big and strong yet. God allows us to grow over time. Let's get back to our original question...Why did God have the Hebrews wait for 40 years before taking Jericho?**

Something akin to their need to grow too.

**The Hebrews were not children when they left the Egyptians, but they had been slaves for decades. They didn't know how to take care of themselves. They surely did not know how to be leaders.**

If one is available, bring in a strong man or a strong kid from senior youth group and have him easily pick up the bag. If none are available, simply proceed without that element.

**We have to wait and be patient until we become big and strong, and then God will trust us with his plans for our grownup years. What can we do in the meantime?** Be good: Don't make idols out of your stuff, be nice and respectful of your mom and dad, don't steal, don't lie, etc. (go over the commandments).

**And the most important thing you can do is use every Sunday to make promises about doing these things for the rest of the week.**

## INTRO ACTIVITY, YOUNGER CHILDREN: MAKE ME STRONG, LORD

**Joshua led the Hebrew army after Moses led them for 40 years through the desert. Today we're going to talk about how God made Joshua strong. Let's see how strong you are.**

Have the kids keep track of how many "heavy lifts" they can do. Give them two half-gallon milk containers filled with water (Put in as much water as you think your average student could lift outward five or six times, depending on their ages). Tell them to hold one in each hand with their hands tight to their chests. Straighten their arms until the containers are out straight, then bring their arms back in again (bicep curls). Count how many times they can thrust their arms out straight holding the containers before their arm muscles start to give.

Prizes are optional for strongest.

## INTRO ACTIVITY, OLDER CHILDREN: ENDURANCE TEST

**Joshua led the Hebrew army after Moses led them for 40 years through the desert. Today we're going to talk about how God made Joshua strong and gave him endurance. Let's see how much endurance you have already.**

Give students an option: Jumping rope or wall sitting.

Option 1: Give students a jump rope and ask them to skip rope and see how many skips they can do without missing or before they get too tired to continue.

Option 2: Have students stand against the wall, then put their legs out and "sit," as if an imaginary chair is underneath them. Using a stop watch, have them time each other to see who can "sit" the longest without standing up.

Prizes: Optional

## ACTIVITY, YOUNGER CHILDREN: GOD WILL MAKE ME STRONG LEMONADE

**God made Joshua strong, and he wants to make you strong too. The thing is, we have to wait and be patient and work toward it every day.**

Hand out empty water bottles, one to each child.

**This water bottle is like you are now. It doesn't weigh much, and neither do you, compared to Joshua. But every day, we should add a little bit of the stuff God gives us to make us strong.**

**First, we're going to remember to be polite and kind to everybody we can. We'll add some "sweetness" to our lives.**

Using a funnel, go around and add a tablespoon or scoop (read instructions for single servings) of lemonade mix to each child's water bottle.

**Next, we're going to remember every day to pray to the Father and Son, through the Holy Spirit. Let's add some "prayer water" to us.**

From several gallon jugs or pitchers, go around and fill each child's jug up three quarters of the way.

**Next, we're going to add some "patience potion." Sometimes it's hard to be patient and it feels kind of "bitter." That's why we're adding lemon peels. Lemon peels taste very bad when you try to bite them, but if you add them to lemonade, they have lots of nutrients and make the drink taste yummy!**

Go around and put a slice of lemon peel in everyone's water bottle (if they'll let you!).

**Finally, we're going to put the cap on. This is the 'salvation cap.' It shows how, if we are polite, pray, and have patience, our strength will grow and won't get away from us.**

Be sure everyone secures their cap on *tightly!*

**Now shake up your drink! This shows us how, if we do these things, they become a part of us.**

Let the kids shake until the lemonade mix has mixed with the water.

**And do you see how much heavier our bottle is now than when we started? By the time we're big like Joshua, we will be one strong, weighty, nutritious drink of politeness, prayer and patience! Enjoy your drink!**

## ACTIVITY, OLDER CHILDREN: BE STRONG IN THE LORD

**The Hebrews went into the desert with Moses as former slaves who needed to learn many things in order to become strong. We should be working on those same things. Here are some starter words. You think of more strengths you will need to develop before you're an adult and write them down:**

patience

optimism

humility

prayer

hope

courage

More in case they get stuck:

vision

growth

worship

imagination

tolerance

commandments

diplomacy

peacefulness

reverence

politeness

trust

perseverance

Discuss all these words and some game plans on how kids can practice. Share with them that writing goals down helps bring them to pass. Tell them to either hang the list in their rooms or put it them in the front of a journal or somewhere easily accessible.

## GAME, YOUNGER CHILDREN: GROWING UP STRONG GAME

Have children form two lines for a relay race at one end of the room. Each child must cross the room twice before the next child can go. Each must

1. Crawl on all fours to the far end of the room.
2. Hop back to the beginning on one foot.
3. Hop to the far end again on two feet.
4. Run to the beginning and tag the next child.

If you don't have enough children for a relay, simply time them, one compared to the next. When all have been timed, ask:

**How did it feel to have to crawl in the beginning?**

**Then you 'grew,' but were still a little clumsy. That was the hopping-on-one-foot part. Did you feel clumsy?**

**Then, you got to hop on two feet. Did you feel a little more graceful?**

**And how about running for the finish line? Were you glad to be free and strong?**

**We can't expect to do everything right, especially when we are little and just learning. But Jesus helps us, and every day we get a little bigger, stronger and more free!**

## GAME, OLDER CHILDREN: VIRTUES CHARADES

Use the Christian virtues written down on children's individual lists from the Activity. Have one student get in front of the others and do a pantomime of that word. The other students should try to guess which virtue the student is acting out. Let them keep their word searches in front of them so they can see all of the choices. No one acting out a virtue may speak. However, he may use the gesture "sounds like" by pulling on his ear, and acting out the syllables.

## CLOSING PRAYER

**Father, Thank You for making us a little stronger, wiser and more virtuous every day. Please give us the patience to wait while You make us into great people for you.**

**Amen.**

# RAHAB RATS OUT THE BAD GUYS

Rahab the Harlot is a great story to share, as it seems that children think, regardless of right or wrong, that they should never tattle on their friends. This lesson should help provide some perspective at an early age. Rahab, who was certainly not a perfect woman, proves that **it's better to be known through history as someone who does good, as opposed to being known for a brief while as someone who didn't rat out the bad guys.**

## MATERIALS LIST

### Lesson

- Piece of twine, nine inches long
- Three strips of paper, 8" x 1", folded in half and stapled. Write one word on the front of each: *fear, bullied, coward*
- Three strips of gold craft store ribbon, 8" x 1", folded in half and stapled. Write one word on the front of each in Sharpie marker: *courage, strength, blessed*

### Intro Activity, Younger Children

- Coloring paper, one sheet for each child
- Crayons and markers

### Intro Activity, Older Children

- Photocopies of "Scenario: Tell or Don't Tell," one for each child

### Activity, Younger Children

- Pieces of twine cut 12" long, one for each child
- Pieces of gold craft ribbon from above, 8" long, folded in half; three for each child
- Strips of construction paper cut ½" x 4"
- If your students are too young, write the words *courage, strength and blessed* on the paper for them and let them color in the backgrounds

- Scotch tape
- Stapler

### Activity, Older Children

- No materials needed

### Game, Younger Children

- Two discarded tin cans. At home: Puncture the bottoms of both cans with a can opener to create two holes in each can
- One cut of twine or string, 8 to 12 feet long (it should stretch across most of your classroom, so it depends on how big your room is)
- Copy of scripture verses you want children to repeat into the speaker's can

### Game, Older Children

- Index cards with short scriptures written on them: one card for each "bad guy"
- Hat for pulling positions from
- Small strips of paper on which you should have written "good guy," "bad guy," or "spy."
- Have enough in the hat so that each student can pull only one

## BIBLE READING / STORY:

# JOSHUA 2

### Rahab and the Spies

<sup>1</sup> Then Joshua son of Nun secretly sent two spies from Sittim. "Go, look over the land," he said, "especially Jericho." So they went and entered the house of a prostitute named Rahab and stayed there.

