



LESSON 22

3rd and 4th Grade

Principle: Following by faith, and symbols to remember.

Bible Character(s): Joshua

Scripture Reference: Joshua 1, 3-4



PERSONAL PREPARATION: Before this weekend, please read Joshua 1-4. After

Moses died, God chose Joshua to cross the Jordan River to lead the people into the Promised Land. Notice the faith it took for Joshua, the priests, and the people to set out into the Jordan River. God commanded them to do it, and they responded in faith. God was faithful in bringing them to the land He had promised to their ancestors. Have you had times in your life when the waters were high and God asked you to step in? Did you trust God and respond in faith and obedience, or were you fearful of what He wanted you to do and chose not to obey? Were you strong and courageous, just like Joshua was? Reflect on times of faith in action in your life. How have these times shown you and reminded you of God's faithfulness? Spend some time in prayer thanking God for challenging you, and for being faithful.

PLUG IN TIME - 5-10 minutes as the kids begin to arrive

Arrive early to check the supplies in the bin and review the lesson. Write today's principle on the whiteboard. Remember to greet all campers upon arrival; meet their parents; welcome and introduce all visitors. Create a welcoming cabin for all campers!

Joshua Says

Have your campers play "Joshua Says" (like "Simon Says") as a starting point to studying about how Joshua was obedient to God's commands.



BIG GROUP Time - 35-40 minutes

As you line up, remind campers we are going to have fun as an entire Camp Grace group! We are going to live out GRACE by **Glorifying God** through worship, **Respecting All Leaders**, and **Accepting Responsibility** to listen with attentive ears, minds, and hearts - fully **Celebrating Christ** with passion! We should **Encourage Others** to do the same, by not distracting them from their worship of God.

*Take your cabin flag to Big Group.

The Bridge to Small Group

Today we are going to study from the book of Joshua. We will see God choose Joshua to lead the Israelites into the Promised Land after Moses dies. We will focus on the faith of Joshua and the Israelites as they obey God's commands.

Small Group Time - 25-30 minutes

Getting Started

If your cabin did well in Big Group, acknowledge it. If not, take a couple of minutes to talk about how they can do better next time.

What did you learn about in Big Group today? Why did the runner want to run in place? (He was afraid of falling and getting hurt if he ran in the actual race.) Have you ever felt afraid to try something new because you didn't know what might happen?

Remember how God used Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt? They spent 40 years in the wilderness and God gave them food and water. God gave Moses the Ten Commandments to give to the Israelites and then He told Moses how to anoint a High Priest. We saw how the Israelites had to get help from the High Priest to purify or clean themselves of their sin by having animal sacrifices. We do not have to perform animal sacrifices anymore because God gave us the final sacrifice in His Son, Jesus. Jesus was our High Priest because His sacrifice was the payment for our sin so that we can live forever with God if we choose to believe and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Just like the High Priest was the Israelites' bridge to God, Jesus is our bridge to God.

Today we will be studying from the book of Joshua. Joshua was born in Egypt when the Israelites were slaves. He trained with Moses, traveled with Moses and experienced all that God was doing with the Israelites. In the book of Numbers, Moses sent twelve spies to go explore the land of Canaan, and Joshua was one of those spies. Joshua and another man named Caleb were the only two who had faith that God would help the Israelites. Joshua told the truth and was faithful to what Moses had asked him to do. When Moses died, God chose Joshua to lead the Israelites across the Jordan River into their Promised Land.

Let's begin reading from the Bible in Joshua 1 [NLT].

Joshua 1:6-9

6 "Be strong and courageous, for you are the one who will lead these people to possess all the land I swore to their ancestors I would give them. 7 Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the instructions Moses gave you. Do not deviate from them, turning either to the right or to the left. Then you will be successful in everything you do. 8 Study this Book of Instruction continually. Meditate on it day and night so you will be sure to obey everything written in it. Only then will you prosper and succeed in all you do. 9 This is my command—be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

Why do you think God chose Joshua to lead the Israelites into the Promised Land? (Allow responses.) Joshua showed Godly character when Moses sent him to be a spy and explore the land of Canaan, their Promised Land. God saw how Joshua responded to what he was asked to do in a way that brought glory to God. Only Joshua and Caleb, another man Moses chose to be a spy, trusted that God would help them conquer the land.

