

Session 10

Power with you

As our children hear how Joshua followed God's call, help them to begin to understand that God is calling them to do certain tasks for him. Encourage them that God will always help them to do whatever he asks.

To plan your session... Choose a selection of *Starting, Into the Bible* and *Living the life* activities to make your session fun and memorable.

Options to start your session...

Psalm praise

Activity time: 5–10 minutes

Aim: to praise God for the great things he does

- 1 Divide the children into small groups, each with a leader if possible, and help them to find Psalm 27 in their Bibles.
- 2 Split the psalm between the groups, and ask each group to work out a way to present their section (for example, with a narrator and mime, or with everyone reading together or individuals reading a line each).
- 3 Allow a few minutes for the groups to prepare, and then invite each group to present their section in turn as a psalm of praise to God.

Spot the leader

Activity time: 5 minutes

Aim: to identify a leader by their actions

- 1 Invite one or two volunteers to wait outside the room. Ask everyone else to stand in a circle, facing inwards.
- 2 Choose one child to be the leader and to perform various actions, such as waving, clapping and smiling. Invite the other children in the circle to copy the 'leader'. Encourage them to be as quick as possible in following what the leader does, so as to make it difficult to spot who the leader is.
- 3 Call the volunteers back into the room and challenge them to identify the leader – the child whom everyone is following!
- 4 Repeat the game with different volunteers.

Aim

To expect great things when we follow God's call

Bible passage

Joshua 1

READY TO USE activity

Game

Activity time: 5–10 minutes

Aim: to understand the consequences of our actions

- 1 Divide the children into groups of two or three (if you have a small group, ask the children to work individually). Give each group a sheet of paper and a pen.
- 2 Ask each group to write the name of a famous person at the top of the paper. Then invite them to fold over the top of the paper so that the name is hidden and pass their paper on to the next group. Now encourage each group to write on the sheet of paper they have just received where the famous person went, before folding it over and passing it on.
- 3 Continue in the same way until each group has added, in turn: a famous person; where they went; why; what they did; what they said; what the consequence was.
- 4 At the end, enjoy reading out the story on each sheet together.

Tip for Leaders: If you are short of planning time, choose to include one of the *Ready to use* activity options for part of your session.

READY TO USE activity

Interactive Bible story

Activity time: 10–15 minutes

Aim: to expect great things when we follow God's call

You will need: copies of the *Xstream* sheet from page 77, music (optional)

1 Tell the story

Tell the story using the script below. Whenever you say the words in bold type, invite the children to respond as follows:

Joshua: 'He followed God.'

Strong: 'Be strong!'

Brave: 'Be brave!'

Power: 'Yes!'

Story: The big question was, 'Who would God choose to lead the people of Israel into the land he had promised them?' It turned out that **Joshua** was the man for the job.

Joshua would be in charge... of everyone... gulp!

But don't worry, **Joshua** wasn't on his own. He had God's **power**. God said to him, 'Be **strong** and **brave**.' Just in case he hadn't taken in what had been said, God repeated, 'Just be **strong**; be **brave**.' And then, so **Joshua** didn't forget, God told him again. He said, 'I've commanded you to be **strong** and **brave**!'

Well, it was all very well for God to tell **Joshua** to be **strong** and **brave**, but how was **Joshua** going to do that, when he had to lead thousands of people through the desert? What a job! But then God told him how he could be **strong** and **brave** even with such a difficult job. He gave **Joshua** his **power** and a special promise. Awesome!

This is what God said: 'Don't ever be afraid or discouraged! I am the Lord your God, and I will be there to help you wherever you go.'

Joshua told everyone they had three days to pack up and prepare some food. Because he was the boss and he had God's **power**, everyone did what he said, without grumbling or complaining, which was great. 'We will do everything you have told us and will go wherever you send us,' they said. Then they reminded him to be **strong** and **brave**.

So, because **Joshua** remembered to be **strong** and **brave** and followed God, God's promise to him came true and great things happened. God was with **Joshua** and he helped him to lead the people of Israel into the land God had promised to give them.

2 Sing

Sing the song 'Be bold, be strong', but change the words to 'Be brave, be strong'.

3 Xstream

Give each child a copy of the *Xstream* sheet from page 77. Challenge them to answer the multiple choice questions there.

4 Pray

Ask the children to think of other people in the Bible who, like Joshua, were brave and strong and through whom God did great things. (*David, Samson, Gideon, Paul, Mary.*)

What great things happened? Look together at the *Bible Timeline* and invite different children to identify some of the Bible heroes it shows.

Talk about how these people trusted God to help them do great things. Even though they didn't know what would happen, they still followed him. Encourage the children to pray and thank God for these people who trusted him.

If appropriate, challenge the children to decide if they want to add their name to the list as someone who follows God. Allow a few moments of silence for them to think and pray, if they wish. Encourage them to tell you afterwards if they have done that.

Finish by singing 'Be brave, be strong' again.



Act out the story

Activity time: 20–25 minutes

Aim: to expect great things when we follow God's call

You will need: chairs and tables, string, sheets or blankets, speech bubbles from page 78

1 Pitch your tents

Explain to the children that they are the people of Israel and they need to set up camp in the desert. Divide them into small groups and give each group at least two chairs and/or a table, a sheet or blanket, some string and some scissors. Challenge each group to create a tent. Allow a few minutes for them to do this. (If they are stuck, show them how to stretch the string across a gap and tie it between two chairs like a washing line. The sheet or blanket can then be draped over it.)

