

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: From 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

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.

Play Stations – (split into groups for this, or save it for the end of class to fill time!)

SUPPLIES: coloring utensils, [Wet or Dry Sheet](#), [God Calls Gideon Coloring Sheet](#) (1 per kid)

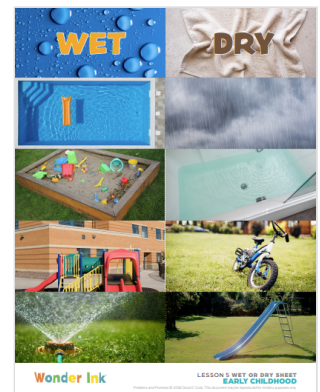
Greet kids warmly as they arrive and briefly explain the play stations. Invite them to play at any of the play stations.

Welcome to church! While we're getting ready to start, you can play at any of these stations to help get ready for our lesson today. Do you have any ideas about what we'll be learning today?

1. Play Station: Wet or Dry

Set up: Ahead of time, print and cut apart the cards on the [Wet or Dry Sheet](#). Tape the "Wet" and "Dry" cards on a flat surface. Set the rest of the cards in a pile nearby.

Play: Allow kids to take turns picking a card from the pile and placing it under the correct Wet or Dry card, depending on whether the thing in the picture is wet or dry.



2. Play Station: God Calls Gideon Coloring Sheet

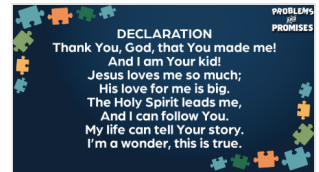
Set up: Ahead of time, print one copy per kid of the coloring sheet and set out coloring utensils.

Play: Let the kids color. The kids can also turn the sheet over and draw a picture of someone who is brave.

Declaring God's Wonder

SUPPLIES : Early Childhood Declaration [Slide](#)

Show the [Slide](#) and encourage the kids to say the statements and do the motions with you.



Thank You, God, that You made me! *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*

Make prayer hands, then point up to God and to yourself.

And I am Your kid! *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*

Put your hands on your hips.

Jesus loves me so much; *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*

Spread your arms out wide to your side one at a time, then pull them in for a hug around your chest.

His love for me is big. *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*

Hold your arms up high and wide above your head.

The Holy Spirit leads me, *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*

Bring your arms down from above, making a path in front of you.

And I can follow You. *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*

March in place like you're following the leader.

My life can tell Your story, *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*

Hold your hands in front of you like an open book.

I'm a wonder; this is true. *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*

Put your hands up, shake your fingers, and celebrate ("praise hands").



Belief

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

Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use the prayer here or your own words: **God, thank You for being here with us today. May Your Holy Spirit fill our hearts and open our minds to hear what You have to say to us. Please speak to us through Your word today, and remind us that You can help us be courageous. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

God's Big Story

SUPPLIES: Bible, Bible Story Picture [Option 1](#) and [Option 2](#)

Bible Time Rhyme

Say the Bible time rhyme (with motions) each week with the kids before the Bible story, to remind kids that what they're about to hear is part of God's big story.

I open my Bible and what do I see? *Hold your hands together, then open your palms, as if opening a book.*

God's big story, waiting for me! *Point to yourself.*

Let's start by reading part of God's big story from the Bible. We're going to read from the Old Testament.

Read the God's Big Story Script provided below or read [Judges 6:11–21, 36–40](#) from the Bible. Show the Bible Story Picture [Option 1](#) and [Option 2](#) to give kids a visual depiction as you tell the story.

GOD'S BIG STORY SCRIPT

SUPPLIES: bowl, water, washcloths (2)

Before kids arrive, fill a bowl with water. Set out two towels or washcloths nearby.

A long time ago, God brought His people—the Israelites—into a special place that God promised to give them. God loved His people and took care of them. But sometimes the Israelites forgot about God. They stopped listening to Him and started praying to pretend gods called idols. When the Israelites did this, their enemies came and made life very hard for them.

