

UNIT 7 | SESSION 5

JOSHUA'S FAREWELL

JOSHUA 23-24



KEY PASSAGE: Psalm 24:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Why can we trust God? We can trust God because He is faithful and does everything for His glory and our good.

CHRIST CONNECTION: Joshua reminded the people that God saved them from Egypt and gave them the Promised Land. He told them to worship God alone. Jesus is worthy of all worship because He saves those who trust in Him from sin and gives them eternal life.

STORY POINT: Joshua reminded the Israelites to worship and obey God.



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

The book of Joshua ends with a farewell address to God's people about 20 years after they first found rest in the Promised Land. Joshua took one last opportunity to challenge the people to continue following the Lord and remind them how they were called to live in view of what God had already accomplished on their behalf.

What did Joshua commission the Israelites to do in his farewell address? How does this parallel with how Christ followers should live today?

Joshua spent his last moments on earth reminding the Israelites of the grace God had shown them by giving them the land He promised to Abraham long ago. Joshua led them through the history of their people, through the patriarchs and battles that brought them to the land. He also impressed upon them the truth that God's promise to bless them had been fulfilled, but the rest they were experiencing in the land was contingent upon their covenant loyalty to worship God alone.

The Israelites were commissioned to get rid of the foreign gods that were among them and turn their hearts to the Lord (Joshua 24:23). We, like the Israelites, are called to lead lives of obedient worship, turning away from idols in our midst. By the grace of God, we can have hearts that desire to follow His commands through faith-filled obedience as we live through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Lead boys and girls to see the awe-inspiring deliverance God extends to the people He has sworn to provide for—those who place their faith in His Son. Help kids see that God's greatest act of love is found in Jesus, whose sacrifice atoned for the sins of His people long ago and for us today. Ask the Lord to instill upon the children in your class a deep desire to know and worship Him in light of the promise of eternal life in Christ's presence.



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10-15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



LEARN

25-30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



LOVE

15-20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



LIVE

15-20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- ☐ "Bible Search" activity page

Session Starter (Option 1)

- ☐ painter's tape
- ☐ pom-poms, 1 per kid
- ☐ plastic straws, 1 per kid

Session Starter (Option 2)

- ☐ dry erase board, marker, and eraser



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- ☐ Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- ☐ "All about Joshua" printable, 1 per kid

Reflection and Prayer

- ☐ Bible Story Coloring Page (optional)



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- ☐ countdown video
- ☐ Story Point Poster

Big Picture Question

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- ☐ Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- ☐ "Joshua's Farewell" video
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ biblical clothes (optional)
- ☐ past Bible Story Picture Posters (optional)

Questions from Kids

- ☐ "Unit 7, Session 5" Questions from Kids video

Missions Moment

- ☐ "South Asian Peoples" missions video

Key Passage Activity

- ☐ Key Passage Poster
- ☐ "Who Is (Psalm 24:8)" song
- ☐ worship song of your choice (optional)



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY “Do you ever need reminding? Maybe you forget to put away your shoes or brush your teeth. Who helps remind you to do things?”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Bible Search” activity page.

SAY “Today, we will see how Joshua reminded the Israelites to worship and obey God.”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

☐ OPTION 1: WALK THE LINE

Before the session, use painter’s tape to create various lines of the floor of your room such as a straight line, a zig-zag line, a curvy line, and a swirled line. Invite kids to take turns walking on each line, challenging them to keep their feet on the tape at all times. If they fall off the line, direct them to start over.

Then provide each kid with a pom-pom and a straw. Challenge kids to blow their pom-pom on each line, making sure the pom-pom stays on the line at all times. (Tip: This activity could also be played outdoors by drawing the lines with chalk.)

SAY “It was challenging to always remain on the line! This reminds me of our Bible story. Joshua challenged God’s people to remain true to God. Similar to always staying on the line, Joshua told the Israelites not to turn away from God, but to worship only Him. As we’ll see later, God’s people don’t keep their promise to be faithful to God. In fact, all people sin and turn away from God. No one can be saved by trying to obey God at all times. But God is faithful! He made the way for people to be saved through faith in Jesus.”

