True heroes stand up for what they believe.

Bible Verse

“Be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go” (Joshua 1:9b).

Growing Closer to Jesus

Students will

- explore what it means to be heroes,
- stand up for their beliefs,
- help one another stand firm, and
- pray for the strength to stand firm in daily life.

Teacher Enrichment

Bible Basis

The 12 spies go into Canaan.

Numbers 13:1–14:30

This is a story of people like us. The Israelites had witnessed God’s presence and protection in dramatic ways. They knew they were his chosen people who were protected by God. They knew they were promised this new land flowing with milk and honey. Yet they were easily swayed to disbelief and panic. They quickly forgot what they had just experienced and even plotted to kill Joshua and Caleb who spoke up for God and his plans.

This time, God was extremely angry. Moses and Aaron pleaded with God for the Israelites. Moses wanted the whole world, including the Egyptians, to see how powerful God was.

God once again forgave the Israelites, but he imposed a harsh punishment: With the exception of Joshua and Caleb, no adults who were alive during the rebellion would be allowed to enter the Promised Land. Joshua and Caleb had faith that God could do what he said he would. Their faith enabled them to stand up for God, even when it wasn’t the popular thing to do.

Other Scriptures used in this lesson are Matthew 5:14; 1 Corinthians 16:13.

Prayer

- Read 1 Corinthians 15:58.
- What things are you doing for the Lord?
- How should you be approaching them?
- Pray: Dear God, thank you for entrusting me with some of your work. I want to approach all of it with strength and courage. Remind me often of your presence with me. In Jesus’ name, amen.
Lesson 10

Before the Lesson

- Collect the necessary items for the activities you plan to use, referring to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies listed on the chart.
- Make photocopies of the “Hands-On Fun at Home” handout (at the end of this lesson) to send home with your students.
- Pray for your students and for God’s direction as you teach the lesson.

This Lesson at a Glance

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Welcome

As kids arrive, ask them how they applied last week's lesson to their lives. Ask questions such as, “How did God help you think good thoughts last week?” and “How did good thoughts lead you to do a good thing?”

Tell kids that whenever you blow the trumpet twice, they are to stop talking, raise their hands, and focus on you. Explain that it’s important to respond to this signal quickly so the class can do as many fun activities as possible.

Attention Grabber

Who's a Hero?

SUPPLIES: tape, newsprint, markers

Tape two sheets of newsprint to a wall. Place a marker beneath each sheet. Have kids form two teams, and have them line up on the side of the room opposite the newsprint. Give the first person in each line a trumpet.

Say: Today we’re going to talk about heroes. But first we’re going to have a race. When I say, “Name your heroes,” the first person in each line should pass the trumpet overhead to the person behind him or her. The second person in line should grab it and pass it underneath his or her legs to the next person, and so on. Continue passing over and under until the last person in line has the trumpet. Then that person should run to the newsprint and write the name of a hero. It can be someone in your family; a teacher; a movie or sports star; or a cartoon, TV, or movie character.

After you write the name of your hero, run to the front of your line and hand the trumpet overhead to the person behind. Pass the trumpet over and under again, and continue until everyone has written the name of a hero on your newsprint. Each person on the team needs to write a different hero’s name. Let’s see who can finish first. Ready? Name your heroes!

When both teams have finished, have kids applaud one another’s efforts. Then have everyone find a partner from the opposite team and sit down. Collect the trumpets.

Have partners identify the hero they named on the newsprint. Then have partners discuss the following questions. Pause after you ask each question to allow time for discussion.

Ask: • What qualities do you admire about your hero? (He’s a great athlete; she’s a talented and famous singer; he’s rich.)

• Could your hero do anything that would make you stop admiring him or her? Explain. (No, I like the person just as he is; yes, if he did drugs, I wouldn’t like him anymore; yes, if she lives a wild life.)

• What does your hero’s behavior tell you about his or her beliefs? (He’s against doing drugs because he talks to schools about it; I know she believes in God because her songs are about Jesus; he always has the best of everything so I think he believes money and possessions are important.)
Lesson 10

**What do you think God looks for in a hero?** (Someone who’s not afraid; someone who will help people and stick up for what’s right.)

**What do you think God would think about the heroes on our lists?** (Some of them aren’t very good heroes; God would want us to have better heroes; he would like them.)

Blow the trumpet twice to bring everyone together, and wait for kids to respond. Then invite them to share insights from their discussions.

