



OLDER KIDS
Explore
the Bible®

Leader Guide > Spring 2018
Clint Pressley, General Editor



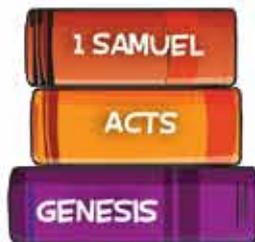
MATTHEW, JUDGES, RUTH, PSALMS

LifeWay | Kids

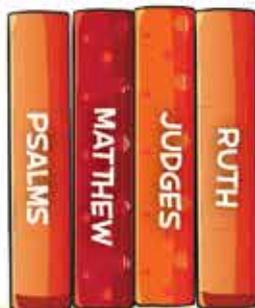
BIBLICAL OVERVIEW 2017-2018

This year kids and preschoolers will be studying the following books as they explore the Bible.

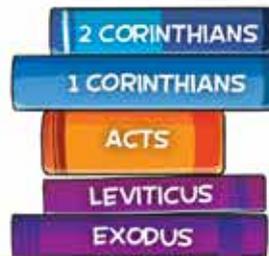
FALL 2017



WINTER 2017-18



SPRING 2018



SUMMER 2018

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EXPLORE THE BIBLE: OLDER KIDS LEADER GUIDE

Spring 2018

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We believe that the Bible has God for its author; salvation for its end; and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter and that all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. To review LifeWay's doctrinal guideline, please visit lifeway.com/doctrinalguideline.

This study of Matthew, Judges, Ruth, & Psalms was written by Penny Perkins. Penny serves as Children's Minister at Westside Baptist Church in Murray, Kentucky.

AT A GLANCE

SESSION	SUGGESTED FOR THE WEEK OF	STORY TITLE	BIBLE PASSAGE
1	March 4	Jesus Healed People	Matthew 8:1-15
2	March 11	Jesus Calmed the Storm	Matthew 8:23-27
3	March 18	Jesus Fed the Crowds	Matthew 14:13-21; 15:32-39
4	March 25	Jesus Entered Jerusalem	Matthew 21:1-17
5	April 1	Jesus' Crucifixion and Resurrection	Matthew 27:11-52; 28:1-15
6	April 8	God Sent Judges to Help His People	Judges 2:11-19; 3:7-31
7	April 15	Deborah Led Israel	Judges 4-5
8	April 22	Gideon Learned to Trust God	Judges 6-8
9	April 29	The Life of Samson	Judges 13-16
10	May 6	Ruth Showed Kindness to Naomi	Ruth 1:1-2:3
11	May 13	God Provided for Ruth and Naomi	Ruth 2; 4
12	May 20	Delight in God's Word	Psalms 119
13	May 27	God Created You	Psalms 139

	TEXT TRUTH	MEMORY VERSE
	Jesus is God the Son and has authority over everything—even sickness.	Matthew 9:36
	Jesus is God the Son and has authority over everything—even nature.	Matthew 8:27
	Jesus had compassion for the people and helped them.	Matthew 15:32a
	Jesus is worthy of honor and praise.	Matthew 21:9b
	Jesus died on the cross to pay for my sin. Jesus is alive!	Matthew 28:6
	The consequence of sin is that our world and our relationship with God are broken.	Judges 2:16
	We should trust God when He gives us a command to obey.	Judges 5:3b
	We grow in our faith by being obedient to God.	Judges 6:16a
	Sin separates us from God and His good plan for our lives.	Proverbs 8:33
	God can use anything—good or bad—to accomplish His good plans for us.	Psalms 46:1
	God is always working to accomplish His redeeming purposes.	Psalms 117:2
	When we delight in God's Word, it helps us resist sin.	Psalms 119:160a
	God created me and has a purpose for my life.	Psalms 139:14

GET TO KNOW YOUR LEADER GUIDE

The weekly session plan is your tool for leading great Bible explorations. For free online training on how to lead a group, visit ministrygrid.com/web/explorethebible.

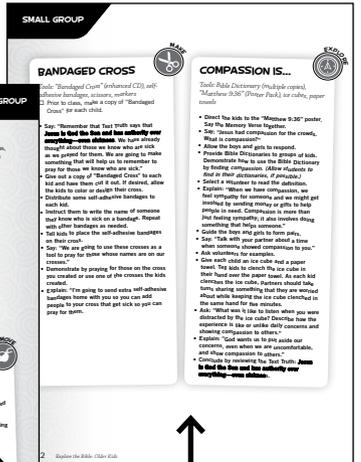
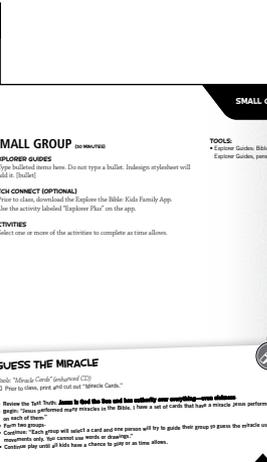
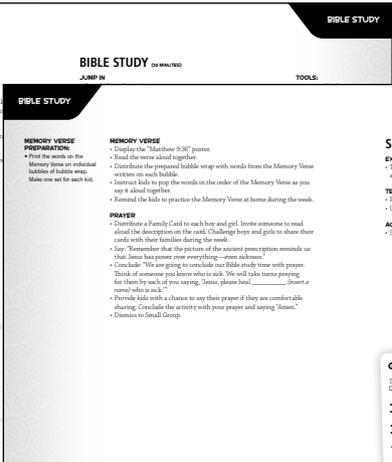
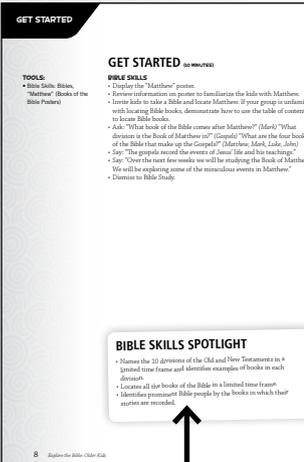
BIBLE STUDY FOR LEADERS



QUICK LOOK AT THE SESSION



POINTS TO MAKE AND THE BIBLE STORY



GET THE SESSION STARTED.

LEAD KIDS THROUGH BIBLE STUDY.

USE THE ACTIVITIES TO APPLY THE TEXT TRUTH.

Check out page 109 for more information about your Leader Guide!



Session

1



JESUS' HEALING MIRACLES

Matthew 8:1-15

Last quarter we studied the Sermon on the Mount. Matthew 8 opens with Jesus leaving the mountain following His preaching of that sermon. The crowds that followed Jesus down the mountain had followed Him up in chapter 5. Having heard Jesus' words, and having been admonished to become faithful followers of Him, the crowds were amazed by the authority Jesus had as He preached. Jesus continued to show His authority over everything as the crowds brought the lame and sick to Him to be healed.

Jesus is God the Son and has power over everything—even sickness. Three healings following the Sermon on the Mount proved that Jesus did indeed have the authority to heal the sick. The first man who encountered Jesus was a man with leprosy. Leviticus 13–14 describes the responsibilities of a person with leprosy as well as those who come in contact with the individual. The leprous man who approached Jesus knelt before Him. Jesus didn't recoil; He simply reached out, touched the man, and made him clean.

Then Jesus traveled to Capernaum—a city considered to be Jesus' home and where He centered operations for His public ministry. When Jesus arrived in Capernaum, He encountered a Roman centurion. The centurion was a military leader for Rome and commanded up to 100 men. The centurion's servant was sick at home and the centurion approached Jesus and told Jesus of the illness. Jesus said He would go and heal the servant, but the centurion assured Jesus that His words were enough for the servant to be healed. Jesus was amazed at the centurion's faith and recognized his faith as a model for belief. Jesus healed the servant and when the centurion returned home, he discovered his servant had been healed at the very moment Jesus declared the healing.

The final vignette in this story is about Peter's mother-in-law at home with a fever. With a mere touch, the fever left her and she was well. Jesus healed sick people as a way to prove He is God's Son Who has authority over everything.

SESSION FOCUS

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 8:1-15

MEMORY VERSE: Matthew 9:36

TEXT TRUTH: Jesus is God the Son and has authority over everything—even sickness.

CHRIST IN CONTEXT: In the Book of Matthew, Jesus is the fulfillment of Old Testament promises. He is the King that God’s people had been waiting for. As Matthew told the story of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection, he described Jesus as King and Messiah. Jesus reigns over all and He has power over everything—even death.

GET STARTED TOOLS

(10 MINUTES)

- Bible Skills:** *Bibles, “Matthew” (Books of the Bible Posters)*

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

(35 MINUTES)

- Jump In:** *“Medical Prescription Tablet” (DVD-ROM), modern day prescription sample (optional)*
- Examine the Text:** *Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” (Poster Pack)*
- Play the Video:** *Explore the Bible on Location video*
- Memory Verse:** *“Matthew 9:36” (Poster Pack), air bubble packaging (larger bubbles work best), permanent marker*
- Prayer:** *Family Cards*

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

(30 MINUTES)

- Explorer Guides:** *Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens*
- Move:** *“Miracle Cards” (enhanced CD)*
- Make:** *“Bandaged Cross” (enhanced CD), self-adhesive bandages, scissors, markers*
- Explore:** *heavyweight paper, markers, stickers, Bibles, church prayer list (optional)*

NOTE: Downloadable versions of DVD items are available in the Digital Video Bundle. Downloadable versions of enhanced CD items are available in the Music and Print Extras Bundle. For free online training on how to lead a group, visit ministrygrid.com/web/explorethebible.

JESUS HEALED PEOPLE

Matthew 8:1-15

One day after Jesus finished teaching, He walked down from the mountain. A man with a skin disease came to Jesus. “Lord, if You are willing, you can heal me.” Jesus reached out and touched the man, “I am willing.” Immediately the man was healed.

Then Jesus traveled with His disciples to the town of Capernaum. A centurion came to Jesus. The man begged Jesus, “Lord, my servant is at home paralyzed and in pain.”

Jesus said, “I will come and heal Him.”

“Lord,” the centurion said, “I am not worthy to have You come to my house, under my roof. If You will say the word, I know that My servant will be healed.”

The centurion explained, “I am a man under authority. I have soldiers under My command. If I say to one, ‘Go,’ he obeys and goes. If I tell another one to come, he comes. Anything I tell my servant, he does.”

Jesus was amazed and said to His followers, “I assure you: I have not found anyone in Israel with so great a faith as this man. Many Gentiles (the people who are not Jewish) will be in heaven with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But many Israelites will not be in heaven because they do not believe in Me.”

Jesus told the centurion, “Go. You have believed and it will happen.” The servant of the centurion was healed at that very moment.

Next Jesus went to Peter’s house. Peter’s mother-in-law was sick with a fever. Jesus touched the woman’s hand and her fever left. She got out of bed and started to serve Jesus. Jesus continued healing and preaching everywhere He went.

KEY POINTS

- The centurion had great faith in Jesus.
- Jesus healed people physically, but His mission on earth was to rescue people from their sin.

TEXT CONNECTION

- A Roman centurion came to Jesus asking for healing of his servant who was home sick. The centurion knew that Jesus alone had the power to heal the servant. The centurion’s faith in Jesus’ power to heal was so great that Jesus did not have to go heal the servant, but merely speak the words.
- The centurion’s dependence on Christ alone for the healing of his servant reminds us of Paul’s statements to the Corinthian church where Paul reminded the believers that not just healing, but salvation came only through Christ.
- Jesus chose to heal many people, as recorded in Matthew 8. Though the ailments suffered by persons varied, Jesus healed those who had faith in Him. Jesus healed so people would believe in the One who sent Him.
- Paul encouraged the believers in Corinth to be united in their understanding of Who Jesus is and to depend on Christ alone for salvation.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE AT HOME

See the enhanced CD for additional family resources.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Bible Skills: Bibles, “Matthew” (Books of the Bible Posters)

BIBLE SKILLS

- Display the “Matthew” poster.
- Review information on the poster to familiarize the kids with Matthew.
- Invite kids to take a Bible and locate Matthew. If your group is unfamiliar with locating Bible books, demonstrate how to use the table of contents to locate Bible books.
- Ask: “What book of the Bible comes after Matthew?” (*Mark*) “What division is the Book of Matthew in?” (*Gospels*) “What are the four books of the Bible that make up the Gospels?” (*Matthew, Mark, Luke, John*)
- Say: “The Gospels record the events of Jesus’ life and His teachings.”
- Say: “Over the next few weeks we will be studying the Book of Matthew. We will be exploring some of the miraculous events in Matthew.”
- Dismiss to Bible Study.

BIBLE SKILLS SPOTLIGHT

- Names the 10 divisions of the Old and New Testaments in a limited time frame and identifies examples of books in each division.
- Locates all the books of the Bible in a limited time frame.
- Identifies prominent Bible people by the books in which their stories are recorded.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMP IN

- Greet kids as they arrive.
- Say: “Hello, I am glad that you are here! We are starting a study of the Book of Matthew today. To get us started, I have an object to show you.”
- Display the “Medical Prescription Tablet” visual.
- Ask: “What do you think this is a picture of?”
- Discuss: “When you are sick and go to the doctor, they will write something down on a special piece of paper if medicine is needed. You take the special paper to a pharmacy to get the medicine you need. This paper is called a *prescription*.” (Optional: Show an example of a modern prescription as you discuss.)
- Explain: “This is a picture of an ancient medical prescription for treating skin disease. As you can see, prescriptions and our methods of writing have changed over the years. In our Bible study today, we will be learning about a man who had a skin disease but did not need to go to the doctor for a prescription to get better.”

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Say: “Tell me about a time when you were sick.” Select several kids to share.
- Explain: “Even the strongest adults can become weak and get sick. Disease and sickness are very strong. In our story today, we will see that Jesus is more powerful than sickness. As you hear the Bible story, listen for three people that Jesus heals.”
- Invite boys and girls to open their Bibles to Matthew 8:1. Select a kid to read that verse aloud. Continue by asking volunteers to read the following verses: Matthew 8:3; Matthew 8:13; and Matthew 8:15.
- Tell the Bible story in your own words. A Bible story page has been provided for you to use as a guide.
- Say: “Jesus was more powerful than any of the diseases and sicknesses in our Bible story. And Jesus is more powerful than any sickness that we may face today.”
- Display the “Text Truth Strip.”
- Say: “Our Text Truth today says that **Jesus is God the Son and has authority over everything—even sickness.**”
- Invite everyone to say the Text Truth together.

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 1” video.
- Ask: “Who did Joel visit in today’s video? What are some of the things Joel learned? Who was healed in today’s Bible story? Who has power over sickness?”

TOOLS:

- Jump In: “Medical Prescription Tablet” (DVD-ROM), modern day prescription sample (optional)
- Examine the Text: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” (Poster Pack)
- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location video
- Memory Verse: “Matthew 9:36” (Poster Pack), air bubble packaging (larger bubbles work best), permanent marker
- Prayer: Family Cards

MEMORY VERSE

PREPARATION:

- Print the words of the Memory Verse on individual bubbles of the air bubble packaging. Make one set for each kid.

MEMORY VERSE

- Display the “Matthew 9:36” poster.
- Read the verse aloud together.
- Distribute the prepared air bubble packaging with words from the Memory Verse written on each bubble.
- Instruct kids to pop the words in the order of the Memory Verse as you say it aloud together.
- Remind the kids to practice the Memory Verse at home during the week.

PRAYER

- Distribute a Family Card to each boy and girl. Invite someone to read aloud the description on the card. Challenge boys and girls to share their cards with their families during the week.
- Say: “Remember that the picture of the ancient prescription reminds us that **Jesus is God the Son and has authority over everything—even sickness.**”
- Conclude: “We are going to conclude our Bible study time with prayer. Think of someone you know who is sick. We will take turns praying for them by each of you saying, ‘Jesus, please heal _____ (*insert a name*) who is sick.’”
- Provide kids with a chance to say their prayers if they are comfortable sharing. Conclude the activity with your prayer and say “Amen.”
- Dismiss to Small Group.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute Explorer Guides to boys and girls. Assist kids in locating today's pages, "Jesus' Healing Miracles."
- Review today's object, the "Medical Prescription Tablet."
- Invite kids to read more about the author of the Book of Matthew in "Spotlight on Matthew."
- Select a few volunteers to take turns reading aloud "Plant Provision."
- As kids complete the activity "Where's the Centurion?" review today's Bible story.
- Help kids apply today's Bible study by guiding them to quietly color the "Think About It" word.

TECH CONNECT (OPTIONAL)

- Before today's Small Group begins, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" on the app.

ACTIVITIES

- Select one or more of the activities to complete as time allows.

TOOLS:

- Explorer Guides: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

GUESS THE MIRACLE

Tools: "Miracle Cards" (enhanced CD)

- Print and cut out "Miracle Cards."

- Review the Text Truth: **Jesus is God the Son and has authority over everything—even sickness.**
- Begin: "Jesus performed many miracles in the Bible. I have a set of cards that have a miracle Jesus performed on each of them."
- Form two groups.
- Continue: "Each group will select a card and one person will try to guide their group to guess the miracle using movements only. You cannot use words or drawings."
- Continue play until all kids have a chance to play or as time allows.





BANDAGED CROSS

Tools: “Bandaged Cross” (enhanced CD), self-adhesive bandages, scissors, markers

- Make a copy of “Bandaged Cross” for each child.
- Say: “Remember that our Text Truth says that **Jesus is God the Son and has authority over everything—even sickness.** We have already thought about those we know who are sick as we prayed for them. We are going to make something that will help us to remember to pray for those we know who are sick.”
- Give a copy of “Bandaged Cross” to each kid and have him cut it out. If desired, allow the kids to color or design their crosses.
- Distribute some self-adhesive bandages to each kid.
- Instruct them to write the name of someone they know who is sick on a bandage. Repeat with other bandages as needed.
- Tell kids to place the self-adhesive bandages on their crosses.
- Say: “We are going to use these crosses as a tool to pray for those whose names are on our bandaged crosses.”
- Demonstrate by praying for those on the cross you created or use one of the crosses the kids created.
- Explain: “I’m going to send extra self-adhesive bandages home with you so you can add people to your cross that get sick so you can pray for them.”



PRAYING FOR YOU CARDS

Tools: heavyweight paper, markers, stickers, Bibles, church prayer list (optional)

- Ask: “What was today’s Text Truth?” (**Jesus is God the Son and has authority over everything—even sickness.**)
- Say: “Sometimes when someone is sick, we don’t always know how to help them. What are some ways we can help?” (*Examples: pray for them, encourage them, take them food*)
- Continue: “Encouraging someone who is sick can help them feel better. We can also pray for God to help them recover from their illness.”
- Explain that kids will make cards. You may choose to select some people on your church’s prayer list to make the cards for. Or you may allow kids to create a blank card to take home and use at a later time when someone they know is sick.
- Encourage kids to write encouraging messages. (*Examples: We are praying for you. God loves you. Thinking of you today. Hope you are well soon!*)
- Guide kids to look for Bible verses in their Bibles to include in their cards.

Tip: Be sensitive to kids who may have family members or friends suffering from serious or long-term illnesses.



Session 2

JESUS' POWER OVER NATURE



Matthew 8:23-27

Matthew's purpose for writing his gospel was to show that Jesus was indeed the Messiah sent from God. The narratives in Matthew's gospel show Jesus' authority and power over many things. In the last session we saw Jesus' power over sickness, and in this session we see Jesus' power over nature.

Following the healing miracles, Matthew recorded Jesus asking His disciples to get into a boat and head to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus Himself climbed into the boat and fell asleep in the bottom of the boat. As the journey continued a sudden storm arose on the sea. This was not uncommon on the Sea of Galilee, and because some of Jesus' disciples were experienced fishermen, this should have been easily handled by them. However, it appears from the context that this was not an ordinary storm. Matthew 8:24 says the storm was a violent storm and that "the boat was being swamped by the waves." The word Matthew used to define the storm is *seismos*, which can be translated "earthquake." It is unlikely that an earthquake caused the waves and more likely that Matthew used this term to identify how intense this storm really was.

As the disciples desperately tried to respond to the situation, Jesus continued to sleep. The disciples woke Him up and pleaded with Him to save them from sure death. Jesus rebuked the disciples and immediately calmed the storm. The disciples' amazement might indicate that their cries for salvation were focused on asking Jesus to help bail water from the boat rather than asking Him to stop the storm. The disciples were amazed at Jesus' ability to calm the storm and His power over nature.

This passage gives us a glimpse into both the humanity of Jesus and the deity of Jesus. Jesus' need for sleep helps us know that Jesus was indeed fully human. Jesus' power over nature showed His full deity and gives us assurance that Jesus can do things no one else can do.

SESSION FOCUS

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 8:23-27

MEMORY VERSE: Matthew 8:27

TEXT TRUTH: Jesus is God the Son and has authority over everything—even nature.

CHRIST IN CONTEXT: In the Book of Matthew, Jesus is the fulfillment of Old Testament promises. He is the King that God’s people had been waiting for. As Matthew told the story of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection, he described Jesus as King and Messiah. Jesus reigns over all and He has power over everything—even death.

GET STARTED TOOLS

(10 MINUTES)

- Bible Skills: “Bible Book Cards” (enhanced CD)

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

(35 MINUTES)

- Jump In: “The Sea of Galilee” (DVD-ROM)
- Examine the Text: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” (Poster Pack), streamers, hair dryer
- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location video
- Memory Verse: “Matthew 8:27” (Poster Pack)
- Prayer: Family Cards

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

(30 MINUTES)

- Explorer Guides: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens
- Move: masking tape, newspaper
- Make: aluminum foil, broomstick, mailing tube with ends, hot glue or masking tape, packing tape, decorative tape, rice, unpopped popcorn, “Allergy Alert” (Poster Pack)
- Explore: “Allergy Alert” (enhanced CD), empty plastic bottle (1 per child), water, blue food coloring, cooking oil, hot glue; shells, glitter (optional)

NOTE: Downloadable versions of DVD items are available in the Digital Video Bundle.

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JESUS CALMED THE STORM

Matthew 8:23-27

One evening, Jesus and His disciples were at the Sea of Galilee. After teaching, Jesus said to His disciples, “Let us go across to the other side.”

Jesus and His disciples left the crowd and climbed into a boat to cross the Sea of Galilee. A mighty storm formed suddenly. The wind was fierce and the waves crashed into the boat. The boat was beginning to fill up with water. The disciples thought they were in danger.

While all of this was happening, Jesus was sleeping. The disciples woke up Jesus exclaiming, “We are going to die! Save us!”

Jesus turned to His disciples and asked, “Why are you so afraid? Have you no faith?”

Jesus rebuked the wind and the sea. As soon as He spoke, the storm stopped. Everything was calm again.

The disciples were amazed. They looked at one another and said, “Who is this? Even the wind and the sea obey Him!”

KEY POINTS

- Jesus trusted God and slept.
- The disciples didn't fully understand who Jesus was, so they were shocked when He calmed the storm.