<sup>2</sup> The king of Jericho was told, "Look! Some of the Israelites have come here tonight to spy out the land." <sup>3</sup> So the king of Jericho sent this message to Rahab: "Bring out the men who came to you and entered your house, because they have come to spy out the whole land."

<sup>4</sup> But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them. She said, "Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they had come from." <sup>5</sup> At dusk, when it was time to close the city gate, the men left. I don't know which way they went. Go after them quickly. You may catch up with them." <sup>6</sup> (But she had taken them up to the roof and hidden them under the stalks of flax she had laid out on the roof.) <sup>7</sup> So the men set out in pursuit of the spies on the road that leads to the fords of the Jordan, and as soon as the pursuers had gone out, the gate was shut.

<sup>8</sup> Before the spies lay down for the night, she went up on the roof <sup>9</sup> and said to them, "I know that the LORD has given this land to you and that a great fear of you has fallen on us, so that all who live in this country are melting in fear because of you." <sup>10</sup> We have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to Sihon and Og, the two kings of the Amorites east of the Jordan, whom you completely destroyed. <sup>11</sup> When we heard of it, our hearts melted and everyone's courage failed because of you, for the LORD your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below. <sup>12</sup> Now then, please swear to me by the LORD that you will show kindness to my family, because I have shown kindness to you. Give me a sure sign <sup>13</sup> that you will spare the lives of my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all who belong to them, and that you will save us from death."

<sup>14</sup> "Our lives for your lives!" the men assured her. "If you don't tell what we are doing, we will treat you kindly and faithfully when the LORD gives us the land."

<sup>15</sup> So she let them down by a rope through the window, for the house she lived in was part of the city wall. <sup>16</sup> Now she had said to them, "Go to the hills so the pursuers will not find you. Hide yourselves there three days until they return, and then go on your way."



<sup>17</sup> The men said to her, "This oath you made us swear will not be binding on us <sup>18</sup> unless, when we enter the land, you have tied this scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down, and unless you have brought your father and mother, your brothers and all your family into your house. <sup>19</sup> If anyone goes outside your house into the street, his blood will be on his own head; we will not be responsible. As for anyone who is in the house with you, his blood will be on our head if a hand is laid on him. <sup>20</sup> But if you tell what we are doing, we will be released from the oath you made us swear."

<sup>21</sup> "Agreed," she replied. "Let it be as you say." So she sent them away and they departed. And she tied the scarlet cord in the window.

<sup>22</sup> When they left, they went into the hills and stayed there three days, until the pursuers had searched all along the road and returned without finding them. <sup>23</sup> Then the two men started back. They went down out of the hills, forded the river and came to Joshua son of Nun and told him everything that had happened to them. <sup>24</sup> They said to Joshua, "The LORD has surely given the whole land into our hands; all the people are melting in fear because of us."

## LESSON (TEACHER WORDS IN BOLD): RAHAB CHOOSES THE SIDE OF GOOD

**Sometimes in school or in your neighborhood, you might hear things like “never rat on your friends.” But the church doesn’t believe that. We believe we should be on the side of “good” and “do good,” no matter what others are doing. God rewards us for doing good, especially when we have to choose against people who are doing wrong.**

**Rahab had lived in Jericho all her life. Her parents, brothers and sisters lived there. She knew God was on the side of Israel and that Jericho had encouraged her to live in a bad way and do bad things.**

**She hid Joshua and the good guys when the bad guys wanted to take them away and kill them. What did they promise her?** That they wouldn’t hurt her or any one in her family when they came to take over the city.

**Let’s say the bad guys had found out that she had hidden Joshua and the spies. What do you think they would have done to her?** Beat her up and killed her.

**Do you think she was scared to do good?** Yes.

**So, why did she make the choice to side with the good guys?** She knew, from the tales floating around, all that God had done for Israel and that God was on their side.

**What was her reward for doing good?** All the other guys got killed, except her and her family.

Hold up a piece of twine. **This is sort of a magical piece of string. It can remind you that you are strong enough to stand up for good, even when everyone around you is not likely to “get it.” You just have to put the right stuff on it.**

**Let’s say we see three kids that are bigger than us and they are stealing a bicycle. Let’s say one of them sees you and says, “If you tell, you’re dead meat.”**

**You can...**

- **Be afraid.** Loop one paper strip through the twine that says the word “fear” on it.
- **Let them bully you into keeping quiet.** Loop one paper strip through the twine that says the word “bullied.”
- **You could even pretend you side with them because they look cool, even if you know it’s wrong.** Loop the final paper strip that says “coward” on it.

Have the assistant tie the string around your wrist. Show what it looks like.

**Do I want to know deep in my heart that I had fear, I was bullied, and I was a coward?**

No.

**We need to be Rahab’s. Her courage has been known for thousands of years, and nobody knows the first thing about those dead guys. One thing she understood:**

- **You can get by for a while if you act on fear, if you let yourself be bullied by evil, and if you act like a coward. Lots of people do this.**

Pull the paper strips off the bracelet one by one.

**But they’re sort of like paper. They don’t stand up under lots of pressure.**

Bring out the gold ribbon strips. Take the string off your wrist and hold it up again.

**If you saw kids stealing a bike and they threaten you, you want to go to the nearest grownup you know well and tell them what happened.**

Loop the gold ribbon onto the string that says “courage.”

**Did you know it often takes more strength to do right than to do wrong?** Take out the ribbon that says “strength” and loop it on.

**Tell the grownup who did the stealing.**

**God will come close to you. You'll have a special relationship with him.** Put the last ribbon on the string, the one that says "blessed."

Have the assistant tie the string on you again.

**Now...I've got something that's strong. I'm going to wear this all week to remind me to be a Rahab.**

## INTRO ACTIVITY, YOUNGER CHILDREN: SHOWING OUR COURAGE

**Today we're going to talk about a woman who had the courage to rat out the bad guys. Think of a time when you saw somebody doing something wrong and you went and told a grownup. Draw a picture of it.**

Have students draw and write at the bottom, I TOLD A GROWNUP.

## INTRO ACTIVITY, OLDER CHILDREN: SCENARIO: TELL OR DON'T TELL?

Give students this line on a piece of paper: "I WOULD NEVER, EVER RAT OUT MY FRIENDS." Tell them this is the thinking of many people, but it is wrong. Have them write down some of the things that can go wrong if grownups don't know what's going on because kids don't tell them.

When you have two students or more, have them discuss times when they had to choose to tell or not tell. Have them examine their choice, deciding whether it had been a good choice or not.

## ACTIVITY, YOUNGER CHILDREN: "CBS" NECKLACES

Use the twine and gold looped ribbon from today's Lesson. The gold ribbon should not only be stapled but folded in half. Help them write "courage" "blessed" and "strength" on their own ribbons in various color Sharpie pens. Turn the ribbons over, and on the other side have

them write “C” on the “courage” ribbon, “B” on the blessed ribbon, and “S” on the “strength” ribbon.

Show them how to loop the ribbons onto the twine to make a necklace with three “charms”. Tie it around their necks so the “CBS” shows.

**Wear this today, and then hang it in your bedroom where you can see it all week. The CBS, Courage, Blessed, Strength, will help you to remember Rahab and to use courage and strength to be blessed, rather than be weak and bullied and a coward.**

## ACTIVITY, OLDER CHILDREN: LET’S BE SPIES: DISCUSSION

As “telling” and “not telling” are very serious issues in today’s society, you can impress this upon your students by leading a serious discussion. Read the following two scenarios, almost as a continuation of the Intro Activity Question, and ask students to give answers as to how they would handle the situation. Assure them that there are no exact right and wrong answers, but Biblical truths can guide them, and people like Rahab can serve as models of behavior:

**1. You hear your older sister talking on the phone with friends. She’s just old enough to have friends with driver’s licenses. From her side of the conversation, you hear that she was in a car with four friends, and the driver was doing ninety miles an hour down a dirt road. She realizes you’ve been listening. She doesn’t want you to spill the tale to Mom or Dad so she offers to take you with her next time she goes out with her friends.**

(Note: Most kids get a real sense of euphoria from being included in their old sibling’s company as it rarely happens.)