Say: **Sometimes the people we think are heroes turn out not to be heroes at all. True heroes stand up for what they believe.** And that can be really hard sometimes. Today we’re going to see why it’s so important to stand up for our beliefs and how we can help each other stand strong.

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**Bible Exploration & Application**

**Spy Assignment**

**SUPPLIES:** Bibles, CD player, paper slips, pencil

Before class, copy the following clues onto slips of paper. If you have more than 10 students in your class, you’ll need to copy additional clues so each student will have one. Hide the clues around your classroom.

- The people look like giants.
- The land flows with milk and honey.
- The cities are enormous!
- The people are stronger than we are.
- The land looks wonderful!
- The people are too tall.
- We can easily take the land ourselves.
- The land is too large to conquer.
- The Lord will lead us into the land.
- We look like grasshoppers compared to the people in the land.

Distribute Bibles, and help kids find **Numbers 13:1-25.** Say: **Today our Bible story involves heroes from the book of Numbers. We’re going to listen to the first part of a story about some heroes named Joshua and Caleb. These heroes were sent with 10 other spies on a dangerous mission. Let’s listen to the story and discover what happened to our heroes.**

Play “Spy Assignment” (track 11) on the CD.

As you stop the CD player, say: **Now we get to take turns spying on the land of Canaan and bringing back clues. After we hear our spies’ reports, we’ll vote on whether or not the land is safe to enter.**

Bring out the **spy disguise** and the **wall walker.**

Give the **spy disguise** to the person sitting closest to you, and have him or her put it on. Say: **This person is the first spy we’ll send into Canaan. This wall walker is the timer. I’ve hidden several slips of paper that contain clues about Canaan. I’ll place the wall walker as high up on a wall as I can reach. When I let go, the spy will search the room for a clue. The spy has until the wall walker reaches the floor to find a clue. When a clue is found, the spy holds**
on to it and hands the spy disguise to another person. Then the first spy places the wall walker as high up on a wall as possible, and the second spy searches for a clue. If the wall walker gets close to the ground before a spy finds a clue, I'll give hints about where to search.

After everyone has had a turn searching for a clue, have kids sit in a circle. Put the spy disguise and wall walker away for use in future lessons.

Ask kids one at a time to read their clues aloud. Then say: Raise your hand if you think we should enter the land of Canaan according to the clues. Count the votes. Then ask:

- What Canaan clues made you vote the way you did? (I didn't want to go to Canaan because I'm scared of giants; I wanted to go to Canaan because it's a rich land.)
- How do you feel about your decision? (Good; happy; unsure; bad.)

Have kids look at Numbers 13:25. Have a volunteer read the verse aloud. Say: Let's find out what happened when the spies returned with their reports. Listen to the rest of the story on the CD. Let's hear the Israelites vote on whether or not to enter Canaan.

Then play “Canaan Vote” (track 12) on the CD.

When the track ends, have the kids stand up. Say: Raise your hand when you think of an answer to each of the questions I'm about to ask. I'd like to hear lots of different, interesting answers. When someone gives an answer you thought of and you don't have anything more to add, you may sit down. When everyone is seated, I'll ask you to stand again for the next question.

Ask: • How do you think Joshua and Caleb felt as they stood up for what they believed? (Happy that they trusted God; sorry for the people; mad at the people for not listening to them; scared because the people wanted to stone them.)

- When do you stand up for what you believe? (When my friends do things I know are wrong; when a new kid at school is picked on.)
- How do you feel in those situations? (Scared; proud; nervous about what my friends will say.)
- What helps you stand up for what you know is right? (Praying; talking to my parents; getting away and thinking about what's right.)
- Why were Joshua and Caleb heroes? (Because they stood up for their beliefs; because they listened to God; they weren't afraid.)

Say: When we have to stand up for our beliefs, it helps if we remember God's promises. Then we can stand firm without any doubt! Joshua and Caleb may have been afraid of the Canaanites, but they also believed God’s promise to help them conquer the land. True heroes stand up for what they believe. Let's learn more about standing up for what we believe.

**HANDS-ON BIBLE**

Give each student a piece of drawing paper, markers, and an index card. Make sure kids have their Hands-On Bibles.

Have students turn to page 148 in their Bibles and complete the "Cross-Eyed" activity found there. When kids have finished, ask:

- When have you had to stand up for what God says is true when others disagreed? (When my friends were making fun of a new kid at school; when some kids wanted me to steal some candy; when my friend wanted to copy my test answers because she didn't have time to study.)