TEXT CONNECTION

- Jesus' disciples ran into quite a storm while crossing the lake. As the violent storm raged—one that was stronger than normal for the experienced fishermen—Jesus slept peacefully in the boat.
- Jesus was able to sleep in the boat because He knew God was in control of what was happening outside. Jesus wasn't worried. The disciples, however, wanted Jesus to intervene. Worried for their lives since they could not save the boat, they called Jesus to save them.
- Jesus provided the salvation the disciples sought, but He questioned the disciples' small faith, not just in Him, the Son of God, but in the Father as well.
- Jesus lived physically with the disciples. Once Jesus returned to heaven, God sent the Holy Spirit. Paul told the Corinthians that the Holy Spirit was present, living with the believers. Jesus' life and complete trust in His father was an example of holy living. The Corinthians, and all people, are called to live holy lives.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE AT HOME

See the enhanced CD for additional family resources.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Bible Skills: “Bible Book Cards” (enhanced CD)

OPTION:

- Extend the activity by removing a few cards at a time and saying the books in order. Continue until all the cards are gone.

BIBLE SKILLS

- Show the “Bible Book Cards” and explain that each book of the Bible, Old and New Testament, is written on one of the cards.
- Throw the cards up in the air and lead kids to collect the cards that are facing up.
- Instruct the kids to put those cards in the correct order as they occur in the Bible.
- Collect the other cards that landed facedown.
- Throw those cards up in the air and guide kids to collect the cards that are facing up.
- Lead the kids to add those cards to their previous list in the correct order.
- Repeat until all cards are used.
- Conclude by saying all of the books in order together.
- Dismiss to Bible Study.

BIBLE SKILLS SPOTLIGHT

- Names all the books of the Old Testament and all the books of the New Testament.
- Knows and recites all the books of the Bible in order in a limited time frame.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMP IN

- Greet the boys and girls as they arrive.
- Say: “I’m excited that you are here!”
- Ask: “What is the weather like outside today?” Allow time for kids to respond.
- Discuss different types of weather.
- Ask: “Has there ever been a time that you’ve been scared or frightened of the weather?” Select several kids to respond and provide a personal example, if possible.
- Display “The Sea of Galilee” visual.
- Explain: “This is the Sea of Galilee where Jesus and His disciples were in a boat together. Today, in our Bible study we are going to learn about some weather that frightened the disciples while they were out on the Sea of Galilee.”

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Lead boys and girls to open their Bibles to Matthew 8:23-27. Ask for a volunteer to read the verses.
- Tell the Bible story in your own words. A Bible story page has been provided for you to use as a guide.
- Say: “Think about the disciples in the boat and how bad the storm must have been for the waves to be breaking into the boat.”
- Ask: “If you had been in the boat, how do you think you would have felt?” Select a few kids to respond.
- We know the disciples were worried and went to wake Jesus to save them. Jesus did save them by calming the storm.
- Display the “Text Truth Strip” and read the Text Truth aloud. Invite everyone to read the Text Truth with you: **Jesus is God the Son and has authority over everything—even nature.**
- Reread the story including interactive elements. Explain: “When I read a certain part of the story, you will respond with different actions.”
 - ▶ Phrase: “Jesus and His disciples left the crowd and climbed into a boat to cross the Sea of Galilee.” Action: Kids rock side to side.
 - ▶ Phrase: “A mighty storm formed suddenly.” Action: Kids rock a little bigger side to side and wave streamers in the air.
 - ▶ Phrase: “The wind was fierce.” Action: Leader uses hairdryer to blow streamers.
 - ▶ Phrase: “Everything was calm again.” Action: Leader and kids stop doing the actions.

TOOLS:

- Jump In: “The Sea of Galilee” (DVD-ROM)
- Examine the Text: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” (Poster Pack), streamers, hair dryer
- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location video
- Memory Verse: “Matthew 8:27” (Poster Pack)
- Prayer: Family Cards

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 2” video.
- Ask: “What did Joel want to become in today’s video? What did he learn about weather and being a weatherman? Why do you think the disciples were afraid? Why do you think Jesus went to sleep? Who has power over nature?”

MEMORY VERSE

- Display the “Matthew 8:27” poster. Invite the kids to read aloud the verse with you.
- Explain: “We are going to say the verse again using different voices.”
(Suggested voices: like a frog, yell like a cheerleader, squeak like a mouse, and like you are underwater)
- Remind the kids to practice the Memory Verse at home during the week.

PRAYER

- Distribute a Family Card to each boy and girl. Invite someone to read aloud the description on the card. Challenge boys and girls to share their cards with their families during the week.
- Say: “Remember our object, the Sea of Galilee, is a reminder that **Jesus is God the Son and has authority over everything—even nature.** The disciples went to Jesus when they were afraid. We can also go to Jesus in prayer when we are afraid. The next time you are afraid, stop and ask Jesus to comfort and help you.”
- Close in prayer and dismiss to Small Group.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute Explorer Guides to girls and boys and help them find today's pages, "Jesus' Power over Nature."
- Guide kids to review today's Bible story by solving the "What Doesn't Belong?" puzzle.
- Invite volunteers to read aloud "Stormy Stats" and "The Sea of Galilee."
- Read aloud "What Are You Afraid Of?"
- Conclude by helping kids use their Bibles to complete the "What Do I Do When I Am Afraid?" activity.

TECH CONNECT (OPTIONAL)

- Before today's Small Group begins, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" on the app.

ACTIVITIES

- Select one or more of the activities to complete as time allows.

TOOLS:

- Explorer Guides: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

SINK THE SHIP

Tools: masking tape, newspaper

- Make a simple outline of a boat on the floor using tape.
- Crumple up several pieces of newspaper. Place some of the pieces inside the boat and the same number outside of the boat.
- Choose a few kids to be the disciples. Instruct them get inside the boat. Say: "The disciples inside the boat were afraid the boat would sink because water was getting inside the boat."
- Explain that the kids will pretend the pieces of paper are "water" and disciples need to save the boat by throwing the water out of the boat.
- Select a few kids to be the storm outside of the boat. Explain that they will be throwing the water inside the boat while the disciples are throwing it out.
- Set a designated time to play and see who has the most water at the end. If more water is inside the boat, then the boat sunk. If more water is outside the boat, then the boat was saved.
- Repeat with other kids so all boys and girls get a chance to play.
- Ask: "What did you have to do to try and save the boat?" Select a few kids to respond.
- Ask: "How do you think you would feel if you were out in a boat during a storm?" Invite kids to respond. "When are some other times you might need Jesus' help?" Select a few kids to respond.
- Say: "We can pray to Jesus when we are afraid and He will calm our fears."
- Review the Text Truth: **Jesus is God the Son and has authority over everything—even nature.**





RAINSTICKS

Tools: aluminum foil, broomstick, mailing tube with ends, hot glue or masking tape, packing tape, decorative tape, rice, unpopped popcorn, "Allergy Alert" (Poster Pack)

- Tear aluminum foil into 2½ foot strips. Tear enough for each child to have 2 strips.
- Review the Text Truth: **Jesus is God the Son and has authority over everything—even nature.** Invite the kids to name examples of other things in nature that Jesus has control over. Select a few volunteers to share.
- Say: "To remember that Jesus has control over everything, including nature, we are going to make a rainstick."
- Distribute the 2 sheets of aluminum foil to each child. Instruct them to crush each piece lengthwise into a long cylinder.
- Assist the children to wrap one of the pieces around the broomstick to form a coil. Repeat with the second piece. Direct the children to take the second piece and twist it more after removing from the broomstick to make a tighter coil. Lead the children to place the smaller coil inside the larger coil.
- Guide the children to place the coils inside the mailing tube and secure the ends of the coil to the tube using hot glue or masking tape about ½ inch from each end. (*Note: Only adults should use the hot glue.*)
- Tell the children to place one of the ends on the tube and secure with packing tape.
- After one end is secured, guide the children to place about 3 tablespoons each of rice and unpopped popcorn into the tube. Tell the children to place the other end on the tube and secure with packing tape.
- Allow time for the children to decorate their rainsticks with decorative tape, if desired.
- Guide the children to turn the rainsticks up and let it rain.



CALMING BOTTLE

Tools: "Allergy Alert" (enhanced CD), empty plastic bottle (1 per child), water, blue food coloring, cooking oil, hot glue; shells, glitter (optional)

- Remind the kids of the Text Truth: **Jesus is God the Son and has authority over everything—even nature.**
- Say: "Jesus calmed the storm for the disciples and He will also calm any fears that you have. We are going to make a calming bottle so we can remember that Jesus will always be there to calm our fears."
- Distribute an empty plastic bottle to each child. Guide them to fill the bottle halfway with water. Add a few drops of blue food coloring. Put the lid on the bottle and gently shake to create blue water. Fill the bottle the rest of the way with cooking oil.
- Hot glue the lids on the bottles for the kids.
- Guide the children to turn their bottles sideways and rock (*not shake*) the bottles to create waves.
- Optional: Put glitter or shells into the bottle before gluing the lid.

JESUS' COMPASSION FOR PEOPLE



Matthew 14:13-21; 15:32-39

Matthew 14:13-21 and 15:32-29 are parallel stories but there are also distinct differences between them. However, both show Jesus' compassion for the crowds. The Matthew 14 account describes Jesus' interaction with a Jewish crowd, while the Matthew 15 account shares Jesus' interaction with a Gentile crowd. Jesus' compassion crossed all boundaries and people groups.

Jesus' feeding of the five thousand is the only miracle of Jesus recorded in all four of the Gospels. Matthew's account highlights Jesus' compassion for the crowd and displays it as an example for believers. The Matthew 14 passage opens just as Jesus had learned of the death of John the Baptist. After He heard of John's death, Jesus boarded a boat seeking some solitude on the other side of the lake.

When Jesus arrived on the other side of the lake and encountered a large crowd who likely had run ahead of Him, He had compassion on the people and healed their sick. The crowd in Matthew 15 had been with Jesus for three days and had likely consumed all of the food they brought with them.

In Matthew 14, Jesus is approached by the disciples to send the crowds away. It was late, they were in a remote place, and they had no food to give to the people. In Matthew 15, Jesus approached the disciples and told them He did not want to send the crowds away for fear they might faint on the way home. In both accounts the disciples were asked to provide the food for the crowds.

With five loaves of bread (*enough for about 15 typically*) and two fish (*see Matthew 14*) in the first story, and seven loaves of bread and a few small fish (*see Matthew 15*) in the second story, Jesus took the food, blessed it, handed it to the disciples, and fed the crowds. The miraculous number of baskets of leftovers was astounding, and the disciples were amazed at Jesus' power over everything and His ability to show compassion.

SESSION FOCUS

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 14:13-21; 15:32-39

MEMORY VERSE: Matthew 15:32a

TEXT TRUTH: Jesus had compassion for the people and helped them.

CHRIST IN CONTEXT: In the Book of Matthew, Jesus is the fulfillment of Old Testament promises. He is the King that God's people had been waiting for. As Matthew told the story of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, he described Jesus as King and Messiah. Jesus reigns over all and He has power over everything—even death.

GET STARTED TOOLS

(10 MINUTES)

- Bible Skills:** *Bibles*; “*Books of the Bible Game Cards*” and “*Bible Book Cards*” (enhanced CD); card markers (buttons, beans, etc.)

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

(35 MINUTES)

- Jump In:** “*Fish and Loaves Mosaic*” (DVD-ROM)
- Examine the Text:** *Bibles*, “*Text Truth Strips*” and “*The Ministry of Jesus Around the Sea of Galilee*” (Poster Pack)

- Play the Video:** *Explore the Bible on Location video*

- Memory Verse:** “*Matthew 15:32a*” (Poster Pack), numbered cubes, paper, pencils

- Prayer:** *Family Cards*

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

(30 MINUTES)

- Explorer Guides:** *Bibles*, *Explorer Guides*, pens
- Move:** newspaper, 2 large containers, “*Fish and Loaves*” (enhanced CD), brown heavyweight paper
- Make:** play dough, paper, markers

- Explore:** *Bibles*, *The Holman Bible Concordance for Kids* (multiple copies), *Bible dictionary*

To order *The Holman Bible Concordance for Kids* (Item No. 001054258) call LifeWay Customer Service at 1.800.458.2772 or order online at www.lifeway.com.

NOTE: Downloadable versions of DVD items are available in the Digital Video Bundle. Downloadable versions of enhanced CD items are available in the Music and Print Extras Bundle. For free online training on how to lead a group, visit ministrygrid.com/web/explorethebible.

JESUS FED THE CROWDS

Matthew 14:13-21; 15:32-39

After John the Baptist died, Jesus got a boat to go to a quiet place to be alone. The people followed Him. Jesus climbed from the boat to the shore and saw the huge crowd of people. Jesus felt compassion for the people and began to heal those who were sick.

At evening, the disciples told Jesus, "It is late. Send the people away for they will go to the villages and buy food to eat."

Jesus replied, "The people do not need to go away. You need to give them something to eat."

The disciples told Jesus, "We only have two fish and five loaves of bread."

Jesus told the disciples to bring the food to Him. He told the people to sit down on the grass.

Jesus took the bread and fish and blessed them. He began breaking the loaves into pieces. He gave the pieces to the disciples and they gave them to the crowds of people.

All of the people ate until they were full. Then all of the leftover pieces were put into baskets until 12 baskets were full!

About 5,000 men plus women and children ate that day.

Another time, Jesus spent the day healing the people. The people were amazed at what they saw Jesus do and they praised God.

Jesus called His disciples together, "I have compassion on the people. They have stayed with Me for three days and have nothing to eat. I do not want to send them away hungry."

"Where could we find enough bread to feed such a big crowd?" the disciples asked Jesus.

"How many loaves of bread do you have?" Jesus asked.

"We have seven loaves," they said, "and we have a few fish."

Jesus called for the crowd to sit down. He took the bread and fish and thanked God for it. Jesus began breaking the bread and the fish into pieces. He gave it to the disciples who gave it to the people. Everyone ate until they were full. Then they gathered all the leftover pieces and filled seven large baskets. On this day, Jesus fed 4,000 men plus women and children.

Jesus loved people and had compassion on them. He wanted the people to know and love God.

KEY POINTS

- Jesus cared for the people and didn't want them to go home hungry.
- The disciples were learning more and more about Who Jesus was.

TEXT CONNECTION

- Jesus cared about people. Much of Jesus' ministry included care for people who were, in many instances, not cared for by others in their community. Jesus showed love for the crowds that followed Him and He provided for their physical needs.
- Jesus' compassion crossed all boundaries. Jesus ministered to those who had terrible diseases, the blind, the lame, and anyone who came to Him in faith asking for help.
- Jesus encouraged His followers to show compassion to those with whom they came in contact. Jesus set no boundaries on this compassion and helped the people understand that their compassion would honor God.
- Paul encouraged the believers in Corinth to honor God in their personal lives as well. Paul gave several examples of ways to honor God through personal relationships. Paul specifically taught that honoring marriage vows would honor God.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE AT HOME

See the enhanced CD for additional family resources.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Bible Skills: Bibles; “Books of the Bible Game Cards” and “Bible Book Cards” (enhanced CD); card markers (buttons, beans, etc.)

PREPARATION:

- Print each kid a “Books of the Bible Game Card.”
- Print and cut apart the “Bible Book Cards.”

BIBLE SKILLS

- Distribute “Books of the Bible Game Cards” and card markers.
- Instruct kids to listen for the books of the Bible to be called out as cards are chosen. If the book of the Bible is on their game card, then they should locate the book in their Bible. Cards may be marked once the book of the Bible is found.
- Choose a card from the prepared pile of “Bible Book Cards” and call out the book of the Bible on the card.
- Allow time for kids to locate books of the Bible on their cards and in the Bible, if applicable.
- Continue until one of the kids marks five in a row on their card.
- As time allows, continue to play.
- Dismiss to Bible Study.

BIBLE SKILLS SPOTLIGHT

- Locates all the books of the Bible in a limited time frame.
- Uses other resources to enrich her Bible skills and knowledge (*Bible dictionary, commentary, concordance, atlas, and digital sources*).

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMP IN

- Greet boys and girls as they arrive.
- Display the “Fish and Loaves Mosaic” visual.
- Say: “This object represents a Bible story. Look at the object. What Bible story do you think this object represents?”
- Select a few kids to respond.
- Say: “As we explore our Bible story today, we will discover how it relates to our object.”

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Lead the girls and boys to open their Bibles to Matthew 14.
- Explain: “Our first Bible passage today is Matthew 14:13-21. I will be reading the passage aloud; however, I will stop randomly and you will supply the next word in the passage.”
- Read the passage aloud. Stop periodically throughout the passage and allow the kids to say the word that comes next. Continue until you have read the complete passage.
- Repeat with the second Bible passage, Matthew 15:32-39.
- If you prefer, tell the Bible story in your own words. A Bible story page has been provided for you to use as a guide.
- Ask: “What truth did you learn from the Bible study today?”
- Allow several kids to share their thoughts.
- Display the “Text Truth Strip” and read the Text Truth aloud. Invite everyone to read the Text Truth with you: **“Jesus had compassion for the people and helped them.”**
- Display “The Ministry of Jesus Around the Sea of Galilee” map. Allow kids to locate today’s Bible story and others that they recognize.

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 3” video.
- Ask: “What was Kaileigh doing today? What did Jesus do when the people were hungry? Why? What can we do when we see someone in need or hurting?”

MEMORY VERSE

- Display the “Matthew 15:32a” poster. Invite the kids to read aloud the verse with you.
- Form groups of three or four kids. Provide each group with a numbered cube and each kid with a blank piece of paper and a pencil.
- Explain: “You will take turns rolling the numbered cube. For each number rolled, you will write down that many words of the Memory Verse starting at the beginning. For example, if you roll a 3, write down the first three words of the Memory Verse on your piece of paper.”

TOOLS:

- Jump In: “Fish and Loaves Mosaic” (DVD-ROM)
- Examine the Text: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” and “The Ministry of Jesus Around the Sea of Galilee” (Poster Pack)
- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location video
- Memory Verse: “Matthew 15:32a” (Poster Pack), numbered cubes, paper, pencils
- Prayer: Family Cards

- Continue until one child in the group has written down the entire verse including the Bible reference.
- Lead each group to determine who has a birthday closest to today. That person will be the person to start in each group and they will continue to the person on their left.
- Allow time for kids to play.
- Remind the kids to practice the Memory Verse at home during the week.

PRAYER

- Distribute a Family Card to each boy and girl. Read the description on the card aloud. Remind the boys and girls to share their cards with their families during the week.
- Say: “Remember that our object of the fish and loaves mosaic is a reminder that **Jesus had compassion for the people and helped them.**”
- Challenge the kids to look for opportunities to show compassion to someone and help them.
- Say a prayer asking God to provide opportunities to show compassion to others this week.
- Dismiss to Small Group.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute the Explorer Guides. Lead kids to locate today's pages, "Jesus' Compassion for People."
- Help kids recall facts from today's Bible story as they complete the "Bible Story Crossword" and the "Gather the Baskets" activity.
- Read aloud about today's object, the "Fish & Loaves Mosaic."
- Select a volunteer to read "What Is Compassion?"
- Choose another volunteer to read "Today's Menu."
- Guide kids to quietly read "Worth Reporting."

TECH CONNECT (OPTIONAL)

- Before today's Small Group begins, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" on the app.

ACTIVITIES

- Select one or more of the activities to complete as time allows.

TOOLS:

- Explorer Guides: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

DIG IT

Tools: newspaper, 2 large containers, "Fish and Loaves" (enhanced CD), brown heavyweight paper

Copy "Fish and Loaves" onto brown heavyweight paper and cut them out. Crumble several pieces of newspaper and fill two large containers. Add cutouts of fish and loaves to containers and hide them in the crumbled newspaper.

- **Begin:** "What is one thing that you learned in today's Bible study?" If no one mentions the Text Truth, remind kids of it: **Jesus had compassion for the people and helped them.**
- **Form two groups of kids.**
- **Explain:** "Pretend that you are the disciples looking for food to give to the crowd. As a group, you will search for fish and loaves of bread in your container among the newspaper."
- **After the allotted amount of time, determine which group found the most fish and loaves.**
- **Ask:** "What do you think the disciples were thinking as they searched for food among the crowd?" Select a few kids to respond.
- **Repeat activity as time allows.**

Option: Challenge kids by allowing each one to only use one hand or only use their feet to search for fish and loaves of bread.



HANDFUL OF FOOD



Tools: play dough, paper, markers

- **Begin:** “Trace your hands onto the piece of paper. Using the play dough, create fish, loaves of bread, and some of your favorite foods.”
- Provide time for kids to complete their models and select several to share their favorite food play dough models.
- Lead the kids to place their play dough models of food on their traced hands. Explain that the food on their hands is a reminder of people who are hungry and do not have food. Ask for a volunteer to pray for these people. Be prepared to lead the prayer if no one volunteers.
- **Share:** “The Gospel of John reveals that the 5 fish and 2 loaves came from a young boy’s lunch.”
- **Explain:** “The boy could have kept what he had to himself. Instead he gave it all to Jesus. God can do great things when we share what He has given us.”
- **Conclude** the activity by stating today’s Text Truth: **Jesus had compassion for the people and helped them.**

COMPASSION SEARCH



Tools: Bibles, The Holman Bible Concordance for Kids (*multiple copies*), Bible dictionary

- **Review the Text Truth: Jesus had compassion for the people and helped them.**
- Show the boys and girls a copy of the *The Holman Bible Concordance for Kids* and a Bible dictionary. Ask: “What do you think you would use a Bible concordance to do? What would you use a Bible dictionary for?” Select several volunteers to share.
- Say: “A Bible dictionary helps us understand the definition of a word in the Bible. A Bible concordance is a kind of dictionary to help you locate a Scripture reference by looking up an important word of the verse.” Show the kids that there is a concordance located in the back of most Bibles too.
- **Continue:** “Today, we have learned that Jesus had compassion for the people and helped them. We are going to use the Bible concordance to see what other Scriptures refer to *compassion*.”
- Demonstrate how to use the Bible dictionary to locate the definition of *compassion*.
- Demonstrate how to use the concordance by finding the word *compassion*, identifying a Scripture reference listed, and locating that Scripture in the Bible. Read the verse(s).
- Form groups and provide them with a concordance. Say: “Which group can find another Scripture in the Bible that contains the word *compassion*?”
- Provide time for the groups to find a verse and share the verse(s).
- Ask: “How can we use a Bible concordance to help us during the week?” Select a few volunteers to share.
- **Conclude:** “During this week, if you are struggling with something, use a Bible concordance to find Scripture that contains a relevant word to help you.”



Session

4



THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

Matthew 21:1-17

Jesus arrived in Bethphage, a city on the southeast side of Jerusalem. Bethphage was significantly higher in altitude than Jerusalem, so looking down from Bethphage would have given Jesus and the disciples a great view of the city of Jerusalem. Jesus prepared to enter Jerusalem by sending two disciples to go into Bethphage and find a donkey and her colt. Jesus gave the men further instructions on how to respond if questioned by the animals' owners.

Matthew, quoting the prophet Zechariah, shows how Jesus fulfilled prophecy once again. While Zechariah's prophecy, and Matthew 21:2, mention both the colt and the donkey, it is likely that Jesus only rode the colt as He entered Jerusalem. This can quickly be confirmed by reading the same account in each of the other gospels. Matthew is the only gospel writer who mentions both the donkey and the colt.