☐ OPTION 2: HELP ME REMEMBER



Write the big picture answer on a dry erase board: We can trust God because He is faithful and does everything for His glory and our good. Tell kids that you will erase one or two words at a time, and they must help you remember the missing word(s). Show kids the written big picture answer. Then turn the board around and erase a word or two. Show kids the board again and invite them to raise their hand to tell you the missing word(s). Be sure to call on different kids each time. Once the entire big picture answer has been erased, invite kids to say it aloud together while you rewrite it on the dry erase board.

SAY “Sometimes, we all need help remembering things. Today, we will learn how Joshua challenged the Israelites to remember all God had done for them. **JOSHUA REMINDED THE ISRAELITES TO WORSHIP AND OBEY GOD.** We also need to be reminded of all God has done for us. The more time we spend in God’s Word, the more we will remember God’s actions, character, and promises.”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY Welcome, kids! My name is [your name], and I am so glad you are here. Today, we will hear about Joshua's final message to God's people. We'll see that Joshua was growing old and would soon die. But before his death, **JOSHUA REMINDED THE ISRAELITES TO WORSHIP AND OBEY GOD.** [Display the Story Point Poster.] Joshua wanted God's people to stay true to God and remember His goodness to them.

If you have your Bibles with you, please take them out. [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.] Let's prepare our hearts to hear God's Word. Pray with me: 'Dear God, please help us see Your faithfulness in our story. Help us be reminded that You alone are worthy of worship. Amen.' ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

Display the Big Picture Question Poster.

SAY Let's say our big picture question: **Why can we trust God?** What's the answer we have learned? [Allow responses.] **We can trust God because He is faithful and does everything for His glory and our good.**

In our story today, Joshua reminded the Israelites of God's faithfulness by telling them of all God had done for them. Everything God did was for His glory. God's people saw how only God could perform such miracles. God always acted for the good of His people. If we have trusted in Jesus, we can know that God will always be faithful to us and also works for our good. Every promise God made comes true in Jesus. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the Giant Timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY God promised to make Abraham's family into a great nation and give them the land of Canaan. Abraham's family grew into the nation of Israel. After years of slavery in Egypt, God led His people to freedom and guided them to the wilderness through Moses' leadership. We learned how God's people were disobedient in the wilderness, but God was still faithful. After Moses died, God chose Joshua to lead the Israelites into Canaan. Joshua and the Israelites faced many battles to take the land, and God gave them victory. Today, we will learn how Joshua gave a final message before his death and reminded the Israelites to worship and obey God in the new land. ”



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story



1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Joshua 23–24. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Joshua’s Farewell.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

JOSHUA’S FAREWELL

“Many years had passed since the Lord gave His people rest from war. Joshua was now an old man. He made a speech to the leaders of the people.

Joshua said, “You have seen for yourselves everything the LORD did for you. He fought for you and gave you the land He promised. Be very strong and continue obeying all of God’s laws. Do not worship the gods of the other nations. Instead, be loyal to the LORD your God.

“If you turn away from the LORD and begin serving the gods of the other nations, know for certain that God will not fight for you. The good promises God has made to you have all come true. So, do not worship other gods or you will not remain in the land God has given you.”

Then, **Joshua called all the people of Israel together. He reported God’s words, saying, “Long ago, I called Abraham to leave his home and the gods he worshiped and to follow Me. Abraham had Isaac, and Isaac had Jacob and Esau. Jacob and his sons went to Egypt, where your ancestors were put into slavery.**

“Then I sent Moses and Aaron and defeated Egypt by sending the plagues, and My people were free. When it looked like the army of Egypt was about to capture my people again, I brought the Red Sea down on them to destroy them. After that, I led the people in the wilderness for a long time.

“Then I took you across the Jordan River. I fought for you and gave you victory in every battle. I gave you land you did not work for, cities you did not build, and vineyards and olive groves you did not plant.”

Joshua then said, “Therefore, fear the LORD and worship Him alone. You must choose for yourselves who will you worship: The LORD your God or false gods. As for me and my family, we will worship the LORD.”

The people replied, “We will not abandon the LORD to worship other gods! He brought us up out of slavery in Egypt and performed great miracles to save us. He protected us and defeated armies for us. We will worship the LORD, because He is our God.”

