

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Leads Us

SCRIPTURE: [Joshua 5–6](#)

WORD OF WONDER: [1 Chronicles 16:15](#)

When life gets crazy, sometimes I just want to be told what to do. I long for someone to enlighten me on the “right” way to proceed. But when I ask for a friend’s advice, I don’t always take it. Why? Because deep down, I believe my own ways of solving life’s problems are better.

After God faithfully led the Israelites across the Jordan River on dry ground and gave them assurance that they would defeat Jericho, He gave Joshua an unusual battle plan: Walk around the city, blow trumpets, and shout. Although God’s ways are mysterious, the Israelites were learning that His leadership can always be trusted.

Read [Joshua 6:1–7, 20–21](#). Joshua had the Lord’s assurance of success if he followed each instruction. The people followed Joshua’s lead, and the result was a crumbling wall and an overwhelming victory.

- When have you followed God’s lead? What happened?
- When have you failed to follow God’s lead? What happened?
- What is an area in your life you can yield to the Lord’s leadership today?

In good times and bad, we can trust God to lead us. He is a good shepherd with a perfect plan. God led the Israelites, and God leads us too! Thank Him for providing divine guidance in every situation.

—**Suzanne Gosselin**

Children’s Ministry Volunteer

Contributor to Wonder Ink

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READ THIS!

JOSHUA AND JERICO

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

This story revolves around God and how He delivered Jericho into Israel's hands. Jericho was famous as a walled city, but God showed that He is stronger than the thickest walls.

WHAT?

[Joshua 5–6](#) shows how God led the Israelites to defeat the army of Jericho. God laid out a plan and the Israelites followed it, marching around the city for seven days. On the seventh day, God brought the walls of Jericho crashing down.

WHERE?

The story takes place at Jericho, which is one of the oldest cities in the world. The city was located on particularly fertile land in Canaan, which made it strategically valuable to the Israelites.

WHEN?

This story takes place immediately after God piled up the water of the Jordan River so that the Israelites could cross on foot ([Joshua 3–4](#)).

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

This story shows the central role that God played in defeating Israel's enemies. The Israelites didn't have to tear down the walls themselves. Instead, God brought the walls down for them. Likewise, salvation isn't something we can earn through what we do: It's a gift from God through Jesus!

Welcome & Curiosity Questions

WHAT YOU NEED: [Jericho Welcome Question Slide](#)

Display the [Jericho Welcome Question Slide](#).



As kids arrive ...

Welcome each kid by name. Remember to introduce kids to each other and encourage everyone to introduce themselves when new kids arrive. Point out the Welcome Question and read it to younger kids. Talk with kids about their favorite board games, outside games, or sports.

At your start time ...

Invite kids to answer the Welcome Question aloud:

What's your favorite game? Explain how to play it.

Directions are pretty important to playing a game, aren't they? Sometimes, we might want to jump right into the game—before making sure we know what we're doing. Today, we're going to learn about some unusual directions God gave His people when they finally arrived in the promised land. But first, it's time to be curious!

Ask the following "I'm curious" questions. Say, "I'm curious ..." before each question and give kids a chance to think about and answer each one.

I'm curious ...

- **Have you ever followed directions you didn't understand? Tell us about it.** As an example, you could share how following directions for a recipe can be hard and confusing.
- **What do you think makes a good leader?**

Elementary Interactive Game: Follow the Leaders

WHAT YOU NEED: [Follow the Leaders Slide](#), [Jericho Wonder Truth Slide](#)

Display the [Follow the Leaders Slide](#) and gather the kids. **Let's start today with a game of Follow the Leaders! For this game, we'll follow the motions of the leader. You'll do your best to follow me in our area, doing the same motions and actions as I do. Let's get started!** Start with easy to follow movements and motions. Then randomly do something super silly/difficult/erratic for them to follow. Do not point out the difference in leadership styles—allow kids to notice it themselves. Then gather the kids.



