

date: 10/12/17

Bible Passage: Numbers 13; 14:26–33; Joshua 5:13—6:27
(Joshua and Jericho)

God Always Keeps His Promises

REMEMBER VERSE

**We praise you, God, we praise you, for your Name is near;
people tell of your wonderful deeds. Psalm 75:1**

Inspire

Shares personal stories from fellow ministry leaders about how God has worked in their lives

When I was 18 years old, I ventured out into the world on my very first mission trip overseas, to the countryside and jungles of Haiti to share God's message of love and hope. The spiritual, physical, and relational challenges during our journey confronted my ability and desire to respond in love.

One moment in particular, I stood physically frozen, overwhelmed with fear. Was I going to give in to the fear of the unknown and unfamiliar—spiritually crippling me for the extent of my stay? Or was I going to push through and choose to be courageous—both giving love and opening myself up to receiving love? Thankfully, the Spirit of God gave me all I needed to choose the latter. Courage in the midst of opposition allowed me to experience powerful love in action. Haiti changed me; love changed me.

“Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go” (Joshua 1:9). Regardless of the size of the challenge before us, we're to respond in love. Love has been freely given to each of us, and we're to release it to a world in desperate need of true love. But first, we must risk. We must allow God to open up the parts of our heart we might not have dared to let brave potential threats. He will go before you. He promised, and God always keeps His promises.

Cristi Thomas
Tru Team

Equip

Offers perspective and context to the lesson's Bible passage

After 40 years in the desert, the Israelites were about to enter the land of Canaan that God promised Abraham. The people were fearful and felt ill-equipped to handle what awaited them in this new place: giants, strong armies, fortified cities, and potential hostility. However, God was with His people. After the death of Moses, God appointed Joshua as his successor. He served under Moses' leadership and would be the one to take them into the land. God would be with Joshua just as He was with Moses. Educated in the principles of governing and groomed for leadership, God prepared him to lead Israel into the new era. God promised Joshua, "I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses. ... No one will be able to stand against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Joshua 1:3, 5).

As the people entered the land, God instructed Joshua to lead them and take the city of Jericho, an envied city within ancient Palestine. The mountains surrounding Jericho allowed for the development of lush agriculture through natural irrigation and also provided protection and isolation from neighboring countries. The city was centrally located within the region, making it an ideal trade route.

God gave specific instructions to Joshua for successfully taking the city. God would go before His people, conquering the obstacles they faced. Following each of God's instructions, none of the priests, armed men, Joshua, or any of God's people had to pick up a weapon to fight for the destruction of the city. God gave it over to His people just as He said. He was their defense, their strength, their provider, and their God. He fulfilled each promise He made to His people. God is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Support

Provides reflection and assessment through encouragement, prayer, and time in God's Word

If God wants you to do something, He'll make it possible for you to do it, but the grace He provides comes only with the task and cannot be stockpiled beforehand. We are dependent on Him from hour to hour; and the greater our awareness of this fact, the less likely we are to faint or fail in a crisis.

—Louis Cassels, quoted in *Draper's Book of Quotations for the Christian World* (Tyndale House, 1992)

What is God calling you to this week, or this year?

In every challenge that faces you, may you see an opportunity to be brave. In each act of bravery, may you know it's the Lord who has given you all that's required. May you know it's Him who has gone before you, preparing a path for you to follow in faith and in love. He will be with you each step of the way. Let the examples of our forefathers in faith encourage your heart and soul.

Small Group
SECTION

EXPLORE:: 10 min.

Small Group Leaders

Children engage in fun, creative activities designed to pique their curiosity about

the day's portion of The Big God Story.

Milk and Honey

God promised a special land to His people. In today's part of The Big God Story, the kids will hear what the spies found when they went exploring. Kids will play a classic game of memory pairing images of food.

SUPPLIES (per small group)

- [Milk and Honey Game cards \(see Resources\)](#)
- Resealable bag (1 per game set)

PREPARE AHEAD

Print or copy the Milk and Honey Game cards and create pairs of each picture for each small group that will be playing the game. Cut cards to size and place in a resealable bag.

RELATE

Welcome children to the EXPLORE Station. Place the cards facedown on the table. Remind everyone how to play a memory game, turning cards over in pairs to make matches. After children have completed all the matches, invite them to play a game of association with the cards. Turn one set of the cards with the illustrations facing up. Then ask them to pair foods together based on various characteristics. For example, in the first round, group foods together by food group. In the second round, group favorite dinner, breakfast, or lunch items together, and so on.

DISCOVER::: 25 min.

Host/Worship Leader/Storyteller

Children participate in discovering God's Word through Bible verse memorization, interactive storytelling techniques, and worship as response.

