

Courage When Life is Tough

Track A

LEADER TIP: VISUAL SCHEDULE & ADAPTING FOR THE GROUP

Many individuals appreciate a visual schedule. Feel free to use [the icons provided for this lesson](#) to make an order of events for your group. Simply print out the icons, cut them apart, and glue them to a strip of paper or attach them with magnets to a board. Some group members might like to remove the icon when that portion of the group meeting is done.

On the page [Adapting the Sessions to the Needs of Your Group](#) you'll find very helpful tips for adapting each session for the specific needs of people in your group. Use it to plan and shape each session.

Step 1: Gathering & Theme

What We'll Need

- [Courage video](#)
- Name tags
- Unit Theme songs: "[You Never Let Go](#)" and "[He's Got the Whole World](#)"
- (Optional) Printouts of [courage pictures](#)



If this is your first session together, be sure to give all participants a name tag and a warm welcome as they enter your meeting space. You may want to print out some of the [pictures](#) from this unit and hang them on your wall to get group members thinking about courage (e.g., bungee jumping, public speaking, and so on).



Begin your praise time by singing a few of your group's favorite songs, perhaps including "[You Never Let Go](#)" (Matt Redman) and "[He's Got the Whole World In His Hands](#)." You'll find numerous versions of both songs on YouTube.



To introduce the topic for this unit, use the [Courage video](#). As you move through the video, invite participants to signal with a thumbs up or a thumbs down whether the subject of the slide makes them afraid or not.

Step 2: Exploring God's Word

What We'll Need

- Option 1
 - [Courage or Fear? Bible Study A video](#)
- Option 2
 - [Drama: Grumbling Israelites](#) script, printed for group members or projected
 - Newsprint or Whiteboard & markers

Choose one of the following two ways to read the Scripture together.

Option 1: Bible Study



Use the [Courage or Fear? video](#) to read through the Scripture. Where indicated, pause for discussion. After the video, invite the group to talk about whether they would have been afraid if they had been there with the Israelites. Why or why not? Give them a chance to talk about things they find frightening in their own lives, too. You'll be exploring this further together in Step 3.

Option 2: Grumbling Israelites Drama



Make copies of the [Grumbling Israelites script](#) for members of your group. Feel free to add some actions to the words to make the drama even more interesting. Assign the following parts to members of your group:

- Narrator 1
- Narrator 2
- Grumbling Israelites — sound makers
- Grumbling Israelites — readers
- Joshua
- Caleb

After the drama, invite the group to break into pairs and talk about two questions (write them on a whiteboard or on newsprint).



1. Were the people of Canaan strong or weak?
2. How would you have felt about going into Canaan?





Step 3: Responding to the Story

What We'll Need

- Option 1
 - Very large mitten, oven mitt, or work glove
 - Two or three sticky notes for each participant
 - Pens or pencils for each person
- Option 2
 - [Bruce Olson's story](#) video
 - [Bruce Olson's picture](#)
 - Markers

Option 1: In God's Hand

Spend a little time talking about courage together—the kind of courage that Joshua and Caleb had. Acknowledge that we probably won't be asked to fight giants! But all of us are afraid sometimes. (If there's time, invite volunteers to share a time when they were afraid.)



Take out the large mitten, oven mitt, or glove you've brought to this session. Imagine together that the glove is God's big hand. Then think about things in your life that make you scared or are hard to do. How would it feel to place all of these things in God's hands? As each of you mentions concerns, write or draw a description of them on sticky notes. After you have created your sticky notes with your partner, take turns placing them in God's "hand" (the big mitten or glove). As each of you puts a sticky note in the mitten, say together, God will hold you and help you.

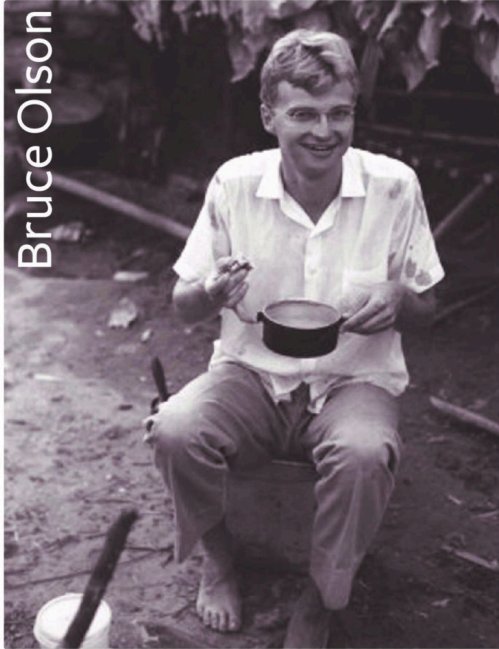
Take time to pray for each other too, allowing the Holy Spirit to direct you.

Option 2: Bruce Olson's Story

Tell the group that it's easy to see courage in the lives of Joshua and Caleb. But what about today? Most of us don't walk in a hot desert. Most of us will not be asked to fight giants. But all of our lives have struggles, fears, and other kinds of giants. (Invite group members to tell about some of the things that frighten them!)