Discussion questions for them:

**What makes this invitation hard to resist? Do you think you would be able to resist it? How?**

**Planning for something like this in advance often helps you be prepared when the time comes. Even if you don’t have older siblings, you might have an older kid in your neighborhood. First, understand that 12 American teenagers die in car accidents every day. This doesn’t include the ones who are injured, have broken necks, will never walk again,**

**and have brain damage. Prepare yourself by practicing *now* what you will actually do or say if you are approached to drive with a reckless teenage driver.**

Example: **Thanks. I don't want to. What if something happened and Mom and Dad had to bury you? Are you really so scared of your own friends that you can't tell them to slow down? I'm glad I'm not you.**

Let them provide some examples of what they would say.

**2. You're at the mall with your mom, your big sister, and her girlfriend. Your mom says it's fine for all of you to go in one store while she heads down to another. You all look around for a while, see nothing you want. When you get out in the mall, your sister's friend starts laughing victoriously. She holds out three pairs of earrings she just stole. Your sister laughs at first but then gets deadly serious and asks the friend, "Why'd you do that in front of my [brother]? He tells everything!"**

Questions:

**That last line was a real slap in the face. How do you stand up to something like that and still tell your mom?**

**Even though there's no security camera, Who sees everything? Who wants to help you do the right thing?**

**Let's take another look at Rahab. Did she tell the authorities *everything*?** (She actually didn't tell the authorities anything. She found that discreet means to be on the side of "right," which actually saved her life in the long run.)

**Even if you let Mom know, do you have to do it in front of your sister and her friend? It's not likely Mom will be able to solve the situation without letting your sister know (eventually) that you told. What can you do to keep your dignity, and your self-respect intact, when your sister finds out?**

Have kids practice lines like, **"Look, you might be older but you're not always right. You know that was wrong and you were just afraid to say anything. I don't want to be afraid like that--ever."**

Things to impress upon them:

- **Ask Jesus for wisdom in every tricky "Rahab" situation. You will be amazed at how fast He is to help you and how much wisdom will come clear. You can't know until you try.**

- **Every situation is different. Every sibling and friend is different. That’s why a relationship with Him is so important. He’s the only one in the universe who knows intimately the people involved and what will help.**

**If you don’t sense clear wisdom, make a decision and start moving toward it anyway. God can turn a moving ship more easily than one that is stopped. And stopping can turn into procrastination, and then “well, it’s too late now to do anything.”**

## GAME, YOUNGER CHILDREN: YOUR SECRET LINE TO GOD

**God’s voice is always available to us, but as we’ve often learned by now, you have to listen for it. It sounds far off sometimes, in comparison to what goes on around us. Let’s practice with a tin can.**

Punch small holes in the bottoms of two cans. Tie them together with a 12-foot string that runs from one hole to the other. Tie the string off with knots big enough that they won’t slip back through the little holes.

Pull the string out to its entire length. You have to pull the string tight to hear best. Have one child say something into one can. Have the child at the other end repeat it.

Variation: Use short scripture verses and have the listening child repeat at the other end.

- Seek first the Kingdom of God. (Matthew 6: 33)
- Delight yourself in the Lord...He will give you the desires of your heart. (Psalm 37:3)
- He will give you the desires of your heart. (Psalm 37:5)
- Blessed is the man who perseveres. (James 1:12)

## GAME, OLDER CHILDREN: SPY

Have all the children pull a slip of paper out of a hat. Half the slips should say “Good Guy.” Half the slips should say “Bad Guy.” One slip should say “Spy.” Nobody can know what the slips say. *Hence, nobody will know who the spy is. If the spy accidentally blabs, you have to start over with the pulling-out-of-the-hat.*

Have them split up into two groups.

The good guys go to the center of the room.

The bad guys go to the far wall with a stack of index cards.

The “spy” should go with the bad guys.

The bad guys pass out index cards with scripture verses on them. As no one knows who the spy is, he will get an index card too. The bad guys then move to the center of the room and start walking in a circle. The good guys form a bigger circle outside their little circle and walk in the opposite direction.

The goal is for the “spy” to keep walking in the circles with everyone until he or she feels a little bit safe. Then quickly, the spy should yell “SPY!” She should pass off her index card quickly as possible to the nearest good guy. The good guy runs to the designated spot at the far side of the room and slaps the wall. The bad guys try to tag him.

If he slaps the designated spot before getting tagged, he wins and gets to read the scripture verse.

Repeat, having students pick out of the hat again with a new spy. Points are scored by

Being a spy: 1 point

Being a good guy who makes it to the wall without being tagged: 1 point

Being a bad guy who tags the good guy before he gets to the wall: 1 point

Person with the most points wins a snack prize.

## CLOSING PRAYER

**Father, Lead us and guide us in this world when we have to make tough decisions like when to tell and when to keep silent. We know that You are always there to lead us and guide us and give us courage to do the right thing.**

**Amen.**

# JOSHUA COLLAPSES THE WALLS OF JERICHO

When Joshua led the Hebrew army to take Jericho, one of their biggest obstacles would be to break through the big, thick walls that protected that city. However, the Lord went before them and did the toughest work Himself, which was to demolish that wall and give the army many directions from which to attack. **With Jesus in charge of our lives, we can count on Him to do the hard work to make us strong and successful, but we have to be willing to work at being strong Christians.**

## MATERIALS LIST

### Lesson

- No materials necessary

### Intro Activity for Younger Children

- Prize (optional)

### Intro Activity for Older Children

- Pen and paper

### Activity, Younger Children

- Construction paper, one sheet for each child
- Glue sticks
- Marker pens
- Stapler
- Brown construction paper, five sheets cut into little squares to make bricks.

### Activity, Older Children

- Dollar store pinwheels, one for each child.
- Their rankings from the list of charities in the Intro Activity
- Scotch tape or stick glue

### Game, Younger Children

- Jericho horns made from Activity

### Game, Older Children

- Large raw potato
- Four Sunday school chairs



## BIBLE READING / STORY:

# JOSHUA 5:13-15

<sup>13</sup> Now when Joshua was near Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him with a drawn sword in his hand. Joshua went up to him and asked, "Are you for us or for our enemies?"

<sup>14</sup> "Neither," he replied, "but as commander of the army of the LORD I have now come." Then Joshua fell facedown to the ground in reverence, and asked him, "What message does my Lord have for his servant?"

<sup>15</sup> The commander of the LORD's army replied, "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy." And Joshua did so.

## Joshua 6:1-15

<sup>1</sup> Now Jericho was tightly shut up because of the Israelites. No one went out and no one came in.

<sup>2</sup> Then the LORD said to Joshua, "See, I have delivered Jericho into your hands, along with its king and its fighting men. <sup>3</sup> March around the city once with all the armed men. Do this for six days. <sup>4</sup> Have seven priests carry trumpets of rams' horns in front of the ark. On the seventh day, march around the city seven times, with the priests blowing the trumpets. <sup>5</sup> When you hear them sound a long blast on the trumpets, have all the people give a loud shout; then the wall of the city will collapse and the people will go up, every man straight in."

<sup>6</sup> So Joshua son of Nun called the priests and said to them, "Take up the ark of the covenant of the LORD and have seven priests carry trumpets in front of it." <sup>7</sup> And he ordered the people, "Advance! March around the city, with the armed guard going ahead of the ark of the LORD."

