



Joshua and Caleb

Bible Passage: Numbers 13-14

Bottom Line: God's Word is always right and His commands are always for our best. We can trust and obey Him.

Key Passage: ⁵ Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; ⁶ in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. **Proverbs 3:5-6**

Big Picture Question: What does it mean to sin? To sin is to think, speak, or behave in any way that goes against God and His commands.

Christ Connection: *The Israelites rebelled against God because they did not trust Him. Jesus trusted God perfectly. He took the punishment we deserve for our sin, or rebellion against God. When we trust in Jesus, God forgives our sin and gives us eternal life.*

10 Minutes **SOCIAL:** SETTING THE TONE OF THE EXPERIENCE

Freeze Dance

What You Need: music played on your phone

What You Do:

- Sing a song or play music.
- Instruct kids that they can dance and move to the music while it plays, but they must freeze in place when the music stops.
- Every so often, pause the music.
- Kids who keep dancing will sit down but may continue dancing in their seats when the music plays.
- The last kid dancing while standing up wins.

What You Say "When I paused the music, you had to stop dancing. In this series we are going to hear many stories about God's chosen people and how they make choices about following God. We are going to have fun learning about how God is always there for us and we can trust Him with our whole being because of it.

10 Minutes **Worship:** CELEBRATING WHAT GOD IS DOING

SONGS, OFFERING AND PRAYER

15 Minutes **LARGE GROUP:** COMMUNICATING GOD'S TRUTH IN ENGAGING WAYS

CONTEXT

Before God rescued His people from slavery in Egypt, He promised to bring the Israelites back to the land He had given to Abraham so many years before. (Ex. 3:8) From Egypt, the Israelites crossed the Red Sea and traveled toward Mount Sinai. When they were hungry and thirsty, God provided food and water. (See Ex. 16–17.) Israel spent one year at Mount Sinai, where Moses received God's law, including the Ten Commandments.

Time and again, the Israelites rebelled against God, Moses interceded, and God pardoned the people. When Israel arrived at the edge of the promised land, God instructed Moses to send scouts into the land. Moses sent out a leader from each tribe. Twelve men, including Joshua and Caleb, traveled through the promised land of Canaan for 40 days. They returned with fruit—grapes, pomegranates, and figs—and gave a report on the land.

The scouts described the land's abundance, as "flowing with milk and honey." They gave an account of the people, various tribes who were physically strong and whose cities were fortified. Caleb's immediate imperative—"Let's go up



now!”—was met with resistance by most of the group. Assessing their own strength against the strength of the inhabitants, they concluded that to move forward would mean certain defeat.

The Israelites complained: “If only we had died in the land of Egypt, or if only we had died in this wilderness!” Joshua and Caleb tried to persuade the people of God’s presence and protection, but the people would not trust God. So God gave them what they thought was better. He sent them into the wilderness to wander for 40 years.

TEACHING FOCUS (Numbers 13-14)

We learned about how God rescued His people from slavery in Egypt. He led them in the wilderness and taught them the right way to live to honor Him. When they were hungry, God provided them with food; and when they were thirsty, God gave them water. God dwelt with His people and taught them how to love Him and how to offer sacrifices when they sinned against Him. You would think the people would have gotten really good at trusting God’s promises. We will learn today that they continued to struggle with trusting God. Our story today is called “Joshua and Caleb.”

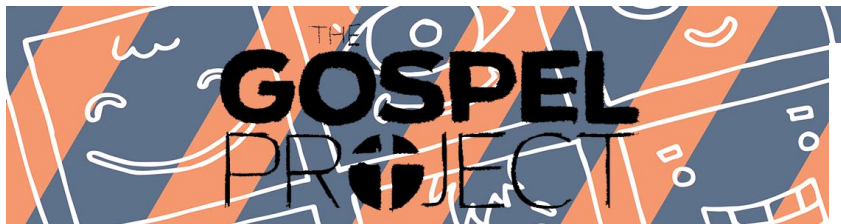
TODAY’S TAKEAWAYS

- *No matter what God did to prove His faithfulness, the Israelites always seemed to turn away from Him or believe wrong things about Him.*
- *The enemies living in the promised land were powerful, and they had strong cities. That was all true. Even so, God is more powerful, and He has the ability to defeat any enemy. God gave Moses the help he needed because every needs help to love and follow God.*
- **BL: God’s Word is always right and His commands are always for our best. We can trust and obey Him.**
- *Every time I choose sin instead of obedience, it shows I do not trust that God’s commands are good for me. Even though God has never been unfaithful to me, I am unfaithful to Him. I sin even though I should trust Him and obey.*

