

Junior Soldiers

UNIT 13 : LESSON 6



Living with courage

PURPOSE: For the children to explore and understand how we can live with courage in our everyday lives as well as in the big, scary moments.

I've commanded you to be strong and brave.

Don't ever be afraid or discouraged!

I am the Lord your God, and I will be there to help you wherever you go.

Joshua 1:9 (CEV)

This is my command - be strong and courageous!

Do not be afraid or discouraged.

For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.

Joshua 1:9 (NLT)

Consider & Prepare

Read:

Joshua 1:1-9

Joshua was called to step up and take on the leadership of a homeless nation. From the outset, Joshua knew that this undertaking would require tremendous faith and courage.

Courage is easily connected with pivotal, life-changing moments such as these.

Courage is associated with heroes and overcoming extreme situations. It is required at these times, but courage is required far more often than we might think. Courage is also demonstrated in the everyday circumstances of life. You don't need to be a hero or superhero to have courage.

In this lesson, we define courage as doing what is right, even when you are afraid or it is difficult or uncomfortable. It is brave to step outside your comfort zone.

Courage is more than facing up to physical fears and doing things that scare you. The word courage comes from the Latin "cor" which means heart. Originally, it meant living well by speaking your whole heart. There is vulnerability and honesty in living life wholeheartedly, facing up to situations even when they are scary, difficult or uncomfortable.

Importantly, the reason we can have courage is because God has promised to be with us wherever we go. The Key Scripture (and memory verse) is from Joshua 1:9.

Other Bible verses about courage include:

Psalm 138:3

1 Corinthians 16:13-14

Deuteronomy 31:6

1 Chronicles 28:20

Song Suggestions for this lesson

- My God is so big, so strong and so mighty
- Be strong and courageous (Colin Buchanan)
- I once was frightened by spiders (Ian Smale)
- Let your light shine (Hillsong Kids)
- Stand my ground (Steve Fee)
- Strong and courageous (Justin Graves Band)
- You make me brave (Bethel music)

What you will need:

For 'Connecting In':

- Print enough copies of the 'Courage-o-meter' and 'Courage-o-meter Cards' for each child (page 8-9)
- Pens or pencils
- Scissors

For 'The Main Thing':

- Brainstorm
 - » Whiteboard, blackboard or butcher's paper
 - » Markers/pens/pencils/chalk
- Activity - Types of Courage
 - » Print and cut up cards

For 'Tying In':

- Brainstorm
 - » Business card sized pieces of paper
 - » Markers/pens/pencils

- Stepping Stone Challenge
 - » Hula hoop (you may need several if you have a large group)
 - » Print a set of the stepping stones and cut them out (you may need several sets if you have a large group) (page 11-18)

For 'Memory Verse':

- Bibles
- One large print copy or several small print copies of the memory verse

For 'Home and Beyond':

- Print enough copies of the 'Home and Beyond' card for each child

Connecting In

What is the scariest thing you have ever done?

You have to be brave to do something scary. It takes a lot of courage! Today we are going to think some more about courage and what it means.

Give each child a copy of the Courage-o-meter and Courage-o-meter cards. (page 8-9)

The Courage-o-meter measures how much courage it takes to do a particular activity.

- Cut along the lines to make your own set of cards.
- Choose two other activities and write them on the blank cards.
- Think about how much courage it would take for you to do each one.
- Take each of your cards and place them next to the right step on the courage-o-meter.

When you have finished, compare your ratings with a couple of people around you.

You probably didn't all rate every activity in the same way. Something that takes lots of courage for one person, might not take a lot of courage for another. Let's do a quick survey. Put your hand up if it would take you lots of courage to make a speech in front of your whole school?

Did you know that lots of adults would find that hard to do too? But there are people who LOVE public speaking. They enjoy the preparation and the delivery. It doesn't take much courage for them to speak into a microphone in front of a lot of people. But they would probably need courage to do something that you would find easy.

The Main Thing

Tell the person next to you what you think 'courage' means?

Courage is doing what is right, even when you are afraid or it is difficult or uncomfortable. It is brave to step outside your comfort zone.

Brainstorm

For this activity, use a whiteboard, blackboard, or butcher's paper to record answers. You can do this as a whole group, or break up into smaller groups and assign each group a category from the list below.

Let's take a few minutes to brainstorm some people we can think of who show courage.

- Name some **famous people** who have shown courage.
- Name some **people in our community** who are courageous.
- Name some **people you know** who are show courage.

Remember, courage is doing what is right, even when you are afraid or it is difficult or uncomfortable. It is brave to step outside your comfort zone.

Invite the children to each pick one of the characters from the brainstorm and share briefly how they showed courage.

- What was scary, difficult or uncomfortable for that person?
OR
- What did they do that was brave?