What did you notice about the difference in movements? Invite kids to respond freely. **When we follow human leaders, sometimes it goes well. They lead well, and we can follow them well. But sometimes human leaders don't lead well. God is not like human leaders. God always leads well, and we can always trust Him and His instructions.**

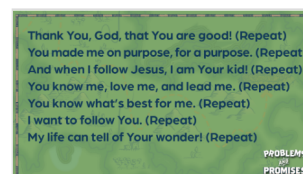


Display the [Jericho Wonder Truth Slide](#). **Today in God's big story, we'll hear about a time when God gave Joshua and His people good, but unusual, instructions as He led them. Our Wonder Truth for today is GOD LEADS US.**

Declaring God's Wonder

WHAT YOU NEED: Jericho Declaration Slide [Option 1](#)

Display the Jericho Declaration Slide [Option 1](#). Read each line boldly and invite kids to repeat after you.



Thank You, God, that You are good! (Kids repeat.)

You made me on purpose, for a purpose. (Kids repeat.)

And when I follow Jesus, I am Your kid! (Kids repeat.)

You know me, love me, and lead me. (Kids repeat.)

You know what's best for me. (Kids repeat.)

I want to follow You. (Kids repeat.)

My life can tell of Your wonder! (Kids repeat.)



Belief

Guide kids into knowing God, exploring His big story, and marveling at His wonder.

God's Big Story

WHAT YOU NEED: Bibles (1 per kid), [Jericho Title Slide](#)



Display the [Jericho Title Slide](#). Share that today's words come straight from the book of Joshua in the Bible. God has led the Israelites through the wilderness for 40 years, and they're finally ready to enter the land God promised them. Invite kids to open their Bibles to [Joshua 6](#).

Let's start by reading part of God's big story directly from the Bible.

Invite three or four confident readers to read each section of the passage aloud while the rest of the group follows along: [Joshua 6:1-5, 8-11, 14-16, 20](#).

In Awe of God's Wonder

Spend a few moments allowing kids to think about the wonder of God's story.

What a story! How do you think Joshua felt after he heard God's instructions for how to conquer Jericho? Allow time for kids to really think about Joshua's position.

Based on what God did in this story, how would you fill in the blank? God is

_____.

Word of Wonder Activity

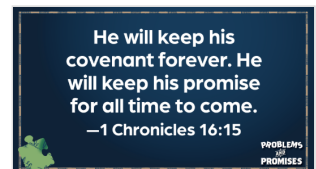
WORD OF WONDER

He will keep his covenant forever. He will keep his promise for all time to come.

—1 Chronicles 16:15 (NirV)

WHAT YOU NEED: Bible, boxes (8 per small group, Box Wall Sheets NirV, Word of Wonder Slide NirV

I will get the boxes prepped for this activity!



Our Word of Wonder for the Problems and Promises series tells us that God always remembers and keeps His promises! Let's say the verse together now.

Display the Word of Wonder Slide NirV. Read 1 Chronicles 16:15 several times together.

In today's story, God led Joshua and the Israelites by having them do some unusual things, and in the end, the walls of Jericho fell! Let's practice our Word of Wonder by building a wall of our own. Invite kids to help you build a wall out of boxes, placing the words of the verse in correct order from bottom to top. **Fantastic! Now, like the Israelites in God's big story did on the seventh day, let's march around our wall seven times. After the seventh time, let's shout the words of the verse together and knock down the wall!** Join kids in marching, shouting the verse, and knocking down the wall. Then rebuild the wall and repeat the process, as time allows.

Elementary Questions

- **What did the priests do each day as the Israelites walked around the city of Jericho?** *(They carried the ark of the covenant, the gold-covered box that represented God's presence, and they blew their rams' horn trumpets.)*
- **What did the fighting men do each day as the Israelites walked around the city of Jericho?** *(They remained silent.)*
- **What was different about the seventh (and last) day the Israelites marched around the city of Jericho?** *(They circled the city seven times, the priests blew their trumpets, the army*

shouted, and the walls of Jericho crumbled and fell!!)

