

Small Group Leader Guide



Today's Suggested Schedule

Prelude: Setting the tone for the experience

See the Getting Ready pages at the end of this document for a detailed description of what you'll need for today. In the Prelude folder of your curriculum, you'll find a variety of other resources to help you prepare.

Small Group (15 minutes)

Social: Providing time for fun interaction

1. Opening Activity

Large Group (35 minutes)

Worship: Inviting people to respond to God

Story: Communicating God's truth in engaging ways

- Opener
- Worship
- Bible Story (sections about God's Big Story are listed as optional)
- Prayer

Small Group (25 minutes)

Groups: Creating a safe place to connect

1. Take a Snapshot
2. Bible Story Extension and Discussion Questions
3. Verses to Take with You
4. Make It Personal with Prayer

Home: Prompting action beyond the experience

- Devotionals for Kids
- Parent Cue Card (print or email)
- [Parent Cue App](#) and [ParentCue.org](#)

✦ Need activities for a K-5th group? Check out the 2nd-3rd grade guide.

THIS MONTH



Today's Bible Story

Joshua and the Spies

Numbers 13-14

Conversation Starter

When is it hard to trust God?

Bottom Line

God can give you courage when others are afraid.

Memory Verse

**"When I'm afraid, I put my trust in you."
Psalm 56:3**



Inclusive Pro Tips

This leader guide is designed to be inclusive of children with a disability who attend a group with their peers. See highlighted sections below for additional inclusive pro-tips. Check out the Special Needs Resource Kit for more ideas for adapting each segment.

SOCIAL

Opening Activity

What You Need

- ☐ Pieces of Floor Tape or Floor Dots



Inclusive Pro Tips

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

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

① What You Do

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

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

Actions to call out:

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

② What You Say

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

Transition → Lead your group to the Large Group area.

GROUPS 1/5

Take a Snapshot

Application Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

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



Inclusive Pro Tips

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

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

① What You Do

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

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

GROUPS 2/5

Bible Story Extension



Bible Story Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

☐ No Supplies Needed

① What You Do

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

Story Scenarios

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

Inclusive Pro Tips



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

GROUPS 3/5

Discussion Questions

Bible Story Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

☐ No Supplies Needed


① What You Do

Ask the following:

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

Inclusive Pro Tips



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

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

GROUPS 4/5

Verses to Take with You



Memory Verse Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

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



Inclusive Pro Tips

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

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

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

① What You Do

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

Preteen

Small Group

September — Week 2

GROUPS 5/5

Pray and Dismiss

Prayer Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

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



① What You Do

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

Inclusive Pro Tips



Invite kids to draw instead of writing full sentences.

Getting Ready

Social

Welcome the kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Use this time to create space for them to connect with you and with each other by playing age-appropriate games, asking fun questions, and encouraging friendly interactions. This is a great moment to help kids feel seen, known, and ready to experience today's story.

Groups

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible story applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

Choose as many of these activities as you like.

Social

Opening Activity

- ☐ 4-inch pieces of floor tape (or floor dots), one for every kid

Groups

Take a Snapshot

- ☐ Print "My Journey" Activity Page on paper, one for every kid and Small Group Leader
- ☐ Coloring supplies, enough for each Small Group to share
- ☐ Pencils, one for every kid
- ☐ Device for playing music, one for each Small Group

Bible Story Extension

→ No Supplies Needed

Discussion Questions

→ No Supplies Needed

Verses to Take with You

- ☐ Bible marked at Psalm 56:3, one for each Small Group
- ☐ Plain paper, one sheet for every three kids
- ☐ Pencils, one for every three kids

Pray and Dismiss

- ☐ Print "Compass Prayer" Activity Page on paper, one set for each Small Group
- ☐ Clipboards, one for every kid
- ☐ Plain paper, one sheet for every kid
- ☐ Pencils, one for every kid

Home

- Print on cardstock or email this week's devotionals and Parent Cue cards.
- Tell parents about our additional family resources: **Parent Cue app** and **ParentCue.org**