

# Junior Soldier Renewal Day 2020



## The Great Adventure – staying on track

### Key Scripture

...God himself is right alongside to keep you steady and on track until things are all wrapped up by Jesus. God, who got you started in this spiritual adventure, shares with us the life of his Son and our Master Jesus. He will never give up on you. Never forget that.  
**1 Corinthians 1:8-9 (The Message)**

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### Song Suggestions

- *One way*
- *My Lighthouse*

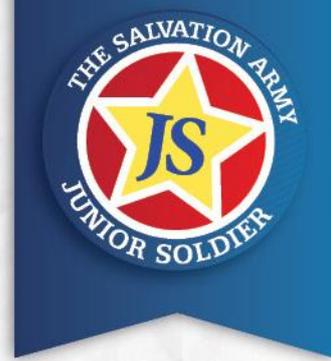
### The Junior Soldier Promise

"I know that Jesus is my Saviour from sin. I have asked Him to forgive my sins, and I will trust Him to keep me good. By His help, I will be His loving and obedient child and will help others to follow Him. I promise to pray, to read my Bible and to lead a life that is clean in thought, word and deed. I will not use anything that may injure my body or my mind, including harmful drugs, alcohol and tobacco."

## Consider and Prepare

### You will need:

- Junior Soldier Renewal Certificates, novelty items and pens to sign
- Masking tape – silver
- Strips of coloured cardboard – enough for one per person (cut an A4 sheet into four)
- One strip of cardboard in a different colour
- Enough markers for everyone to have at least one
- Ping pong balls – approx. one per 10 people
- Tongue depressors or similar - to use as bats in part 2 – approx. one per 10 people
- Pool noodles – approx. 2 per 10 people
- Hand held fans or sheets of thick cardboard – approx. four per 10 people
- Additional sheets of cardboard – cut cardboard in the shape of stepping stones - approx. 18-20. Write a few words of the key scripture on each stone.
- Printed copies of the 'Home and Beyond' cards – enough for one per child



### Before the meeting:

- Set up some fun, simple obstacle courses that everyone can do as they arrive.
- Put a large world map on the wall and ask everyone to pin the places that they have travelled to.
- Run a strip of paper along one wall (low enough that everyone can reach it – or provide a stepstool). Write “An adventure I would love to have...” Invite everyone to write a few words or draw a picture about their dream adventure.
- Display the key scripture. You could project them on a screen, make a banner etc.

### Intro:

I wonder if you have ever been on an adventure? Was it a little adventure or a Great Adventure? Every Great Adventure has ups and downs, easy spots and challenges, surprises and fun!

Every Great Adventure also has a destination or goal, but there may be lots of different ways to get there. Sometimes we can take little detours but it's important from time to time to stop and check that we are on track. We might even have to take action, make different choices or ask for help to get back on track.

Did you know that our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander friends have been having great adventures on this land for many, many years? Before, we take another step in this journey of learning, I want to acknowledge and pay my respects to the Elders of this land [insert the name of the traditional owners of the land on which you meet]. I want to thank them for letting us share this land and commit to caring for it, as they have done. Let's walk this journey of life in friendship together.

Today we are going to think about life as a Great Adventure. The goal for this adventure is to be closer and closer to Jesus. The best news is, that Jesus also wants to be closer and closer to us!! So today, we are going to think about these questions:

- How do we know where to go or what direction to take?
- What will help us to stay on track?
- What can we do if we get off track?

## PART 1: How do we know where to go or what direction to take?

Choose a couple of volunteers (of different ages and abilities).  
Explain that they are about to take a part in a little competition.  
All they must do is be the first person to get to the spot you are thinking of  
**(don't tell them where that is!!)**.  
Ask them if they understand what they need to do.  
Great! Ready, set, go! (they will be confused about where to go)  
Go! (encourage them, to get started on the adventure  
– they will still be uncertain)  
Don't you want to win the prize?  
All you need to do is get to the destination.  
Offer them a phone with a navigation app or a GPS. This will help you to find the way.  
Point out that **we can't find directions if we don't know where we are heading.**



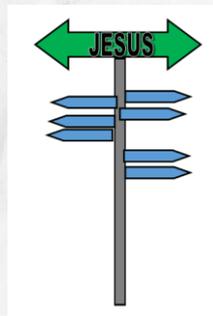
When we set out on an adventure, we need to know something about the adventure. Not every adventure is completely planned out before we start but it's important to know where we are heading or what we want to achieve.

Choose someone who is at least ten years older or younger than you. In a couple of sentences, tell them about an adventure that you have been on. Where were you heading to or what did you want to do?