- **A lot of people marched around the city. Who led the Israelites?** (God)
- **Does God still lead us and give us directions today? How?**
- **Do you remember what God told Joshua about Jericho before giving him any battle plan directions?** (If needed, reread [Joshua 6:2](#). God would lead Joshua and the Israelites to victory over Jericho.)
- **What was the difference between the directions for the Israelites on days 1–6 and on day seven?** (On days 1–6, the army was to march around the city one time, following the priests carrying the ark of the covenant. On day seven, they were to march around it seven times. After the final time, the priests would blow their trumpets, the men would shout, and the wall would crumble and fall.)
- **How would you have felt if you had been in Joshua's place? Do you think you would have done what God said? Or do you think you would have followed your own battle plan? Why?**

God led Joshua and the Israelites to victory over the city of Jericho! God leads us too, to know Him and know what's best for us. Let's spend some time talking with God in prayer and thanking Him for leading us.

Make It Inclusive: Open-ended questions can be difficult for some kids to answer. Consider modifying the questions into yes/no format or offering two answer choices for each.

Elementary Responding in Worship: Build, March, Draw

WHAT YOU NEED: silent stacking blocks (we'll see what I can find to do this!), table, butcher paper, coloring utensils, [Build March Draw Slide](#), [Prayer Station Signs](#),

Designate an area for each station and post the corresponding sign at each station:

- Build station: Place a large pile of silent stacking blocks. Ideas for blocks include beanbags, pool noodles sliced in half (vertically) and cut into smaller pieces, dry kitchen sponges cut into smaller pieces, or a combination of all three.
- March station: Set up a table with plenty of open space around it for kids to march.
- Draw station: Tape a large sheet of butcher paper to the wall. With a permanent marker, write "God Leads Me" in large letters across the top. Then cover the paper in rectangular-shaped brick outlines that kids can draw in. Set out coloring utensils.



Display the [Build March Draw Slide](#) and gather the kids. **Today we heard how God led the Israelites to victory over the city of Jericho, which stood between them and the land God had promised them. God leads us too! He desires us to trust Him and His directions, even when we don't understand them or see the outcome right away. Let's spend some time talking with God at prayer stations.**



Show kids the three prayer stations and explain what they'll do at each. These instructions are also on the [Prayer Station Signs](#):

At the Build station:

- Kids will stack these silent blocks to make a wall. Each time they stack a block, they can think about a hard thing in their lives.
- Kids will silently knock down the wall. As they do, they'll pray and ask God to help them with the hard things in their lives.

At the March station:

- Kids will silently march around the table six times. They'll pray this breath prayer each time:
- (Breathe in) God, ...
- (Breathe out) please lead me.
- March around the table one more time. Then pray this breath prayer:
- (Breathe in) God, ...
- (Breathe out) You are *amazing*!

At the Draw station:

- In one of the bricks on the paper, kids will draw a picture of one hard thing God has helped them get through.
- As they draw, they'll tell God "Thank You" for leading you through that hard thing.

Leader Tip: A *breath prayer* is a word or phrase repeated in a single breath with one part on the inhale and the other part on the exhale. Breath prayers help us focus on God and His presence with us. When teaching kids a breath prayer, pray it with them several times, modeling deep breaths in and out as you say the words.

Invite kids to pray at the stations. You might divide them into groups and have each group rotate through the stations every few minutes, or you might let kids choose the station or stations they want to go to.

After kids have had a chance to pray at the stations, gather them together. Invite them to share one difficult thing they've faced in life and how God helped them through it. Lead the group in prayer over their difficulties and celebrate God being a God who helps them through it!

Blessing Your Kids

WHAT YOU NEED: Jericho Blessing Slide

Display the [Jericho Blessing Slide](#). Speak this blessing over your kids, as a group or as individuals. If you bless kids individually, insert each name into the blessing.



Blessing: May God continue to lead you each day. May you recognize God's presence with you and understand His directions for you. May you have the courage to follow God's leading and know how very loved you are!