The disciples placed their coats on the colt and Jesus rode into Jerusalem. Large crowds laid down clothing and palm branches on the road. This practice was a type of victory celebration when military leaders returned from war. The crowds that day were not welcoming a military king, but the Messiah for whom they had been waiting. The terminology used in Matthew 21:9 gives clear evidence that the crowds were welcoming Jesus as King (*son of David*), identifying Him as "he who comes in the name of the Lord" (*a reference to John the Baptist's prophecy*), and giving praise to Yahweh with the praise word *Hosanna*.

The crowd welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem and identified Him as the prophet from Nazareth, possibly unknown to some in Jerusalem but certainly praised by them. Later in Matthew 21 we see that the children also welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem with praise. Praise and worship of God is for all people. Jesus is worthy of honor and praise and the people showed their love for Jesus.

SESSION FOCUS

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 21:1-17

MEMORY VERSE: Matthew 21:9b

TEXT TRUTH: Jesus is worthy of honor and praise.

CHRIST IN CONTEXT: In the Book of Matthew, Jesus is the fulfillment of Old Testament promises. He is the King that God's people had been waiting for. As Matthew told the story of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, he described Jesus as King and Messiah. Jesus reigns over all and He has power over everything—even death.

GET STARTED TOOLS

(10 MINUTES)

- Bible Skills:** *table tennis balls (2 colors), plastic cups, marker, "Christ in Context: Matthew" (Poster Pack)*

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

(35 MINUTES)

- Jump In:** *"Triumphal Entry Sculpture" (DVD-ROM)*
- Examine the Text:** *Bibles, "Text Truth Strips" (Poster Pack)*
- Play the Video:** *Explore the Bible on Location video*
- Memory Verse:** *"Matthew 21:9b" (Poster Pack), whiteboard, dry erase markers*
- Prayer:** *Family Cards*

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

(30 MINUTES)

- Explorer Guides:** *Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens*
- Move:** *none*
- Make:** *smooth rocks (3-4 per child), permanent markers*
- Explore:** *"True/False Headings and Cards" (enhanced CD), Bibles, tape*

NOTE: Downloadable versions of DVD items are available in the Digital Video Bundle. Downloadable versions of enhanced CD items are available in the Music and Print Extras Bundle. For free online training on how to lead a group, visit ministrygrid.com/web/explorethebible.

JESUS ENTERED JERUSALEM

Matthew 21:1-17

Jesus and His disciples walked toward Jerusalem. As they neared, Jesus sent two of the disciples into a village. “Go to the village. You will see a donkey and a colt. Untie them and bring them to Me.”

Jesus fulfilled a prophecy Zechariah made: “Tell Jerusalem that their King will come riding on a donkey. He will come with humility.”

The disciples obeyed Jesus and brought the donkey and the colt. They laid their robes on the animal and Jesus sat on the animal.

A large crowd gathered. The people spread their robes on the road and some cut palm branches and placed them on the road. The people shouted, “Hosanna! He who comes in the name of the Lord is blessed!”

The city of Jerusalem was shaken by this event. Once Jesus entered Jerusalem, He went to the temple. Inside the temple complex, people were buying and selling things. Jesus turned over the tables. He said, “Scripture says that My house will be a house of prayer.” Jesus told the people they were turning the temple into a den of thieves.

The blind and the lame people came to Jesus. Jesus healed them. The children were shouting, “Hosanna.” The chief priests and the scribes were upset. Jesus left Jerusalem and spent the night at Bethany.

KEY POINTS

- Zechariah prophesied that a king would come riding on a donkey. Jesus fulfilled that prophecy.
- Jesus is worthy of praise, but soon the people wouldn't be praising Jesus. Instead, they would want to crucify Jesus.
- Jesus wasn't a political king like the people expected. He is the King of kings and one day He will reign over all!

TEXT CONNECTION

- Jesus had spent three years pouring Himself into the lives of twelve men. The events of this story lead up to the final week of Jesus' life. By the following week, Jesus' disciples would need to take the knowledge He had been teaching them and apply His teachings to their lives as He would no longer be with them.
- Jesus was welcomed into the city with a celebration like those given military heroes returning home. Jesus was not a military hero, but His entry into Jerusalem did receive the royal treatment.
- Jesus deserves to be praised. Our praise and worship of Jesus gives an example to others of how important Jesus is. We should strive to live lives that honor God and are examples to others of faith in Christ.
- Paul taught that believers need to do whatever they can to lead others to faith in Christ. Without compromising the gospel, believers should live as examples of a Christian life so that others will be drawn to a relationship with Jesus.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE AT HOME

See the enhanced CD for additional family resources.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Bible Skills: table tennis balls (two colors), plastic cups, marker, “Christ in Context: Matthew” (Poster Pack)

PREPARATION:

- Label ten plastic cups with one of the divisions of the Bible: *Law, OT History, Poetry & Wisdom, Major Prophets, Minor Prophets, Gospels, NT History, Paul’s Letters, General Letters, Prophecy.*
- Select ten books of the Bible and write them on one color of table tennis balls. Repeat with the other color.

BIBLE SKILLS

- Place labeled cups around the room.
- Form two groups and display the two groups of balls labeled with books of the Bible. Explain they will try to bounce the balls into the correct cups according to the division in which each book belongs.
- Each team will have their own color and take turns trying to bounce the ball into the correct cup. The team that gets the most balls into the correct cups, wins. Correct and guide as needed. Repeat as time allows.
- Display the “Christ in Context: Matthew” statement. Invite kids to read the statement and discuss it together.
- Dismiss to Bible Study.

BIBLE SKILLS SPOTLIGHT

- Names the 10 divisions of the Old and New Testaments in a limited time frame and identifies examples of books in each division.
- Is able to locate Bible passages in a limited time frame.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMP IN

- Greet the children as they arrive.
- Say: “Hello, I’m so glad that you are here! We are studying about an important part of the life of Jesus today. Let’s look at this object.”
- Display the “Triumphal Entry Sculpture” visual.
- Ask: “Does this object remind you of anything?” Guide discussion to reveal that the object is a sculpture of Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem.
- Say: “We are going to learn more about this exciting event in our Bible study.”

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Lead the boys and girls to open their Bibles to Matthew 21. Instruct the boys to read the first verse together and the girls the second verse. Continue in this pattern as you read the rest of the passage (*Matthew 21:1-17*).
- If you prefer, tell the Bible story in your own words. A Bible story page has been provided for you to use as a guide.
- Ask: “How do you think you would feel to see Jesus riding into your city?”
- Share: “As the crowd recognized, our Text Truth this week is: **Jesus is worthy of honor and praise.**”
- Display the “Text Truth Strip” and read it aloud.
- Ask: “Why is Jesus worthy of honor and praise?” Guide discussion and select a few volunteers to respond.
- Explain that the crowd gladly participated in praising Jesus, but that some of these same people would desert Him in just a few days as we will study next week.

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 4” video.
- Ask: “What did Joel want to experience in today’s video? Why? What happened to Joel’s parade? What happened when Jesus entered Jerusalem? Why did the people want to praise Jesus?”

MEMORY VERSE

- Display the “Matthew 21:9b” poster. Invite the kids to read aloud the verse with you. Read the verse together several times and remove the poster from the wall temporarily.
- Write the verse on a whiteboard. Read the verse together again. After reading it, erase one word of the verse. Then repeat the verse aloud. Continue until all words are erased.
- Reverse the process and add a word back until the whole verse is written on the board.

TOOLS:

- Jump In: “Triumphal Entry Sculpture” (DVD-ROM)
- Examine the Text: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” (Poster Pack)
- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location video
- Memory Verse: “Matthew 21:9b” (Poster Pack), whiteboard, dry erase markers
- Prayer: Family Cards

- Challenge the kids to say the verse to their parents when they are picked up later today.
- Remind them to practice the verse at home during the week.

PRAYER

- Distribute a Family Card to each boy and girl. Invite a volunteer to read aloud the description on the card. Challenge boys and girls to share their cards with their families during the week.
- Say: “Remember that our object, the triumphal entry sculpture at Bethphage Chapel, is a reminder that **Jesus is worthy of honor and praise.**”
- Conclude: “We are going to end our Bible study and time by praying and offering praises to Jesus. I want you to think of something that you can praise Jesus for. We will take turns completing the phrase, ‘Jesus, I praise you for _____,’ as our prayer.”
- Allow kids to participate as desired. Conclude by sharing your praise and saying “Amen.”
- Dismiss to Small Group.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute Explorer Guides and assist boys and girls in finding today's pages, "The Triumphal Entry."
- Direct kids' attention to today's object, "Triumphal Entry Sculpture."
- Select a volunteer to read "Types of Transportation."
- Help kids review the Bible story by solving the "Definition Match Up."
- Ask a volunteer to read aloud "What Is Gentleness?"
- Guide girls and boys to quietly complete the "Praise Palm" activity to apply today's Bible truths to their own lives.

TECH CONNECT (OPTIONAL)

- Before today's Small Group begins, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" on the app.

ACTIVITIES

- Select one or more of the activities to complete as time allows.

TOOLS:

- Explorer Guides: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

PRAISE MARCH

Tools: none

- **Begin:** "We know what our Text Truth says is true: **Jesus is worthy of honor and praise.** We are going to show Jesus our praise by creating a praise march."
- **Teach the following march lyrics.** In a military-like voice, say one line and let them repeat.
 - I sure know and I've been told,
 - His story won't get old.
 - I sure know and it's been said,
 - For my sins, Jesus bled.
 - Sound off
 - Jesus
 - Louder
 - Praise Him
 - Bring it on down
 - Praise Him, Praise Him
- Ask kids to stand up and form a line and instruct them to march in a military style around the room repeating the lines after you say them.





ROCK CONCERT

Tools: smooth rocks (3-4 per child), permanent markers

- Begin: "Have any of you ever been to a concert? What was the crowd doing?" Guide the children to understand that the crowd at a concert cheers and is excited about the star of the concert. "Don't you think that Jesus should be the star of our lives? We are going to make him a rock concert of praises."
- Say: "Just like the crowd in our Bible study, we have many things to praise Jesus for." Review the Text Truth: **Jesus is worthy of honor and praise.**
- Remind the children of the praises they discussed during prayer time.
- Distribute a few rocks to each child and instruct them to write one praise on a rock. Continue with the rest of their rocks.
- Gather all rocks together. Explain that Jesus can be the star of our lives when we praise Him.
- Allow the children to take their rocks home and instruct them to use them as a reminder to praise Jesus every day.



IT'S TRUE

Tools: "True/False Headings and Cards" (enhanced CD), Bibles, tape

- Print "True/False Headings and Cards" and cut apart. Display the headings on the wall.
- Distribute the "True/False Cards" to the boys and girls. Ask them to read their cards and determine whether they think the statement on their card(s) is true or false.
- Select one of the boys or girls to read their statement aloud and put their card under one of the headings—true or false. Discuss and guide children as needed.
- Say: "Some of those were really easy and some were a little difficult. It can be hard to figure what is true and what isn't. But did you know there is Someone and something that is always true? God and His Word are always true. Sometimes God says true things while they are happening right then, but sometimes His true words are a promise of something that is going to happen one day."
- Continue: "Have you ever heard of a *prophecy* or a *prophet*? In Bible times there were many prophets and prophecies. A *prophecy* is a message from God. Think of it as a promise of something to come. Since it is God making the promises, we know that it will come true. When a prophecy, or promise, comes true, we say it was fulfilled."
- Explain: "A *prophet* is someone who delivers those promises from God to the people."
- Say: "In the Bible, we find a lot of prophecies, and most of them are about Jesus. Jesus fulfilled more than 300 prophecies!"
- Continue: "In our passage today one of those prophecies was fulfilled."
- Ask a volunteer to find and read Zechariah 9:9 and Matthew 21:5. Explain: "The prophecy was foretold in Zechariah and fulfilled in Matthew. This is just one of the many prophecies that Jesus fulfilled and one of the many reasons that our Text Truth is true: **Jesus is worthy of honor and praise.**"



Session 5



THE FIRST EASTER

Matthew 27:11-52; 28:1-15

Jesus' death on the cross as payment for our sins and His resurrection are the events in which we put our faith. We trust in Christ Who, as the sacrifice, paid for our salvation. The events we study this session give us reason to celebrate the resurrection of the King.

The events that transpired following the triumphal entry brought the crowds to a frenzy, demanding to have Jesus crucified. Jesus, having been betrayed by Judas Iscariot, stood before Pilate, the Roman governor of the province. Pilate asked Jesus if He was indeed the King of the Jews. Jesus' response basically told Pilate that Pilate's words were true. Pilate had no reason to keep Jesus and offered the option of releasing Jesus or a criminal named Barabbas. The crowd, having been stirred up against Jesus, demanded that Barabbas be released instead of Jesus. When Pilate asked what he should do with Jesus, the crowd yelled that Jesus should be crucified.

Pilate released Jesus to the crowd and allowed His crucifixion. Jesus was hung on a cross between two criminals and died. Jesus' body was placed in a borrowed tomb as the Sabbath Day drew near. Early on the morning following the Sabbath, two women, Mary Magdalene and the "other" Mary, went to the tomb. Because the events of Jesus' crucifixion and death happened quickly, the women had not appropriately prepared His body for burial. It appears they were on their way to the tomb to finish preparing His body.

On the morning of their arrival near the tomb, the earth began to quake and the stone that sealed the tomb rolled away. An angel, sitting on the stone, told the women to not be afraid. This is juxtaposed against the guards who were so shaken by fear that they had fainted. The angel announced that Jesus was no longer in the tomb, but He had been resurrected just as He said. Jesus' death on the cross paid the penalty for our sin. Jesus' resurrection confirmed God was satisfied with the payment. Jesus is alive!

SESSION FOCUS

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 27:11-52; 28:1-15

MEMORY VERSE: Matthew 28:6

TEXT TRUTH: Jesus died on the cross to pay for my sin. Jesus is alive!

CHRIST IN CONTEXT: In the Book of Matthew, Jesus is the fulfillment of Old Testament promises. He is the King that God's people had been waiting for. As Matthew told the story of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, he described Jesus as King and Messiah. Jesus reigns over all and He has power over everything—even death.

GET STARTED TOOLS

(10 MINUTES)

- Bible Skills: *“Bible Book Cards” (enhanced CD)*

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

(35 MINUTES)

- Jump In: *“Giant Cross” (DVD-ROM)*
- Examine the Text: *Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” (Poster Pack), “The Gospel” (enhanced CD)*
- Play the Video: *Explore the Bible on Location video*
- Memory Verse: *“Matthew 28:6” (Poster Pack), poster board, paper fasteners, string, marker*
- Prayer: *Family Cards*

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

(30 MINUTES)

- Explorer Guides: *Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens*
- Move: *whiteboard, dry erase marker*
- Make: *white paper, masking tape, markers or washable paint*
- Explore: *index cards, markers, Bibles, “The Gospel” (enhanced CD)*

NOTE: Downloadable versions of DVD items are available in the Digital Video Bundle. Downloadable versions of enhanced CD items are available in the Music and Print Extras Bundle. For free online training on how to lead a group, visit ministrygrid.com/web/explorethebible.

JESUS' CRUCIFIXION AND RESURRECTION

Matthew 27:11-52; 28:1-15

The religious leaders did not like Jesus. They wanted to get rid of Him. One of Jesus' disciples, Judas, went to the religious leaders and made a deal. Judas agreed to betray Jesus in exchange for some silver.

The leaders had Jesus arrested and they sent Him to Pilate, the governor. Pilate asked Jesus, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus told him, "You have said it."

The religious leaders began telling lies about Jesus, but Jesus said nothing. Pilate was amazed at Jesus. He decided to let the people decide what he should do. Pilate could let a criminal named Barabbas go free or he could release Jesus. Pilate knew that the religious leaders were jealous of Jesus and that is why they had arrested Him. The religious leaders got all of the people to tell Pilate that they wanted Barabbas to be free. When Pilate asked the people about Jesus, the people said they wanted to crucify Him.

Finally, Pilate agreed to free Barabbas, and let the people crucify Jesus. As Jesus was dying on the cross, the veil in the temple split down the middle. Jesus called out to God and Jesus died on the cross. One of the soldiers at the cross, a centurion, began to praise God. He understood that Jesus was innocent of sin; Jesus was righteous.

Jesus was buried in a tomb and Pilate sent soldiers to guard the tomb. Then people observed the Sabbath. On the morning after the Sabbath, Mary Magdalene and another Mary took spices and perfumes to His tomb.

Suddenly, there was an earthquake! An angel rolled the stone away and was sitting on it. The guards were so afraid that they fainted!

The angel spoke, "Don't be afraid. I know you are looking for Jesus. He is not here. He has been resurrected just like He promised! Come and see the empty tomb, then go tell the disciples."

The women were afraid and happy at the same time. They ran to tell the disciples the good news when suddenly Jesus appeared to them. The women worshiped Jesus and He gave them a message for the disciples, "Go and tell them to go to Galilee, and I will see them there." Jesus was alive!

KEY POINTS

- In less than a week, the people went from praising Jesus to demanding He be crucified.
- Jesus never sinned. He died on the cross to rescue us from our sin.
- God raised Jesus from the dead! He is alive today!
- We can repent of our sin and trust Jesus as our Lord and Savior.

TEXT CONNECTION

- Jesus was mocked, beaten, and nailed to a cross. Jesus died on the cross and was buried in a borrowed tomb. The sacrifice of Jesus paid the penalty for our sin. God's plan to redeem people was completed.
- On the first day of the week following Jesus' crucifixion, two women went to the place He had been buried and discovered the tomb to be empty. An angel announced He had been resurrected, and Jesus' disciples believed He had been raised just as He said.
- Paul, in his letter to the Corinthians, taught that the curse of death had entered the world through one man—Adam. Further, the salvation of the world was also accomplished through one man—the risen Jesus. True life is found through faith in Jesus Christ.
- The reality of Christ's resurrection leads believers to have hope in a future resurrection and eternal reign with Christ. Believers can rejoice in their assurance of Jesus' resurrection and share His love with others.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE AT HOME

See the enhanced CD for additional family resources.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Bible Skills: “Bible Book Cards” (enhanced CD)

BIBLE SKILLS

- Explain that the kids will select one of the “Bible Book Cards” and hold it up on their forehead so that they cannot see it but the rest of the group can. The kid holding the card will ask ‘yes’ or ‘no’ questions to try and determine which book of the Bible they are holding.
- For example: “Am I in the New Testament? Am I in the Old Testament?”
- Continue until they are able to determine the book or if they are unable to name the book after an allotted amount of time, then the kids in the group can give hints to help.
- Repeat until all the kids have had a turn or as time allows.
- Dismiss to Bible Study.

BIBLE SKILLS SPOTLIGHT

- Names all the books of the Old Testament and all the books of the New Testament.
- Identifies prominent Bible people by the books in which their stories are recorded.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMP IN

- Greet the kids as they arrive.
- Say: “I’m so glad that you are here on this special day, Easter. Who can tell me what Easter means and what we celebrate?”
- Select a few volunteers to answer. Guide discussion to conclude that we celebrate that Jesus died on the cross and His resurrection.
- Continue: “We will be learning more about the first Easter in our Bible study today.”
- Display the “Giant Cross” visual.
- Share: “Our object is a cross. This is not the cross that Jesus died on but a modern cross that people have built. The cross is used as a symbol for many beautiful things today. This is the largest cross in America.”
- Say: “Now, let’s learn more about the first Easter.”

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Lead the boys and girls to open their Bibles to Matthew 27. Read aloud the Bible passage (*Matthew 27:11-52; 28:1-15*) as they follow in their Bibles.
- If you prefer to read aloud fewer verses, tell the Bible story in your own words. A Bible story page has been provided for you to use as a guide.
- Ask: “How do you think Mary, the mother of Jesus, felt when Jesus was crucified?” Allow several kids to share their thoughts.
- Ask: “Then, how do you think Mary, the mother of Jesus, felt when she discovered that Jesus was alive?” Allow several kids to share their thoughts.
- Share: “This is similar to how we may feel when we read or hear the Bible story. We may be sad or upset about Jesus having to die on the cross, but we can be excited about Jesus’ resurrection.”
- Display the “Text Truth Strip” and read the Text Truth aloud. Invite everyone to read the Text Truth with you: **Jesus died on the cross to pay for my sin. Jesus is alive!**
- Share the gospel with boys and girls using “The Gospel” as a guide.

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 5” video.
- Ask: “Where did Kaileigh visit? What Bible story did she explore? Why? Why is this Bible story important?”

TOOLS:

- Jump In: “Giant Cross” (DVD-ROM)
- Examine the Text: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” (Poster Pack), “The Gospel” (enhanced CD)
- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location video
- Memory Verse: “Matthew 28:6” (Poster Pack), poster board, paper fasteners, string, marker
- Prayer: Family Cards

OPTION:

- You may invite kids to read some verses from the passage aloud. Here are some suggestions: Matthew 27:1-2, 20-23, 50, 54, 59-60; 28:1-2, 5-6, 9.

TIP:

- To help you prepare to share the gospel message with your kids, see “The Gospel” on the enhanced CD. A video presentation is also on the DVD-ROM. You may choose to use it to help you prepare or show the presentation to boys and girls.

MEMORY VERSE

PREPARATION:

- Write the words of the Memory Verse randomly on poster board. Place a paper fastener close to each word. Attach a string to the paper fastener by the first word of the Memory Verse.

MEMORY VERSE

- Display the “Matthew 28:6” poster. Invite the kids to read aloud the verse with you.
- Share the prepared poster board with the boys and girls.
- Say: “As we say the verse together, one of you will wrap the string around each word until we finish the verse.”
- Repeat with other volunteers until all kids have an opportunity to string the words or as time allows. Remind kids to practice the Memory Verse at home during the week.

PRAYER

- Distribute a Family Card to each boy and girl. Invite someone to read aloud the description on the card. Challenge the boys and girls to share their cards with their families during the week.
- Say: “Remember our object of the giant cross reminds us that **Jesus died on the cross to pay for my sin. Jesus is alive!**”
- Lead the group in prayer, thanking Jesus for dying on the cross and God for resurrecting Jesus from the grave for us.
- Dismiss to Small Group.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute Explorer Guides. Assist kids in locating today's pages, "The First Easter."
- Allow volunteers to take turns reading the "Bible Story Who's Who."
- Review today's object, the "Giant Cross."
- Guide kids to complete the "Bible Story Sequence" activity. Assist kids as needed and help them use their Bibles to complete the sequence.
(Answers: 5,7,1,4,6,2,3)
- Select a volunteer to read "How Was Jesus' Tomb Sealed?"
- Lead boys and girls to think about today's Bible story as they complete "What Does It Mean to Me?" You may want to encourage kids to spread out a little to complete this activity quietly and alone.

TECH CONNECT (OPTIONAL)

- Before today's Small Group begins, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" on the app.

ACTIVITIES

- Select one or more of the activities to complete as time allows.