2 Set the scene

Invite the children to sit in their tents (check that the tents are secure). Encourage them to imagine that they are camped in the middle of the desert at the foot of a mountain. Say that the ground is sandy and stony, the hot sun is beating down on them and the sounds of sheep and cows are around them. Ask what else they might be able to see, hear, smell or feel. Say that Moses, their leader, has died and invite them to say how they are feeling.

3 Read and respond

Choose a confident reader to read Joshua 1:1–8, either from the Good News Bible or the Contemporary English Version. Give each small group a copy of the three speech bubbles from page 78. Ask one child to read what God said to Joshua from the speech bubble. Follow this with one group reading what Joshua said to the people. Finally, invite everyone to read together the speech bubble with the words that the people spoke to Joshua.

4 Questions

Visit the different tents in turn, asking the occupants some of the following questions. Invite the children to respond in their own way:

Why are you camped in the desert?

Do you know how long your people have been in the desert?

Who has taken over as leader now that Moses has died?

Where has he promised to lead you?

How do you feel about that?

What did you say to Joshua?

What did he tell you that you will do in three days?

What do you think about that?

What did it mean for Joshua to follow God's call?

What do you think it means for us to follow God's call at home, or at school?

5 Pack up

Challenge the children to pack up their tents ready to travel to the land God has promised them. They should roll the sheet or blanket up like a sleeping bag and tie it with some of the string. See which group is the fastest, neatest etc.

6 Prayer

Challenge the children to tell you what two things God told Joshua he must have (*strength, courage*). Invite the children to find a space and sit quietly. Encourage them to ask God to give them strength and courage wherever they are – at school, at home or with their friends. Finish by reading Joshua 1:9. Talk about how Joshua didn't know exactly what would happen when he followed God's call, but he trusted God to use him to do great things.

More on this theme

If you want to do a short series with your group, other sessions that work well with this one are:

Session 11 Help for the spies, Joshua 2

Session 12 Across obstacles, Joshua 3

Session 13 Breaking the walls, Joshua 6

Living the life – options to help live God’s way...

Wristbands

Activity time: 5–10 minutes

Aim: to encourage the children to remember that God wants us to follow him and promises to be with us always

You will need: copies of the *Xstream* sheet from page 79

- 1 Read Deuteronomy 6:6–9 and then invite one of the children to read the words on the strips on the *Xstream* sheet from page 79.
- 2 Encourage the children to decide which of the following they want to make: a wristband, armbands, a headband, a paper chain, a frieze or border for their bedroom wall or door frame. Alternatively, they could wrap individual strips around pencils, or make a mobile. Help them to cut out the strips and join them together.
- 3 Ask the children to think of particular situations where it might be hard for them to follow God. If appropriate, encourage them, in pairs, to tell each other about these situations and then pray for each other that God will do great things in their lives.

Prayer activity

Activity time: 5–10 minutes

Aim: to thank God that he uses us to do his work, and to ask for his power to help us

- 1 Ask the children to get into twos or threes and choose two people from the Bible who did great things because they followed God.
- 2 Read Ephesians 3:20,21 (from the CEV, if possible) to the children.
- 3 Invite each group to name their chosen people as you say this prayer together: ‘Thank you, God, for doing great things through ... [names]. Please help us to remember that you can do great things through us, too.’
- 4 Have a time of silence or, if appropriate, invite the children to pray for each other in their small groups. Encourage the children to ask God to help them in particular situations at school, at home or with their friends.

READY TO USE
activity

Drama

Activity time: 10–15 minutes

Aim: to help the children remember that when they follow God’s way he will help them do great things

- 1 Talk with the children about being bullied, or other difficult situations at school.
- 2 Divide the children into small groups (with a leader, if possible) and ask them to produce a short drama about a child being bullied (or a similar situation).
- 3 After they have presented their dramas to each other, challenge each group to explain how the child could be brave and strong in those circumstances. (*They could pray and ask God for help. They could remember his promise in Joshua 1:9.*)
- 4 Ask what difference they think it will make if they behave like that. What might the bullies think?

Extra ideas for the session and beyond...

Encourage the children to find other Bible verses where God promises great things to those who follow his call, such as Jeremiah 33:3; Psalm 37:5; 1 Peter 5:7; Romans 5:8; Matthew 28:20. What do they notice about Matthew 28:20 in comparison with Joshua 1:9?

Invite someone to come to your group and share a time when they did something brave for God.

What about you?



What God wanted Joshua to do was...

- A difficult, but he had God with him to help him.
- B something he could do with his eyes closed.
- C easier than anything he'd done before.

What God wants me to do will be...

- A difficult, but I have God to help me.
- B something I could do with my eyes closed.
- C easier than anything I've done before.

God told Joshua to be brave and strong...

- A because he was on his own.
- B because Moses was brave and strong.
- C because God's power was with him.

God tells me to be brave and strong too...

- A because I'm on my own.
- B because God's power is with me.
- C because the Bible says so.

When God told Joshua what to do, did he...

- A grumble and complain?
- B agree and obey?
- C laugh and joke?

When I follow God, do I...

- A grumble and complain?
- B worry?
- C agree and obey?

What God said to Joshua:

Haven't I commanded you? Strength! Courage! Don't be timid; don't get discouraged. God, your God, is with you every step you take.

What Joshua said to the people:

Pack your bags. In three days you will cross this Jordan River to enter and take the land God, your God, is giving you to possess.

What the people said to Joshua:

Everything you commanded us, we'll do. Wherever you send us, we'll go. We just pray that God, your God, will be with you. Strength! Courage!

“don't be afraid or discouraged, for I, the Lord your God,
am with you wherever you go.”

Joshua 1:9

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