In the Great Adventure of Life where are we heading? What direction should we take to get started?

Usually, there will be many places that we want to go in life and many things that we want to achieve or do.

Place a strip of silver masking tape on a wall or along the floor. Give everyone a strip of cardboard. Ask them to write on it one thing that they would like to do or one place that they would like to go. Provide masking tape so that everyone can add their signs to the signpost.



Write 'Jesus' on a strip of different coloured cardboard and place it at the top of the signpost.

No matter where else we go, or what else we do, the most important thing is that we are growing closer to Jesus. Knowing Jesus is the greatest destination of all. Every person is on an adventure towards Jesus. Some are far away, and some are very close. Some people haven't even realised yet that they are on this adventure. We know that we are on this adventure because God has told us in Ephesians that we are loved and chosen in Christ even before the world was made. Jesus started on an adventure towards us even before we were born! The most mysterious part of this is that as we grow closer and closer to Jesus, we realise that Jesus has been beside us the whole time! Jesus walks beside us every moment of our lives. Jesus wants to be our friend and help us through this Great Adventure.

## Part 2: What will help us to stay on track?

In any adventure, there is a possibility that we will get off track. Let's see how you do at staying on track with a little activity...

### Activity

1. Set up a 'race course' on the ground (or on a table to make it more accessible) in your space by running two lines of masking tape approximately 1m long and 10cm apart. (If you have a large congregation then you could set up several of these around the room – aim for around one set per 10 people).

Choose a volunteer (old or young but they will need to be able to kneel on the ground).

Provide your volunteer with an unused paddle pop stick or tongue depressor and a ping pong ball. When you say 'go' they must tap the ball along between the lines to reach the finish line as quickly as they can.

Celebrate their success!

2. Next, choose someone else to have a turn but this time, give some of the spectators on the sidelines fans to wave to blow the ball out of the lines – push it off track.

3. Try the activity once more. This time give a couple of volunteers pool noodles and ask them to hold the noodles on the masking tape lines. When the fans wave, the ball will blow to the side but the noodles will stop it from going off track.

### Discussion

In this activity, even though we knew where the ball should go, it still got off track sometimes.

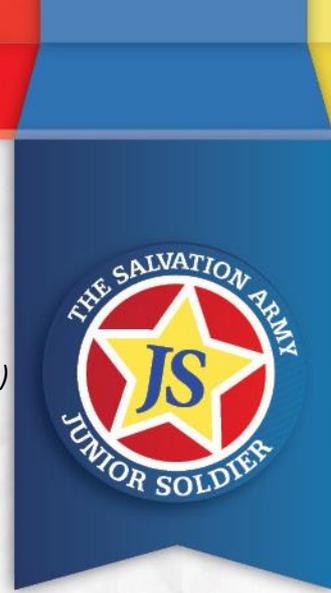
Even when we know where we are heading (towards Jesus), there are times when we can get distracted and go off track.

In groups of 4 or 5 (different ages) think about what can get us off track from heading towards Jesus. Choose 2 of your answers and share them back with the whole group.

Doubt, fear, money and so many other things can distract us and get us off track.

Everyone gets off track sometimes. In the game, the ball was off track if it crossed the lines. If we were walking in the bush, we might realise that we were off track if we could no longer see a clear path ahead. What about in the great adventure of life? How do we know when we are off track?

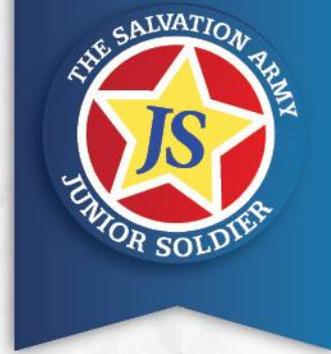
- Holy Spirit – God speaks directly to us – can be like a small voice inside us, a thought or feeling that is hard to ignore.
- Other people – our parents, family members, friends, leaders or teachers – anyone who is following Jesus might help us to realise that we are off track.
- The Bible - (God's word) is a bit like a map for life. It helps us to understand the right way to live and the best path to take. Psalm 119:105 describes God's word as a lamp that guides us. Show everyone a compass (if you don't have one, a picture of a compass will work) Explain that a compass helps hikers to know the direction to go. The needle on a compass always points towards north – the Bible always points towards LOVE and GOD is LOVE.
- The Bible is a great map for us to follow. There might be other helpful maps for us too. For instance, for Junior Soldiers, the JS promise can be like a map. When we follow the promise, it can help us to know the best way to go.