**Bible Insight**

Joshua's name is the Hebrew equivalent of the name Jesus and means "Yahweh is salvation." This symbolizes the importance of God's power; although Joshua was a leader among his people, the Lord is the conqueror above all.
Lesson 10

Light in the Dark

SUPPLIES: Bibles

Have kids sit in a circle, and make the room as dark as possible without making it pitch black.

Say: The Bible talks about how we’re to be a light in a dark world. That means we’re to stand up for what we believe even when everyone else may be against us.

Sometimes it’s hard to stand up for what we believe. We may feel like we’re in a dark situation and we don’t know how to stand firm. But when we stand firm, especially in a tough situation, we’re a light in a dark world. And we help show the world God’s power.

I’m going to pass this flashing orbit ball around the circle. When it comes to you, bounce the ball once to make it light up, and say a prayer out loud to thank God for helping you stand up for what you believe in a dark world. It’s OK if you say the same prayer as someone else. God hears us all. When you finish saying your prayer, pass the orbit ball to the next person.

When everyone has had a chance to say a prayer, turn on the lights and distribute Bibles.

Ask: • What was it like to bounce the ball in the darkness? (It gave me comfort; it was cool to see the light; the flashing colors surprised me.)

• How are we like the light when we stand up for what we believe? (We show others Jesus’ love; people might be surprised when we don’t do what everyone else does; people see that God is strong when they see us standing strong.)

Help kids find Matthew 5:14. Have a volunteer read the verse aloud.

Say: Jesus said we are a light. When we stand up for what we believe, everyone sees us as if we were a city on a hill. True heroes stand up for what they believe. Standing up for what we believe can be scary, just like a lot of things can be scary in the dark. But the Bible encourages us as we stand firm, even in the dark. Let’s read another verse that encourages us.

Help kids find Joshua 1:9 in their Bibles: “Be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.” Have a volunteer read the verse aloud. Then ask:

• According to this verse, why should we have courage? (Because God is with us; God will give us strength.)

• How does this verse encourage us? (It reminds us to be strong; it tells us not to be afraid or discouraged; it promises us that God will be with us.)

Say: True heroes stand up for what they believe. When we stand up for what we believe, we’re being strong and courageous just like this verse says. The Bible is full of heroes who stood firm in their faith. Let’s read about one of them now.

Have kids turn to the Joshua biography on page 108 of their Hands-On Bibles. Have a few volunteers read the bio aloud. If you don’t have a Hands-On Bible in your group, check with your kids to see who has a Bible with a biography or information page about Joshua. Many Bibles will give background information on major characters and events, and you may find one at the beginning of the book of Joshua.

After kids have read the biography, say:
**Firm in the Faith**

**SUPPLIES:** Bibles, pencils, “Stand-Strong Skits” handout (p. 121), scissors

Before class, photocopy the “Stand-Strong Skits” handout, and cut apart the cards.

Have kids form four groups, and give each group a pencil, a card from the handout, and the corresponding item from the Learning Lab.

Say: **You’ll have five minutes to read your situation, discuss it, and write on the back of your card how you’ll stand firm in your situation. Prepare your “Stand-Strong Skit” to present to the rest of the class. Choose a person to read your situation to the class. Then choose two people to act out the roles. The rest of your group will help brainstorm and direct your skit.**

Allow five minutes for kids to prepare their skits. Then blow the trumpet twice, andwait for kids to respond. Gather kids in a semicircle, and have groups take turns performing their skits. After each skit, have everyone clap and say, “Way to stand firm!”

After the performances, place the Learning Lab items out of sight for use in future lessons.

Ask: • **How were the people in your skits like the people in today’s Bible story?** (The characters weren’t afraid to stand up for what’s right; some people did what God wanted them to do, and some people didn’t.)

• **Have you ever experienced situations like these in real life? What happened?** (A friend wanted me to steal candy from a store; lots of kids like to tease new people at school; I saw someone cheat on a test.)

• **How did you respond in those situations?** (I got scared; I felt bad, but I didn’t say anything; I stood up for what was right.)

• **Why is it hard to stand up for what you believe?** (My friends might think I’m weird; I don’t know what to say; people make fun of me.)

Say: **The Bible encourages us to be strong. Let’s look at this next verse together.** Help kids find 1 Corinthians 16:13 in their Bibles. Have a volunteer read the verse aloud. Then ask:

• **How does that verse make you feel about standing strong?** (Strong; good; excited; like I could stand firm; wonderful.)
Say: Turn to a partner, and tell him or her one way you can be strong this week. For example, you might say, “I can be kind to new kids when my friends are mean,” “I can invite a friend to church,” or “I can be nice to my sister when she picks on me.”