But when the Israelites said, “We’re sorry” and came back to God, God helped them. Show me how you would look if you were really sorry. Allow the kids to respond. **He gave them special leaders called judges to guide them and protect them. One of the leaders was a man named Gideon.**

Gideon did not feel brave at all. In fact, he felt very small and unimportant. Show how you would look if you felt small and unimportant. Allow the kids to respond. **But God knew Gideon could be brave with His help.**

One day, an angel came to Gideon and said, “The LORD is with you, mighty warrior!” (Judges 6:12). **The angel told Gideon that God wanted him to help save Israel from people called the Midianites. The Midianites kept attacking and hurting the Israelites. They even stole the Israelites' food.**

Gideon didn’t feel like a mighty warrior. He was the least important person in the least important family. Gideon wondered why God would choose him to save Israel. So, God encouraged Gideon again: “You are strong [and] I will be with you,” God told him (Judges 6:14, 16).

Gideon wanted to be sure, so he asked God for a sign. Gideon brought some food to the angel. When the angel touched it with his walking stick, the food burst into flames. Gideon knew God was really speaking to him, and he felt a little braver. How would you stand if you were feeling a little brave? Allow the kids to respond.

Later, the Midianite army came to fight. Gideon was still nervous, so he asked God for another sign. He put a fluffy sheepskin on the ground and said, “God, if You’re really with me, make the sheepskin wet and the ground dry.” Invite a kid to put one towel or washcloth on the ground.

In the morning, the ground was dry, but the sheepskin was soaking wet! Invite a kid to dip the towel or washcloth into the bowl of water and squeeze it over the bowl. **Gideon squeezed the wool, and the water from it filled a bowl. Gideon felt braver. Then Gideon asked for one more sign. He said, “This time, make the sheepskin dry and the ground wet.” And the next morning, that’s exactly what happened.** Invite a kid to put the dry towel on the ground. **Gideon knew God was helping him. Show me how you would stand if you felt brave and courageous.** Allow the kids to respond.

Gideon gathered an army of lots of men! But God said, “That’s too many. If you win, you might think you did it all by yourselves.” So Gideon told anyone who was scared to go home.

Many of the soldiers left. Encourage a group of kids to go sit a few feet away from the rest of the group.

But God said there were still too many! God told Gideon to take the soldiers to a stream and keep only the ones who drank water in a special way—by scooping the water up with their hands. Invite one kid to come scoop some water from the bowl with her hands. Then send another group of kids to sit a few feet away from the others. **When Gideon finished counting, only 300 men were left!**

Gideon only had 300 soldiers to fight a huge army! But Gideon trusted God. And with God's help, Gideon and his army won the battle. The Midianites ran far away, and God saved Israel! Let's cheer! Invite the kids to respond.

Gideon didn't think he was brave, but God helped him grow in courage. When we trust God, God helps us be brave.

Watch God's Big Story

Watch the [God Calls Gideon God's Big Story](#)! Worship videos will also be available on the computer!



Connecting the Wonder Truth

Ask the following question to help kids connect the Wonder Truth to God's big story:

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

Sometimes God likes to make His plans happen through people we don't expect. He chose Gideon and David, even though they were not important. And many years later, God raised up Jesus, the Savior of the whole world, from the family of a carpenter in the small 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 only need to trust God, and He will help you be courageous.

Word of Wonder

SUPPLIES: Problems and Promises Word of Wonder [Slide](#)

WORD OF WONDER

God keeps His promises forever.

—from 1 Chronicles 16:15

Display the Word of Wonder [Slide](#). Our Word of Wonder for the Problems and Promises series is [from 1 Chronicles 16:15](#): “God keeps His promises forever.” Invite the kids to say the verse with you. **God promises to always be with us. Whenever we face something scary, we can be courageous because God is with us.**



Encourage the kids to do the motions and say the verse with you.

- **GOD**—*Point up.*
- **KEEPS**—*Spread your right hand out before you from left to right.*
- **HIS PROMISES**—*Place an index finger on your lips. Move your hand downward and open your palm.*
- **FOREVER.**—*Draw large circles in the air with your index finger.*
- **FROM 1 CHRONICLES 16:15**—*Open your hands in front of you, like opening a book.*

Help kids see the wonder of God's story and how it connects to their own story.

