

INVITATION

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

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Helps Us Be Courageous

SCRIPTURE: [Judges 6–7](#)

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

When I encounter big obstacles, fear is often my first response. I occupy myself imagining worst-case scenarios and shrinking back from the challenge before me. I once heard this saying: “Worry is like a rocking chair. It will give you something to do, but it won’t get you anywhere.”

After Joshua died, the Israelites forgot what God had done for them and did evil in His sight. God raised up judges to guide the people and point them back to Him. Gideon seemed an unlikely pick for this position of power and authority—he even doubted it himself—but God continued to work gently with the reluctant judge.

Read [Judges 6:11–16](#) and [7:1–8](#). Gideon was hiding when the Lord told him he would be a mighty warrior. After testing God several times, Gideon finally believed God was speaking to him. When Gideon did go into battle, the circumstances made it obvious that victory came from God alone.

- When have you felt inadequate for the task to which God is calling you?
- How have you seen God work through your inadequacy?
- How can you surrender your fear to God and deepen your dependence on Him today?

Gideon didn’t see himself as a “mighty warrior,” but as he trusted God, the Lord gave him boldness. When we put our faith in the Lord, God gives us courage.

Thank God for equipping us for His work and giving us boldness.

—Suzanne Gosselin

Children’s Ministry Volunteer

Contributor to Wonder Ink

Sunday, Sept 27

FOR LEADERS

GOD CALLS GIDEON

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

The book of Judges takes its name from its leading men and women—the judges of ancient Israel. They were individuals through whom God overthrew foreign oppression and established godly leadership.

WHAT?

[Judges 6–7](#) tells the story of the judge named Gideon. When the Midianites were oppressing Israel, God sent Gideon to lead the Israelites in battle. Though Gideon was scared, God gave him courage. God helped him and just 300 soldiers defeat their oppressors.

WHERE?

The story takes place in Canaan, after Israel had occupied the land. The Midianites were oppressing the Israelites in their own land. Midian is the land where Moses lived for 40 years before God called him at the burning bush to deliver Israel from Egypt ([Exodus 3](#)).

WHEN?

The book of Judges is set after Joshua and the Israelites conquered Canaan and before Israel asked God for its first king, Saul. Several judges likely served at the same time in different parts of Israel. Gideon served around or after the time of Deborah.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

God often fulfills His plans through unexpected people. He chose Gideon and David, even though they were the least important members of their families. Likewise, God raised up Jesus, Israel's Messiah, from the house of a carpenter in the backwater town of Nazareth.

Large Group or Small Group

Spark curiosity and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

LESSON AT A GLANCE

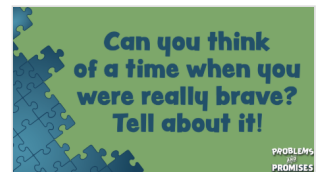
WONDER TRUTH: God Helps Us Be Courageous

SCRIPTURE: Judges 6–7

WORD OF WONDER: 1 Chronicles 16:15

Welcome & Curiosity Questions

SUPPLIES: Gideon Welcome Question Slide



At your start time ...

Ask the Welcome Question: **Can you think of a time when you were really brave? Tell about it!**

Thank you for sharing your amazing stories of bravery! Today in God's big story, we'll see how God gave courage to someone who didn't think he had what it took to accomplish what God was asking him to do. 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 ...

- What does it mean to be *brave*?
- What does it mean to have *courage*?

Help kids understand the subtle difference between bravery and courage: **Bravery is defined by our actions in dangerous or difficult situations. Courage runs deeper—it's the state of our hearts when we depend on God (not just ourselves) for whatever comes next. As Jesus-followers, being courageous means trusting God in every situation.**

Preteen Interactive Game: Pick Your Path

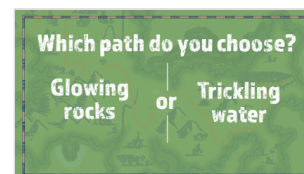
SUPPLIES: Pick Your Path Slides, Gideon Wonder Truth Slide

Use tape to make a line in down the center of your area. Display the [Pick Your Path Slide](#) and gather the kids in the center of your area.



Let's play a game called Pick Your Path! I'll tell you about several adventure scenarios in which you must choose between two paths. You'll go to one side of the tape or the other based on which path you choose. Once there, you'll gather with others and come up with a story about what happened next. Let's get started with our first adventure scenario!

- Scenario 1: **You walk into a cave. Down one path, you see glowing rocks. Down the other, you hear the trickling of water.** Display [Pick Your Path Slide 2](#). **Which path do you choose:**



glowing rocks or trickling water? Designate one side of the tape for glowing rocks and the other for trickling water, then invite kids to go to the side of their choosing. Once all of the kids have chosen, invite them to gather with the kids who made the same choice and discuss what happens next in the story. Allow them about 30 seconds to come up with their ideas; then invite them to share!

Gather the kids again as you share the next scenario and advance to the next Pick Your Path Slide. Repeat the same steps for each scenario.

