

Alley SG—November 27th, 2022

Today's Bible Story: Stand Up (Esther) • *The Book of Esther*

Today's Key Question: When have you done something you were afraid to do?

Today's Bottom Line: You can do what you should even when you don't know what will happen

Monthly Memory Verse: *Be strong and brave. Do not be afraid. Do not lose hope. I am the LORD your God. I will be with you everywhere you go.* Joshua 1:9b (NIRV)

1. Verses to Take with You

What You Need: Bible, tweezers (2 per Group), pipe cleaners (2 per Group, per Service), beads (2 bags per Group)

What You Do:

- Make sure kids have access to a Bible or a Bible App.
- Invite everyone to look up and read Psalm 27:14.
- Form two teams.
- Give each team a pipe cleaner, a pair of tweezers, and a bag of assorted beads.
- Explain that on "go," one kid on each team must say the verse, use the tweezers to put a bead on the pipe cleaner, and pass everything to the next kid who repeats the process.
- Each kid must WAIT until the verse is quoted and the bead is on the pipe cleaner – even if it takes longer than they would like.
- Allow kids to use their Bibles and assist each other in saying the verse if a team member can't remember it.
- The first team to finish wins.
- Discuss the verse.
 - Would you say that patience or waiting to see God work in a situation takes courage? Why or why not?
 - What are some situations when the most courageous thing you can do is wait?
 - How do we go about being strong and not losing hope in situations where we are not sure whether the outcome will be good or bad?
 - When we "wait for the Lord," how are we showing courage?

2. Bible Story Extension

What You Need: Bible, paper, pens, dice (1 per pair of kids)

What You Do:

- Pair kids up with a friend or let them choose a partner.
- Assign partners one of the people from the story. It's okay if more than one group has the same character.
 - Esther
 - Mordecai
 - Haman
 - Xerxes, King of Persia
- Ask kids to work with their partner to come up with a 10-word quote for their character.
 - It doesn't have to come directly from a verse in the book of Esther, but it must be accurate with the story.
 - In other words, something they might have said or something they are describing in the story.
 - For example: "I believed God would use Esther to save our people." (Mordecai)
- Let teams share their quotes in order to review the story.
- Give each team a dice and ask them to roll it one time.
- The number that it lands on is their team's number for the following game. Note that it's okay if more than one team has the same number.

- Explain that, at your signal, one partner from each team will begin rolling their die until it lands on their number.
- As soon as it does, the other partner begins writing out their 10-word quote as fast as they can.
- The other partner continues to roll the dice until their number comes up a second time.
- At this point, partners switch roles and continue—one kid writing and the other rolling the dice.
- They will keep switching places until time is called.
- The team with their quote written the most times in a set amount of time is the winner.
- Repeat (if time and interest allow) with new sentences but with a different amount of words to use.
- Ask:
 - How did Esther demonstrate courage?
 - Esther had courage to believe that God could do the impossible and save her people. Do you think it's possible to have that same kind of courage today? Why or why not? What might it look like if we did?
 - When you are tempted to chicken out or give up, what could help you stand strong instead? What are things you can do to have courage when you don't know what will happen?
 - When have you done something you were afraid to do? Did you feel God's presence with you?

3. Take a Snapshot

What You Need: Aluminum foil

What You Do:

- As a group, brainstorm different scenarios in which having courage can be particularly hard. When is it easy? Encourage personal stories or examples from their lives or the lives of others.
- Invite kids to sit in a wide circle with backs to one another or scatter around the room so they are not facing anyone else.
- Give each kid a piece of foil.
- Tell kids to tightly press the foil over their faces to make a distinct impression of how someone might look as they faced one of the situations they just discussed (sad, happy, surprise, scared, etc.).
- Tell kids to gently remove the foil, being careful to maintain the impression of their face.
- Collect the foil faces while kids remain in their spots with backs to one another.
- Arrange the foil pieces on the floor in no particular order.
- Ask kids to gather around and try to correctly identify the faces of each kid in the group and the expression they are making.
- Let kids take turns telling the story behind the situations that go with their foil face impressions.
- Include an opportunity to share how they had courage and how God was with them.

4. Discussion Questions

- God used Esther in a special way at a special time. Share whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: "Everyone was made to do something courageous . . . and whatever that something is, no one can do it quite like you."
 - If you believe that statement, how does it help you do what you should even when you don't know how it will all turn out?
- If we miss an opportunity to show courage, what should we do?
- How do you think our need for courage changes at different times in our life?
 - For example, what did courage look like for you when you were a little kid?
 - How might it look when you are in high school?
 - What's the best ways to get ready for the courageous things you'll do as you get older?

5. Make it Personal with Prayer

What You Need: No supplies

What You Do:

- Use the prayer starters below to guide kids in a group prayer.
- Encourage any who are willing to pray aloud to do so after each starter.
 - Lord, You are . . .
 - Lord, forgive me for . . .
 - Lord, thank you for . . .
 - Lord, help me to have courage when . . .

What You Say:

“Dear God, we have learned about so many amazing and courageous heroes this month. Thank You for the examples of Esther, David, Daniel, Joshua, and Caleb. Even though they lived thousands of years ago and faced many situations we will never face, we know that the same courage You gave them is something we can have, too. Please show us how to be heroes for You by doing what we should even when we don’t know what will happen. We believe You are always with us and can help us when we are alone or afraid. In Jesus’ name, amen.”