Ponder Point

God Always Keeps His Promises

Chloe's Rules

Host/Worship Leader

SUPPLIES

- [Chloe's Rules videos](#)
- Worship music (suggestions: "I May Be Small" and "Sincerely Yours," TruWorship *Sincerely Yours*)

RELATE

Welcome children as they're entering the large group meeting area. *Tech: Cue Chloe's Rules video.* The theme song will play as the Worship Leader/Host enters and makes his way up front, welcoming and greeting children along the way. This should be a high-energy entrance. Choose and play two upbeat worship songs of your choice from a worship album that complements the theme and focus of the lesson.

Mail Time

Host/Worship Leader

SUPPLIES

- Remember Verse image (see Resources)
- Remember Verse cards (see Resources)
- Bibles (your personal and large children's)
- Mailbox

RELATE

Choose one volunteer to hide the mail and another to find the mail. Have the "Seeker" close her eyes while the "Hider" finds a good place to hide the Remember Verse. Once the mail has been hidden, the Seeker will begin to look for the mail while the children give clues to its whereabouts by calling out "hot" and "cold."

Once the Seeker finds the mail, the Host invites her to pull out the enclosed Remember Verse. Next, the Host should find the Remember Verse in his Bible and read the words aloud. Talk about the meaning of the verse while interacting with the children.

Lead the children in reciting the Remember Verse several times together using a variety of engaging methods. Hand motions, different voices, various speeds, and character integration are all great ways to help commit the Scripture to memory. For longer verses, approach the verse one section at a time, increasing what the children repeat back each week.

REMEMBER VERSE

**We praise you, God, we praise you, for your Name is near;
people tell of your wonderful deeds.**

Psalm 75:1

REMEMBER VERSE DEFINITIONS

Praise: honor or worship

Deeds: great things God has done

REMEMBER VERSE MOTIONS

We praise you: Raise both hands overhead, fingers spread, then wiggle fingers.

God, we praise you: Point both index fingers to sky, then open hands and wiggle fingers.

for your Name is near: Cross both open hands over heart.

people tell: Hold left hand at side of mouth.

of your wonderful deeds: Extend both hands, palms up, until arms fully extend.

Wardrobe of Wonder

Storyteller/Host/Worship Leader

SUPPLIES

- What'slit: Ram's Horn or Brass Horn (see optional image in Resources)
- Wardrobe of Wonder

What'slit: Ram's Horn (or Brass Horn)

The walls of Jericho were shut up tight, but the Lord God gave the city into Joshua's hands. He told Joshua to command the priests and armed men to march around the walls every day, and on the seventh day they did it seven times. It was on this day that the walls of Jericho came down. The ram's horn blown by the priests as commanded by God helps us to remember that God always keeps His promises.

RELATE

Tech: Cue image. Invite a child volunteer to "spy" on the What'slit by peeking into the wardrobe. Have him whisper the identity of the What'slit in your ear to ensure he knows what it is.

Invite your assistant to sit on the stools with you. Then lead the group in asking the assistant yes-or-no questions about the What'slit. Once the children have guessed correctly, ask your assistant to retrieve the What'slit from the wardrobe and bring it to you. Thank your volunteer and encourage her to sit with her small group.

ASK

What do you think a horn is doing in the Wardrobe of Wonder? Volunteer gives some suggestions. Then invite all the kids to give suggestions. **What kind of sound do you think this horn makes? Can you make your best horn sound for me?** Encourage children to make horn sounds using their hands and voices. **I wonder what the What'slit has to do with all we're going to hear today from The Big God Story. Friends, what do you think? We're about to find out because ... do you know what time it is?**

The Big God Story

Numbers 13; 14:26–33; Joshua 5:13—6:27

God Always Keeps His Promises

Storytelling Technique: Images and Sound Effects

SUPPLIES

- The Big God Story images (Grapes, Pomegranates, and Figs [or use real items]; Men Carrying Fruit; Giant Standing Next to Grasshopper; and Person Leaning over Grasshopper; see Resources)
- Ram's Horn sound effect (see Resources)
- Optional: [Storytelling video](#) (see Resources)

RELATE

Hello, friends! Before we jump into The Big God Story, let's close our eyes and talk to God. Let's ask God to teach us. Lead children in a Prayer of Release to pause, be still, and ask the Holy Spirit to quiet their hearts and minds.

After God's people left their lives as slaves in Egypt, they traveled toward their new home in a wonderful land—the Promised Land. Twelve men were sent to spy and see what the land was like. When the men returned, they showed the people huge clusters of grapes, pomegranates, and figs. Have you ever eaten

grapes? *Tech: Cue Grapes, Pomegranates, and Figs image.* Children respond. **Well, the grape clusters the spies brought back from the land were so big, they had to tie them to a pole to carry them.** *Tech: Cue Men Carrying Fruit image.* The food there was wonderful, just as the Lord said.