<sup>8</sup> When Joshua had spoken to the people, the seven priests carrying the seven trumpets before the LORD went forward, blowing their trumpets, and the ark of the LORD's covenant followed them. <sup>9</sup> The armed guard marched ahead of the priests who blew the trumpets, and the rear guard followed the ark. All this time the trumpets were sounding. <sup>10</sup> But Joshua had commanded the people, "Do not give a war cry, do not raise your voices, do not say a word until the day I tell you to shout. Then shout!" <sup>11</sup> So he had the ark of the LORD carried around the city, circling it once. Then the people returned to camp and spent the night there.

<sup>12</sup> Joshua got up early the next morning and the priests took up the ark of the LORD. <sup>13</sup> The seven priests carrying the seven trumpets went forward, marching before the ark of the LORD

and blowing the trumpets. The armed men went ahead of them and the rear guard followed the ark of the LORD, while the trumpets kept sounding.<sup>14</sup> So on the second day they marched around the city once and returned to the camp. They did this for six days.

<sup>15</sup> On the seventh day, they got up at daybreak and marched around the city seven times in the same manner, except that on that day they circled the city seven times.<sup>16</sup> The seventh time around, when the priests sounded the trumpet blast, Joshua commanded the people, "Shout! For the LORD has given you the city!"<sup>17</sup> The city and all that is in it are to be devoted to the LORD.

## Joshua 20

<sup>20</sup> When the trumpets sounded, the people shouted, and at the sound of the trumpet, when the people gave a loud shout, the wall collapsed; so every man charged straight in, and they took the city.

# LESSON (TEACHER WORDS IN BOLD): THE WALLS OF JERICHO COME TUMBLING DOWN

**Gee, I'm really tired this morning, but God is good and strong and powerful, and He never gets tired. I think I'll let God teach this class.**

Lean your chair into the corner or against the wall, put your head back and pretend to sleep until your class is very restless.

**Gee, it looks like God didn't show up to teach my class. Maybe God doesn't care about me. Maybe He thinks my being tired is just not important. Does God care about me?** Yes.

**Then, why won't He come down and teach my class?**

Some will say that that God doesn't do things like that.

**Why not? He's God. He can do anything. And I'm really, *really* tired today. I didn't get enough sleep last night. Does one of *you* want to teach my class? Go ahead.**

As you may have some well-intending born leaders among you, don't carry this on for too long.

**Wait. The Book of Romans says a very cool thing. It says, “ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER FOR THE GOOD OF THEM THAT BELIEVE.” Could my being tired today be a good thing in some way? Let them answer.**

**Could it be that God *wants* me to work when I’m tired? Why would He want that? He knows that working when you don’t want to makes you stronger.**

**What happens when we do things we don’t want to do because we love God? We get stronger.**

**Jericho was the first land the Hebrews took in the 40 years since they had left Egypt. Now they were being told to stand up like men and fight. Sometimes following God is not easy. Sometimes we have to do what we don’t want to do in order to build our faith or build up our courage and strength. Think of some things you don’t like to do but that you have to do.**

Prompts:

- Minding your parents’ rules, even though you might not always like them;
- Standing up for God when others say that faith is silliness;
- Resisting temptation to lie or steal, even though a friend is doing so.

**When you do these things, God starts working his own little miracles inside of you. Every time you resist temptation to take the easy way out and you do the right thing, you get a little bit stronger in Christ.**

**Here’s what I’m going to do. Instead of wishing I could have stayed home in bed, I’m going to thank God that I’m here with you. “Heavenly Father, thank you for putting me in the company of these great kids. (Yawn.) They’re so much fun. And thanks for giving me a job for Your Kingdom! How cool is that! Help me do my job well for you.”**

Roll your arms around some and take deep breaths. **God is telling me to get up and get moving. It’s the last thing I feel like doing, but let’s try. Everyone get up with me.**

Have kids get up, stamp their feet, jog in place, roll their arms. **Gee, I feel better already.**

**I do the work, and God does the miracles. Guess what he did? He made our activity for today a relay game...and He wants me to participate! That’s sure to wake anybody up!**

## INTRO ACTIVITY, YOUNGER CHILDREN: THE PATIENCE GAME

**Today we'll be talking about Joshua and how he made the walls of Jericho tumble down. Joshua had to be patient for a lot of years before becoming that courageous, so today we're practicing patience. It's not easy!**

Have the arriving children sit facing each other. They can move their eyes and mouths but nothing else. See who can sit the longest without moving.

## INTRO ACTIVITY, OLDER CHILDREN: WAITING ON THE LORD

**Today we're talking about how Joshua led the Hebrew army to conquer Jericho. He had to be patient to become that strong. What do you want to do once you're a strong Christian?**

Show them the following list of charity work that Christians do. Ask them to number their piece of paper, then rank each one on a scale of 1-10. "1" means I have almost no interest in doing this. "10" means I would totally love to do this. While understanding the 1-10 thing might seem tedious, it helps keep them moving slowly enough to reflect on each charity.

1. \_\_\_\_ save animals
2. \_\_\_\_ build homes for homeless kids
3. \_\_\_\_ help people who have been tortured by bad governments
4. \_\_\_\_ work as a doctor in a poor country
5. \_\_\_\_ work as a nurse in a poor country
6. \_\_\_\_ help clean up pollution
7. \_\_\_\_ bring food to starving people
8. \_\_\_\_ help people escape prison in other countries who are there because they believe in God
9. \_\_\_\_ help people whose houses have blown away in a tornado
10. \_\_\_\_ help keep the water clean for the fish and water mammals

11. \_\_\_\_ drive an ambulance in the jungle
12. \_\_\_\_ rebuild homes for people after tidal waves demolished them
13. \_\_\_\_ take kids with terminal illnesses on vacation
14. \_\_\_\_ grow fruits and vegetables for people who don't have any
15. \_\_\_\_ help kids learn to walk again after they've been struck by war bombs
16. \_\_\_\_ find the homeless a place to stay on cold nights
17. \_\_\_\_ run after school programs for kids who live in depressed areas
18. \_\_\_\_ take elderly people in your car after they can't drive anymore
19. \_\_\_\_ teach kids who are in jail for bad behavior
20. \_\_\_\_ teach poor people how to farm
21. \_\_\_\_ run a shelter for dogs and cats that nobody wants
22. \_\_\_\_ visit sick kids in the hospital
23. \_\_\_\_ be a musician who sings gospel music to raise money
24. \_\_\_\_ rebuild cars for poor people who can't afford one

Add their own: \_\_\_\_\_

Have them announce which charitable activities are most appealing to them. Encourage them with anything you know personally about charities concerning those issues.

## ACTIVITY, YOUNGER CHILDREN: JERICO HORNS

**God and Joshua worked together to get the walls of Jericho to come down. Joshua had to lead the men who blew the horns. God made the walls tumble down. After the walls came down, Joshua had to lead the army in to take over the land.**

**When we work together with God, amazing things can happen. To remind us of that, we're making our own "Jericho Horns" today.**

Give each student a sheet of construction paper. You should have the word JOSHUA written in large letters at the top of each sheet, or show them how to do this if they are old enough. The small brown squares are bricks of the walls of Jericho which they can glue on in a haphazard fashion (as if they are flying).

Note to students: If they only glue down half of each brick, the unglued part might vibrate and add to the noise, depending on the type of paper used, once the horn is made.

Have each student roll his paper lengthwise but unevenly, so that near the mouth, there is only a very small hole, and near the opposite end there is a bigger hole. They can blow through the horns.

## ACTIVITY, OLDER CHILDREN: STRENGTH & COURAGE PINWHEELS

**You're probably not old enough yet to know what God has in store for your future, but you can start now by asking Him to use you. Not everyone goes into fulltime ministry, of course, but teenagers and adults go on mission trips and do summer projects to help those less fortunate. It's never too soon to start building our strength for that.**

Using their "Strength in the Lord" Intro Activity sheets, have them cut out four activities they think they'd most like to be involved in someday.

Discuss with them their choices and enlighten them about some of the opportunities available, so they can visualize themselves doing something like this eventually.

Have them glue or staple those four choices to the straight side of the leaf of each pinwheel. (Most pinwheels have four leaves. If the ones you buy have six leaves, have them pick six possible choices).