- Scenario 2: **You're trekking through the desert. The sun is scorching. You're hot and very thirsty. Down one path is a thick grove of shade trees. Down the other path is something that looks like a lake of water.** Display [Pick Your Path Slide 3](#). **Which path will you choose?**
- Scenario 3: **You're hiking in the mountains when a sudden blizzard blows in. Down one path is a rock cave. Down the other is an abandoned cabin.** Display [Pick Your Path Slide 4](#). **Which path will you choose?**
- Scenario 4: **It's nearing dusk, and you come across a rushing river that you must cross before nightfall. One path leads you across the river on an old, fallen log bridge. The other path leads you through a shallow—but very wide—spot in the river.** Display [Pick Your Path Slide 5](#). **Which path will you choose?**

After kids have picked their paths for all four scenarios and imagined what would happen next, gather everyone together. **If you actually faced the scenarios described in this game, choosing a path would require bravery. Courage is something even deeper than bravery: It's when we depend on God for whatever comes next, even when a situation seems uncertain or scary. Today in God's big story, we'll learn about a man named Gideon who wasn't naturally very brave, yet God helped him to be courageous.** Display the [Gideon Wonder Truth Slide](#). **Today's Wonder Truth is GOD HELPS US BE COURAGEOUS.**



Declaring God's Wonder

SUPPLIES: Gideon Declaration Slide

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

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

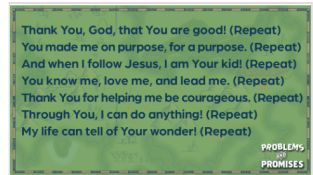
And when I follow Jesus, I am Your kid! (Kids repeat.)

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

Thank You for helping me be courageous. (Kids repeat.)

Through You, I can do anything! (Kids repeat.)

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



God's Big Story

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid), [Gideon Title Slide](#)



Display the [Gideon Title Slide](#). Tell kids today's story comes directly from the Bible, is 100% true, and is found in [Judges 6–7](#). Help kids navigate Scripture by locating the book of Judges in the Old Testament. Invite them to find the chapter number by locating the big black number six.

Let's start by reading part of God's big story directly from the Bible. Afterward, we'll watch and experience more of the story!

Read [Judges 6:11–21, 36–40](#) twice.

Connecting the Wonder Truth

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: [Gideon Wonder Truth Slide](#)



Our Wonder Truth today is **GOD HELPS US BE COURAGEOUS. Where did you see our Wonder Truth in the story?** Allow kids to answer freely.

God often fulfills His plans through people we wouldn't expect! God chose Gideon, even though he was the least important member of his family, and God helped him be courageous. Many years later, God raised up Jesus, the Savior, from the humble house of a carpenter in the small, unimportant town of Nazareth. You don't have to be big or considered important by others to be a part of what God is doing on earth—you just have to trust God, and He will help you be courageous.

Word of Wonder Activity

WORD OF WONDER

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

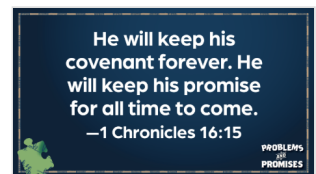
—1 Chronicles 16:15 (NirV)

SUPPLIES: Bible, sticky notes, Word of Wonder Slide [NirV](#)

In today's part of God's big story, God helped Gideon be courageous and lead the Israelites against their enemy. And God helped them win the battle! God continued to keep His covenant promises to His people! Let's say our Word of Wonder now. Display the Word of Wonder Slide [NirV](#). Read the verse several times together.

Give the prepared the sticky notes to each kid. Then play a game where kids form a line (in random order) and take turns running to the wall and sticking their sticky notes on the wall in verse order.

For added challenge, have kids switch sticky notes with someone in the group so each person has a different word each round.



Elementary Questions

- **Who did God choose to help the Israelites defeat their enemies?** (*Gideon*)
- **What is something important that Gideon didn't have?** (*Possible answers: courage, bravery*)
- **Who did God send to encourage Gideon?** (*an angel*)
- **What did Gideon ask the angel for?** (*signs that God would be with him*)
- **Do you think the signs from God helped Gideon trust God more? Why or why not?** (*For reference, the signs were burning wet food, wet sheepskin/dry grass, wet grass/dry sheepskin.*)
- **Gideon never considered himself a mighty warrior until God helped him be courageous. What is one thing in your life that you need God to give you courage for?**

Everyone struggles to be courageous sometimes. Our situations can feel hard or scary. But just as God was ready to help Gideon be courageous, He's ready to help you too! Let's talk with God and ask Him to help us be courageous!

Leader Tip: God's heart breaks when people hurt children. So while God can give kids courage when they are being abused or mistreated, His will is always for the child to be safe. Courage is not a substitute for safety. If you suspect that a child is being mistreated, report your concerns immediately to your ministry leader.



Identity

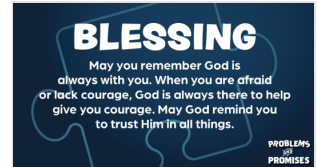
Create space for God to remind kids they are known, loved, led, and their lives can tell of God's wonder.

Blessing Your Kids

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: [Gideon Blessing Slide](#)

Speak this blessing over your kids.

Blessing: May you remember God is always with you. When you are afraid or lack courage, God is always there to help give you courage. May God remind you to trust Him in all things.



BONUS GAME 5: COURAGEOUS CHARADES

to use if you need to fill more time at the end of service!

SUPPLIES: prepared note cards, timer

You get to draw a card and then act out the fear listed on the card. The rest of the group will try to guess what it is. You're going to silently act out this fear. That means there's no talking or sound effects! Allow the first volunteer to choose a card.

Works great with the
God Calls Gideon
lesson!

Start a timer for one minute. You and the other kids try to guess what fear the first volunteer is acting out before time is up. If someone guesses correctly, the round is over. If the timer goes off, the kid acting it out can share with the group what he's afraid of and keep the card. Play multiple rounds. Then ask the kids to share how they could be courageous when faced with each of the fears.

Everyone experiences fear. Fear isn't wrong or unhealthy. Fear is a gift from God that lets us know when something is dangerous or risky. Fear warns us to be careful. But fear can become a problem if it keeps us from living our lives or if it stops us from following and trusting God or from doing the right thing. Fortunately, God is stronger than our fears. Courage doesn't mean we'll never face scary things. It means we trust God to help us be brave. We'll learn in today's God's big story about when God helped someone be courageous in a scary situation. God helps us be courageous!