get over yourself!

PREPARING TO TEACH

I. SYNOPSIS

This lesson deals with the story of the 12 spies sent to explore the land of Canaan and bring back a report. While they reported the land as being a good land, filled with abundance, they were terrified by the strength of the inhabitants and their cities. Ten of the spies doubted God’s ability to lead Israel into this land. Only two spies, Caleb and Joshua, encouraged the people to put their trust in God and move forward.

This story has a powerful lesson to teach about dealing with fear. Fear is a reality, and almost all young people experience it. But fear doesn’t have to control our lives. Faith in God is based on seeing what God is able to do in our lives and the lives of others. The more we exercise faith, the less we are captive to fear.

II. TARGET

The students will:
- Learn that Caleb and Joshua trusted God to help Israel conquer the land of Canaan. (Know)
- Experience God’s power to help them cope with fear. (Feel)
- Trust God to help them through challenging situations. (Respond)

III. EXPLORE

- Courage
- Fear
- Perseverance

You will find material to help you explore these and other topics with your students at www.leadoutministries.com.

TEACHING

I. GETTING STARTED

Activity

Refer the students to the What Do You Think? section of their lesson. After they have completed it, discuss their responses.

Use the following list of unusual phobias to open a discussion on fear.

- Alliumphobia—Fear of garlic
- Bibliophobia—Fear of books
- Chiraptophobia—Fear of being touched
- Ergophobia—Fear of work
- Hippophobia—Fear of horses
- Neophobia—Fear of anything new
- Ranidaphobia—Fear of frogs
- Triskaidekaphobia—Fear of the number 13

Ask each student to share something they’re afraid of and make up a name for that “phobia.” Allow lighthearted, silly responses if that’s what students feel comfortable starting with. If someone shares a more serious fear, use that as an opportunity to shift the discussion to a more serious one on the topic of fear.

Illustration

Share this illustration in your own words:

Two explorers were on a jungle safari when suddenly a ferocious lion jumped in front of them. “Keep
afraid. It's a scary world out there. But almost every time one of God's angel messengers appears to someone in Scripture, they appear with the message: "Fear not! Don't be afraid!" God doesn't want us to be captives to fear. God empowers us to conquer fear and move forward in faith.

Out of the Story for Teachers

After you read the Into the Story section with your students, use the following in your own words to process it with them.

Divide students into groups of four or five. If you have some who know their Bibles better than others, make sure they are distributed throughout the different groups. Ask each group to find an example of a Bible story in which God helps His people win a victory in an unexpected way. (Some sample answers might be: crossing the Red Sea, breaking down the walls of Jericho, etc.) Ask each small group to come back and share their story with the whole group. For each story, ask:

• What does this tell us about God's power?
• How could experiencing, or hearing about, this event build your faith?
• Does God help His people in this way today?

After discussing all the stories, return to the story of the 12 spies. Point out that Caleb and Joshua had faith that God could work mighty miracles to defend His people because they knew He had done so in the past. Ask:

• Out of 12 spies, why do you think only two had this kind of faith in God's power? What might...
have made Caleb and Joshua different?
• What kinds of frightening situations do we face in our lives that might make it hard to trust God?
• How can we build greater faith in God’s power in our own lives?

Sharing Context and Background
Use the following information to shed more light on the story for your students. Share it in your own words.
At the time that Moses sent the 12 spies into Canaan, the Israelites had already witnessed many mighty demonstrations of God’s power. They had seen:
• Their miraculous deliverance from slavery, accompanied by the 10 plagues on Egypt (Exodus 5–12).
• The parting of the Red Sea (Exodus 13–15).
• Manna provided for them to eat (Exodus 16).
• Water miraculously flowing from a rock (Exodus 17).
• The defeat of the Amalekites (Exodus 17).
• The Ten Commandments given directly from God on Mount Sinai (Exodus 20).
How were people who had seen so many miracles so easily convinced to lose faith and give up? Because they allowed fear to be more powerful than faith. They focused on the threat that faced them—the fierce, warlike people of Canaan with their fortified cities—rather than on the things God had done for them.
The same thing can happen to us as we focus on our problems instead of God’s power. Like the Israelites, we can draw on evidence of what God has done in the past to assure us that He’s always going to be there for us, no matter what the future holds!
“We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history” (Ellen G. White, Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, p. 196).

III. CLOSING

Activity
Close with an activity and debrief it in your own words.
Distribute paper and pencils to each student. Ask each person to write down a situation they’re worried about or afraid of in their own lives. Then ask them to fold the paper without showing it to anyone, and hold on to it during prayer time. As you pray, ask God to demonstrate His power in dealing with each situation the students have written about. Ask Him to build the students’ faith so that they, like Caleb and Joshua, can trust Him in difficult situations.

Summary
Share the following thoughts in your own words:
Fear is a reality we all face. It’s a normal, even healthy, reaction to frightening situations. But fear can put roadblocks in our way if we don’t learn to move
past it. The most powerful weapon we have for con-
quering fear is trust in God. When we know that God
cares for us and is able to help us, then we can take a
step of faith even in a frightening situation.

The great thing about faith is that it can be as small
as a tiny seed (Matthew 17:20). If we start to use it, it
will grow. Even a little courage and faith can be enough
to get us started in dealing with a frightening situation.
When we see how God leads us, we'll be empowered
to go further and do more!