Do you remember who their ancestors were that God promised the land to? (Allow responses.) In Genesis 17 God made the covenant with Abraham to make him the father of many nations and to give him and his descendants the whole land of Canaan. Now, God was answering this promise and showing His faithfulness.

Promises and Commands



The purpose of this activity is to recognize the promises and commands God made to Joshua.

Supplies:

List of God's promises and commands (1 per bin)

Ark of the Covenant pictures (1 per bin)

Explain to your campers that you are going to read off the promises and commands that God made to Joshua and the Israelites. Tell them to line up on one side of the room. Every time you read a command, they are to take one step forward. If they hear a promise, they stay still. If they walk when a promise is said or stay still when a command is said, they are out and have to go sit down.

Tie It Together



God placed Joshua in a big position of responsibility and leadership when He chose Joshua to take Moses' place as leader. God promised many things to Joshua. He also told Joshua what to do. What was the most repeated command? "Be strong and courageous." Why do you think God kept telling Joshua to be strong and courageous? (Allow responses.) God wanted Joshua to be strong and courageous to show the Israelites that God was always with them and there was no need to fear. God kept His promises to the Israelites and He keeps His promises to us, as well. We can obey God commands without fear because we know that we have a faithful God who promises to be with us always.

The Israelites arrived at the banks of Jordan River and set up camp. They were given the instructions to wait until the Levitical priests carrying the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord begin crossing the river. They were told to follow the priests carrying the ark, keeping about half a mile distance between them and the ark. The Bible tells us this in Joshua.

Joshua 3:7-8, 14-17

7 The Lord told Joshua, "Today I will begin to make you a great leader in the eyes of all the Israelites. They will know that I am with you, just as I was with Moses. 8 Give this command to the priests who carry the Ark of the Covenant: 'When you reach the banks of the Jordan River, take a few steps into the river and stop there.'"

14 So the people left their camp to cross the Jordan, and the priests who were carrying the Ark of the Covenant went ahead of them. 15 It was the harvest season, and the Jordan was overflowing its banks. But as soon as the feet of the priests who were carrying the Ark touched the water at the river's edge, 16 the water above that point began backing up a great distance away at a town called Adam, which is near Zarethan. And the water below that point flowed on to the Dead Sea until the riverbed was dry. Then all the people crossed over near the town of Jericho.

17 Meanwhile, the priests who were carrying the Ark of the Lord's Covenant stood on dry ground in the middle of the riverbed as the people passed by. They waited there until the whole nation of Israel had crossed the Jordan on dry ground.

Can anyone remember what was in the Ark of the Covenant? (Allow responses.) The Ten Commandments; Aaron's staff; and a jar of manna. Each item in the Ark reminded the people that God loves them and provides for all their needs. The Ark was just over 4 feet long, 2.5 feet wide, and 2.5 feet tall, and it was covered with pure gold. (Show picture of Ark.) It was probably pretty heavy to carry! (Show picture of priests carrying Ark.)

Imagine helping to carry the Ark, and when you arrive at the Jordan River, you realize it is flood season and the river is deeper than normal and overflowing its banks. How would that make you feel, knowing that God had commanded you to be the first to enter the river? Would you believe that God would stay true to His promises and bring you across safely? (Allow responses.) I bet those priests were kind of scared, but they knew God was with them.

When they entered the river, God separated the river, parting it in half, so that the Israelites could cross. We are told that even the riverbed (the ground) was dry! The Israelites did not need to worry about getting stuck in the mud as they crossed because the ground was completely dry for them! The Israelites all obeyed and trusted that God would make it possible for them to cross, and He did.

Trust In The Lord



The purpose is to have the campers examine their life to see if they are putting their full trust in the Lord.