TOOLS:

- Explorer Guides: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

BODY ART

Tools: whiteboard, dry erase marker

- Remind the kids of the Text Truth: **Jesus died on the cross to pay for my sin. Jesus is alive!**
- Say: "We are going to create symbols to represent our Text Truth. For example, for Jesus dying on the cross, what symbol can we use to remember that?" (Cross) Continue with the rest of the verse. Draw these symbols on the whiteboard. (Examples: pay—dollar sign, sin—X, alive—tomb)
- Continue: "We are going to use our bodies to create these symbols."
- Guide the kids to create a cross or first symbol using their bodies either standing up or laying on the floor. You may use more than one child per symbol.
- After forming all the symbols, say the Text Truth aloud using the symbols as a reference.





THE GOSPEL MATCH UP

Tools: index cards, markers, Bibles, "The Gospel" (enhanced CD)

- Write the following statements and Scripture verses on separate index cards. Make one set for every 3-4 kids.
 - ▶ **God Rules. Revelation 4:11**
 - ▶ **We Sinned. Romans 6:23**
 - ▶ **God Provided. John 3:16**
 - ▶ **Jesus Gives. 1 Peter 3:18**
 - ▶ **We Respond. Romans 10:9-10,13**
- Forms groups of 3-4 kids. Give each group at least one Bible.
- Explain that you will give each group a set of cards. The cards have a set of 5 statements and 5 Scripture references. Groups should work together to look up each Scripture reference and match it with the statement they think it best fits. Emphasize that this is not a race, so each group should work at a thoughtful pace.
- After several minutes, pause and display "The Gospel." You may opt to give each kid a copy of the sheet.
- Talk through each statement, allowing groups to reveal what matches they made and why.
- Say: "Our Text Truth states: **Jesus died on the cross to pay for my sin. Jesus is alive!** This truth tells us why Jesus came to earth. God had a plan to rescue us from our sin."
- Conclude: "If you have any questions about this or want to talk to someone, please tell me or another adult."



COLORFUL CROSS

Tools: white paper, masking or painter's tape, markers or washable paint

- Make a cross on the paper using tape. Make 1 for each kid.
- Distribute the prepared white pieces of paper to the kids. Also, provide the markers or the paint.
- Instruct the kids to color or paint the white paper covering all of the white space and over the tape.
- When finished, pull tape off to reveal a white cross.
- Guide the kids to write the Text Truth inside the cross on the white space: **Jesus died on the cross to pay for my sin. Jesus is alive!**



Session

6



THE FIRST JUDGES

Judges 2:11-19; 3:7-31

Following the death of Joshua, “the Israelites did what was evil in the Lord’s sight.” Judges 2:11 gives us this sad commentary and is one of eight such references in the Book of Judges. The opening chapters of Judges show that the people did not remember or follow their commitment to God that they had made previously (*see Joshua 24*).

Judges 2 gives us a picture of Israel’s interaction with God over the next many years. As the Israelites began worshiping things other than God, God became angry with the people. As a consequence, God sent opposing nations to conquer the Israelites and make life tough for them. As the people cried out to God, He sent judges to rescue the people from the evil nations that had oppressed them. As long as a judge lived, God sent favor to the people. Once the judge died, the people would return to their evil ways, acting more corruptly than before, and the cycle would begin again.

Judges 3 introduces us to the first of the judges listed in the book. When Israel chose to sin, God sent the most powerful military leader at that time. The king of Aram-naharaim, (*which basically means Aram of the two rivers*) controlled all the land from the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee eastward to the Tigris and Euphrates basin. This king’s oppression of Israel lasted eight years until the judge Othniel was sent to rescue Israel. Othniel overpowered the king and Israel had peace for forty years.

Eglon, king of Moab, used the Ammonites and Amalekites to help him conquer Israel, and Eglon set up his kingdom in the city of Jericho. Ehud, God’s chosen judge, visited Eglon, killed him in secret, and escaped after locking all the doors to the room. Following that incident, Israel had peace for eighty years.

Shamgar, the last judge mentioned in this section, is only attributed one verse, therefore, we know very little about who he was. God used Shamgar to fight the Philistines, a relative newcomer to Israel’s oppressors, and a group we will see again.

SESSION FOCUS

BIBLE PASSAGE: Judges 2:11-19; 3:7-31

MEMORY VERSE: Judges 2:16

TEXT TRUTH: The consequence of sin is that our world and our relationship with God are broken.

CHRIST IN CONTEXT: The Book of Judges highlights the consequences of sin and our need for a Savior. The judges were temporary deliverers rescuing the Israelites from their enemies. Jesus is the sinless deliverer, who through His death on the cross and resurrection, has defeated our enemy, Satan.

GET STARTED TOOLS

(10 MINUTES)

- Bible Skills:** *“Judges” (Books of the Bible Posters), Bibles*

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

(35 MINUTES)

- Jump In:** *“Dagger” (DVD-ROM)*
- Examine the Text:** *Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” (Poster Pack)*
- Play the Video:** *Explore the Bible on Location video*
- Memory Verse:** *“Judges 2:16” (Poster Pack), large sheet of paper, marker, 2 new flyswatters*
- Prayer:** *Family Cards*

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

(30 MINUTES)

- Explorer Guides:** *Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens*
- Move:** *large plastic hoop*
- Make:** *“Cycle of Sin” (Poster Pack); white paper; black markers; washable tempera paint or watercolors; paintbrushes; several small, medium, and large plastic cups*
- Explore:** *none*

NOTE: Downloadable versions of DVD items are available in the Digital Video Bundle. Downloadable versions of enhanced CD items are available in the Music and Print Extras Bundle. For free online training on how to lead a group, visit ministrygrid.com/web/explorethebible.

GOD SENT JUDGES TO HELP HIS PEOPLE

Judges 2:11-19; 3:7-31

The Israelites sinned. They forgot God. Instead of worshiping and loving God, they worshiped and loved false idols that their neighbors worshiped.

God was upset. So He allowed the king of Aram to capture the Israelites. The Israelites served the king for 8 years.

The Israelites prayed to God and asked Him for help. They were sorry for their sin (and the trouble it caused them). God chose Othniel, the son of Caleb's youngest brother, to be a deliverer or judge. God helped Othniel defeat the king of Aram, and Israel had peace for 40 years.

Then, the Israelites sinned. They forgot God. They worshiped false idols. This time, God let the king of Moab have power over the Israelites. For 18 years, the people served Eglon, the king of Moab.

The Israelites prayed to God and asked for help. God chose Ehud, a left handed man from the tribe of Benjamin to be the new deliverer or judge.

Ehud made a plan. The Israelites had to send money to Eglon. Ehud hid a sword under his clothes and took the money to the king, Eglon. Ehud told Eglon that he had a secret message for him. The king made all of the other people leave the room. Then Ehud walked closer to Eglon. "I have a message from God for you." Eglon stood up and Ehud grabbed his hidden sword and killed Eglon. Ehud escaped and led the Israelites to defeat the Moabites in a battle. Israel had peace for 80 years.

Once again, Israel needed a deliverer. This time God chose a man named Shamgar to deliver the Israelites from the Philistines.

KEY POINTS

- God loves His people even when they sin.
- Sin always has consequences.
- Just like the Israelites, we sin over and over again.
- We have a sin problem and need a deliverer.
- God sent Jesus to rescue us from our sin.

TEXT CONNECTION

- Jesus paid the penalty for our sin, but that does not mean we no longer sin. Unfortunately people still choose to sin. Our world and our relationship with God are broken by our sin.
- God planned for the Israelites to have Him as their King. Once Joshua died, the people started rejecting God instead of remaining faithful to Him and remembering His faithfulness to them.
- When the people rebelled, God sent oppressors to control Israel. When God's people finally repented, God sent deliverers in the form of judges. However, once a judge died, the people went back to their old way of sinning instead of remembering what life with God was like.
- After Jesus went back to heaven, Paul wrote to the Corinthians, helping them remember the purpose of the Lord's Supper—to remember the sacrifice Jesus made and to proclaim His death until He returns. Remembering this event should change lives.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE AT HOME

See the enhanced CD for additional family resources.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Bible Skills: “Judges” (Books of the Bible Posters), Bibles

BIBLE SKILLS

- Display the “Judges” poster.
- Ask all kids to find Judges in the Bible. If guidance is needed, demonstrate how to use the table of contents page.
- Ask: “Is Judges in the Old or New Testament?” (*Old Testament*) “What Bible division is Judges in?” (*History*)
- Referring to the “Judges” poster, read aloud the statement under Judges: “God used judges to provide order for His people and deliver them from evil.”
- Continue by reading aloud the why: “To tell of the Israelites’ cycle of consequences, repentance and deliverance. Over and over the Israelites rejected God, but God’s plan to send the Savior continues.”
- Conclude: “We will be learning about some judges over the next few weeks that God used to bring the Israelites to deliverance and peace.”
- Dismiss to Bible Study.

BIBLE SKILLS SPOTLIGHT

- Locates all the books of the Bible in a limited time frame.
- Locates from memory often-used Bible passages and memory verses.
- Uses other resources to enrich her Bible skills and knowledge (Bible dictionary, commentary, concordance, atlas, and digital sources).

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMP IN

- Greet boys and girls as they arrive.
- Display the “Dagger” visual.
- Begin: “We know that we are studying in a new book called Judges today. How do you think this object relates to the Book of Judges?”
- Say: “Today in our Bible Story, listen for how one of God’s chosen judges used a dagger or sword.”

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Lead the boys and girls to open their Bibles to Judges 2.
- Read the passage aloud (*Judges 2:11-19; 3:7-31*) or if you prefer to read aloud fewer verses, tell the Bible story in your own words. A Bible story page has been provided for you to use as a guide.
- Share: “Every time the Israelites had peace, they ended up turning to evil again even after a period of many years. Why do you think this happened repeatedly?” Select several kids to respond.
- Display the “Text Truth Strip” and read it aloud. Invite everyone to read it with you: **the consequence of sin is that our world and our relationship with God are broken.**
- Conclude: “God does not want our relationship with Him to be broken, so He sent Jesus to die for our sins so that our relationship with God can be restored.”
- Review the gospel with your girls and boys. Explain that kids who have questions or need to talk, can always speak with you, another adult leader, or their parents.

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 6” video.
- Ask: “What book of the Bible did Joel learn about today? What did he learn from the story of the Israelites? How did that help him with his basketball?”

MEMORY VERSE

- Display the “Judges 2:16” poster.
- Read the Memory Verse aloud together.
- Display the large piece of paper with the bugs and words on it.
- Say: “We are going to play a game to help us remember our verse. Each word of the Memory Verse is written on a bug. I’m going to give two of you a flyswatter and you will try to smack the bug with the word that comes next in order. As they smack the bugs, the rest of us will say the words aloud.”
- Repeat until all kids have had a turn or as time allows.
- Remind the kids to practice the Memory Verse at home during the week.

TOOLS:

- Jump In: “Dagger” (DVD-ROM)
- Examine the Text: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” (Poster Pack)
- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location video
- Memory Verse: “Judges 2:16” (Poster Pack), large sheet of paper, marker, 2 new flyswatters
- Prayer: Family Cards

MEMORY VERSE

PREPARATION:

- Draw simple two-dimensional bugs on the sheet of paper. Draw enough bugs for each word of the Memory Verse. Write one word from the Memory Verse randomly in the bugs on the paper.
- Option: Allow kids to tap the words with their hands if you do not want to use flyswatters.

PRAYER

- Distribute a Family Card to each boy and girl. Invite someone to read aloud the description on the card. Challenge boys and girls to share their card with their families during the week.
- Say: “Remember that **the consequence of sin is that our world and our relationship with God are broken.**”
- Lead in prayer thanking God for providing a way to restore our relationship with Him and that He desires to have a relationship with us.
- Dismiss to Small Group.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute the Explorer Guides to girls and boys. Help kids find today's pages, "The First Judges."
- Review today's object by reading about the "Dagger."
- Invite a volunteer to read "The Tribe of Benjamin."
- Ask another volunteer to read aloud "Idols: Then & Now."
- Help kids use their Bibles to find Judges 3 and complete the matching activity in "Judge Matching."
- Guide kids to work with a partner to solve the puzzle in "Decoding Truth" to reveal a message about today's Bible study.

TECH CONNECT (OPTIONAL)

- Before today's Small Group begins, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" on the app.

ACTIVITIES

- Select one or more of the activities to complete as time allows.

TOOLS:

- Explorer Guides: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

DON'T BREAK THE CIRCLE

Tools: large plastic hoop

- Direct the kids to form a circle and join hands. Ask two of the kids to let go of their hands. Put a large plastic hoop on one kid's arm, then have them rejoin hands.
- See how fast they can get the large plastic hoop around the circle without letting their hands break apart.
- If the circle breaks, have the two children at the "break" name something that we do that breaks our relationship with God.
- Continue as time allows.
- For a more competitive version, form two groups and see who can get the large plastic hoop around the circle first.
- Remind the kids of the Text Truth: **the consequence of sin is that our world and our relationship with God are broken.**
- Ask: "Do we have a problem with sin too? Or are we different from the Israelites?" (*No, we sin too!*) "Why did Jesus come?" (*He came to deliver us from our sin.*)
- As time allows, review the message of the gospel with girls and boys.





JUDGES: CYCLE OF SIN

Tools: "Cycle of Sin" (Poster Pack); white paper; black markers; washable tempera paint or watercolors; paintbrushes; several small, medium, and large plastic cups

- Begin: "In the Book of Judges, the Israelites lived in a repetitive cycle of sin. They sinned. They begged God for help. God rescued them. They served God for a period of time. They sinned again and the cycle continued. Remember our Text Truth: **the consequence of sin is that our world and our relationship with God are broken.**"
- Provide kids with a piece of white paper and a black marker. Guide the kids to trace the rim of a cup on their papers. Help kids continue tracing using various size cups and overlapping the circles as desired.
- When kids finish tracing, allow them to paint inside the circles. Tell kids that these circles are a reminder of the cycle of sin.
- Display the "Cycle of Sin" poster.
- Share: "As we discovered Israel's cycle of sin and God's rescue in Judges today, did you see how you and I can fall into a similar cycle of sin in our own lives? As believers we know what God says we should do. When we disobey and do not immediately confess our sin, we are enslaved to whatever sin that is causing us to abandon God's truth just like the Israelites. Abandoning God and living enslaved to any sin makes us miserable, and eventually we will cry out to God to forgive us and help us not to sin."
- Conclude: "Jesus has rescued us from sin and the punishment we deserve. He is our righteous Judge. When we walk in obedience to Him we will have peace from the stress that sin brings to us and those around us."



I HAVE NEVER

Tools: none

- Lead boys and girls to stand in a circle.
- Explain that kids will take turns being in the middle of the circle. The person in the middle will say, "I have never ..." and complete the statement with something they have not done before. (*Examples: I have never ridden a school bus. I have never been to Connecticut.*)
- If a kid has done the activity named he should step out and trade places with someone else in the circle who has also stepped out. The person in the middle will try to take someone's spot, leaving a new person in the middle.
- Play until every kid has a chance to be in the middle or until time runs out.
- Ask: "Can any of us say, 'I have never sinned?'" (*No.*) "Romans 3:23 tells us that we all sin. Who is the only person to live on earth and never sin, not even once?" (*Jesus*)
- Continue: "Remember our Text Truth: **the consequence of sin is that our world and our relationship with God are broken.** The Israelites had a problem. We have a problem, don't we? We sin. We break God's law. Thankfully, God send Jesus to rescue us from our sin. Jesus lived and never sinned. He obeyed God's law perfectly. Then He paid the price for our sin by dying on the cross."
- Close in prayer.



Session 7

DEBORAH, A FAITHFUL LEADER



Judges 4–5

Judges 4:1 mentions Ehud, not Shamgar. Likely Shamgar’s deliverance from the Philistines happened at the same time as Deborah and Barak’s deliverance from Canaan. After Ehud died, the Israelites once again followed depraved practices and God sent Jabin, king of Canaan, to enslave the Israelites. Sisera, the commander of Jabin’s army, terrorized Israel with his 900 iron chariots, and Israel became servants of Sisera and Jabin for twenty years.

Deborah, a prophetess, was judging Israel during Sisera’s command. Deborah appeared to be both a prophetess—one who spoke God’s words to the people—and a judicial leader, administering judgment on civil and theological cases. When Deborah heard from God, she summoned Barak, the military leader of Israel, and asked why he had not accomplished God’s command to overthrow Sisera and his army. God had promised to lure Sisera and his army to Mount Tabor, but Barak had failed to go. Barak wanted Deborah to accompany him in the mission and she agreed, but warned Barak that the victory would go to a woman, not to Barak.

Sisera learned Barak had gone to Mount Tabor, and in an attempt to completely annihilate the army of Israel, Sisera summoned all 900 of his massive iron chariots. As Barak and his 10,000 men came down the slopes of the mountain, God threw Sisera and his entire army into a panic. Confused, Sisera actually left the safety of his chariot and escaped on foot. Barak conquered Sisera’s army and not a single one of them was left.

Sisera ran to the tent of a woman, Jael, who invited him in and offered him milk and safety. When Sisera fell asleep, Jael killed him and let Barak know what she had done. God’s victory over the Canaanites was complete. Deborah knew God had won the victory and she and Barak sang a song to honor God for the victory. Good leaders trust God when He gives them a command to obey. Encourage kids to follow and obey God.

SESSION FOCUS

BIBLE PASSAGE: Judges 4–5

MEMORY VERSE: Judges 5:3b

TEXT TRUTH: We should trust God when He gives us a command to obey.

CHRIST IN CONTEXT: The Book of Judges highlights the consequences of sin and our need for a Savior. The judges were temporary deliverers rescuing the Israelites from their enemies. Jesus is the sinless deliverer, who through His death on the cross and resurrection, has defeated our enemy, Satan.

GET STARTED TOOLS

(10 MINUTES)

- Bible Skills:** *“Bible Book Cards”* (enhanced CD), bucket, *“Christ in Context: Judges”* (Poster Pack), Bibles

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

(35 MINUTES)

- Jump In:** *“Deborah Tapestry”* (DVD-ROM)
- Examine the Text:** Bibles, *“Text Truth Strips”* and *“Cycle of Sin”* (Poster Pack)
- Play the Video:** *Explore the Bible on Location video*
- Memory Verse:** *“Judges 5:3b”* (Poster Pack), colored paper, scissors, marker, beanbags
- Prayer:** *Family Cards*

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

(30 MINUTES)

- Explorer Guides:** *Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens*
- Move:** *cones, large plastic hoops, rope, chairs, blindfolds*
- Make:** *brown construction paper, large pieces of white paper, scissors, glue, cotton swabs, rubber bands, green paint (variety of shades), paper plates, markers*
- Explore:** *“Keys to Obeying God”* (enhanced CD), scissors, hole punch, chenille stems

NOTE: Downloadable versions of DVD items are available in the Digital Video Bundle. Downloadable versions of enhanced CD items are available in the Music and Print Extras Bundle. For free online training on how to lead a group, visit ministrygrid.com/web/explorethebible.

DEBORAH LED ISRAEL

Judges 4–5

Once again Israel sinned. They did not love and worship only God. God allowed Jabin, the king of Canaan, to rule over the people. The commander of Jabin’s army was named Sisera. Jabin had 900 iron chariots and he treated the Israelites badly for 20 years.

The Israelites called to God for help. At this time, Deborah was a prophetess and a judge in Israel. She would sit under a palm tree and the Israelites would come to her for help.

One day, Deborah sent for a man named Barak (BAY rak). Deborah asked Barak, “Didn’t God tell you to take soldiers to Mount Tabor and defeat Sisera?”

Barak told Deborah that he would go if she would also go.

Deborah agreed, but she told him, “You will not receive the honor for the battle. A woman will defeat Sisera.”

Barak gathered 10,000 soldiers. Barak and Deborah traveled with the soldiers to Mount Tabor. Sisera heard the news that Barak had gone to Mount Tabor. He gathered all 900 iron chariots and all of his soldiers. Deborah told Barak to take his men and go to the battle.

Suddenly, God caused Sisera, all of his chariots, and all of his soldiers to be confused. Sisera ran away from the battle. He traveled to the tent of a woman named Jael. Jael welcomed Sisera into the tent. She offered him milk to drink and hid him under a rug. Sisera fell asleep and Jael killed him.

Barak had been chasing Sisera and arrived at the tent to find that Sisera was dead. God had delivered the Israelites from Jabin and his army. Eventually, the Israelites completely defeated Jabin.

Deborah and Barak sang a song of praise to God for all that He had done. “May those who love God be like the rising sun in its strength,” they sang. There was peace in Israel for 40 years.

KEY POINTS

- God helped His people defeat Canaan.
- Deborah praised God after the battle.

TEXT CONNECTION

- Deborah knew that God had given Barak specific instructions to follow. She also knew that God would give Barak everything he needed to accomplish God’s plan. The problem was, Barak wouldn’t act unless Deborah went with him.
- Deborah understood that good leaders followed God’s instruction. Deborah helped Barak follow God’s instruction and went with him into battle.
- Like He did with Deborah and Barak, God gives us everything we need through the Holy Spirit. The Spirit gives gifts to each person so they may use those gifts to benefit the church. God calls believers to use those gifts to glorify Him.
- As Deborah and Barak learned, God uniquely gifted people to do what He called them to do. God still gives gifts today. These gifts enable church members to serve the church in advancing God’s kingdom here on earth.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE AT HOME

See the enhanced CD for additional family resources.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Bible Skills: “Bible Book Cards” (enhanced CD), bucket, “Christ in Context: Judges” (Poster Pack), Bibles

BIBLE SKILLS

- Place the bucket with the Bible Book Cards in front of the kids.
- Explain: “You will take turns choosing a card out of the bucket. After choosing a card, name a Bible person in that book.”
- Allow kids to use their Bibles for help. Continue until several kids have had an opportunity to play or as time allows.
- Display the “Christ in Context: Judges” poster. Read the statement and remind kids of the sin cycle the Book of Judges reveals. Help kids understand that we also have a problem with sin and need Jesus.
- Dismiss to Bible Study.

BIBLE SKILLS SPOTLIGHT

- Identifies prominent Bible people by the books in which their stories are recorded.
- Applies biblical principles to personal and social issues.
- Learns the Bible teaches people how to live a Christian life by following Jesus.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMP IN

- Greet the kids as they arrive.
- Display the “Deborah Tapestry” visual.
- Explain that the lady in the tapestry, Deborah, is one of the judges that God used in the Bible to rescue the Israelites.
- Say: “Deborah provided great leadership and God provided deliverance to the Israelites through her. Let’s see how she allowed God to use her.”

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Lead the boys and girls to open their Bibles to Judges 4.
- Tell the Bible story in your own words. A Bible story page has been provided for you to use as a guide.
- Share that this is another example of how the Israelites continued in the cycle of sin. Refer to the “Cycle of Sin” poster displayed from Session 6.
- Say: “Deborah was a judge who sat under a tree and provided help for those who came to her. It’s not quite the setting we think of when we think of a judge. We think of a courtroom and the judge sitting up on a high seat and behind a barrier. Deborah’s ‘courtroom’ was under a tree.”
- Select a volunteer to read Judges 4:4-8.
- Ask: “What do you think Deborah was thinking when Barak (*BAY rak*) said that he would go if she would?” Allow kids to respond.
- Ask: “How did God defeat Sisera?” Invite a volunteer to read Judges 4:15.
- Continue: “Deborah provided great leadership. Let’s name some of the things that Deborah did that showed great leadership.” Select a few kids to respond. Guide kids to look at Judges 4–5 for help. If not mentioned, discuss how Deborah trusted God and did what He asked.
- Display the “Text Truth Strip” and read the Text Truth aloud. Invite everyone to read the Text Truth with you: **we should trust God when He gives us a command to obey.**
- Conclude: “We need to obey God just as Deborah did.”