Have kids stand in a circle. Say: True heroes stand up for what they believe. We can be heroes for God by standing strong in our faith, just as Joshua and Caleb did. Let’s read 1 Corinthians 16:13 again, but this time we’ll all read it together loudly! And when we say “strong,” we’ll flex the muscles in our right arms. I’ll start, and we’ll continue around the circle—like a wave. Practice the motion.

Read the verse loudly and do the action.

**BIBLE VERSE**

**BIBLE POINT**

**Closing**

** Hero Haul**

**SUPPLIES:** Bibles, CD player

Ask: • What have we discovered today about what makes a person a hero? (A hero is someone who stands up for what’s right; true heroes stand up for what they believe; heroes follow God no matter what.)

Say: Let’s read one of our verses again to help us remember what we’ve learned. Help kids find Joshua 1:9. Have everyone read the verse in unison.

Say: Let’s listen to a song based on this verse. Play “Do Not Be Afraid” (Joshua 1:9) (track 13) from the CD.

When the song is done, have kids scatter throughout the room and sit down. Say: True heroes stand up for what they believe. I’ll reach out my hand to someone and affirm him or her by saying, “[Name], God is with you. Stand up for what you believe.” Then I’ll pull that person up from the floor. I’ll stand behind that person, hold on to his or her shoulders, and we’ll go to another person in the room and do the same thing. We’ll continue until we form one long line.

Play “Do Not Be Afraid” (Joshua 1:9) (track 13) again softly in the background during this activity. When the last person has been affirmed and pulled up, gather everyone in a circle. Say: True heroes stand up for what they believe. And when we help each other stand strong in faith, we’re all heroes for God!

Close in prayer, asking God for strength to stand firm this week and thanking him for this class full of heroes.

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**Growing closer to Jesus extends beyond the classroom.**

Photocopy the “Hands-On Fun at Home” handout (at the end of this lesson) for this week, and send it home with your kids. Encourage kids and parents to use the handout to spark meaningful discussion on this week’s topic.
Stand-Strong Skits

**Color-Cube Grab**
Allison and Patti are shopping at the mall. Allison holds the *color cube* and tells Patti to slip it in her pocket and walk out of the store without paying for it.

Decide how Patti can stand firm in this situation.
Then choose two people to act out the situation and Patti’s response for the rest of the class.

**Catch-Ball-Ring Keep-Away**
Fred wears the *catch ball ring* and tosses the ball up and down. Fred tells David, “Help me play a trick on a new kid at school by playing Keep-Away with the ball and never letting the new kid get a turn.”

Decide how David can stand firm in this situation.
Then choose two people to act out the situation and David’s response for the rest of the class.

**Miniature-Trophy Cheat**
Beth and Bill are going to compete in a race in gym class. They’re the fastest runners in class. Beth points to the trophy the teacher will award the first-place runner and says to Bill, “I really want this trophy. If you let me win, I’ll give you my allowance next week.”

Decide how Bill can stand firm in this situation.
Then choose two people to act out the situation and Bill’s response for the rest of the class.

**Colored-Ring Disappearance**
Martin and Michaela borrowed their neighbor’s rare *colored-ring* collection and accidentally lost one of the rings. Martin holds up the *plastic egg* filled with *colored rings* and says, “Take this back to Mrs. Frank. Don’t say anything about the ring we lost, OK?”

Decide how Michaela can stand firm in this situation.
Then choose two people to act out the situation and Michaela’s response for the rest of the class.
“Be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go” (Joshua 1:9b).

Trace your shoe on a sheet of colored construction paper. Cut the footprint out and write on it, “Stand firm! Remember that Jesus loves you very much!” Decorate the footprint with colorful markers and glitter. Early in the week, give it to someone who could use some encouragement. Pray for that person during the rest of the week.

Have your family sit in a circle and hold hands. Take turns around the circle sharing a situation when it’s hard to stand up for what you believe. Then take turns around the circle praying for the person on your right, but when you pray, stand up! When it’s the next person’s turn to pray, help that person stand up, too.

**Check It Out**

- Read Colossians 2:8. What can you do when people make fun of your faith?
- Read 2 Timothy 4:17. How does God help you stand up for your beliefs?
- Read James 1:12. What good things happen when we stand up for what we believe?

**Talk It Over**

True heroes, like Joshua and Caleb, stand up for what they believe.

- How can your family members encourage each other to stand up for what you believe?
- Are there situations in which your whole family needs to take a stand for what you believe? How will you do that?