Supplies:

Paper

Give campers a piece of paper and ask them to take some time to think about how they are putting trust in God for their life. Ask them to think about times when the water has seemed deep, what God wanted them to do in that situation, and how they responded. Lastly, have them think about their life right now and if there is anything that they are not trusting to God. Have them write (or draw pictures) about anything that they should trust God with.

Tie It Together



Supplies:

Pictures of memorials (1 per bin)

Can you think of any times in your life when things looked kind of scary and you were afraid of what might happen? Maybe you were signed up to go to an overnight camp in the summer, but you were afraid to be away from your parents. Being afraid is the opposite of trusting God.

The Israelites were probably afraid, too, when they came to the river and saw it overflowing, knowing that God had commanded them to cross the river into their Promised Land. They were about to get to something great, that God had promised them, but this one scary thing stood in their way. But you know what the Israelites did? They remembered how God had been faithful to them in the past (think about the Red Sea!), and they knew God was with them, so they had faith in what God was asking them to do and obeyed His command. God provided a way for them to safely get across.

We can always remember that God is with us. We can be strong and courageous because we know God is with us and that we can believe that His commands are for the best. If there is anything going on in your life right now that you know God wants you to trust Him, but you are having a hard time doing that, think about how God is with you always. You can trust Him in where He is leading you.

The Israelites made it safely across the Jordan River. God then gave Joshua instructions on what to do next. Let's continue reading the Bible in Joshua 4 to see what happens.

Joshua 4:4-5

4 So Joshua called together the twelve men he had chosen—one from each of the tribes of Israel. 5 He told them, "Go into the middle of the Jordan, in front of the Ark of the Lord your God. Each of you must pick up one stone and carry it out on your shoulder—twelve stones in all, one for each of the twelve tribes of Israel."

God instructed Joshua to choose twelve men, one from each tribe, to each pick a stone from the river. What do you think God wanted them to do with these stones? They were getting stones from the river so they could build a memorial. Do you know what a memorial is? A memorial is something that is made to remember a person or an event from the past. Here are some examples of memorials (Show pictures of memorials.)

Let's see what Joshua had to say about the memorial they were building with the stones. The Bible tells us

Joshua 4:21-24

21 Then Joshua said to the Israelites, "In the future your children will ask, 'What do these stones mean?' 22 Then you can tell them, 'This is where the Israelites crossed the Jordan on dry ground.' 23 For the Lord your God dried up the river right before your eyes, and he kept it dry until you were all across, just as he did at the Red Sea when he dried it up until we had all crossed over. 24 He did this so all the nations of the earth might know that the Lord's hand is powerful, and so you might fear the Lord your God forever."

They built this memorial with the twelve stones as a reminder of how God stopped the flow of the river and dried up the ground so that they could cross into Canaan. God had made a promise long ago to their ancestors to give them this land, and now His promise was becoming reality. God wanted

them to build something that they would see and be able to refer to for generations as a reminder of God's power and faithfulness to the Israelites.

My Memorial Stone



The purpose of this activity is for the campers to create a reminder for themselves of God's faithfulness.

Supplies:

River stone (1 per camper)

Sharpies

Have campers think of a time or times in which God has been faithful to them. Share a time in your life in which God was faithful, and help them think through some ideas from their lives. Give each child a stone and have him/her write that memory on the stone. Tell campers to take the stone home to use as a reminder of God's faithfulness.

Tie It Together



What kinds of things has God done for you that have shown His faithfulness? How often do you remember God's faithfulness to you in your life? (Allow responses.) God is always faithful to us because He loves us and will never leave us. We can follow Him and trust in His plan for us. When things get difficult or scary, we can remember how God was with us in the past, know that He is with us now, and we can trust that He will provide the way through whatever situation it is. God is glorified when we remember all He has done for us and worship Him for everything.

Prayer Time

Spend some time in prayer to close small group time. Thank God for the trust we can have in Him, and for always being with us.



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