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 7” video.
- Ask: “Who was Kaileigh’s special guest? What did Kaileigh and Joel learn about good leaders?”

MEMORY VERSE

- Display the “Judges 5:3b” poster. Invite the kids to read the verse with you.
- Lay out the two sets of colored circles with words from the Memory Verse in two separate areas of the room. Form two groups of kids and designate a start line. Instruct the first kid from each team to stand at the start line and toss their beanbag towards the colored circles. If the beanbag lands on a circle, then they can pick it up.

TOOLS:

- Jump In: “Deborah Tapestry” (DVD-ROM)
- Examine the Text: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” and “Cycle of Sin” (Poster Pack)
- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location video
- Memory Verse: “Judges 5:3b” (Poster Pack), colored paper, scissors, marker, beanbags
- Prayer: Family Cards

MEMORY VERSE PREPARATION:

- Cut circles out of the colored paper. Write one word from the verse onto each circle. Make two sets.

- If the beanbag does not land on a circle, they do not pick up a circle. They then give the beanbag to the next person in line. Continue until one team has all the words to the Memory Verse picked up and placed in the correct order. Guide the entire group to say the verse aloud.
- Repeat as time allows.
- Remind the kids to practice the Memory Verse at home during the week.

PRAYER

- Distribute a Family Card to each boy and girl. Invite someone to read aloud the description on the card. Challenge boys and girls to share their cards with their families during the week.
- Explain: “Remember our object, the Deborah tapestry, is a reminder that **we should trust God when He gives us a command to obey.**”
- Lead the group in prayer.
- Dismiss to Small Group.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute Explorer Guides to boys and girls. Guide kids to find today's pages, "Deborah, a Faithful Leader."
- Help kids complete the "Follow the Path" activity.
- Select a volunteer to read about the "Deborah Tapestry."
- Read aloud about the "Ancient Tanks."
- Invite three volunteers to each read one section of "Women in the Bible."
- Lead girls and boys to complete the "How Can I Obey?" activity.

TECH CONNECT (OPTIONAL)

- Before today's Small Group begins, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" on the app.

ACTIVITIES

- Select one or more of the activities to complete as time allows.

TOOLS:

- Explorer Guides: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

BLIND TRUST



Tools: cones, large plastic hoops, rope, chairs, blindfolds

- Create an obstacle course. Ideas: weave through cones, hop in and out of hoops laying on the ground, put rope on top of chairs a short distance apart to crawl under.

- Deborah trusted and obeyed God even when she did not know what would happen. We are going to play a game to help us remember that **we should trust God when He gives us a command to obey.**
- Form pairs of children. Tell the children that they are going to go through an obstacle course with their partner. However, one person will wear a blindfold and the other person will give directions to help make it through the course.
- Discuss what will be helpful for the person wearing the blindfold to do and also the person giving the instructions. Allow several kids to respond.
- Allow pairs to go through the obstacle course, stopping as needed to provide direction and instruction.
- Ask: "How did it feel to be the person wearing the blindfold? How did it feel to be the person giving directions?" Select a few children to respond.
- Discuss: "The person wearing the blindfold had to listen and obey the person giving directions even though they could not see where they were going. In the same way, **we should trust God when He gives us a command to obey** even though we cannot see where we might be going or what might happen next."



DEBORAH'S TREE

Tools: brown construction paper, large pieces of white paper, scissors, glue, cotton swabs, rubber bands, green paint (variety of shades), paper plates, markers

- Bundle several cotton swabs together with a rubber band. Make enough for each child to have one bundle.
- Begin: “Deborah sat under a tree and people came to her for help. We are going to make a tree to remind us of Deborah’s obedience to God and also our Text Truth: **we should trust God when He gives us a command to obey.**”
- Distribute a piece of brown construction paper and a large piece of white paper to each child. Instruct them to trace their hand and part of their arm to create the trunk and branches of the tree on the brown piece of paper. Instruct the kids to cut their “trunk” out and glue it on the white piece of paper.
- Provide each child with a cotton swab bundle. Place small paper plates with different shades of green paint on them. Instruct the kids to dip their bundle in multiple places on the plate to pick up different shades of green and dab off extra paint on the edge. Then show the kids how to use the bundles to paint “leaves” on their trees.
- Continue until kids are finished or as time allows.
- Say: “Deborah sat under the tree and was obedient to God. Under our tree, we are going to write down a few ways that we can be obedient to God.” Allow for responses and guide the kids to write them on their papers.
- Conclude: “Take your trees home and put them in a place where you will see them. When you look at it, think of Deborah and remember that **we should trust God when He gives us a command to obey.**”



KEYS TO OBEYING GOD

Tools: “Keys to Obeying God” (enhanced CD), scissors, hole punch, chenille stems

- Make copies of “Keys to Obeying God.”
- Say: “After learning how Deborah obeyed God when He gave her a command, we are going to discover how we should respond when God gives us a command.”
- Distribute a “Keys to Obeying God” to each child. Demonstrate how to use the code to find the four ways we should respond. Provide guidance as needed. Review the sheet together to reveal the words: *immediately, cheerfully, completely, without complaining.*
- Say: “These are some ways we should respond to God when He commands us to obey Him. We should also respond in these ways when our parents give us commands because God tells us in the Bible to obey our parents.”
- Instruct the kids to cut out their keys. Provide a hole punch to punch out the hole. Distribute chenille stems for them to use as a key ring.
- Conclude: “Take your keys home and use them to remind you of our Text Truth: **we should trust God when He gives us a command to obey.**”

GIDEON, THE RELUCTANT JUDGE



Judges 6–8

Once again, following the death of a judge, the people turned away from God and incurred His wrath. The oppressor this time was the Midianites. The Midianites had a complicated relationship with Israel. There were instances when a relationship with Midian was a good thing (*God's call of Moses came in Midian, and Moses' wife was from there*), and other instances where Midian was an oppressor. Midian had been oppressing Israel for seven years until God called Gideon to rescue Israel.

Before God sent Gideon, He first sent a prophet to the people to remind them that God had brought the people out of Egypt and had continually rescued them. But the people still did not listen or obey the word of God. The call of Gideon in Judges 6 is different from any of the other call narratives in this book and is reminiscent of God's call of Moses in Exodus 3. The similarity between the two would have been recognized by the original audience of Judges and almost presented Gideon as a second Moses.

Gideon, hiding from the Midianites, was confronted by an angel, and after some initial pushback from Gideon, he ultimately followed God's call, built an altar, and worshiped. Scripture does not tell us if any of the other judges questioned God as extensively as Gideon did, but his story is full of instances of questioning and worry. As Gideon grew to understand God's call and mission, his faith and trust in what God was doing grew. We grow in our faith by being obedient to God, and this is what Gideon was learning.

Gideon's faith was tested as his obedience grew. God allowed Gideon only 300 men to fight this battle against the Midianites. God's insistence that 300 men would be sufficient went unchallenged by Gideon, and with full confidence in God, Gideon attacked the Midianites and God won the victory for them. The people, showing that they still did not understand God's ways, offered Gideon the opportunity to be their king. Gideon declined the offer and the land enjoyed peace for another 40 years.

SESSION FOCUS

BIBLE PASSAGE: Judges 6–8

MEMORY VERSE: Judges 6:16a

TEXT TRUTH: We grow in our faith by being obedient to God.

CHRIST IN CONTEXT: The Book of Judges highlights the consequences of sin and our need for a Savior. The judges were temporary deliverers rescuing the Israelites from their enemies. Jesus is the sinless deliverer, who through His death on the cross and resurrection, has defeated our enemy, Satan.

GET STARTED TOOLS

(10 MINUTES)

- Bible Skills:** “Bible Books” and “Judges” (Books of the Bible Posters), “Bible Book Cards” (enhanced CD), five pieces of paper, tape, marker, music

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

(35 MINUTES)

- Jump In:** “Ein Harod Stream” (DVD-ROM)
- Examine the Text:** Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” and “Cycle of Sin” (Poster Pack)
- Play the Video:** Explore the Bible on Location video
- Memory Verse:** “Judges 6:16a” (Poster Pack), index cards, marker
- Prayer:** Family Cards

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

(30 MINUTES)

- Explorer Guides:** Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens
- Move:** index cards, marker
- Make:** long cardboard tubes, colored duct tape, buttons, glue, small insulated cups, scissors
- Explore:** index cards, pencils

NOTE: Downloadable versions of DVD items are available in the Digital Video Bundle. Downloadable versions of enhanced CD items are available in the Music and Print Extras Bundle. For free online training on how to lead a group, visit ministrygrid.com/web/explorethebible.

GIDEON LEARNED TO TRUST GOD

Judges 6–8

Israel sinned—again. The people of Midian ruled the Israelites for 7 years. The Midianites were very mean to the Israelites. They would destroy any food the people planted. Israel had nothing to eat. The Israelites asked God for help.

God sent the Angel of the Lord to Gideon. Gideon was hiding from the Midianites so he could thresh wheat to make flour. Suddenly, the Angel of the Lord appeared and said, “The Lord is with you, mighty warrior.”

Gideon was confused. If God was with His people, why were they suffering? The Angel of the Lord told Gideon that God was sending Gideon to deliver His people from the Midianites.

Gideon wasn’t sure he could do it, but the Angel of the Lord told him again, “You will defeat Midian.” Eventually, Gideon built an altar to God and began to obey God’s commands.

God was with Gideon. Gideon blew a ram’s horn to call soldiers to come join him. He sent messengers throughout the land to gather more soldiers. Gideon and the soldiers gathered and camped. But God had another message for Gideon, “You have too many people. Tell all of the ones who are afraid to go home.” God didn’t want Israel to think they defeated Midian.

God wanted the people to understand that God would defeat Midian. So 22,000 people left and 10,000 stayed.

God said, “You still have too many people. Take them to the water for a test.” All of the men who lapped the water with their tongues were sent home. Only the ones who knelt down to drink were allowed to stay. Now Gideon had 300 soldiers. God again promised Gideon that He would defeat Midian.

God helped Gideon form a plan. The 300 men formed 3 groups, each with 100 men. Each man carried a trumpet in one hand. In the other hand, he had an empty pitcher with a torch inside it. The 3 groups spread out around the sleeping Midianite soldiers. Gideon and the men suddenly blew the trumpets. They broke the pitchers. They held their torches up and shouted, “A sword for the Lord and for Gideon.”

The other army of soldiers woke up and God caused them to start fighting each other. Others ran away. God had defeated the Midianites. The Israelites had peace for 40 years.

KEY POINTS

- God wanted Israel to understand that He defeated Midian.

TEXT CONNECTION

- Gideon was from the smallest clan of the smallest tribe of Israel. Gideon did not feel adequate to be the chosen instrument of God, but God had gifted Gideon with everything he needed to do what God had called him to do.
- Gideon had plenty of reservations about the task God had called him to. But as time passed, Gideon began to put his full faith and trust in God. God directed Gideon to do some things that left no doubt that God was the One Who defeated Midian.
- Love is described in Paul’s letter to the Corinthians. Love is patient, kind, not boastful, not arrogant, not rude, not selfish, and not irritable. Paul said that love gives other spiritual gifts the impact they need to be effective. Without love, a Christian cannot be an example of Christ to those around them.
- God gave Gideon gifts to use, just as He gives gifts to each Christian. Our gifts are to be used, along with love, to glorify God.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE AT HOME

See the enhanced CD for additional family resources.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Bible Skills: “Bible Books” and “Judges” (Books of the Bible Posters), “Bible Book Cards” (enhanced CD), five pieces of paper, tape, marker, music

PREPARATION:

- Print the following divisions on individual pieces of paper: *Gospels, History, Paul’s Letters, General Letters, Prophecy*.
- Display the signs around the room.

BIBLE SKILLS

- Begin: “The New Testament is divided into five divisions: Gospels, History, Paul’s Letters, General Letters, and Prophecy.”
- Using the “Bible Books” poster as a reference, continue and explain the New Testament divisions.
- Review: “The word *gospel* means ‘good news.’ The first four books of the New Testament tell us the good news about Jesus and are called the Gospels. Acts is the History book that tells us what God’s Holy Spirit did through people who told the good news about Jesus to the rest of the world. The next division of the New Testament is Paul’s Letters. Paul wrote letters to many people and groups of people encouraging them to stay true to the gospel. The division after Paul’s Letters is the General Letters. These letters were written by different men and were written to encourage people to live as Christians. The last division is Prophecy and contains only one book, Revelation. This book tells us about the future when Jesus will come back to Earth.”
- Continue: “We are going to play a game to help us remember the divisions in the New Testament.”
- Guide kids to stand in a circle. Distribute one of the New Testament “Bible Book Cards” to each child. As you play the music, the children will pass the cards around the circle. When the music stops, they will take the card they are holding and put it in the correct New Testament Division. Continue until all cards have been placed.
- Repeat as time allows.
- Display the “Judges” poster and remind kids where in the Bible you are currently studying and why.
- Dismiss to Bible Study.

BIBLE SKILLS SPOTLIGHT

- Locates from memory often-used Bible passages and memory verses.
- Names the 10 divisions of the Old and New Testaments in a limited time frame and identifies examples of books in each division.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMP IN

- Greet boys and girls as they arrive.
- Display the “Ein Harod Stream” visual.
- Explain: “Our object is a modern day place that God told Gideon to use in our Bible study today. How do you think that Gideon, a judge in the Bible, would use this place?”
- Continue: “The name of this place is Ein Harod stream. Listen as we study today to see what happened here.”

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Lead boys and girls to open their Bibles to Judges 6.
- Ask: “What part and division of the Bible is Judges in?” (*Old Testament, History*)
- Guide kids to read Judges 6:1-6 to establish the setting of today’s Bible story.
- Tell the Bible story in your own words. A Bible story page has been provided for you to use as a guide.
- Ask: “What happened at the Ein Harod stream? What do you think Gideon was thinking when God kept telling him to reduce the number in his army? How would you feel?” Select several kids to respond.
- Share that this is another example of how the Israelites continued in the cycle of sin. Refer to the “Cycle of Sin” poster displayed from Session 6.
- Discuss: “What do you think you would have done if you were Gideon? Would you have obeyed God and taken a small army to defeat the Midianites?”
- Continue: “It’s easy to say what we would have done if we were Gideon because we know what happened, but what about when we must be obedient to God and we cannot see how things are going to turn out?”
- Display the “Text Truth Strip” and read the Text Truth aloud. Invite everyone to read the Text Truth with you: **we grow in our faith by being obedient to God.**

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 8” video.
- Ask: “Where did Kaileigh go? Whom did she meet? What did she learn about? Why is trust important when you work with a horse? Why is trusting God important?”

MEMORY VERSE

- Display the “Judges 6:16a” poster. Invite the kids to read the verse aloud with you.
- Distribute the cards with a word or phrase from the Memory Verse. Instruct the kids to randomly stand in front, facing the group, with their backs to the “Judges 6:16a” poster.

TOOLS:

- Jump In: “Ein Harod Stream” (DVD-ROM)
- Examine the Text: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” and “Cycle of Sin” (Poster Pack)
- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location video
- Memory Verse: “Judges 6:16a” (Poster Pack), index cards, marker
- Prayer: Family Cards

MEMORY VERSE PREPARATION:

- Write words or phrases from the Memory Verse on index cards.

- Select children to take turns giving directions to rearrange the group to get them in the correct order. (*For example: Sarah, move to your right 3 steps.*)
- Continue until the group is in the correct order and instruct the group to say the verse together.
- Remind kids to practice the Memory Verse at home during the week.

PRAYER

- Distribute a Family Card to each boy and girl. Invite someone to read aloud the description on the card. Challenge boys and girls to share their cards with their families during the week.
- Say: “Remember that our picture of the Ein Harod stream is a reminder that **we grow in our faith by being obedient to God.**”
- Lead the boys and girls in prayer asking God to help us to be faithful and obedient.
- Dismiss to Small Group.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute Explorer Guides and help kids locate today's pages, "Gideon, the Reluctant Judge."
- Guide kids to examine the "Ein Harod Stream."
- Review today's Bible story as kids find the errors in the "Fix the Errors" activity. (*Answers: Samuel—Gideon; lion's—ram's; laughing—afraid; 100,000—10,000; 30—300; drum—trumpet; flashlight—torch; hugging—fighting*)
- Invite a volunteer to read "Gideon Who?"
- Choose another volunteer to read "Trust God!"
- Help boys and girls use their Bibles to complete the "My Battle Armor" to reveal their spiritual armor of God.

TECH CONNECT (OPTIONAL)

- Before today's Small Group begins, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" on the app.

ACTIVITIES

- Select one or more of the activities to complete as time allows.

TOOLS:

- Explorer Guides: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

HOW MUCH FAITH?

Tools: index cards, marker

- Print the numbers 1 through 10 on separate index cards and place them several feet apart on the floor.

- **Begin:** "We are going to see how much faith you have that certain events will happen. When I say an event, you will line up behind the number indicating how much faith you have in that event happening—1 being no faith at all and 10 being very certain."
- **Read through events listed below. How much faith do you have that:**
 - ▶ You will leave this group today?
 - ▶ Your parents will give you \$100 this week?
 - ▶ You will make a good grade at school this week?
 - ▶ The chair will hold you up when you sit down?
 - ▶ You will eat something tomorrow?
 - ▶ You will get to fly on a space shuttle?
 - ▶ Your family will go on vacation this year?
- **Discuss:** "Which event did you have the least faith would happen? Why? Which event did you have the most faith would happen? Why?"
- **Continue:** "How can we show faith in Jesus? What might make it hard to show faith in Jesus?"
- **Review the Text Truth: we grow in our faith by being obedient to God.**
- **Conclude:** "Sometimes it is hard to have faith in something or someone we have not seen. But remember, when we obey God we will have more and more faith in Him."





BLOW YOUR HORN

Tools: long cardboard tubes, colored duct tape, buttons, glue, small insulated cups, scissors

- Cut off the bottom of the small insulated cups.
- Distribute one long cardboard tube, one insulated cup, and three buttons to each child.
- Assist the children to tape the cup to the end of the cardboard tube and place a couple pieces of colored duct tape on tube for decoration. Guide the children to glue three buttons onto the tube to resemble keys of a horn.
- Allow time for kids to blow their horns as Gideon's men blew their horns in battle.
- Remind the boys and girls of the Text Truth: **we grow in our faith by being obedient to God** just as Gideon obeyed.



DOWNSIZING

Tools: index cards, pencils

- Demonstrate how God told Gideon to reduce the number of men in his army before going into battle against the Midianites using the following activity.
- Begin: "This group is my army just as Gideon started out with his army. But just as God told Gideon to reduce the number of men, I am going to reduce the number in my army."
- Distribute an index card to each boy and girl. Instruct them to draw a triangle or a square on their cards.
- Continue: "If you drew a square, you will continue to be in my army. If you drew a triangle, you are removed from my army." Guide the kids who were removed to another section of the room.
- Instruct the remaining boys and girls to stand shoulder to shoulder facing you. Ask them to take one step forward.
- Say: "If you stepped with your right foot first, you will continue in my army. If you stepped with your left foot first, you are removed from my army." Guide the kids removed to another section of the room.
- Instruct the remaining boys and girls to make an X or an O with their arms.
- Say: "If you made an X, you will continue to be in my army. If you made an O, you are removed from my army. Guide the kids who were removed to another section of the room.
- Conclude: "It must have been hard for Gideon to continue to obey God and remove men from his army. Gideon remained faithful to God and everyone could see that they won the battle because of God not because of their own strength. Remember our Text Truth: **we grow in our faith by being obedient to God.**"



Session 9



SAMSON, THE PRIDEFUL JUDGE

Judges 13–16

Shamgar, the judge whom we studied earlier, had defeated 600 Philistines. During his time period the Philistines were still an emerging nation, but when the story of Samson begins, the Philistines had become a major superpower.

On par with the story of Gideon, Samson's story covers quite a few chapters in the Book of Judges. An angel of the Lord was sent to Manoah's wife, a barren woman, to tell her that she would be with child. The angel gave specific instructions for the child to follow and promised that he would begin the salvation of Israel from the oppression of the Philistines.

The Samson narrative is very different from the other cycles in Judges. The author of Judges typically follows a single pattern where the people are oppressed and then begin to cry out to God. In the story of Samson the crying out element seems to be missing. Perhaps the people of Israel had become so calloused against God that they simply accepted the mistreatment of the Philistines. Whatever the reason, God began to stir in Samson's heart at the conclusion of Judges 13.

Samson's life began a downward spiral from that point. He killed a lion with his bare hands and later scooped honey from the dead carcass, a clear violation of the instructions he had been taught. Samson married a woman from the Philistines, another violation of God's law. Samson got too close to the Philistines and became involved with another woman who discovered the secret of his strength. Delilah turned Samson over to the Philistines, who blinded Samson and made him entertain them with feats of strength.

Samson's life gives us testimony that sin has consequences and ultimately it breaks our relationship with God and the good plan He has for our lives. God is faithful through our sin, and when we repent and are sorry, He does forgive us. God heard Samson's final plea and gave him strength once more to defeat the Philistines.

SESSION FOCUS

BIBLE PASSAGE: Judges 13–16

MEMORY VERSE: Proverbs 8:33

TEXT TRUTH: Sin separates us from God and His good plan for our lives.

CHRIST IN CONTEXT: The Book of Judges highlights the consequences of sin and our need for a Savior. The judges were temporary deliverers rescuing the Israelites from their enemies. Jesus is the sinless deliverer, who through His death on the cross and resurrection, has defeated our enemy, Satan.

GET STARTED TOOLS

(10 MINUTES)

- Bible Skills:** *“Bible Book Cards” (enhanced CD), Bibles*

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

(35 MINUTES)

- Jump In:** *“Ancient Shears” (DVD-ROM)*
- Examine the Text:** *Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” and “Cycle of Sin” (Poster Pack), “The Gospel” (enhanced CD)*
- Play the Video:** *Explore the Bible on Location video*
- Memory Verse:** *“Proverbs 8:33” (Poster Pack), numbered cubes, paper, pencils*
- Prayer:** *Family Cards*

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

(30 MINUTES)

- Explorer Guides:** *Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens*
- Move:** *balloons, “Allergy Alert” (enhanced CD), 2X long sleeve shirt/sweatshirt*
- Make:** *“Cut Samson’s Hair” and “The Gospel” (enhanced CD), play dough, scissors*
- Explore:** *none*

NOTE: Downloadable versions of DVD items are available in the Digital Video Bundle. Downloadable versions of enhanced CD items are available in the Music and Print Extras Bundle. For free online training on how to lead a group, visit ministrygrid.com/web/explorethebible.