Let's look at story about Paul.

Encourage the children to look up Acts 27:27-44 in their Bibles and read it together.

Living with courage can mean taking different action depending on the circumstances.

- Living with courage might mean you need to STEP OUT.
- Living with courage might mean you need to SPEAK UP.
- Living with courage might mean you need to STAND FIRM.

Step out. Speak up. Stand firm.

How did Paul STEP OUT, SPEAK UP or STAND FIRM in this story?

- What do you think it means to use courage to step out? *(Do something brave. Step out of your comfort zone. Try something new or scary.)*

Not every situation that needs courage means we have to step out. For example, would you know what to do if you were hiking in the bush and came across a snake? You should stand still! When you come across a snake, standing firm is the best response and the most courageous thing to do.

- What does it look like to have courage to stand firm? *(Stick to your beliefs. Don't give in to the crowd. Do the right thing even if it seems everybody else is doing the wrong thing.)*
- What do you think it means to have courage to speak up? *(Speak up for people who can't speak up for themselves. Speak up for what's right. Speak against bullying or injustice.)*

Activity - Types of courage

Let's take a look at some more people in the Bible who acted with courage.

For each one, I want you to decide how they acted with courage. Did they step out, stand firm or speak up?

If you think they stepped out (did something) I want you to start walking.

If you think they stood firm I want you to freeze.

If you think they spoke up then I want you to say "Babble, babble, babble".

Hand out the cards to the children.

Invite them to read out the cards one at a time.

After each one, ask the children to do the action they think best represents the type of courage shown.

These Bible characters were ordinary people like you and me. They didn't have superpowers. They weren't seeking to become heroes. They simply showed courage in their circumstances. Some of the difficult or scary things they faced aren't things you are likely to have to face! It's extremely unlikely that you will have to face a giant, stand in a fire, be thrown in a lion's den or get shipwrecked! But these people showed courage in these big, scary events as well as in their everyday moments.

What gave them the courage? God was with them.

You could repeat this exercise with other (non-Bible) names of people who showed courage or add them to the lists you have.

Tying In

Let's start thinking about ourselves. If we're not going to face lions, fire or prison, what situations might we face that take courage? When might we need to be brave? What opportunities do we have to step out, stand firm or speak up?

Brainstorm

Invite the children to write or draw situations that children need courage to face on pieces of paper or card. Some possible scenarios are below to kick start or supplement the ideas that the children come up with.

What are some scenarios that might require courage?

Have the children share the scenarios with the group. Ask the children to hold their card and stand in a group as to whether the situation they have on their card fits with STEP OUT, STAND FIRM or SPEAK UP.

What happens when we act with courage?

Here are some possible answers:

- We grow stronger
- Our faith grows
- We find freedom (we are no longer trapped in our comfort zone)
- We gain a better understanding of God's power in us
- We have an increased reliance on God and closeness to Him

Think of a personal example of a situation where you (the leader) showed courage and how it impacted you. Share briefly. (It is always good for children to know that adults deal with issues too!)

Stepping Stone Challenge

Place a hula hoop on the ground and explain to the children that this is the 'safe circle' or 'comfort zone'.

In life, our 'safe circle' or 'comfort zone' includes all the places, people and activities that we are very comfortable with. Often our comfort zone includes our home, our family and close friends and the sort of activities that we do every day.

To step out of our comfort zone takes courage.

Scatter some of the stepping stone challenges cards around the hula hoop at varying distances.

Note: You don't need to use every scenario for every child who participates, it is good to mix them up as well as change the distance from the safe circle.

I'm going to choose some volunteers to try a special challenge.

You will need to begin by standing in the circle.

You must see how far you can get outside your comfort zone by moving only on stepping stones that contain challenges you would be prepared to accept.

If a child hesitates to take a step you might like to ask

- *Is there anything that would help you to make that step?*
- *Who could help you to take that step?*

When you live everyday with courage, you might not get an award, trophy or ribbon to recognise your courage but you will get stronger. You will live with your whole heart. When you live with your whole heart, knowing that God is with you, you will have courage to face situations that are scary, difficult or uncomfortable.

This is my command—be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go. (Joshua 1:9, NLT)

Ask the children to look up this verse in their Bibles. Not every translation uses the word 'courage'. Some use 'brave'. You could choose to talk about the similarity between these words and see if there are any other synonyms that the children come across.

Print off the memory verse in large font so that it is easy for the children to see/read it. Or print enough smaller versions for each child to hold their own copy.