Circle Time: Picture Questions

SUPPLIES: whiteboard, dry-erase marker, eraser, [Picture Sheet](#)

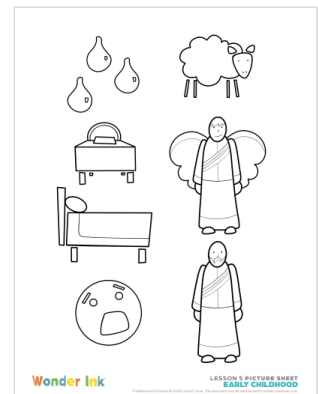
Gather the kids together in a circle. **God showed Gideon that he was a mighty warrior because God was with him. With God's help, the Israelites defeated their enemies! God helped Gideon be courageous, and God helps us too.**

I'm going to draw a simple picture of something from God's big story today. Whoever is the first to guess what I'm drawing gets to answer a question. Use a whiteboard and dry-erase marker to draw.

Draw each of the pictures as illustrated on the [Picture Sheet](#) and invite the kids to guess what you're drawing. Provide hints as needed. When a kid guesses correctly, ask them the corresponding question below.

The pictures will be:

- Gideon
- an angel
- a bed
- a sheep
- water droplets
- a scared face



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Draw a picture of Gideon. **What did God want Gideon to do in today's God's big story?** (*lead the fight against the Midianites*)
- Draw an angel. **What did the angel call Gideon?** (*a mighty warrior*)
- Draw a bed. **When did God give Gideon a sign (or miracle) to help Him trust God?** (*while Gideon was sleeping*)
- Draw a sheep. **What happened to the sheepskin when the ground was dry?** (*The sheepskin was wet.*)
- Draw water droplets. **What happened to the sheepskin when the ground around it was wet?** (*The sheepskin stayed dry.*)
- Draw a scared face. **What are some things that make you feel scared?**
- **Who can help you be courageous when you feel scared?** (*God!!*)

Even though Gideon was not very brave, God gave him the courage to do what God asked him to do. Sometimes we may not feel very brave, but we can ask God to help us be courageous too. Let's talk to God now in prayer!

Invite kids to share prayer requests and praises and to pray for each other. Some kids may not be comfortable praying out loud. That's OK! Encourage them to pray silently and thank God for being

with us and making a way for us. God hears all our prayers!

Craft: Cotton Ball Sheepskins

SUPPLIES: blue paper, paper (1 sheet per kid), cotton balls (several per kid), glue

Before the kids arrive, tear a sheet of blue paper into small pieces. The kids will use these pieces as “water droplets” on their picture.

Give each kid a sheet of paper and a handful of cotton balls. Demonstrate how to pull the cotton balls apart so they look like wool and how to use a small amount of glue to glue the cotton balls to the paper.

These cotton balls remind me of the sheepskin fleece that Gideon used in God’s big story. Do you remember what Gideon asked God to do with the sheepskin? Allow kids to respond. Right! He asked God to keep it dry when the ground all around it was wet and to make it wet when the ground all around it was dry! This helped Gideon be courageous! Can you think of a time when you need God to help you be courageous? Allow the kids to respond.

I’m going to give each of you a few pieces of blue paper to remind you of the water droplets that were on Gideon’s sheepskin. Ask God to help you be courageous in the situation you just thought of, then glue your blue paper on top of your cotton balls as a reminder that God can help you be courageous too.

Give each kid a small handful of blue paper pieces and let the kids glue the pieces on their papers as water.





Identity

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

Prayer and Blessing

After the kids finish their activity, pray with them and thank God for always being with us and giving us courage.

God, thank You for being with us when we're happy, sad, and afraid. You can give us courage. Help us trust in You and find courage and strength in You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Encourage the kids to hold their hands out in front of them, with palms up, as if their hands are open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them.

Blessing: As you go out today, may you always remember that God will help you be courageous. When you're feeling scared or alone, God will always be with you and will help you be brave.