## Part 3: How do we get back on track?

*Set the scene: using the ping pong, and stick, attempt to get it down the track and intentionally push it "off track" and leave it there.*

When we find that we that we are feeling a bit lost, uncertain about what choices to make, it's important to know how to get back on track. Here are four ways to get back on track...



1. Ask other people for directions – In the activity with the ping pong ball, some people used pool noodles to keep the ball on track. Even though the ball went from side to side, it was able to keep moving forward.

In a way, people can do this for us. This is why it's so important for us to meet together with other people who are following Jesus. They can help you to stay on track and you can help them to stay on track - no matter who we are or how old we are, we can help to keep each other on track.

2. Consult the map – The Bible. The Bible is packed full of wisdom about how to live life on track. It can help us to know what things will hurt us, what things will help us, and which direction to take.
3. Ask God for directions – prayer.
4. Remember, at the beginning, I mentioned that Jesus wants us to come close to him? When we get off track, Jesus comes looking for us. In the book of Matthew, in the Bible, this is described like a person looking for a precious pearl or, in John, like a shepherd searching for a lost sheep. Jesus helps us get back on track.

*Set the scene: Move the ping pong ball back onto the track.*

*Display the Scripture verse on a screen or point it out on a banner.*

Our Scripture verse for today is from 1 Corinthians 1. The Message translation says:

**...God himself is right alongside to keep you steady and on track until things are all wrapped up by Jesus. God, who got you started in this spiritual adventure, shares with us the life of his Son and our Master Jesus. He will never give up on you. Never forget that.  
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This is a great verse for us to remember, so let's see if we can memorise it.

*Cut out pieces of cardboard in the shape of stepping stones. Write a few words of the verse on each stone. Give each group a stepping stone. Ask everyone to work together to put the stones in order. Have someone from each group come forward with their stone in turn.*

*Repeat the verse together several times.*

## Renewal Time

For this session you will need:

- Renewal Day novelty item
- Renewal Day certificate
- The key verse on a PowerPoint slide – 1 Corinthians 1:8-9

Remember, when it's time to get back on track we can

1. Consult the map – the Bible (*hold your hands together with palms up as though reading a book*)
2. Ask other people for directions (*reach out a hand as though asking for help*)
3. Pray (*put your hands together as though praying*)
4. Trust Jesus to help us get back on track.

Let's take some time now to try some of these.

Think about your own adventure with Jesus. I wonder if you are on track right now.

In the next few minutes, if you feel like you might be a bit off track then ask someone here to help you work out how you can get back on track.

*Everyone might like to pray this prayer:*

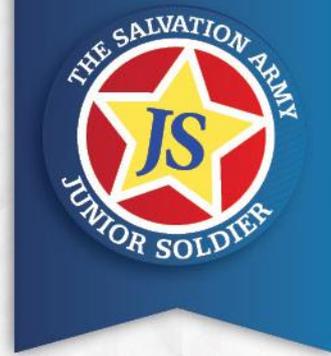
*Jesus, please help me to stay on track with you, whatever happens in the great adventure of life.*

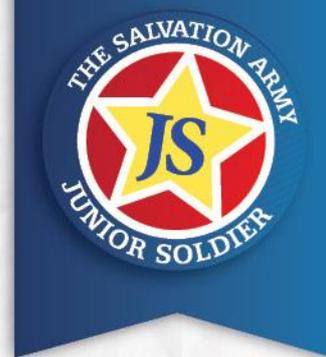
*Invite the Junior Soldiers to come forward, pray with their Big Buds and sign their renewal promise. The prayer above is printed on the renewal card.*

*Invite everyone to add their name to a signpost as they ask Jesus to help them stay on track.*

## Final Blessing

I pray that you will know that God himself is right alongside you, keeping you steady and on track.  
Keep on heading towards Jesus, knowing that you are not alone in this great adventure.  
No matter what happens, remember that Jesus will never give up on you.





## **HOME AND BEYOND**

### **The Great Adventure – Staying on Track!**

**Plan an adventure that you can take with your family. It might be a small adventure or a big adventure. Think about:**

- Your destination or goal - Where will you go? What will you do?
- What will help you to stay on track? Will you need a plan or a map? Are there some tools that will help you?
- If you get lost or distracted, what will help you to get back on track?

**Remember that in the Great Adventure of Life:**

- Our destination is Jesus!
- God's Holy Spirit, the Bible, family and friends can all help us to stay on track.
- If we find ourselves off track then we can consult the map (the Bible), ask for help and trust Jesus to help us get back on track.

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until things are all wrapped up by Jesus.**

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