**We send our wishes up to God for time to devote to his service** (blow on one of the pinwheels and watch it go around). **He makes the circumstances "blow our way" so that we can serve Him in the ways He knows are best.**

**Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart. –Psalm 37:4**

## GAME, YOUNGER CHILDREN: ANNOUNCING OUR LOVE

Have the children form a circle holding their Jericho Horns made earlier. Starting with one child, have them go around in a circle and put their horn to the ear of the child next to them.

*Note: Be sure to tell them to WHISPER...no talking allowed.*

In that child's ear, the child holding the horn must whisper something nice about the child on his other side. The horn blower has to use the child's name (not he or she) and the compliment has to be at least eight words long. It can't just be "she's nice."

Prompts:

- I like how Jamal is quiet and doesn't interrupt.
- I like how Kaleigh is funny and makes me laugh.
- I like Mindy's outfit and how she always looks nice every Sunday.
- I like that Brian shares with me and makes me feel good.

The child who is listening to the whisper has to repeat the compliment for the whole group to hear.

**Sometimes we think of being strong as having lots of muscles, but one of the most important things about true strength is that true strength sees the good in everyone. A strong heart is more important than a strong body!**

## GAME, OLDER CHILDREN: POTATO SOCCER

**One thing the Hebrews had to learn in order to form an army was how to work as a team. We're going to play potato soccer today and try to win a game that requires teamwork.**

Have children form two teams. The goal is for one team to kick the potato into their goal, which can be two chairs situated close together, the opening between the inner legs being the goal. One goal should be laid down on either side of the room.

Kids can kick the potato only twice before kicking to a teammate. The team that gets the most goals wins.

## CLOSING PRAYER

**Father, Thank you for showing us how You work with us, even when we're working for You. Help us make choices in our lives that make You happy, the choices that make You want to pick us for Your team.**

**Amen.**



# JOSHUA FORGETS TO ASK GOD

This lesser known story of the Bible is quite powerful in that it shows what happens when we forget to include God in our planning. Joshua forgot to include God in his plans, and he ended up in a partnership with the very bad men God told him to destroy! **God wants to be included in ALL of our plans. If we ask for His help, we surely get it, and if we don't, we're cutting ourselves a raw deal.**

## MATERIALS LIST

### Lesson

- One party horn
- One set of big metal spoons
- Two building blocks
- Party hats, one for each child
- Small prizes, one for each child (use your imagination for these, or see notes at the end of lesson for suggestions)
- Cupcakes, one for each child

### Intro Activity for Younger Children

- Drawing paper with I WILL INCLUDE GOD IN... written at the top; one sheet for each child
- Crayons or markers

### Intro Activity, Older Children

- Construction paper, one sheet for each child
- Marker pens

### Activity, Younger Children

- Paper plates, one for each child. Punch a very small hole in the center for a fastener to fit through snugly. Using a ruler, divide the plate into equal quarters
- Colored construction paper; cut or draw into arrows to make the large and small hands of a clock. If the children are old enough, just give them the construction sheet with the hands drawn on so they can cut out themselves
- Fasteners, one for each child
- Paper hole punch
- Markers and crayons
- Write one of these things in each quarter:
  - EATING MEALS;
  - PLAYING WITH FRIENDS;
  - BEING IN SCHOOL;
  - BEING WITH FAMILY.
- Write on the little hand of the clock: I WILL
- Write on the big hand of the clock: INCLUDE GOD

### Activity, Older Children

- Foam sheets from the craft store in 10-12 bright colors
- Scissors
- Ribbon thin, or ¼-inch thick, 1 foot for each child
- Hole punch

### Game, Younger Children

- Blindfolds, enough for half the children
- Balls (any size; can be made of balled up sheets of aluminum foil), enough for half the children

### Game, Older Children

- Two bouncy balls, at least the size of a basket ball

## BIBLE READING / STORY: JOSHUA 9, EXCERPTS

<sup>1</sup> Now when all the kings west of the Jordan heard how God helped Israel. They came together to make war against Joshua and Israel.

<sup>3</sup> However, when the people of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai, <sup>4</sup> they tried to trick him: They sent a group whose donkeys were loaded with worn-out sacks and old wineskins. <sup>5</sup> The men put worn and patched sandals on their feet and wore old clothes. All the bread of their food supply was dry and moldy. <sup>6</sup> Then they went to Joshua in the camp at Gilgal and said to him and the men of Israel, "We have come from a distant country; make a treaty with us."

<sup>7</sup> The men of Israel said to the Hivites, "But perhaps you live near us. How then can we make a treaty with you?"

<sup>8</sup> "We are your servants," they said to Joshua.

But Joshua asked, "Who are you and where do you come from?"

<sup>9</sup> They answered: "Your servants have come from a very distant country because of the fame of the LORD your God. For we have heard reports of him: all that he did in Egypt, <sup>10</sup> and all that he did to the two kings of the Amorites east of the Jordan. <sup>11</sup> And our elders and all those living in our country said to us, 'Take provisions for your journey; go and meet them and say to them, "We are your servants; make a treaty with us." <sup>12</sup> This bread of ours was warm when we packed it at home on the day we left to come to you. But now see how dry and moldy it is. <sup>13</sup> And these wineskins that we filled were new, but see how cracked they are. And our clothes and sandals are worn out by the very long journey."

<sup>14</sup> The men of Israel sampled their provisions but did not inquire of the LORD. <sup>15</sup> Then Joshua made a treaty of peace with them to let them live, and the leaders of the assembly ratified it by oath.

<sup>16</sup> Three days after they made the treaty with the Gibeonites, the Israelites heard that they were neighbors, living near them. <sup>23</sup> Joshua summoned the Gibeonites and said, "Why did you deceive us by saying, 'We live a long way from you,' while actually you live near us? <sup>23</sup> You are now under a curse: You will never cease to serve as woodcutters and water carriers for the house of my God."

<sup>24</sup> They answered Joshua, "Your servants were clearly told how the LORD your God had commanded his servant Moses to give you the whole land and to wipe out all its inhabitants from

before you. So we feared for our lives because of you, and that is why we did this.<sup>25</sup> We are now in your hands. Do to us whatever seems good and right to you."

<sup>26</sup> So Joshua saved them from the army and they did not kill them. <sup>27</sup> That day he made the Gibeonites woodcutters and water carriers for the community and for the altar of the LORD at the place the LORD would choose. And that is what they are to this day.

## LESSON (TEACHER WORDS IN BOLD): JOSHUA FORGETS TO ASK FOR HELP

**Joshua had led the take-over of lands held by two very strong kings by the time he faced the Gibeonites. Yet they were able to trick him. Why?** Because he forgot to ask for God's help.

**Sometimes we can get so involved in things like playing with friends or planning a party that we suddenly stop and think, "Wait! I haven't thought about God all day!" And that's a shame. God is Our Father, who wants to be part of all things we do. We should learn at a very early age to seek His help in everything.**

Bring three children to the front of the room. Give one a party horn. Prompt her to say, "We're having a party!!" over and over. Give one a set of blocks to pound together. Prompt him to say, "We're going to play great games!" over and over. Give one two spoons to clang together. Prompt her to say, "We're going to have cake!" over and over.

**When I say "three," everyone do your part at once and jump up and down, and let's see if we can hear the voice of the Lord. One...two...three....**

As they clatter, in a very small voice, say, "**Make sure you have a prize for everyone.**" Say it in such a way that probably nobody can hear you.

**Now, what did I say?**

No one should be able to recite. Repeat the exercise. Go around and have each child whisper in your ear what he *thinks* you said.

**Do you think you could hear better if we stopped all the clatter for a moment? Yes. Do you sometimes get so involved in things that you forget to listen for the Voice of God? Tell us about a time when you've been too busy to ask God for help:**

Let some children make some confessions. Examples:

- Did you have a party and forget to invite Jesus?
- Did you forget on Christmas morning to thank Jesus for your new toys?
- Did you forget to say happy birthday to *Him*?
- Did you forget to ask Jesus to come with you on your trip last summer?