THE LIFE OF SAMSON

Judges 13–16

The Israelites sinned again. They were ruled by the Philistines for 40 years. One day God sent the Angel of the Lord to tell a woman that she would have a baby.

The angel said, “Your child will begin to rescue Israel from the Philistines.” The Angel of the Lord gave special instructions about the baby including that no one should ever cut his hair.

The man and woman had a baby and named him Samson. He grew and God’s Spirit was with Samson. Now, Samson made some good choices and some bad choices, but God used Samson to defeat the Philistines. The Philistines really, really, really did not like Samson.

Samson fell in love with a woman named Delilah. The Philistines leaders visited Delilah and made a deal with her. If she could get Samson to tell where his great strength came from, each of the leaders would give her 1,100 pieces of silver.

Delilah began to beg Samson, “Please, tell me where your great strength comes from? How could someone make you helpless?”

Samson told Delilah, “If someone ties me up with seven fresh bowstrings that were not dried, I will become weak.”

The Philistines brought bowstrings to Delilah and she tied up Samson. The Philistine leaders waited while Delilah called, “Samson, the Philistines are here!”

Samson woke up and broke the bowstrings. Delilah was upset that Samson lied to her. She begged him again to tell his secret. Samson lied to Delilah two more times. Each time when she called, “Samson, the Philistines are here,” Samson woke up and broke free.

Delilah was upset. Day after day Delilah begged Samson to tell the secret of his strength. Finally, Samson told her the truth, “My hair has never been cut. I am a Nazirite dedicated to God from my birth. If someone shaved my head, I would lose my great strength.”

Delilah realized that this time Samson had told her the truth. She sent a message to the Philistine leaders to come to her house. Samson fell asleep and Delilah had a man shave off Samson’s seven braids. She called out, “Samson, the Philistines are here.” Samson thought that he would escape again. He did not realize that his strength and God’s Spirit had left him. The Philistines captured Samson, blinded him, and made him work in their prison. But his hair began to grow again.

One day, the Philistines gathered in their temple to the false god Dagon. They called for Samson to be brought from prison to entertain them. Samson was led from the prison to the temple. He asked the young man to help him put his hands on the pillars supporting the temple so he could lean on them.

Samson prayed to God, “Please remember me and give me strength once again.” Samson grabbed the pillars and pushed with all of his strength. The temple fell down. Samson had been a judge for 20 years. God used Samson to begin to rescue Israel from the Philistines.

TEXT CONNECTION

- Israel’s history of faithfulness to God was not stellar. As later oppressors came against Israel, the judges appeared to be less inclined to remain faithful to God. This was certainly the case with Samson. The story of Samson highlights our need for Jesus to be our Savior.
- God sent an angel to visit Manoah’s wife to tell her about the son to come. When Samson was born, his parents followed God’s instructions and brought up Samson to follow God.
- At some point, Samson clearly disregarded what his parents had taught him and he chose to go his own way. Even through Samson’s sin, God still used Samson to deliver the Israelites from the hard Philistine oppression.
- Paul, in his second letter to the church at Corinth, reminded the believers that hard times were surrounding them, but even through the hard times, God was still with them. Paul encouraged believers to remember that God uses tough times to help believers grow closer to Him.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE AT HOME

See the enhanced CD for additional family resources.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Bible Skills: “Bible Book Cards” (enhanced CD), Bibles

BIBLE SKILLS

- Place five of the “Bible Book Cards” on the table.
- Read a verse from one of the books and select a volunteer to guess the book where the verse is found.
- Continue until all five of the “Bible Book Cards” have been selected.
- Repeat with new “Bible Book Cards” and verses as time allows.
- Suggested Books and Verses:
 - ▶ John—John 3:16
 - ▶ Genesis—Genesis 1:1
 - ▶ Psalms—Psalm 56:3
 - ▶ 1 Thessalonians—1 Thessalonians 5:17
 - ▶ Exodus—Exodus 20:12
- Dismiss to Bible Study.

BIBLE SKILLS SPOTLIGHT

- Locates from memory often-used Bible passages and memory verses.
- Knows that the Bible tells about God’s plan to rescue us. Knows how to use the Bible to tell someone about God and Jesus.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMP IN

- Greet boys and girls as they arrive.
- Display the “Ancient Shears” visual.
- Begin: “This is a picture of a really old pair of scissors or shears. How are they the same or different from scissors we use today?” Select a few boys and girls to share.
- Continue: “Shears that may have been similar to the ones in this picture may have been used in our Bible story today. Can anyone guess what Bible story we are studying today?” Select a few children to respond.
- Conclude: “Listen to our story to see if we are right about how the shears may have been used. I wonder if they are used for good or evil?”

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Lead the boys and girls to open their Bibles to Judges 13.
- Tell the Bible story in your own words. A Bible story page has been provided for you to use as a guide.
- Ask: “Did any of us guess the correct Bible story? How might the shears have been used? Was it for good or evil?” Allow responses from boys and girls.
- Invite kids to read Judges 13:7 to discover some of the special rules Samson was to follow. Explain that Samson struggled with sin just like the Israelites. Read Judges 13:1.
- Share that this is another example of how the Israelites continued in the cycle of sin. Refer to the “Cycle of Sin” poster displayed from Session 6.
- Display the “Text Truth Strip” and invite everyone to read the Text Truth with you: **sin separates us from God and His good plan for our lives.**
- Ask: “What sin separated Samson from God and His good plan for his life?” Select a few boys and girls to respond.
- Review the gospel with boys and girls. Remind kids that Samson is not the only one who sinned; we sin too.

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 9” video.
- Ask: “Would you want Joel to cut your hair? What did Joel learn from the Book of Judges this week?”

MEMORY VERSE

- Display the “Proverbs 8:33” poster. Invite the kids to read aloud the verse with you.
- Forms groups of 3-4 kids. Distribute a piece of paper to each kid and a numbered cube to each group.

TOOLS:

- Jump In: “Ancient Shears” (DVD-ROM)
- Examine the Text: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” and “Cycle of Sin” (Poster Pack), “The Gospel” (enhanced CD)
- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location video
- Memory Verse: “Proverbs 8:33” (Poster Pack), numbered cubes, paper, pencils
- Prayer: Family Cards

- Explain: “In your group, each person will take turns rolling the numbered cube. For each number rolled, you will write down that many words of the Memory Verse starting at the beginning. For example, if you roll a 3, you will write down the first three words of the Memory Verse. Continue until someone writes down the entire verse including the reference. That person wins.”
- Select the person to start the game in each group.
- Repeat the game as time allows.
- Remind the kids to practice the Memory Verse at home during the week.

PRAYER

- Distribute a Family Card to each boy and girl. Invite someone to read aloud the description on the card. Challenge boys and girls to share their cards with their families during the week.
- Say: “Remember that our picture of the ancient shears is a reminder that **sin separates us from God and His good plan for our lives.**”
- Lead the boys and girls in prayer.
- Dismiss to Small Group.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute Explorer Guides and lead girls and boys to find today's pages, "Samson, the Proudful Judge."
- Choose a volunteer to read about today's object, "Ancient Shears."
- Invite another volunteer to read aloud "Bound by Bowstrings."
- Guide kids to complete "The Cycle of Sin" activity and review the pattern.
- Select a volunteer to read "Why Did God Send the Judges?"
- Guide kids to complete "How Well Do You Know God's Word?"
[Answers: 1. Not in the Bible; 2. Luke 6:31; 3. Not in the Bible (see 1 Timothy 6:10); 4. Romans 5:8; 5. Ephesians 6:1; 6. Not in the Bible; 7. Titus 3:9; 8. Hebrews 13:17; 9. Colossians 4:6; 10. Not in the Bible (see James 2:10)]

TECH CONNECT (OPTIONAL)

- Before today's Small Group begins, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" on the app.

ACTIVITIES

- Select one or more of the activities to complete as time allows.

TOOLS:

- Explorer Guides: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

STUFFED STRONG

Tools: balloons, "Allergy Alert" (enhanced CD), 2X long sleeve shirt/sweatshirt

Blow up several balloons to a small size.

- Form as many groups as the number of shirts there are.
- Begin: "Today in our Bible story, Samson's strength came from God. Samson allowed pride to separate him from God. We are going to see how strong we can be today."
- Provide each group with a shirt and balloons.
- Continue: "One person in each group will put on the shirt. You will have one minute to see how many balloons (*muscles*) you can stuff in the shirt. Whoever has the most balloons wins the game."
- Repeat the game allowing other kids to wear the shirt.
- Continue as time allows.
- Conclude: "Remember that like Samson, sin separates us from God and His good plan for our lives."



CUT SAMSON'S HAIR



Tools: "Cut Samson's Hair" and "The Gospel" (enhanced CD), play dough, scissors

- Distribute one copy of "Cut Samson's Hair" and play dough to each child.
- Instruct the children to create strands or braids of hair and place around the face of Samson on the paper.
- Distribute scissors and instruct them to cut Samson's hair.
- Repeat as time allows.
- Conclude: "Remember our Text Truth today: **sin separates us from God and His good plan for our lives.**"
- Display "The Gospel." As you review each point with boys and girls, ask them to shape their play dough to match each gospel point's symbol.

THIS OR THAT?



Tools: none

- Guide kids to gather in the middle of the room. Explain that you are going to give them two choices. If they would rather have choice A, they should step to the right side of the room. If they would rather have choice B, they should step to the left side of the room.
 - ▶ A: vanilla ice cream; B: chocolate ice cream
 - ▶ A: TV show; B: video game
 - ▶ A: cheese pizza; B: veggie pizza
 - ▶ A: a blue jacket; B: an orange jacket
 - ▶ A: cupcakes; B: cookies
 - ▶ A: fiction book; B: biography
 - ▶ A: winter; B: summer
 - ▶ A: broccoli; B: carrots
 - ▶ A: history group; B: science group
 - ▶ A: tennis shoes; B: sandals
- Say: "We had some silly and fun choices in our game, but in life sometimes the choices we have to make are serious. What kind of choices did Samson have to make in his life?" Allow kids to share their thoughts based on today's Bible story.
- Ask: "Did Samson always make the right choice?" (*No.*) "Will we always make the right choice?" (*No, sometimes we will choose to sin.*)
- Remind the boys and girls of the Text Truth: **sin separates us from God and His good plan for our lives.**
- Share: "We have a sin problem. But God loves us so much that He sent Jesus to die on the cross to pay the price for our sin. God doesn't want us to have a broken relationship with Him. God wants us to repent of our sin and trust Jesus as our Lord and Savior. We can receive God's gift of salvation."



Session 10



RUTH AND NAOMI

Ruth 1:1–2:3

The time period of the Book of Ruth is identified as “during the time of the judges.” We have no way of knowing under which judge this famine occurred or why Elimelech decided to take his family and settle in the land of Moab. The Moabites and the Israelites were not customarily friendly to one another and it seems that only Elimelech and his family chose Moab as their escape from the famine. Of course, we know God is the one who orchestrated the move and led the family into the land of the Moabites.

Once settled in Moab, the two sons of Elimelech and Naomi, Mahlon and Chilion, both married women from Moab. The text tells us that after ten years in Moab, Naomi’s husband and sons-in-law had all died. Naomi was left alone with two Moabite women. Tough times had come to Naomi.

Naomi learned that through God’s work, the famine in Israel was over. Naomi returned to Bethlehem to her family land. Naomi’s daughters-in-law accompanied her on the trip until Naomi encouraged them to return to their Moabite families who could care for them better than she could. Naomi encouraged the women to return to their homes in order to find new husbands rather than face the unknown in Bethlehem.

After more conversation, Orpah decided to return to Moab while Ruth decided to experience a new life in Bethlehem with her mother-in-law. Ruth 1:16 is one of the more well-known verses in this book. Ruth basically tells Naomi, there is nothing for me here, I want to worship whom you worship and live where you live; I will die where you die, and may God punish me if I ever leave you.

Ruth and Naomi arrived in Bethlehem to an excited town. Those who had remained, or who had returned themselves, recognized Naomi and welcomed her home. Though Naomi’s life seemed bitter to her, God used everything—good or bad—to accomplish His good plans for her. He does the same for us.

SESSION FOCUS

BIBLE PASSAGE: Ruth 1:1–2:3

MEMORY VERSE: Psalm 46:1

TEXT TRUTH: God can use anything—good or bad—to accomplish His good plans for us.

CHRIST IN CONTEXT: The Book of Ruth is a beautiful picture of redemption and grace. God extended grace through Ruth to Naomi and redeemed Ruth and Naomi through Boaz. While Boaz redeemed Naomi and Ruth’s earthly inheritance, he could not redeem anyone from sin. God extended grace and redemption by sending His Son, Jesus, to be our Redeemer. He paid the price for our sin and secured our future with God.

GET STARTED TOOLS

(10 MINUTES)

- Bible Skills:** “*Ruth*” (*Books of the Bible Posters*), *Bibles*

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

(35 MINUTES)

- Jump In:** “*Combine*” (*DVD-ROM*), *toy combine*
- Examine the Text:** *Bibles*, “*Text Truth Strips*” (*Poster Pack*)
- Play the Video:** *Explore the Bible on Location video*
- Memory Verse:** “*Psalm 46:1*” (*Poster Pack*), *whiteboard*, *dry erase markers*
- Prayer:** *Family Cards*

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

(30 MINUTES)

- Explorer Guides:** *Bibles*, *Explorer Guides*, *pens*
- Move:** *medium-size ball*
- Make:** *brown and yellow construction paper*, *glue*, *markers*, *scissors*
- Explore:** *red, yellow, and green paper squares*; *red, yellow, and green paper bags*

NOTE: Downloadable versions of DVD items are available in the *Digital Video Bundle*. Downloadable versions of enhanced CD items are available in the *Music and Print Extras Bundle*. For free online training on how to lead a group, visit ministrygrid.com/web/explorethebible.

RUTH SHOWED KINDNESS TO NAOMI

Ruth 1:1–2:3

During the time when Israel had judges, the land experienced a famine. A man named Elimelech left Bethlehem with his wife Naomi and their two sons. They traveled to the land of Moab to live for a while. While in Moab, Elimelech died and the two sons married women from Moab. After living in Moab for 10 years, Naomi's sons died.

Naomi heard that God had provided food for the people back in Judah, so she and her daughters-in-law, Orpah and Ruth, prepared to leave Moab. They began the trip to Bethlehem. Naomi encouraged both of her daughters-in-law to return to the home of their parents. "Go back to your mother's home. May the Lord show faithful love to you. May you find a new husband." Orpah and Ruth said that they wanted to go with Naomi, but Naomi told them it was better that they go home. They wept and Orpah agreed to go. Ruth clung to Naomi and said, "Where you go, I will go. Your people will be my people. Your God will be my God."

Naomi realized that she could not change Ruth's mind, so the two traveled to Bethlehem. When they arrived, the entire town became excited to see Naomi. But Naomi was sad, she thought that God was upset with her and that was why her husband and sons had died.

When Ruth and Naomi arrived in Bethlehem, it was time for the barley harvest to begin. Ruth offered to go to the fields and gather the grain left behind by the workers. She began to work in the field of a man named Boaz. Naomi was related to Boaz.

God was providing for Naomi and Ruth. God had a plan for them. He was going to use their bad times to bring something very good for them.

KEY POINTS

- Because our world was broken by sin, bad things sometimes happen.
- God is always with us, even when things are bad.
- We can trust God to help us.

TEXT CONNECTION

- During the time of the judges, a man named Elimelech moved his family to the region of Moab. The family moved because there was a famine in their homeland and the people could not find food. While in Moab, Elimelech's two sons married Moabite women.
- Once Elimelech and his two sons died, his wife, Naomi, was left alone with her two daughters-in-law. Ruth was committed to remaining with her mother-in-law, so the two of them returned to Bethlehem.
- Ruth cared for her family by gathering grain. Though the famine was over, the women still had no one to care for them. God was their provider and had great plans for their future and the eternal future of all people.
- Paul challenged the Corinthian believers to focus their thoughts on the eternal truths of God's Word. God was in charge of things that the Corinthians could not see. Ruth's life is an example that displays the same truth. Ruth had faith that God was going to provide.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE AT HOME

See the enhanced CD for additional family resources.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Bible Skills: “Ruth” (Books of the Bible Posters), Bibles

BIBLE SKILLS

- Begin: “We are studying in a new book of the Bible today, the Book of Ruth. Is Ruth found in the Old or New Testament? Please find Ruth in your Bible. Ruth is in the History division of the Old Testament.”
- Ask: “What are some of the other books of the Bible in the Old Testament History Division?”
- Display the “Ruth” poster. Select volunteers to read sections of the poster aloud to the group.
- Continue: “Ruth is a very important part of history. I can’t wait for us to learn about Ruth over the next couple of weeks.”
- Dismiss to Bible Study.

BIBLE SKILLS SPOTLIGHT

- Knows and recites all the books of the Bible in order in a limited time frame.
- Identifies prominent Bible people by the books in which their stories are recorded.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMP IN

- Greet girls and boys as they arrive.
- Display the “Combine” visual and toy combine.
- Begin: “Does anyone know what our object is and what it is used for?” Lead the discussion to reveal that it is a combine and that it is used to harvest crops. “How many of you have ever ridden in a combine?”
- Continue: “How do you think crops were harvested before the invention of machinery?” Select a few boys and girls to respond.
- Conclude: “Listen to today’s Bible story and let’s discover what crop was being harvested.”

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Guide the boys and girls to open up their Bibles to Ruth 1.
- Explain that we will continue in the History division of the Old Testament as we study today and the next few sessions.
- Tell the Bible story in your own words. A Bible story page has been provided for you to use as a guide.
- Select a volunteer to read Ruth 1:20-21. Share: “Naomi was at a low point when they returned to Bethlehem and she could not see that God had a plan.”
- Display the “Text Truth Strip” and invite the boys and girls to read the Text Truth with you: **God can use anything—good or bad—to accomplish His good plans for us.**
- Read Ruth 1:6. Conclude: “When the famine was over, Naomi and Ruth returned to Bethlehem. In Bethlehem, Ruth met Boaz and we’ll discover more of their story next week. God was using the good and the bad things in Naomi and Ruth’s lives to accomplish His good plans for them.”

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 10” video.
- Ask: “Where did Kaileigh go? How did the bakery owners learn to trust God? What did Kaileigh learn from the story of Ruth? Why is trusting God important?”

MEMORY VERSE

- Display the “Psalm 46:1” poster. Invite the kids to read the verse with you.
- Draw a large tic-tac-toe grid on the whiteboard. Write the Memory Verse in words or phrases in the grid. Form two groups. One group will be X’s and the other will be O’s.
- Select a group to go first. Someone from that group will erase the word or phrases from one of the squares and replace with an X. Repeat the verse aloud.

TOOLS:

- Jump In: “Combine” (DVD-ROM), toy combine
- Examine the Text: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” (Poster Pack)
- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location video
- Memory Verse: “Psalm 46:1” (Poster Pack), whiteboard, dry erase markers
- Prayer: Family Cards

- Someone from the other group will erase another word or phrase from one of the squares and replace with an O.
- Continue until one team has three in a row.
- Repeat as time allows.
- Remind kids to practice the Memory Verse at home during the week.

PRAYER

- Distribute a Family Card to each boy and girl. Invite someone to read aloud the description on the card. Challenge the boys and girls to share their cards with their families during the week.
- Say: “Remember that our object, the combine, is a reminder that **God can use anything—good or bad—to accomplish His good plans for us.**”
- Lead the boys and girls in prayer.
- Dismiss to Small Group.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute Explorer Guides to boys and girls. Lead kids to find today's pages, "Ruth and Naomi."
- Select a volunteer to read aloud "Spotlight on Ruth."
- Direct girls and boys to read about today's object, the "Combine."
- Guide kids to complete the activity, "Trusting God."
- Choose a volunteer to read "God Cares for People."
- Help boys and girls think about today's Bible truths as they complete the activity, "Apply It."

TECH CONNECT (OPTIONAL)

- Before today's Small Group begins, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" on the app.

ACTIVITIES

- Select one or more of the activities to complete as time allows.

TOOLS:

- Explorer Guides: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

SIDE BY SIDE

Tools: medium-size ball

- Form pairs.
- Instruct the children that they will try to get the ball to the other side of the room, around a chair, and back to the beginning. They cannot use their individual hands, arms, mouths, or feet.
- The children can choose where they want to place the ball, but they must work together just as Naomi and Ruth did in the Bible story. The ball can be placed between their shoulders, arms, waists, and so on.
- If the ball falls, they must pick it up and return to the beginning and start again.
- Allow all pairs of children to have a turn. Repeat as time allows.
- Conclude: "Naomi and Ruth stayed by each other's side through good and bad times. Remember our Text Truth: **God can use anything—good or bad—to accomplish His good plans for us.**"





FIELD OF PROMISES

Tools: brown and yellow construction paper, glue, markers, scissors

- Cut yellow construction paper into strips (approximately 1-by-5-inches).
- Distribute a brown sheet of construction paper to each child. Starting with the short end, show the children how to fold the paper accordion style. Flatten the construction paper back out and place it on the table. This will be a “field.”
- Give each child several strips of yellow construction paper.
- Say: “God has made many promises to us just as He promised to take care of Naomi and Ruth. What are some promises that God has made to us?” Select a few children to respond.
- Guide the children to write one promise on each strip of yellow construction paper. After finishing their promises, instruct the children to fold part of the strip back and glue it in their “field.”
- When completed, the yellow strips of paper will stick up in their “field” like wheat.
- Now, they have a “field of promises.”
- Conclude: “One of God’s promises is stated in our Text Truth: **God can use anything—good or bad—to accomplish His good plans for us.**”



GLEANNING GAME

Tools: red, yellow, and green paper squares; red, yellow, and green paper bags

- Form three groups of children. Distribute a paper bag to each group.
- Begin: “In this game, you will be pretending to gather grain for your meals just as Ruth had to in our Bible story today. Each group has a different color bag. You will only be gathering the color that matches your bag.”
- Scatter the paper squares so they mix across the floor.
- Set a time limit and see how much “grain” each group can gather.
- Repeat as time allows.
- Conclude: “God provided for Ruth and Naomi when they returned to Bethlehem. Remember our Text Truth: **God can use anything—good or bad—to accomplish His good plans for us.**”



RUTH AND BOAZ

Ruth 2; 4

Safely back in Bethlehem, Ruth stayed true to her word and did whatever she could to take care of Naomi. Ruth sought permission to go into the fields and gather grain, a practice very common at the time for widows. Women were allowed to gather the grain that fell from the harvesters' stalks in order to provide for their families. Ruth, unknowingly, was working in the field of a man named Boaz, a relative of Naomi's husband, Elimelech.

When Boaz returned home from his work, he noticed Ruth working in the field and asked who she was. Upon discovering Ruth was the Moabite woman who had returned with Naomi, Boaz encouraged Ruth to remain in his fields and follow his harvesters. Boaz was aware of Ruth's faithfulness to Naomi and granted her the ability to gather grain even from the sheaves that had already been tied. Evidently the field hands were faithful to their master's instruction since the amount of grain Ruth returned home with was a large amount of grain. Ruth returned to Naomi that night and discovered that Boaz was what is termed a kinsman redeemer, or *go'el*.