Show the group the picture of Bruce Olson, explaining that this man needed a lot of courage in his life and that you'll be listening to his story together. (If some members of your group like to have busy hands, distribute copies of the picture and markers, inviting them to add color to the pictures as you watch the story of Bruce's adventures.)



Contemporary Story Picture: Bruce Olson **TOGETHER** Choose Courage, Session 1 © 2023 With Ministries. All rights reserved.



Then play the video of Bruce Olson's Story.

After the video, talk about these questions together:

- What did you like best about Bruce's story?
- How did it remind you of the story of Joshua and Caleb?
- How can you and I get courage like Joshua, Caleb, and Bruce Olson?

Step 4: Taking It Home

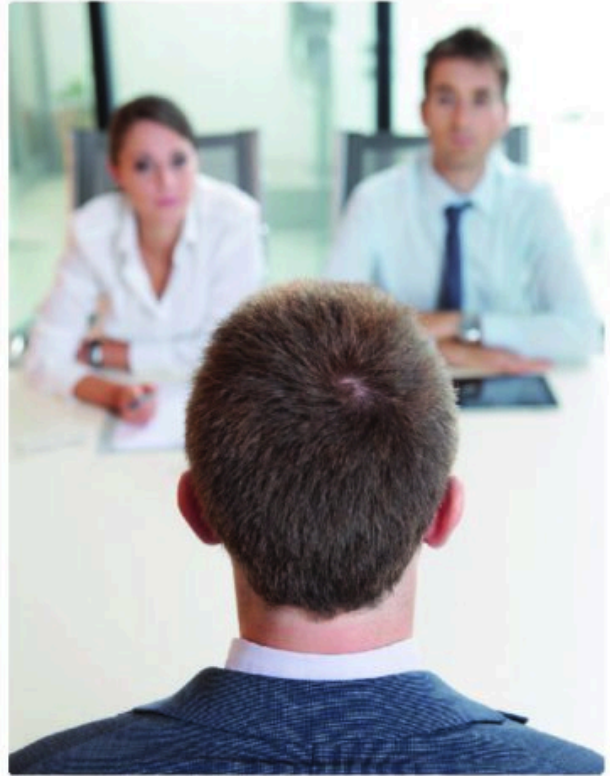
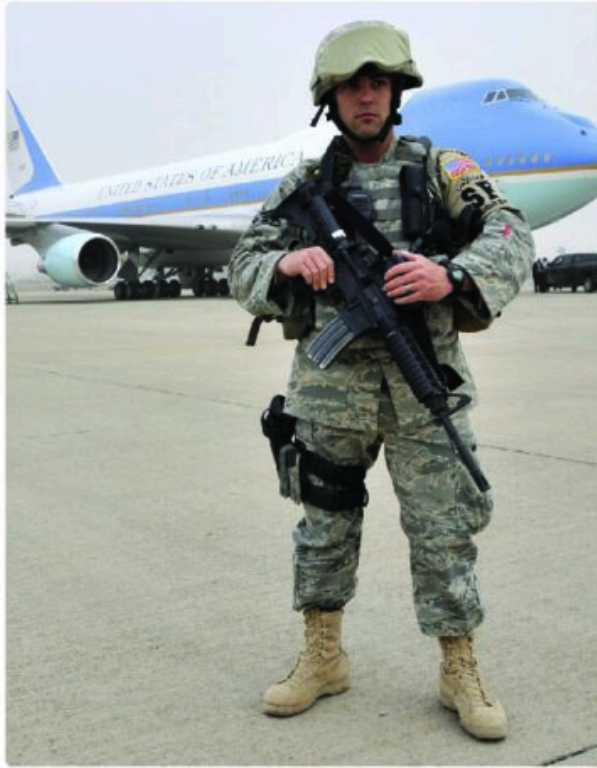
What We'll Need

- Take It Home A for Session 1
- Discussion Pictures

Each person should have a copy of Take It Home A for Session 1.



Draw the group's attention to page 4 of the Take It Home magazine. Say something like this: **This week as you go to work, watch or read the news, visit with your family, or read a book, look for examples of people acting with courage.** These pictures provide some examples to get you thinking.



Discussion Pictures

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Maybe you will meet someone who serves in the military ([picture 1](#)). You might have a family member who is looking for a job and goes to an interview, even though he is a bit nervous

([picture 2](#)).

Maybe you will find a story about a person who jumps into the water to rescue someone else ([picture 3](#)).

When you find a story of somebody acting with courage, write it down, draw it, take a picture of it, or make a copy of it and add it to your Take It Home. We will be using these stories and events later, so make sure you keep track of your Take It Home.

LEADER TIP: FOLDER FOR TAKE IT HOME MAGAZINE

The final session of this unit suggests that you use the six magazines from the unit in your review. Consider keeping a folder and adding your new magazine to it each week.

Step 5: Closing



Close with a prayer, then end your time together with the words of Caleb and Joshua: “Do not rebel against the LORD. And do not be afraid of the people of the land, because we will devour them. Their protection is gone, but the LORD is with us. Do not be afraid of them.” —Numbers 14:9

Choose courage!