But the spies also reported to the people of God about cities filled with strong and giant people. They were so big and tall, the scared spies felt as tiny as grasshoppers next to them. *Tech: Cue Giant and Grasshopper image.* The people of God were afraid. This new land was filled with giant fruit *and* giant people! *Tech: Cue Person Leaning over Grasshopper image.* Because they didn't trust God, the people had to wander in the desert for 40 years. Then God gave them another chance to trust Him.

God used a man named Joshua to lead the people. Joshua believed and trusted God. "Do not be afraid," Joshua said. "The Lord is with us!" God told Joshua to be strong and courageous. What does it mean to be *courageous*? Children answer. **Very brave! That's right! You can be brave even if there are reasons to be scared.** God told Joshua not to be afraid because He would be with Him. God made another promise—to be with Joshua wherever he went! What do we know about God and His promises? Wait for children to answer. **God always keeps His promises, no matter what!**

God gave Joshua instructions. Joshua led the people to Jericho, a city with a huge wall around it. The priests were to carry trumpets made of ram's horns and march in front of the army. *Tech: Cue Wardrobe of Wonder sound effect.* Wait! Where did we see a horn today? Children answer. **In the wardrobe, that's right! A ram's horn is our What'sIt!** The priests were carrying ram's horns! They were to march around the city once a day for six days. On the seventh day, they were to march around the city seven times as the priests blew the trumpets, or ram's horns. God told Joshua, "When you hear them sound a long blast on the trumpets, have all the people give a loud shout; then the wall of the city will fall apart."

Joshua commanded the people to be courageous and trust in God as they marched around the city. While they marched and blew the horns, Joshua gave instructions to the rest of the people. Lower voice and whisper. He told them, "Don't give a war cry; don't raise your voices; don't say a word until the day I tell you to shout. Then when I tell you to shout, SHOUT!" Let's pretend to be the people. Let's crouch down low and whisper together, "Be strong and courageous!" Okay, try it again. Crouch and whisper. **Great job.** Now, when I say, "Shout," jump up as high as you can and give a big shout! Are you ready? **One, two, three ... be strong and courageous! Be strong and courageous! Be strong and courageous! Now, shout!** Jump up and lead children in shouting. **That was great! When we get to the part where Joshua tells the people to shout, let's jump up and give a great big shout!**

The people followed God's instructions exactly. Early in the morning on the seventh day, the priests and the armed men marched around the city seven times as they blew the horns. Then the priests sounded a long trumpet blast and Joshua commanded, "**Shout!** For the Lord has given you the city!" The people shouted. Pause. **And the people shouted!** Everyone jump! *Tech: Cue Ram's Horn sound effect.* Direct children to sit. **When the trumpets sounded and the people shouted, the walls of the city collapsed. The walls came tumbling down! The people of God dedicated the place where the city once stood to the Lord.**

God did all He promised. After years of waiting, God brought His people to their new home. God told the people to be strong and courageous because He was with them. When God says He is going to do something, He *always* does it. Who are God's people? Children answer. **We're God's people. He loves each one of us and wants us to trust Him. God always keeps His promises!**

Wonder Questions

Small Group Enhancements, coloring pages, and discussion questions help your group go deeper into today's portion of The Big God Story.

SUPPLIES (per small group)

- [Wonder Questions coloring pages \(see Resources\)](#)
- Crayons

RELATE

Today in The Big God Story, we heard that God is a promise keeper. We saw how He kept all His promises to His people as He led them into the new land.

I wonder ... How did the people of God feel when they saw God keep all His promises?

I wonder ... What's a promise that God has made to us?

I wonder ... How does my heart feel about God right now?

BLESS:: 5 min.

Small Group Leaders

Children receive a blessing from their leaders and sometimes one another. A blessing may be a prayer of commission, a portion of Scripture, or words to encourage and guide.

SUPPLIES (per small group)

- [Remember Verse cards \(see Resources\)](#)

RELATE

Today, send your little ones out with a blessing by praying Scripture over them. BLESS is an opportunity for children to practice another physical posture of worship. Suggest children place their hands out in front of themselves, palms up as if cupping them together to hold water. This demonstrates that we expect to receive what God has for each of us.

Children, God tells us in His Word: "For great is his love toward us, and the faithfulness of the LORD endures forever. Praise the LORD" (Psalm 117:2).

Have each child hold his God's Promises card as you complete the time together with a final blessing over the group:

May you always know God's great love for you and remember that God will always keep His promises.