**Why did you forget? What were you afraid of? You know that Jesus loves parties and fun, too, don't you? Did you know that the first miracle Jesus did was at a huge party? Sometimes we think church is a very serious big deal and that our fun is light and happy, and maybe our faith could put a damper on things. Not so! God wants to be with you in fun times as well as sad times when you're calling out for him.**

**Let's try this thing again. Only this time without the clamber and racing about.**

Let the demonstrating children sit down. **Listen for what the still, small voice of the Lord said:**

**Make sure everyone gets a prize.**

Bring out party hats and cupcakes for everyone. Prizes can be innovative, such as beanie babies your kids (or neighbor's kids) are finished with. They can be special, personalized notes from you. They can be bubbles from the dollar store.

## INTRO ACTIVITY, YOUNGER CHILDREN: INCLUDING GOD IN YOUR PLANS

**Think of something coming up that you are looking forward to. It can be a shopping trip or a party or a favorite TV show that will be airing. Today we'll be talking about the importance of including God in all our plans.**

Give them construction paper that says at the top: I WILL INCLUDE GOD IN...

Have students draw a picture of what they will be doing. Tell them to draw God into the picture, who is happy to be a part of that activity.

## INTRO ACTIVITY, OLDER CHILDREN: SOMETHING LATE, SOMETHING EARLY

Give each of the children a sheet of paper and tell them to fold it in fours. Once they open it they should draw a diamond shape in the middle, maybe a couple inches long on each side. Without writing in the diamond have them fill in with an example of each of the following: (You can write these four things out and put the list in the middle of the table)

- something that happens late in the day
- something that happens early in the day
- something that will be fun
- something that will be stressful

When they are finished and you're ready to begin the lesson:

**Now write in the diamond: "God wants to be a part of..." Today we'll see how Joshua forgot to ask God, and he ended up in a partnership with the very guys God told him to destroy.**

## ACTIVITY, YOUNGER CHILDREN: GOD CLOCKS

**We've been talking about how we forget sometimes to include God in our plans. Hence we're going to make clocks to help us remember to ask for God's help.**

Pass out paper plates, which you have divided into four equal triangles with a ruler and a sharpie. Tell the children to color four little pictures in each quarter of the plate to go with the words you've written:

1. Eating meals;
2. Playing with friends;
3. Being in school;
4. Being with family.

Give each child the piece of construction paper with the two clock hands to cut out. Punch a hole into the ends. Give each child a fastener so they can attach the hands to the clock.

## ACTIVITY, OLDER CHILDREN: REMEMBERING GOD BRACELETS

Cut up the foam sheets into one-inch squares. Punch a hole in the center of each using a hole punch. Give 10 to 12 squares to each child. Have them string the squares onto the ribbon, tying a knot after each so that there is about a quarter-inch of space between each square. They should leave a couple inches free at the beginning before the first knot. When they have enough squares to fit around their wrist, tie the ribbon off with a box knot and cut the remainder of the ribbon on each side with scissors.

**Sometimes, these are called “friendship bracelets.” Let’s call ours “Friends With God” bracelets. As we wear them, let’s be reminded to include God in all our plans throughout the day. All we have to do is see those bright colors and think of all the “colorful” ways that God wants to brighten up our lives.**

## GAME, YOUNGER CHILDREN: CHINESE FIRE DRILL

Break the children up into pairs. Have half the children come to the center of a ring of chairs. Their partners should be sitting in the chairs. Blindfold the children in the center. Give their seated partners one ball.

- Say to the children in the seats: “Find a new seat! Go!”
- After this “Chinese Fire Drill,” all children should be seated in a different spot than the one they were in before their partners were blindfolded.
- Tell the seated children they *may not* make a sound to help their partner. All those helping will be disqualified.
- Say to the blindfolded children, “Find your partner!”
- The blindfolded children have to go around and just by touching, figure out which seat their partner is in. When they figure it out they should take the ball and return to the center.
- First child back to the center wins the round.

Switch partners, allowing the seated children to be blindfolded in the center for the next round.

For the third round, return to having the first children blindfolded again. Tell them this time, *their partners, after the Chinese Fire drill, may call out to them by name over and over until they reach them, and they may also confirm that they are the right partner.*

Switch again.

Afterward:

**How much easier was it to find your partner when he or she was yelling your name so you could hear? How much faster did you get back with your ball?**

**God wants to be your partner and make everything easier for you. Remember to ask Him to lead you every day, so listen for His voice, even if everyone else is being really loud!**

## GAME, OLDER CHILDREN: BELLY BALL

Have the children split into two-man teams. Have one partner stand at either end of the room.

**We don't realize how difficult it is to get by without inviting God into our daily lives to help us. It's sort of like what I'm going to ask you to do with these balls.**

Pass two balls down to the two competitors at one end of the room.

**Put your hands behind your back. You *may not* kick the ball. You have to find some way to carry it to your partner at the other end of the room without using your hands and without kicking the ball. Go!**

Children should find this very confounding. Eventually, they will see that they can grasp the ball between their knees and hop a few steps at a time before it falls away again. When the first one reaches his partner, say:

**To finish the race, put ball between your bellies. Walk it back to the starting line. If you drop it you have to start from where you dropped it. Go!**

As those with the balls between their knees reach the first finish line, let all partnerships try this to get back to the other end of the room.

Afterwards:



**This ball is sort of like our daily experiences. We have to find ways to cope with them and “carry” them in an imperfect world. Trying to get the ball and carry it between our knees on our own—that’s sort of like how clumsy life can be when we have to do things alone. But God wants to be our partner. Carrying the ball with our partner, things were still a little clumsy, weren’t they? But they were easier. That’s how life on earth when we partner up with God. Things won’t be perfect until we get into heaven, but it helps to know we always have a partner until we get there, doesn’t it?**

## CLOSING PRAYER

**Father, Thank you for wanting to be a part of everything we do. We understand that we were made for You to enjoy, and we want to enjoy Your guidance every day also.**

**Amen.**

# WHAT'S ALL THIS BORING STUFF?

Like many books of the Old Testament, the adventure tales of Joshua often take an Intermission to present lists of names and countries and who-defeated-whom, which most kids would see and think, “Who cares anyway?” It’s not important to take children on lengthy journeys through the hundreds of such lists in the Bible; a glimpse here and there will get across a point they need to understand. It *is* important to let them know that thousands of years ago, historians went very far out of their way to let their descendants know **they were telling the whole truth. The men who chronicled the Bible documented details of names and places to the so that readers like us, so many years later, would take stock in its accuracy. The Bible is truth.**

## MATERIALS LIST

### Lesson

- Photocopies or scans of the chapters of Joshua from your Bible as follows:  
**Joshua 12:1-8, Joshua 12:9-24, Matthew 1:1-17,**
- Tape for putting together parts of scrolls that ran onto separate pages

### Intro Activity, Younger Children

- Construction paper
- Markers and crayons

### Intro Activity, Older Children

- Sheet with saying at the top “Once I was Accused of \_\_\_\_\_.”
- Markers and crayons

### Activity, Younger Children

- Photocopy of the Luke 3 genealogy from your Bible, one copy for each child
- Scissors
- Tape
- Ribbon (gold if possible)

## Activity, Older Children

- Photocopy of the Luke 3 genealogy from your Bible with all the names cut out onto separate pieces
- Hat for names to go in

## Game, Younger Children

- One toy small enough to hide behind a child's back (match box car, beanie baby)

## Game, Older Children

- At least one flat copy of all four lists for the scrolls
- Flat surface like a clip board or book so the children can't see the lists
- *Easier version:* at least four copies of each scroll that the children can share
- Score sheets, pencils for each child

# BIBLE READING / STORY: JOSHUA 12

## Kings defeated by Joshua, Lands taken by Joshua.

Before Class:

In this lesson are examples of four lengthy lists of names and places—two from Joshua and two containing the genealogies of Jesus. Long lists are part of the Bible that are often ignored, because most people, and children especially, can't see the point. Rather than try to read any of the lists presented herein to antsy children, print out the following passages in your Bible (in enlarged type if you really want to make a dramatic impression). Most Bibles are printed in two columns. Cut out the columns and attach the second to the bottom of the first. If you're printing a list that exceeds one page, keep going with the cutting and taping so that passage is contained on one long document (that's four documents altogether). Then, roll the document up like a scroll, so when you first hold one of the lists in front of the class it may look deceptively short. You should have four scrolls by the time you finish.