25 Minutes SMALL GROUPS: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT

Discussion Questions:

1. How did Moses pick the 12 men to go scout out the land? (Moses picked a leader from each of the twelve tribes of Israel, Num. 13:4-16)
2. What did the scouts report about the land? (It was good, flowing with milk and honey, but defended by strong people with fortified cities; Num. 13:27-29)
3. Who trusted God? (Only Joshua and Caleb trusted God to give them the land. The other scouts were afraid; Num. 14:6-9)
4. Was it sinful for the 10 scouts to feel afraid? Guide the kids to discuss the idea that feeling afraid is not sinful. We are humans and sometimes we will face things that scare us. The 10 scouts who were afraid sinned when they doubted God and did not trust Him to give them the land He promised.
5. Why do you think God allows us to go through difficult or scary circumstances? Help kids see that when we face hard times we learn to trust Him. Remind the kids that asking for help is wise. We never have to face scary times alone.
6. How can trusting God help us face our fears? Guide kids to think about who God is and what He can do. Lead them to see that He has promised His people eternal life through Jesus. When we trust Jesus, we know that no difficult situation lasts forever. We always have hope. We can persevere through hard times by remembering what Jesus did to save us.



Activity: Grape smash

What You Need: Gospel Plan Poster, green or purple balloons (10 per group), “Gospel Plan strips” printable, cut and stuffed in balloons

What You Do:

- Before the session, place each strip of paper inside a balloon, and inflate the balloons. Place them in a trash bag.
- When group starts the leader will scatter the balloons on one side of the room.
- Kids must take turns walking quickly across the room and sit on a "grape/balloon" to smash it.
- Once kids smash all the grapes and collect all 10 strips of paper, they must match each description with a step on the Gospel Plan poster.
- Review the Gospel Plan with your group.
- Encourage kids who have questions to ask them now or later when you can talk to them or another leader.
- Urge kids to use these words as a way to share the gospel with everyone they know.

What You Say Joshua and Caleb trusted God to give His people the promised land. The Israelites who did not trust God had to wander in the wilderness for 40 years and would not see the promised land.

As sinners, we have all disobeyed God. But Jesus trusted God perfectly and took the punishment for our rebellion. When we look to Him for salvation, we have forgiveness and the promise of eternal life.

Activity: Memory Verse Activity

What You Need: Memory Verse Poster, Memory Verse Puzzle (printed and cut apart- 1 set per group)

What You Do:

- Review the Memory Verse as a group together out loud a few times.
- Lay the Memory Verse Puzzle on the floor/table face down.
- Take turns picking up a card at a time and putting the puzzle together.
- Keep going until all of the puzzle is together.
- Read the verse together one more time.

What You Say ” Our memory verse reminds us that we need to trust God. He knows better than we do about everything! This passage warns us against trusting our own understanding. God leads us to righteousness in Jesus. Trusting in ourselves for righteousness is sin. We saw this clearly in our story today. Joshua and Caleb trusted God, but the other 10 scouts trusted in their own understanding.

Pray and Dismiss:

What You Need: no supplies needed

What You Say:

“God, thank You for Your Word. We confess that we sometimes trust in ourselves instead of trusting I You. We know that You are good. You always keep Your promises. Help us follow You and obey You with courage because You love us. Amen.

5 Minutes HOME: PROMPTING ACTION BEYOND THE EXPERIENCE

As adults arrive to pick up, encourage your kids to tell their parents about our Big Picture Questions. What does it mean to sin? To sin is to think, speak, or behave in any way that goes against God and His commands. BL- God’s Word is always right and His commands are always for our best. We can trust and obey Him.