A *go'el* had five basic functions in Israelite society. 1) To redeem land and property of tribesmen and ensure it stayed in the family. 2) Buy back family members who had sold themselves into slavery. 3) Exact revenge on those who murdered a family member. 4) Receive financial payment on behalf of a deceased victim of crime. 5) Oversee legal proceedings involving family members to ensure justice.

Naomi encouraged Ruth to inform Boaz that he was a family redeemer and then to do what Boaz asked of her. Boaz gave Ruth grain and sent her home. Boaz was willing to accept the role as *go'el*, but there was a relative closer than he was to this family. The next morning Boaz confronted the man and they agreed that Boaz could redeem the land of Elimelech and the widow, Ruth. Ruth and Boaz eventually became the parents of Obed, the grandfather of King David through whom came the Savior.

SESSION FOCUS

BIBLE PASSAGE: Ruth 2; 4

MEMORY VERSE: Psalm 117:2

TEXT TRUTH: God is always working to accomplish His redeeming purposes.

CHRIST IN CONTEXT: The Book of Ruth is a beautiful picture of redemption and grace. God extended grace through Ruth to Naomi and redeemed Ruth and Naomi through Boaz. While Boaz redeemed Naomi and Ruth's earthly inheritance, he could not redeem anyone from sin. God extended grace and redemption by sending His Son, Jesus, to be our Redeemer. He paid the price for our sin and secured our future with God.

GET STARTED TOOLS

(10 MINUTES)

- Bible Skills: *none*

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

(35 MINUTES)

- Jump In: "Family Tree" (DVD-ROM)
- Examine the Text: Bibles, "Text Truth Strips" and "Christ in Context: Ruth" (Poster Pack), "The Gospel" (enhanced CD)
- Play the Video: *Explore the Bible on Location* video
- Memory Verse: "Psalm 117:2" (Poster Pack), paper, markers
- Prayer: *Family Cards*

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

(30 MINUTES)

- Explorer Guides: *Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens*
- Move: "Allergy Alert" (enhanced CD), 2 baskets, pair of sandals, 2 baby dolls, 2 boxes of wheat cereal, 2 water bottles
- Make: "Allergy Alert" and "Review Questions" (enhanced CD), round shaped cereal, chocolate covered candies, raisins, ziplock baggies, bowls, latex free gloves, spoons
- Explore: "Ruth's Family Tree" (Poster Pack), "My Family Tree" (enhanced CD), pencils

NOTE: Downloadable versions of DVD items are available in the Digital Video Bundle.

Downloadable versions of enhanced CD items are available in the Music and Print Extras Bundle.

For free online training on how to lead a group, visit ministrygrid.com/web/explorethebible.

GOD PROVIDED FOR RUTH AND NAOMI

Ruth 2; 4

After Boaz saw Ruth working in the field, he was very kind to her. First, he told her to collect grain in his fields and to stay near his servants. She was allowed to have water from the jars that his workers filled. At lunch time, he shared food with her. Later, he ordered his workers to leave some good grain for Ruth to gather.

Ruth gathered 26 quarts of barley and took it to Naomi. Naomi asked where she had worked and Ruth told her about Boaz and his kindness. Naomi knew that Boaz was a relative; he was one of the family redeemers.

Naomi made a plan. She had Ruth wash and wear her best clothes. Then she sent Ruth to ask Boaz to be their family redeemer.

Ruth did as Naomi instructed. Boaz explained that he was a family redeemer, but there was a closer family redeemer. Boaz had to give the other man the option to redeem Ruth and Naomi. Boaz gave Ruth some barley and sent her back to Naomi.

Ruth told Naomi everything that had happened. Naomi responded, “He won’t rest until he resolves this today.”

Boaz went to the gate of the town to wait for the family redeemer. When the redeemer arrived, Boaz asked him to sit down along with 10 of the town’s elders.

He told the man, “Naomi has returned home. She is selling a piece of land that belonged to her husband. I wanted to tell you so you could buy it back here in the presence of the elders. If you want to redeem it, do. If you do not, tell me and I will redeem it.”

The man responded, “I want to redeem it.”

Then Boaz added, “When you redeem the land from Naomi, you must marry Ruth from Moab.”

The redeemer changed his mind and told Boaz, “Take it, because I can’t redeem it.”

To make the deal official, the redeemer removed his sandal and told Boaz to buy the land.

Boaz immediately told the elders of the town that he was redeeming the land Naomi had and was marrying Ruth.

So Boaz married Ruth and they had a baby boy named Obed. The women of the town told Naomi, “Praise God. He has not left you without a family redeemer. God will renew you and sustain you.”

Naomi held baby Obed on her lap and helped care for him. God had not forgotten Naomi and her family. Later, Obed had a son named Jesse. Then Jesse had a son named David. David was a king of Israel and was a part of the family of Jesus.

TEXT CONNECTION

- Ruth worked in the fields of a man named Boaz. It was the time of the barley harvest and Ruth, committed to providing for her family, spent many hours picking up grain.
- Boaz saw Ruth’s commitment and heard how she was taking care of Naomi. Boaz had compassion on Ruth and provided for her from his own fields.
- Ruth discovered that Boaz was a family redeemer—one who could redeem the land that could be lost to the family when Elimelech died.
- Boaz fulfilled the responsibilities of the family redeemer and married Ruth. Boaz and Ruth became the parents of Obed, the grandfather of King David through whom came Jesus.
- Ruth and Boaz’s new life together resulted in being included in the lineage of Jesus. Second Corinthians teaches about a new life with Christ. Only through faith in Christ can a person be reconciled to God and experience new life in Him.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE AT HOME

See the enhanced CD for additional family resources.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Bible Skills: none

BIBLE SKILLS

- Explain that you will say two books in the Bible and the kids will say the book (*or books*) of the Bible that comes between the two books you mentioned.
- Continue as time allows.
- Suggestions:
 - ▶ Mark—John (*Luke*)
 - ▶ Genesis—Leviticus (*Exodus*)
 - ▶ Psalms—Ecclesiastes (*Proverbs*)
 - ▶ 1 Timothy—Titus (*2 Timothy*)
 - ▶ Hosea—Amos (*Joel*)
 - ▶ Joshua—Ruth (*Judges*)
 - ▶ Acts—1 Corinthians (*Romans*)
 - ▶ Galatians—Philippians (*Ephesians*)
 - ▶ 2 Samuel—2 Kings (*1 Kings*)
- Dismiss to Bible Study.

BIBLE SKILLS SPOTLIGHT

- Knows and recites all the books of the Bible in order in a limited time frame.
- Learns the Bible is God's message about Himself and how He rescues and transforms us.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMP IN

- Greet the boys and girls as they arrive.
- Display the “Family Tree” visual.
- Begin: “Does anyone know what type of tree this is?” Select a few children to respond.
- Continue: “This is a family tree. A family tree shows the relationship between people in several generations of a family. A family tree is an important part of our Bible study today. We will find out why it is important as we read our Bible story.”

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Lead the boys and girls to open their Bibles to Ruth 2. Invite volunteers to read Ruth 2:1-12.
- Tell the remaining Bible story in your own words. A Bible story page has been provided for you to use as a guide.
- Ask: “Did you hear how a family tree is important in our Bible story today? Ruth was faithful to God and Naomi. Ruth became a part of the lineage—the family—of Jesus. Wow! How amazing is that?”
- Display the “Christ in Context: Ruth” poster. Review the statement with boys and girls.
- Continue: “God accomplished great things through Ruth.”
- Display the “Text Truth Strip” and read it aloud. Invite everyone to read the Text Truth with you: **God is always working to accomplish His redeeming purposes.**
- Say: “We can learn about God’s redeeming purposes when we read God’s Word. The Bible is God’s message about Himself and how He rescues and transforms us. Why do we need a Redeemer?”
- Review the gospel with girls and boys using the “The Gospel” as a guide.

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 11” video.
- Ask: “What was Kaileigh doing in today’s Bible story? How did God’s plan for Ruth’s life come together? What are some of the things God did to help Ruth?”

MEMORY VERSE

- Display the “Psalm 117:2” poster. Invite the kids to read aloud the verse with you.
- Lay out the prepared pieces of paper facedown on the floor.
- Form two groups.
- Say: “This game will be played like a memory game you may have played before. There are two of every word or phrase of the Memory Verse. Your group will try to find matches by turning over two pieces of paper at the same time. If the pieces are the same, pick them up. If the pieces are

TOOLS:

- Jump In: “Family Tree” (DVD-ROM)
- Examine the Text: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” and “Christ in Context: Ruth” (Poster Pack), “The Gospel” (enhanced CD)
- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location video
- Memory Verse: “Psalm 117:2” (Poster Pack), paper, markers
- Prayer: Family Cards

MEMORY VERSE PREPARATION:

- Write words or phrases from the Memory Verse on individual pieces of paper. Repeat so you have two sets.

different, then turn them back over. Try to remember where the pieces are so you can make matches.”

- Play the game until all matches have been made. Instruct the kids to arrange the papers in the correct order.
- Read the verse aloud together.
- Remind kids to practice the Memory Verse at home during the week.

PRAYER

- Distribute a Family Card to each boy and girl. Invite someone to read aloud the description on the card. Challenge boys and girls to share their cards with their families during the week.
- Say: “Remember that our object, the family tree, is a reminder that **God is always working to accomplish His redeeming purposes.**”
- Lead in prayer thanking God that He works in our lives today just like He worked in Ruth’s life.
- Dismiss to Small Group.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute Explorer Guides and help kids locate today's pages, "Ruth and Boaz."
- Allow volunteers to share aloud the "Farm Facts."
- Review today's object, the "Family Tree."
- Assist boys and girls in finding all the words in the "Bible Story Wordsearch." Invite kids to recall facts they remember from the Bible story related to each word in the puzzle.
- Read aloud "God's Plan for Redemption."
- Guide girls and boys to complete the activity "Think About It."

TECH CONNECT (OPTIONAL)

- Before today's Small Group begins, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" on the app.

ACTIVITIES

- Select one or more of the activities to complete as time allows.

TOOLS:

- Explorer Guides: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

PASS IT ON



Tools: "Allergy Alert" (enhanced CD), 2 baskets, pair of sandals, 2 baby dolls, 2 boxes of wheat cereal, 2 water bottles

- Review the Text Truth: **God is always working to accomplish His redeeming purposes.**
- Form two groups and instruct each group to form a line and hold hands.
- Say: "We are working to remember this Bible story so we can always know that God is always working in our lives. I have five objects that relate to our Bible story today. Your group must pass all five objects from the beginning to the end of the line without breaking hands apart. If hands break apart, the item must start back at the beginning."
- Continue: "As you pass the item to each person, tell how that object relates to the Bible story. It can be something new or repeat what has been said. The first group to pass all the objects down the line wins."
- Play game and repeat as time allows.

Option: Check for gluten allergies. Substitute gluten free cereal if needed.

JOURNEY TRAIL MIX



Tools: “Allergy Alert” and “Review Questions” (enhanced CD), round shaped cereal, chocolate covered candies, raisins, ziplock baggies, bowls, latex free gloves, spoons

- Place each food item in a separate bowl with separate spoons.

- Review the Text Truth: **God is always working to accomplish His redeeming purposes.**
- Begin: “We are making trail mix to help us remember our Bible story and how God worked in Ruth’s life and that He works in our lives too.”
- Distribute gloves and a ziplock baggie for each kid. Line the food bowls up and allow the kids to put a spoonful of each item inside a baggie.
- Help kids seal the bag and gently shake the ingredients together.
- Ask: “Why did Ruth and Naomi leave Moab?” (*The famine in Bethlehem was over.*) “Do you think they had food for their journey to Bethlehem?” (*We don’t know.*) “How did Ruth and Naomi get food in Bethlehem?” (*Ruth gathered grain that they could grind into flour to make bread.*)
- Continue: “Most of us tend to take for granted that we have food to eat. We don’t have to gather grain like Ruth did. But God used Ruth’s willingness to gather grain as the way for her to meet Boaz—the family redeemer. Isn’t God’s plan amazing?”
- Allow kids to choose whether they will share their snacks with a friend later or if they want to eat their snacks now while you review the Bible story.
- Using the “Review Questions,” invite kids to recall today’s Bible story. You may also choose to use last week’s review questions to review the entire story of Ruth.

MY FAMILY TREE



Tools: “Ruth’s Family Tree” (Poster Pack), “My Family Tree” (enhanced CD), pencils

- Copy “My Family Tree” for each child.

- Review the Text Truth: **God is always working to accomplish His redeeming purposes.**
- Display the “Ruth’s Family Tree” poster.
- Begin: “God worked through Ruth to accomplish His redeeming purposes.”
- Discuss the lineage of Jesus from Ruth using “Ruth’s Family Tree” as a guide.
- Continue: “God continues to work through people today just as He did in Ruth. The family tree of Ruth showed the relationship between her and Jesus. A family tree shows the relationship between people in several generations of a family. Let’s make a family tree of our own.”
- Distribute “My Family Tree” to each child.
- Guide the children to fill in their family trees.
- Note: If children have a nontraditional family, encourage them to write someone’s name down that has been “like a mom” to them if they do not have a real mom in their life. You can also encourage kids to draw the people who live in their home.
- Conclude with prayer and thanking God for working in our lives just as He worked in Ruth’s life.



Session 12



GOD'S WORD, OUR DELIGHT

Psalm 119

God's Word is to be our delight. Psalm 119 is one of the greatest examples of the sufficiency of God's Word. The author of this Psalm uses the letters of the Hebrew alphabet as an acrostic and each of the 176 verses highlights for the reader why God's Word is enough. All 22 stanzas of the Psalm have 8 verses and, to keep the reader interested, the author varies the term used to denote God's Word. Take the first 8 verses and see how many different words the writer used: *instruction, decrees, His ways, precepts, statutes, commands,* and *righteous judgments*. Throughout this psalm, the writer varies the use of these terms as a skilled poet.

Psalm 119 opens with a theme that can be seen throughout: the one who walks with God will be blessed. The Hebrew word used here is *asher*, which denotes extreme joy, bubbling over delight, and satisfaction for following God's Word. When a person follows God, he will feel God's blessing and joy. Happiness comes to those who desire to follow God's Word. That does not mean that suffering will not occur, but that happiness in the Lord can always be found.

It might be impossible to study all 176 verses of Psalm 119 during your Bible study time, but, as you prepare to lead this session, focus on some of the highlights that are repeated throughout this Psalm. God's Word is a delight and true. God's Word keeps our hearts focused on God and not on sin. God's Word gives us a desire to continually pursue the teachings of the Bible. God's Word is a comfort to us in times of trouble. God's Word helps to calm our fears as we follow its truth. God's Word encourages us when we are confronted by those who mock our belief. God's Word allows us to know the hidden mysteries of God. God's Word gives us boldness to tell others about Him. God's Word lasts forever. As you guide girls and boys to experience God's Word on a new level, pray that their delight, and yours, will always be in His Word.

SESSION FOCUS

BIBLE PASSAGE: Psalm 119

MEMORY VERSE: Psalm 119:160a

TEXT TRUTH: When we delight in God’s Word, it helps us resist sin.

CHRIST IN CONTEXT: The Book of Psalms reveals our need for a Savior. Psalms includes prophecies about Jesus, the Messiah and Savior. Jesus explained in Luke 24 that the Book of Psalms taught people about Him. Psalms highlights our need for salvation and that God, our Redeemer, provides salvation to those who trust in Him.

GET STARTED TOOLS

(10 MINUTES)

- Bible Skills:** *“Bible Book Cards” (enhanced CD), basket, Bibles, “Psalms” (Books of the Bible Posters)*

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

(35 MINUTES)

- Jump In:** *“Linen with Psalm 119” (DVD-ROM), Bibles*
- Examine the Text:** *Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” and “Psalm 119 Facts” (Poster Pack)*
- Play the Video:** *Explore the Bible on Location video*
- Memory Verse:** *“Psalm 119:160a” (Poster Pack), colored paper, index cards, marker*
- Prayer:** *Family Cards*

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

(30 MINUTES)

- Explorer Guides:** *Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens*
- Move:** *red construction paper, scissors, marker*
- Make:** *“Bible Bookmarks” (enhanced CD), white heavyweight paper, crayons, scissors, hole punch, ribbon, Bibles, “The Bible” (Poster Pack)*
- Explore:** *Bibles, shoelaces, permanent markers*

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DELIGHT IN GOD'S WORD

Psalm 119

The psalms were written by many different people. One of the authors wrote a long psalm about the importance of God's Word. Here is some of what he wrote to God:

How does a young person stay pure? He obeys your Word.

I have looked for You with all my heart. Please don't let me wander away from Your commands.

I have treasured Your Word in my heart, so I won't sin against You.

I will study Your precepts and think about Your ways.

I will delight in Your statutes and not forget Your word.

Help my heart focus on Your decrees and not material things.

Help my eyes not to look at what is worthless. Give me life.

You made me. Give me understanding so I can learn Your commands.

Your Word is a lamp for my feet. It is a light for my path.

I put my hope in Your Word.

Long ago I learned from Your decrees that You established them forever.

Remember that I love Your precepts. Lord, give me life because of Your faithful love.

All of Your Word is truth. All of Your righteous judgments last forever.

Lord, I hope for Your salvation and obey Your commands.

I obey Your decrees and I love them.

Hear me Lord. Help me understand things according to Your word.

KEY POINTS

- The Book of Psalms is full of songs written about and to God.
- God's Word helps us know how to love and obey God.
- We can read God's Word every day to help us learn about God and His plan for us.

TEXT CONNECTION

- The Book of Psalms gives believers a wonderful reason to rejoice about the truths God's Word shares. Psalm 119 is 176 verses solely dedicated to honoring God's Word.
- The Bible is the most important book and, as Christians, we need to read God's Word and delight in it. When we delight in God's Word, it will lead us to resist sin.
- Paul reminded the people in the Corinthian church that one way the people could resist sin was to give faithfully to the cause of Christ. Paul asked the church to collect an offering to assist the believers in Jerusalem who were in need of financial assistance.
- The church responded in faithfulness and showed their delight in God's Word. Their faithfulness to collect an offering for the benefit of others shows that when we delight in God's Word, not only does it lead us away from sin, but it gives us a stronger desire to glorify God by meeting the needs of others.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE AT HOME

See the enhanced CD for additional family resources.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Bible Skills: “Bible Book Cards” (enhanced CD), basket, Bibles, “Psalms” (Books of the Bible Posters)

BIBLE SKILLS

- Place the “Bible Book Cards” in a basket.
- Instruct one of the children to choose a card from the basket and give them 20 seconds to find it in the Bible.
- Repeat as time allows and adjust time frame as needed.
- Display the “Psalms” poster. Review the who, what, where, when, and why of the Book of Psalms. Invite boys and girls to take turns reading some of the facts from the poster.
- Dismiss to Bible Study.

BIBLE SKILLS SPOTLIGHT

- Locates all the books of the Bible in a limited time frame.
- Knows the Bible is the only inspired, written Word of God.
- Establishes the discipline of daily Bible reading.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMP IN

- Greet boys and girls as they arrive.
- Display the “Linen with Psalm 119” visual.
- Begin: “The linen in the picture has Psalm 119 written on it. You can tell by looking that it is not in English. God’s Word has been written in many different languages. This is Hebrew, one of the original languages God’s Word was written in.”
- Ask: “Who can tell me some things that change?” Select several kids to respond. (*Examples: weather, people, trees*)
- Continue: “Now who can tell me something that never changes?” Wait for responses. “It may be hard to think of something that never changes, but there is something. It’s the Bible. No matter what happens in the world or what language it is written in, the Bible does not change. It is God’s inspired Word.”

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Display the “Psalm 119 Facts” poster. Read over some of the information about the psalm.
- Lead the boys and girls to open their Bibles to Psalm 119. Share that this is the longest chapter in the Bible.
- Guide kids to take turns reading some of the verses from Psalm 119. (*Suggested verses: Psalm 119:1-2,9-11,44-48,103-105,160*)
- Tell the Bible story in your own words. A Bible story page has been provided for you to use as a guide.
- Ask: “Why is the Bible important?” Select several boys and girls to share.
- Display the “Text Truth Strip” and read the Text Truth aloud. Invite everyone to read the Text Truth with you: **when we delight in God’s Word, it helps us resist sin.**
- Ask: “What are some sins that kids your age are tempted to do? What are some difficult choices kids have to make at home? At school?” Select a few volunteers to share.
- Continue: “What can we do to help us resist temptation?” Allow time for responses. If no one mentions it, remind the kids of the Text Truth: **when we delight in God’s Word, it helps us resist sin.**
- Conclude: “Reading God’s Word every day will help us choose to do what is right.”

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 12” video.
- Ask: “What was Joel learning to play? Why? What did Joel learn about God’s Word?”

TOOLS:

- Jump In: “Linen with Psalm 119” (DVD-ROM), Bibles
- Examine the Text: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” and “Psalm 119 Facts” (Poster Pack)
- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location video
- Memory Verse: “Psalm 119:160a” (Poster Pack), colored paper, index cards, marker
- Prayer: Family Cards

MEMORY VERSE

PREPARATION:

- Cut index cards in half. Write one word of the Memory Verse on each card. Repeat to create two sets.
- Create a small ball of paper. Fold a card around the ball then wrap a piece of paper around the card and secure. Place another card on the ball and wrap another piece of paper around the ball. Repeat until all the cards have been used and secure the last layer of paper with tape. Repeat to make two balls.

MEMORY VERSE

- Display the “Psalm 119:160a” poster. Invite the kids to read aloud the verse with you.
- Form two groups and give each group a prepared ball of layered paper.
- Explain: “The balls have several layers of paper. Between each layer of paper is a word in our Memory Verse. Your group will sit in a circle and take turns pulling off a layer of the paper and finding the word card. After all of the word cards have been found, arrange them in the correct order and raise your hands. The first team to find all the words and raise their hands wins.”
- Allow time to play the game. Instruct everyone to say the verse aloud.
- Remind the kids to practice the Memory Verse at home during the week.

PRAYER

- Distribute a Family Card to each boy and girl. Invite someone to read the description on the card. Challenge boys and girls to share their cards with their families during the week.
- Say: “Remember our picture of the linen reminds us that God’s Word never changes, and **when we delight in God’s Word, it helps us resist sin.**”
- Lead the boys and girls in prayer asking God to help us read the Bible every day.
- Dismiss to Small Group.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute Explorer Guides and assist boys and girls in locating today's pages, "God's Word, Our Delight."
- Select a volunteer to read "Easy as ABC."
- Choose another volunteer to read aloud about today's object, the "Linen with Psalm 119."
- Lead kids to begin the activity, "Alphabet Acrostic." See how many answers kids can think of in 3 minutes.
- Help kids use their Bibles for the "What Does the Bible Say About Itself?" activity.
- Guide kids to examine the "Hide God's Word in Your Heart" information. Share a time when knowing God's Word helped you.

TECH CONNECT (OPTIONAL)

- Before today's Small Group begins, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" on the app.