### Scroll 1: Joshua 12:1-8

#### List of Lands mentioned that Joshua Defeated—East & West of the Jordan

Arnon Gorge to	Beth Jeshimoth	Baal Gad
Mount Hermon	Pisgah	Mount Halak
Heshbon	Bashan	Lands of the
Aroer	Ashtaroth	Hittites
Arnon Gorge	Edrei	Amorites
Jabbok River	Mount Hermon,	Canaanites
Gilead	Salecah	Perizzites
Arabah	Bashan	Hivites
Sea of Kinnereth	Geshur	Jebusites
Sea of the Arabah (the Salt Sea)	Maacah	

## Scroll 2: Joshua 12:9-24

### Kings that Joshua Defeated

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <sup>9</sup> the king of Jericho one<br>the king of Ai (near Bethel) one | <sup>17</sup> the king of Tappuah one<br>the king of Hopher one           |
| <sup>10</sup> the king of Jerusalem one<br>the king of Hebron one        | <sup>18</sup> the king of Aphek one<br>the king of Lasharon one           |
| <sup>11</sup> the king of Jarmuth one<br>the king of Lachish one         | <sup>19</sup> the king of Madon one<br>the king of Hazor one              |
| <sup>12</sup> the king of Eglon one<br>the king of Gezer one             | <sup>20</sup> the king of Shimron Meron one<br>the king of Acshaph one    |
| <sup>13</sup> the king of Debir one<br>the king of Geder one             | <sup>21</sup> the king of Taanach one<br>the king of Megiddo one          |
| <sup>14</sup> the king of Hormah one<br>the king of Arad one             | <sup>22</sup> the king of Kedesh one<br>the king of Jokneam in Carmel one |
| <sup>15</sup> the king of Libnah one<br>the king of Adullam one          | <sup>23</sup> the king of Dor one<br>the king of Goyim in Gilgal one      |
| <sup>16</sup> the king of Makkedah one<br>the king of Bethel one         | <sup>24</sup> the king of Tirzah one<br>thirty-one kings in all.          |

## Scroll 3: Matthew 1:1-17

<sup>1</sup>A record of the ancestors of Jesus Christ the son of David, the son of Abraham:

<sup>2</sup>Abraham was the father of Isaac,  
Isaac the father of Jacob,  
Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers,  
<sup>3</sup>Judah the father of Perez and Zerah,  
whose mother was Tamar,  
Perez the father of Hezron,  
Hezron the father of Ram,  
<sup>4</sup>Ram the father of Amminadab,  
Amminadab the father of Nahshon,  
Nahshon the father of Salmon,

<sup>5</sup>Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother  
was Rahab,  
Boaz the father of Obed, whose mother was  
Ruth,  
Obed the father of Jesse,  
<sup>6</sup>and Jesse the father of King David.  
David was the father of Solomon,  
whose mother had been Uriah's wife,  
<sup>7</sup>Solomon the father of Rehoboam,  
Rehoboam the father of Abijah,

Abijah the father of Asa,  
<sup>8</sup>Asa the father of Jehoshaphat,  
Jehoshaphat the father of Jehoram,  
Jehoram the father of Uzziah,  
<sup>9</sup>Uzziah the father of Jotham,  
Jotham the father of Ahaz,  
Ahaz the father of Hezekiah,  
<sup>10</sup>Hezekiah the father of Manasseh,  
Manasseh the father of Amon,  
Amon the father of Josiah,  
<sup>11</sup>and Josiah the father of Jeconiah  
and his brothers at the time of the exile to  
Babylon.

<sup>12</sup>After the exile to Babylon:  
Jeconiah was the father of Shealtiel,

<sup>17</sup>Thus there were fourteen generations in all  
from Abraham to David,  
fourteen from David to the exile to Babylon,  
and fourteen from the exile to the Christ

Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel,  
<sup>13</sup>Zerubbabel the father of Abiud,  
Abiud the father of Eliakim,  
Eliakim the father of Azor,  
<sup>14</sup>Azor the father of Zadok,  
Zadok the father of Akim,  
Akim the father of Eliud,  
<sup>15</sup>Eliud the father of Eleazar,  
Eleazar the father of Matthan,  
Matthan the father of Jacob,  
<sup>16</sup>and Jacob the father of Joseph,  
the husband (some translators say \*fa-  
ther\*) of Mary,  
of whom was born Jesus,  
who is called Christ.

### **Ancestors of Jesus as presented in Luke 3:23-38:**

<sup>23</sup>Now Jesus himself was about thirty years old when he began his ministry. He was the son,  
so it was thought, of Joseph,  
the son of Heli, <sup>24</sup>the son of Matthat,  
the son of Levi, the son of Melki,  
the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph,  
<sup>25</sup>the son of Mattathias, the son of Amos,  
the son of Nahum, the son of Esli,  
the son of Naggai, <sup>26</sup>the son of Maath,  
the son of Mattathias, the son of Semein,  
the son of Josech, the son of Joda,  
<sup>27</sup>the son of Joanan, the son of Rhesa,  
the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel,  
the son of Neri, <sup>28</sup>the son of Melki,  
the son of Addi, the son of Cosam,  
the son of Elmadam, the son of Er,  
<sup>29</sup>the son of Joshua, the son of Eliezer,

the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat,  
the son of Levi, <sup>30</sup>the son of Simeon,  
the son of Judah, the son of Joseph,  
the son of Jonam, the son of Eliakim,  
<sup>31</sup>the son of Melea, the son of Menna,  
the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan,  
the son of David, <sup>32</sup>the son of Jesse,  
the son of Obed, the son of Boaz,  
the son of Salmon, the son of Nahshon,  
<sup>33</sup>the son of Amminadab, the son of Ram,  
the son of Hezron, the son of Perez,  
the son of Judah, <sup>34</sup>the son of Jacob,

the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham,  
the son of Terah, the son of Nahor,  
<sup>35</sup>the son of Serug, the son of Reu,  
the son of Peleg, the son of Eber,  
the son of Shelah, <sup>36</sup>the son of Cainan,  
the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem,  
the son of Noah, the son of Lamech,  
<sup>37</sup>the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch,  
the son of Jared, the son of Mahalalel,  
the son of Kenan, <sup>38</sup>the son of Enosh,  
the son of Seth, the son of Adam,  
the son of God.

## LESSON (TEACHER WORDS IN BOLD): WHY ARE THERE SO MANY BORING LISTS IN THE BIBLE?

**Let's say you came home from school one day. Your mom is standing at the door, staring at you with a very hurt look on her face.**

**"You're late," she notes.**

**"I had to stop at the drug store. I needed another spiral notebook for science, but they're out of them right now," you say, thinking nothing of this simple truth.**

**But Mom seems not to hear you.**

**"I've told you I don't want you going after school with kids down to the clay pits. It's dangerous down there."**

**You look at her in confusion. "I wasn't at the clay pits, Mom," you say honestly.**

**"And you know that's where the bad kids hang out. And nobody's watching them. And they smoke and curse and pick on kids younger than they are."**

**“Mom. I wasn’t at the clay pits,” you try again.**

**“But the pastor’s wife said she saw you down there, when I ran into her in the Supermarket a few minutes ago.”**

**“It wasn’t me!” You say, growing defensive.**

**“She’s got pretty good eyesight,” Mom says, growing impatient. “And I know all your friends have sneaked down there at least once—“**

**“Mom! Maybe my friends did, but I didn’t!”**

**“And you know a kid died down there a few years back after falling into a landslide, and the kids couldn’t dig him out in time—”**

**“MOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOMMMMM!” You lose it. “I SWEAR TO YOU! I WAS NOT AT THE CLAY PITS. WHY WON’T YOU BELIEVE ME?”**

**You realize this could be a huge problem: Nobody went with you after school. You didn’t speak to any clerks inside the drug store. You didn’t see any friends or classmates along the way today. In other words: You have no witnesses.**

**What are some of the steps you would take to prove your innocence?**

Let the children try to answer this. Here are the answers you’re really looking for:

- Tell her everything you did in detail. It’s hard to lie about all the details.
- Text your friends to see if maybe there were witnesses that you didn’t see.
- Call the pastor’s wife and get her to confess that maybe she saw somebody else. It helps if the witness will reconsider their version of things.