Ask the children to read the verse three times:

- *First time (step out) - Have the children read/say the verse while walking forwards (in a circle.)*
- *Second time (stand firm) - Have the children read/say the verse while standing as still as possible.*
- *Third time (speak out) - Have the children read/say the verse starting at a whisper and finishing with a shout.*

Prayer Time

- Ask the children to stand with one foot forward, like they about to start walking. Pray (or ask a volunteer to pray) that the children will have the courage to **STEP OUT**.
- Ask the children to stand with both feet together, tall and proud like a bodyguard. Pray (or ask a volunteer to pray) that the children will have the courage to **STAND FIRM**.
- Ask the children to cup their hands around their mouth, like a megaphone. Pray (or ask a volunteer to pray) that the children will have the courage to **SPEAK UP**.

Invite the children to close their eyes then choose the pose for the type of courage they most need in the next week.

Please close your eyes. Everybody strike their courage pose. 3... 2... 1. God, I pray that we will each be strong and courageous because we know that you are our God and you are with us wherever we go. Amen

Home & Beyond

Chat with your family or Big Bud about these questions:

- If you could have a superpower, what would it be?
- Would that power give you more courage?
- What would take courage for you to do?
- How does knowing that God is with you wherever you go give you courage?"

Choose something that you need courage to do and ask your Big Bud or a family member to help you to do it.

5

**SUPER
HERO**

4

**LOTS OF
COURAGE**

3

**SOME
COURAGE**

2

**LITTLE
COURAGE**

1

**EASY! NO
COURAGE**

Different people are scared of different things. We also find different things easy or difficult to do.

Think about how much courage it would take for you to do each one. Take each of your cards and place them next to the right step on the courage-o-meter.

Bungee jumping

Make a speech at school assembly

Save someone from a burning building

Learn to ride a skateboard

Read a book

Perform on stage

Hold a snake

Play Uno

Be a contestant on a reality show

Go on your first school camp

Cut along the lines to make your own set of Courage-o-meter cards.
Choose two other activities and write them on the blank cards.

Activity – Types of Courage



Daniel and the lion's den

Daniel 6:6-22

The King ordered that if a person prayed to anyone but the king they would be thrown into a den of lions. How did Daniel respond?



Stephen and the Jewish leaders

Acts 7:51-60

The Jewish leaders threatened to kill Stephen if he continued to speak the truth about Jesus. How did Stephen respond?



Israelites and the Red Sea

Exodus 14:15-22

The Israelites had to trust God to walk across the Red Sea even though the water might flood back and drown them. How did the Israelites respond?



Joseph interprets Pharaoh's dream

Genesis 41:14-36

Joseph had to decide whether to honour God by telling the truth even though Pharaoh might order his death if he didn't like Joseph's answer. How did Joseph respond?



Moses confronts Pharaoh

Exodus 5:1-5

Pharaoh was holding the Israelites as slaves in Egypt. He was treating them cruelly and unfairly. How did Moses respond?



David kills Goliath

1 Samuel 17:32-51

Goliath and his people were threatening the Israelites and mocking the power of God. How did David respond?



Abram (Abraham) obeys God

Genesis 12:1-6

God asked Abram to leave his home and move to a new country. How did Abram respond?



Paul in prison

Acts 16:25-28

Paul was in prison when an earthquake shook the doors open. He had to decide whether to escape or do the right thing and stay where he was. How did Paul respond?



Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego

Daniel 3:1-18

Shadrach, Meshach, & Abednego were ordered to worship the king or be thrown into a fire. They knew it was wrong to worship anyone but God. How did they respond?



Rahab and the spies

Joshua 2:1-7

Rahab was asked to help the Israelite spies even though she could have been put in prison or killed for helping. How did Rahab respond?



Daniel and his friends

Daniel 1:3-16

Daniel and his friends were prisoners who had been selected to serve the king. The king ordered them to eat food that God had ordered the Israelites not to eat. How did they respond?



Esther

Esther 4:7-5:2

Esther had to deliver an urgent message to the king to save her people but speaking to the king without an invitation was punishable by death. How did Esther respond?

Play a sport

**Learn a musical
instrument**

Mow the lawn

Go rock climbing

**Speak or perform
in public**

Do school work

**Own up to
something you've
done wrong**

**Speak up when
you see someone
else doing wrong**

**Believe in God when
there is persecution**

**Move to a
new town**

Pat a dog

**Catch a bus
or train**

**Take a
plane
flight**

**Start at a
new school**

Be in the dark

Go to hospital

Hold a snake

See a spider

**Stand up
to bullying**

Pray out loud

Live life

**Give a speech in
front of your
whole school**

**Read the
Bible in church**

Try something new

Home & Beyond

Chat with your family or Big Bud about these questions:

- If you could have a superpower, what would it be?
- Would that power give you more courage?
- What would take courage for you to do?
- What would knowing that God is with you wherever you go give you courage?"

Choose something that you need courage to do and ask your Big Bud or a family member to help you to do it.


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