ACTIVITIES

- Select one or more of the activities to complete as time allows.

TOOLS:

- Explorer Guides: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

HIDDEN HEARTS

Tools: red construction paper, scissors, marker

- Cut 13 hearts out of red construction paper. Write one letter from the following phrase on each individual heart: *READY YOUR BIBLE*. Hide the hearts around the room.

- Review the Text Truth: **when we delight in God's Word, it helps us resist sin.**
- Begin: "I have hidden 13 hearts around the room. When I say 'go', try to find all 13 hearts."
- Give time for the kids to find the hearts. Provide guidance and hints as needed.
- Instruct the kids to bring the hearts back to the group. Show them the letters that are written on each heart. Tell the kids to hold the heart in front of them with the letters facing out.
- Share: "The letters on the hearts spell something that will help us to do the right thing. Try to unscramble the words to find out what it is." Provide guidance and hints as needed.
- Read it aloud together: "Read your Bible."
- If time allows, hide the hearts and play again.
- Conclude: "How can you read your Bible? When? Where? Why?" Discuss some strategies with kids for finding time alone with God each day. (Examples: *Find a quiet spot, read a few verses, think about what the verses said, and pray for God to help you know how to obey His commands.*)



BIBLE BOOKMARKS



Tools: “Bible Bookmarks” (enhanced CD), white heavyweight paper, crayons, scissors, hole punch, ribbon, Bibles, “The Bible” (Poster Pack)

- Copy “Bible Bookmarks” onto white heavyweight paper.
- Review the Text Truth: **when we delight in God’s Word, it helps us resist sin.**
- Begin: “We are going to make a Bible bookmark to help us remember to read our Bible every day.”
- Give each child a bookmark.
- Allow time for the children to color and cut out the bookmark.
- As children work, punch a hole at the top of each bookmark and give out a ribbon to tie at the top.
- Display “The Bible” poster and review the information with boys and girls. Allow them to practice finding Bible references or Bible books as time allows.

REMEMBERING GOD’S WORD



Tools: Bibles, shoelaces, permanent markers

- Provide each kid with a Bible and help them locate Psalm 119. Invite volunteers to help you read Psalm 119:9-16.
- Review the Text Truth: **when we delight in God’s Word, it helps us resist sin.**
- Ask: “How does God’s Word help us resist sin?” Allow kids to answer. Highlight that knowing God’s Word helps us when we have choices to make.
- Say: “Memorizing God’s Word takes time and effort from us. Our Explorer Guide gave us some strategies for how to memorize verses from the Bible. Another way to help memorize verses is to write it on something that you will see throughout the day.”
- Continue: “Today I am going to give you a shoelace to write a Bible verse on. It can be one of our Memory Verses. It can be a verse from Psalm 119. Or it can be another Bible verse that you want to memorize.”
- Help kids choose a verse and write the verse on their shoelaces. Then show kids how to wrap the shoelaces around their arms to make a wrap bracelet. Assist kids in tying their wrap bracelets on.



Session 13



CREATED WITH PURPOSE

Psalm 139

As opposed to Psalm 119, we know who wrote this Psalm; it is a Psalm of David. Psalm 139 is called a wisdom psalm—a psalm that is poetic in nature and contemplates the nature of God. This theme is clearly seen throughout the psalm as David tries to wrestle with the fact that the God Who created the universe knows intimate details about David and has a special plan for his life.

David opened this psalm by acknowledging that God knows everything and sees everything. David acknowledged that God had searched David's life and knew all about him. God knew when David sat down and when he stood up. God knew David's thoughts and words before they were even thoughts. God knew where David would travel and rest. All of these revelations served to bring awe of God to David. David actually says "this wondrous knowledge is beyond me." To use a common term from today's vernacular, David essentially said, "mind ... blown." The things of God were so mysterious that David couldn't even consider them and was humbled to know that God truly did personally know him.

Translating the vastness of God to the human level is impossible. Our finite minds cannot comprehend the infiniteness of God. This psalm helps us understand three important qualities of God. 1) God is omniscient, or has all knowledge. As we have read already, God knows everything, even as Luke records Jesus' words for us, the number of hairs on our heads (*Luke 12:7*). 2) God is omnipresent, or present everywhere at the same time. David says, no matter where I go, You are there, I can never escape your Spirit and that brings me comfort (*Psalm 139:7-10*). 3) God is omnipotent, or all powerful. God created David inside his mother's womb. God knows each bone and muscle (*see vv. 13-16*).

As God knew David, so He knows each of us. God created you and has a plan for your life. God intends for you to follow His plan for your life. God knows you intimately, just as He knew David. Take comfort that the God who created the universe knows about you!

SESSION FOCUS

BIBLE PASSAGE: Psalm 139

MEMORY VERSE: Psalm 139:14

TEXT TRUTH: God created me and has a purpose for my life.

CHRIST IN CONTEXT: The Book of Psalms reveals our need for a Savior. Psalms includes prophecies about Jesus, the Messiah and Savior. Jesus explained in Luke 24 that the Book of Psalms taught people about Him. Psalms highlights our need for salvation and that God, our Redeemer, provides salvation to those who trust in Him.

GET STARTED TOOLS

(10 MINUTES)

- Bible Skills:** *Bibles, “Christ in Context: Psalms” (Poster Pack)*

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

(35 MINUTES)

- Jump In:** *“Playground, School, Home” (DVD-ROM)*
- Examine the Text:** *Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” (Poster Pack)*
- Play the Video:** *Explore the Bible on Location video*
- Memory Verse:** *“Psalm 139:14” (Poster Pack), “Verse Puzzle” (enhanced CD), scissors*
- Prayer:** *Family Cards*

SMALL GROUP TOOLS

(30 MINUTES)

- Explorer Guides:** *Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens*
- Move:** *none*
- Make:** *pillowcases (1 per child), fabric markers or permanent markers, cardboard*
- Explore:** *“All About Me Prompts” (enhanced CD), scissors*

NOTE: Downloadable versions of DVD items are available in the Digital Video Bundle. Downloadable versions of enhanced CD items are available in the Music and Print Extras Bundle. For free online training on how to lead a group, visit ministrygrid.com/web/explorethebible.

GOD CREATED YOU

Psalm 139

David wrote a psalm to God. David wanted to praise God for creating and knowing Him. “You have searched me and known me,” David told God. “You know when I sit and when I stand. You understand my thoughts. You see where I go and when I rest. You know all about me.”

David said that God knew everything David would say before he even said it! Then David asked, “Where can I go to leave Your presence? Everywhere I go, You are there and Your hand will lead me.”

David knew that God had created him. God created everyone! “You created Me when I was still in my mother. I will praise You! I am wonderfully made!”

David understood that God knew all about David, even before David was alive. God had planned every day of David’s life long ago.

Finally, David asked God to search his heart and reveal anything that did not please God. David asked, “Lead me in the right way.”

KEY POINTS

- David’s psalm helps us see that God is all-powerful, all-knowing, and ever-present.

TEXT CONNECTION

- David, in Psalm 139, praised God for being all-knowing, all-seeing, and ever-present. David was amazed that God knew intimate details about him. David was more in awe that God would listen to him, David, personally.
- God knows the thoughts and words of all people before words are spoken. God knows intimate details about every one of His creations. Just as David stood in awe of God’s knowledge and desire to have fellowship with His creation, we, too, should be in awe of God.
- Paul also rejoiced in the fact that God knew him and had good things planned for him. Paul suffered from what he called a “thorn in the flesh,” but Paul knew that God knew about the “thorn” and would help Paul deal with that issue, whatever it was.
- Paul preached the sufficiency of the gospel and helped his readers know that God is sufficient for all. God’s works are revealed in Scripture, and as Christians read His Word and rejoice in it, God will sustain them.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE AT HOME

See the enhanced CD for additional family resources.

GET STARTED (10 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Bible Skills: Bibles, “Christ in Context: Psalms” (Poster Pack)

BIBLE SKILLS

- Form groups of 3-4 kids.
- Assign each group a division of the Bible.
- Begin: “Every part of the Bible is important. Today, you will be focusing on the specific division that I have given you. As a group, you will create a commercial conveying to your audience the importance of your division and persuading them to read your division before the others.”
- Continue: “Your commercial should include the name of the division, the books included in your division, and at least two reasons why your audience should read your division first. This should all be conveyed using the creativity of your group.”
- Allow time for groups to complete their commercial. Offer guidance and assistance as needed.
- Guide the children to share their commercial with the rest of the group.
- Display the “Christ in Context: Psalms” poster. Read the poster and remind kids that today you will conclude your study in the Book of Psalms.
- Dismiss to Bible Study.

BIBLE SKILLS SPOTLIGHT

- Locates from memory often-used Bible passages and memory verses.
- Names the 10 divisions of the Old and New Testaments in a limited time frame and identifies examples of books in each division.

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

JUMP IN

- Greet the boys and girls as they arrive.
- Display the “Playground, School, Home” visual.
- Ask: “What can someone tell me about the picture?” Select a few boys and girls to respond and guide them to name the places: playground, school, and home.
- Continue: “The three places pictured here are just a few examples of the places that you go. Where are some other places that you go?”
- Share with the boys and girls that God is with you everywhere you go. It does not matter where you are; God never loses you. He knows exactly where you are. He is always there.
- Conclude: “Isn’t that a great feeling to know that no matter where you are, God is always with you?”

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Lead the children to open their Bibles to Psalm 139. Invite kids to take turns reading verses (*Psalm 139:1-3,13-16,23-24*).
- Tell the Bible story in your own words. A Bible story page has been provided for you to use as a guide.
- Say: “David was very thankful to God for creating him and for always being with him. David was a great man of God. God created him and had a very specific purpose for David’s life.”
- Continue: “Just as God created David for a specific purpose, He created you with a specific purpose.”
- Display the “Text Truth Strip.” Invite everyone to read the Text Truth with you: **God created me and has a purpose for my life.**

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the “Session 13” video.
- Ask: “What purpose did Joel think he found at the start of our video? What did Joel learn about God’s purpose for his life and ours?”

MEMORY VERSE

- Display the “Psalm 139:14” poster. Invite the kids to read aloud the verse with you.
- Explain that you have hidden puzzle pieces around the room. Provide time for the kids to search for the hidden puzzle pieces. Provide guidance and clues as needed.
- Say: “There are only two pieces for each puzzle. There are many puzzle pieces hidden, but you must find the other person that has the piece that connects to your piece to create the puzzle.”
- Call on the kids to share the verse together in pairs.

TOOLS:

- Jump In: “Playground, School, Home” (DVD-ROM)
- Examine the Text: Bibles, “Text Truth Strips” (Poster Pack)
- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location video
- Memory Verse: “Psalm 139:14” (Poster Pack), “Verse Puzzle” (enhanced CD), scissors
- Prayer: Family Cards

MEMORY VERSE PREPARATION:

- Print out copies of “Verse Puzzle,” cut them apart, and hide them around the room before children arrive.”

PRAYER

- Distribute a Family Card to each boy and girl. Invite someone to read aloud the description on the card. Challenge the boys and girls to share their cards with their families during the week.
- Say: “Remember that our picture of the playground, school, and home reminds us that **God created me and has a purpose for my life.**”
- Lead the boys and girls in prayer thanking God that He is always with us.
- Dismiss to Small Group.

SMALL GROUP (30 MINUTES)

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute Explorer Guides and help kids find today's pages, "Created with Purpose."
- Review today's object "Playground, School, Home."
- Read aloud "Remarkably Made!" and guide kids to complete the activity, "What Does the Bible Say About Me?"
- Ask a volunteer to read "God's Works Are Wondrous!"
- Lead kids to quietly think about today's Bible truths as they draw their own "Self-Portrait."

TECH CONNECT (OPTIONAL)

- Before today's Small Group begins, download the Explore the Bible: Kids Family App.
- Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" on the app.

ACTIVITIES

- Select one or more of the activities to complete as time allows.

TOOLS:

- Explorer Guides: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens

WHO ARE YOU REFLECTING?

Tools: none

- Review the Text Truth: **God created me and has a purpose for my life.**
- Ask the boys and girls to stand up. Explain that when they hear something that would not reflect the image of God, they should sink to the ground, and if they hear something that would reflect the image of God, they should stand up tall with arms up high.
 - ▶ You tell your teacher a lie about homework.
 - ▶ You go to Bible study.
 - ▶ You help someone who is sick.
 - ▶ You disobey your parents.
 - ▶ You walk away when a friend is talking about someone else.
 - ▶ You read your Bible every day.
 - ▶ You help your brother with a chore.
 - ▶ You bully someone in your group.
 - ▶ You take something that doesn't belong to you.
- Say: "Remember God created you in His image. Let's reflect Him!"
- Conclude by challenging the boys and girls to say, think, and do things this week that reflect God.





SECURE CASE

Tools: pillowcases (1 per child), fabric markers or permanent markers, cardboard

- Write the words of the Memory Verse (Psalm 139:14) in the center of the pillowcases.
- Review the Text Truth: **God created me and has a purpose for my life.**
- Begin: “To help us remember that God created us and has a purpose for our lives, we are going to decorate a pillowcase. Every time you lay your head on your pillow, it will help you remember that God has created you and has a purpose for your life.”
- Distribute pillowcases to each child and fabric markers to the group. Invite kids to read the Memory Verse aloud with you. Instruct the kids to decorate the pillowcase.
- Note: To safeguard against ink bleeding through to the other side, place a piece of cardboard inside the pillowcase.
- Provide time for the kids to complete the pillowcases.
- Conclude: “Remember every time you lay your head down on the pillowcase that God loves you, created you, and has a purpose for your life.”



ALL ABOUT ME

Tools: “All About Me Prompts” (enhanced CD), scissors

- Print, cut apart, and stack the “All About Me Prompts.”
- Gather kids to sit in a circle so everyone can see everyone during the game.
- Explain that everyone will get a chance to select an “All About Me Prompt” and give his answer.
- As you play, celebrate the unique qualities and special details about each kid.
- Ask: “Does anyone remember our Text Truth?” Allow kids to respond. If needed, prompt kids to say the Text Truth with you: **God created me and has a purpose for my life.**
- Continue: “God made each and every one of you. He created you, knowing that some of you would like soccer and some of you would like reading and some of you would like baseball.”
- Conclude: “We are so fortunate that God has a purpose for us. He knows everything from the start to finish. He knows what you need, what you like to do, and what you care about. And He has a plan for your life.”
- Invite everyone to conclude the activity by sharing the Text Truth individually: **God created me and has a purpose for my life.** (Note: If a kid is shy, allow her to choose a friend to say the Text Truth with her.)

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Each of these terms will help you as you delve into teaching Explore the Bible: Kids.

- **BIBLE SKILLS SPOTLIGHT**

The specific Bible skills practiced in the session.

- **CHRIST IN CONTEXT**

The message of Jesus in a particular Bible book.

- **CONTEXT**

The words or environment around what you are studying that help you understand what it means.

Examples of types of context: historical context, cultural context.

- **CROSS-REFERENCING**

Examining a second (*third, fourth, and etc.*) biblical text to gain greater understanding of the first biblical text.

- **GENRE**

A specific form or type of writing or literature. Each form has rules or basic features. In the Bible, there are six genres: Law, History, Poetry and Wisdom, Prophecy, Gospel, and Letters.

- **ORIGINAL AUDIENCE**

The author of each Bible book wrote to a specific audience. The original audience is the first audience to receive the Bible book. All other readers, including today's readers, are not the original audience. The original audience is key to understanding the author's purpose for the Bible book or text.

- **TEXT CONNECTION**

Connects kids to what their parents are studying in Explore the Bible: Adults.

- **TEXT TRUTH**

The main point of the Bible Passage to communicate to children.

COMING NEXT QUARTER

SUMMER 2018

DATE	BIBLE STORY	BIBLE PASSAGE	MEMORY VERSE
June 3	Moses' Birth and Calling	Exodus 2-3	Exodus 3:12
June 10	The Ten Plagues	Exodus 4-14	Exodus 6:7a
June 17	The Ten Commandments	Exodus 19:1-12,16-20; 20:1-17	Psalms 119:138
June 24	The Tabernacle Was Built	Exodus 35:4-40:38	Exodus 25:8
July 1	God Called for Holy Living	Leviticus 18:1-5; 19:1-4; 26:1-13	Leviticus 18:4
July 8	Peter Visited Cornelius	Acts 10:1-43	Acts 10:34
July 15	Paul Told About Jesus	Acts 16:11-15	1 John 3:23b
July 22	Paul and Silas Praised God	Acts 16:16-38	Acts 16:31
July 29	Paul Traveled to Rome	Acts 27-28	Matthew 28:19-20
Aug. 5	Unity in the Church	1 Corinthians 3; 12	1 Corinthians 15:58
Aug. 12	Paul Taught About Love	1 Corinthians 13	John 13:34b
Aug. 19	The Ministry of a Believer	2 Corinthians 3:4-18; 4:7-18; 5:16-21	2 Corinthians 5:20
Aug. 26	God's People Should Give	2 Corinthians 8-9	2 Corinthians 9:7

TOOLS FOR DIGGING DEEP!

OLDER KIDS TOOL KIT

The resources you need to lead one group:

- One Older Kids Leader Guide
- One Older Kids Explorer Guide
- One pack Kids Family Cards
- One Older Kids Poster Pack
- One Kids Enhanced CD
- One Kids DVD

OLDER KIDS LEADER GUIDE

Helps older kids connect the Bible to present day

- Leader-friendly session plans for small- and large-group learning
- Activities to encourage kids to dig, explore, and discover the Bible

OLDER KIDS EXPLORER GUIDE

Engage older kids with a colorful, fact-filled magazine.

- Identifies each object that reminds kids of the Bible story and Text Truth
- Weekly pages with colorful illustrations, info-graphics, and photos
- Fun-to-do Bible-focused activities relate to the Bible content and application
- Send home at the end of the quarter for kids to keep

OLDER KIDS POSTER PACK

Filled with leader-friendly resources that make teaching easy

- Christ in Context poster(s)
- Text Truth statements
- Memory Verse posters (*CSB, ESV, KJV, NIV*)
- Additional visual aids and resources

KIDS FAMILY CARDS

- Equip parents with discussion questions that relate to each session

KIDS ENHANCED CD

- Bible-related music
- Printable teacher tools and session helps

KIDS DVD

- Includes a video for each session to help kids connect the biblical text in the cultural and historical context of the session

KIDS TOOL KIT WITH WORSHIP

- Second-hour option
- Kid-friendly worship experience that reinforces every weekly session



THE GOSPEL

GOD'S PLAN FOR ME

The word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation.



GOD RULES. The Bible tells us God created everything, including you and me, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to recite Genesis 1:1 from memory or read it from his Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 and Colossians 1:16-17.



WE SINNED. Since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God (Romans 3:23). The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death (Romans 6:23).



GOD PROVIDED. Read John 3:16 aloud. God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read Ephesians 2:8-9.



JESUS GIVES. Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.



WE RESPOND. We can respond to Jesus. “The ABCs of Becoming a Christian” is a simple tool that helps us remember how to respond when prompted by the Holy Spirit to the gift Jesus offers.

ADMIT

Admit to God that you are a sinner. The first people God created chose to sin and disobey God. Ever since then, all people have chosen to sin and disobey (Romans 3:23). Tell God you messed up and you are sorry for doing your own thing and turning away from Him through your thoughts, words, and actions. Repent, turn away from your sin. (Acts 3:19; 1 John 1:9) *Repent* doesn't just mean turning from doing bad things to doing good things. It means turning from sin and even from your own good works and turning to Jesus, trusting only in Him to save you.

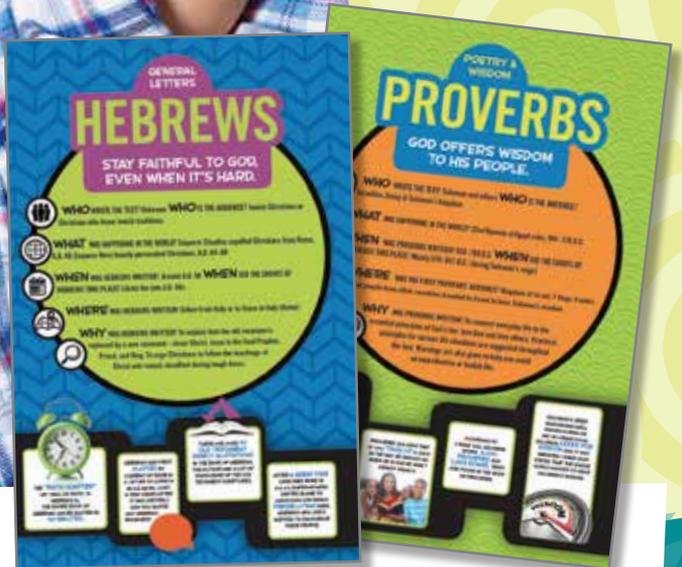
BELIEVE

Believe that Jesus is God's Son and receive God's gift of forgiveness from sin. You must believe that only Jesus can save you and you cannot save yourself from your sin problem—not even by praying to God, going to church, or reading your Bible. Your faith or your trust is only in Jesus and what He did for you through His life, death, and resurrection. (Acts 16:31; Acts 4:12; John 14:6; Ephesians 2:8-9)

CONFESS

Confess your faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Tell God and tell others what you believe. If Jesus is your Savior, you are trusting only in Him to save you. Jesus is also Lord, which means He is in charge and calling the shots in your life. You can start following Him and doing what He says in the Bible. You are born again into a new life and look forward to being with God forever. (Romans 10:9-10,13)

PICTURE THIS: EVERY KID IN YOUR MINISTRY NAVIGATES THE BIBLE WITH EASE AND EXCITEMENT.



That's what happens when you hang up *Explore the Bible: Kids Books of the Bible Posters* in your ministry area. As kids walk past these color-coded posters full of fun facts, they will begin to soak in the structure of the Word of God. Order your posters today and watch kids' Bible skills grow.

ORDER NOW.
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EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Book-by-book studies for groups of all ages.

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Now you can choose the Bible translation that appears in your study!

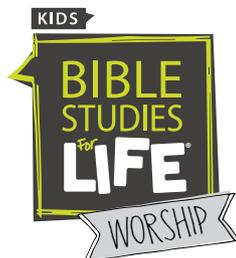
CHECK OUT THESE ADDITIONAL STUDY OPTIONS TO MEET ALL OF YOUR PROGRAMMING NEEDS THROUGHOUT THE WEEK:



BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE: KIDS

Combine creative teaching elements and hands-on learning to teach kids Bible truth and give them specific ways to apply it to their lives. Age-specific content is based on the Levels of Biblical Learning and packaged in a way that helps you disciple kids and strengthen families.

biblestudiesforlife.com



BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE: KIDS WORSHIP

Solid biblical teaching, engaging worship, group games, and take-home family resources—all wrapped in a fun, energetic experience that your kids will love!

Use it as a stand-alone large group program or hand-in-hand with Bible Studies for Life: Kids.



THE GOSPEL PROJECT FOR KIDS

The entire gospel story like kids have never seen it before! Each week, through videos, music, activities and more, kids connect biblical events to God's ultimate plan of redemption through Christ.

gospelproject.com/kids