**If you’ve ever been accused of something you didn’t do, you’re not alone. Almost all of us have. The guys who wrote the books of the Bible were accused of that throughout history. They would often be accused of lying about what happened. After all, there are miracles in the Bible. That makes people who don’t believe in miracles skeptical about the whole thing.**

**So, the author of Joshua took some steps of his own to help prove he was telling the truth. He wrote down all the details.**

**Listen to this** (read quickly like it’s a race):

**Joshua 12:**

**“These are the kings of the land whom the Israelites had defeated and whose territory they took over east of the Jordan, from the Arnon Gorge to Mount Hermon, including all**



**the eastern side of the Arabah: Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon. He ruled from Aroer on the rim of the Arnon Gorge—from the middle of the gorge—to the Jabbok River, which is the border of the Ammonites. This included half of Gilead. <sup>3</sup> He also ruled over the eastern Arabah from the Sea of Kinnereth to the Sea of the Arabah (the Salt Sea), to Beth Jeshimoth...**”

Huff and puff like you’re out of breath. Cross your eyes. Drop down Scroll #1, the list of lands Joshua defeated.

**What *is* this boring stuff? Why are there *fourteen* chapters of stuff just like this in the Book of Joshua? Are they trying to bore you?** No, but we don’t know why.

In rapid fire again:

**“Mom! I left school and walked straight down Connecticut Avenue to the traffic light. I made a call on my cell phone to Todd and told him he could come over later today, right when I was waiting for it to turn green. Then I waved to the traffic cop and crossed over the intersection and walked down Route 9! I passed the house where the bulldog is out in the yard, and I stopped and pet him! Do you believe me yet??”**

Huff and puff. Children may acknowledge at that point that it would be nice to have had a witness.

**Having witnesses is another reason why writers of the Bible put all this stuff down. They were hoping that somebody else would come along from a different group, write about the same stuff, and their stories would match up. That happened sometimes. Now look at this list:**

Drop down scroll #2, of the kings Joshua defeated.

**Do any of these kings exist anymore? Do any of their kingdoms? Why should we care about all these endless lists of old happenings?**

Let them try to answer.

**The most important answer is that the guys who wrote the Bible probably knew that thousands of years later, there might be people like you and me reading it. *They wanted to make sure we believed them. All these facts help prove the Bible is true.***

**And here’s an even more important list. Some say this is the family tree of Jesus’ mother, Mary. It’s in the Gospel of Matthew:**

Hold up scroll #3.

**If some people might not believe Jesus is the Messiah, why not present a family tree, a historical record, with all the known names, all the way back to the beginning of mankind?**

Pass the list around. Unroll scroll #4.

**Here's the last one I have. Luke, the historian and writer of the Gospel of Luke, says that this is the family history of Jesus' dad, Joseph, that goes all the way back to the beginning of man. He's trying to prove that Jesus was a direct descendent of Father Abraham.**

**It all looks so long and boring, doesn't it? So would your neighbor think your prattle was boring, if you were going on and on to your mom to prove you weren't at the clay pits! It's got nothing to do with *her*.**

Pass the last one around for the children to see.

**The Bible is full of lists. Some people use that to say that it's boring and useless and old. They are missing the point. We don't have to read all the lists. I surely haven't read them all to you. *The lists are from the witnesses to important events. The lists are ways of saying, "Please believe me! I'm telling you every surrounding fact I can think of!"***

**By the way, to finish our story: By the time you get through a hundred details of what happened on your trip to the drug store, your mother interrupts. "Enough!! I believe you!!!"**

**As with the Bible, you proved you were telling the truth in the details. So when you see lengthy lists in the Bible, don't think, "Ugh, how boring!" Think, "Wow," all these writers were thinking of *me*, and my parents and my friends. They want to let us know how true it all is!**

## INTRO ACTIVITY, YOUNGER CHILDREN: TRUTH IN LIVING COLOR

Print out the word TRUTH in bubble letters on sheets of construction paper, one for each child.

**Today we'll be talking about some ways we know THE BIBLE IS TRUE. Use rainbow colors to make the truth pretty.**

Allow them to color in and around it and decorate the word as they wish.

## INTRO ACTIVITY, OLDER CHILDREN: “I WAS ACCUSED” PORTRAIT

**Today we’ll be talking about how some of the greatest men in history have been accused of lying.**

Tell each student to think of a time when he was accused of something he didn’t do. Give him a construction sheet that says at the top, “Once I was accused of \_\_\_\_\_.” Tell him to fill in the blank and draw a picture he can explain later to his classmates. The picture should be about what he was accused of and how he managed to prove his innocence.

## ACTIVITY, YOUNGER CHILDREN: TRUTH SCROLLS

Give each child a photocopy of the Luke 3 Genealogy of Jesus from your Bible.

Have them cut off any extra margin. They should then tape the top of the scroll to a straw, then the bottom to another straw. Then, they should roll it all up in a scroll. Have them tie it off with a piece of gold ribbon.

## ACTIVITY, OLDER CHILDREN: CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER, PLEASE

Take a copy of the Luke Genealogy and cut out all of the names. Place them into a hat. Keep your Bible open to Luke 3.

Divide the class into two teams.

Have everyone pick one name from the hat. Say **“Go!”**

The goal of the game is to get all people on one team in chronological order based on which name they are holding. They should look in the Bible, then form a line as quickly as possible from the oldest descendent of Jesus to the latest.

The first team to get themselves in order first wins the round.

Repeat, having the students pick different names each time.

## GAME, YOUNGER CHILDREN: TO TELL THE TRUTH

Pull three students in front of the class and have the other students cover their eyes. Let the three students decide who among them will have the small toy behind his back. When the students uncover their eyes all three will have their hands behind their backs, but only one will have the toy.

Allow students to ask, “Do *you* have the toy?” to any of the three.

Each kid has to say “no,” in reply. The children can try to guess which one is telling the truth by the way they act. Whether they squirm, won’t look in the eye, giggle, or slip out with the truth, it all helps children become discerning about when someone is pulling a fast one on them.

Keep interchanging the three students so everyone gets a turn.

## GAME, OLDER CHILDREN: LUKE GENEALOGY GAME

By now your students will have played for about 15 minutes with the Luke 3 Genealogy of Jesus and are probably familiar with a lot of the names. This game will add further reinforcement.

Sit in front of the children with a flattened copy of the names on all four scrolls in front of you. Have them on a clipboard or something hard you can tilt away from them so they can’t see what list you are looking at.

Pick a name from any of the four scrolls. Say it aloud for all to hear several times. Spell it. Ask:

**Is this name in the genealogy in Luke?**

They should answer yes or no. Students who answer correctly get one point. Either you can keep score or they can keep score on separate sheets. The first student to reach ten points wins.

## CLOSING PRAYER

**Father, Thank you for putting it in men's hearts to find every way possible to prove the Bible is true. Maybe someday we'll be historians and those lists will be very important to us. In the meantime, thank You for letting us know that the whole truth is there in Your word.**

**Amen.**