Joshua died at the age of 110 and was buried in the land God had promised to His people.

Christ Connection: Joshua reminded the people that God saved them from Egypt

STORYTELLING TIPS

Vary your volume: Vary your volume through different parts of the story. Loud volume can suddenly grab attention, and soft (yet intense) volume helps draw kids’ focus.

Visualize it: Gather the Bible Story Picture Posters from *Abram Followed God, God’s Covenant with Abraham, Jacob and Esau, God Called Moses, Moses Parted the Red Sea, Crossing the Jordan River, and Conquering Jericho.* As you read, show the pictures and remind kids of God’s faithfulness.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

and gave them the Promised Land. He told them to worship God alone. Jesus is worthy of all worship because He saves those who trust in Him from sin and gives them eternal life. ”

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ God fought for His people, and the land of Canaan was theirs. The Israelites had rest from war and were living peacefully in Canaan. Before Joshua’s death, he gathered God’s people together and gave them one final message. What did Joshua tell the Israelites not to do? [Allow responses.] Joshua told the people not to worship the gods of the surrounding nations. Not every nation had been removed from the land of Canaan, and Joshua warned the Israelites to not be led away from the one true God by following the false gods of other nations. **JOSHUA REMINDED THE ISRAELITES TO WORSHIP AND OBEY GOD.** Only God is worthy of worship.

What did Joshua remind the people of? [Allow responses.] Joshua remind the people all God had done for them. God called Abraham and made his family into the nation of Israel. God freed Israel when they were in slavery in Egypt. God brought His people into the land He promised them. God kept every promise He made. **We can trust God because He is faithful and does everything for His glory and our good.**

Then Joshua told the people to choose if they would follow God or other false gods. Who did the people choose to follow? [Allow responses.] The people chose to worship God and follow Him. We have this same choice today. God calls us to follow His Son, Jesus. Jesus is worthy of all worship because He saves those who trust in Him from sin and gives them eternal life. ”

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION *Poster*

SAY “ Joshua told the Israelites to choose between God and false gods. We can’t love God most when we are loving other things more than Him. God wants all of our hearts. The Bible tells us that we didn’t love God at first, but He loved us and sent His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross for our sins (1 John 4:10). Jesus loved you, died for your sin, and calls you to follow Him above all else. ”

(Tip: Create an environment where kids are welcome to ask questions about what it means to follow Jesus.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 7, Session 5” Questions from Kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. What can we do when we are afraid to invite people to church?
2. How does going to church with other believers encourage us to worship God throughout the week?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes) *Video*

Tell kids that South Asia has the largest concentration of non-Christians on the planet. Share that South Asia is home to more than 500 million Muslims and is the birthplace of Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, and Jainism. Explain that these religions do not worship the one true



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

God and His Son, Jesus. Play the missions video to allow kids to see the different peoples and cultures of South Asia.

SAY 🗣️ Aadya (Ah-DI-uh) is a South Asian woman who is telling people in her region about Jesus. Missionaries Clark and Elizabeth Atwood are training Aadya and other local church leaders to tell people about Jesus. The missionaries want the South Asian churches to start new churches.

A couple named Raahill (RA-hill) and Sadiya (Sah-DI-uh) have shared Jesus with other South Asian people who have gone on to become Christians. These new believers now meet together in groups. Clark Atwood and other missionaries support these local believers who often face difficult challenges in their country due to their belief in Jesus. Like Joshua's encouragement to the Israelites, we can pray these new believers will follow Jesus and be reminded of God's faithfulness. 🙏

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the Key Passage Poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Psalm 24:8 together.

SAY 🗣️ Joshua encouraged the Israelites to remember how God had fought for them. We've learned that God has defeated our enemies—sin and death—and deserves all the glory! 🙏

Form kids into groups of three or four. Challenge groups to create motions for the key passage. For example, kids could raise their arms above the head for the word "glory," flex one arm muscle for "strong," or flex both arm for "mighty." Invite groups to share the motions with everyone.

Lead kids to sing "Who Is (Psalm 24:8)." You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY 🗣️ Dear God, You are strong and mighty, and You deserve all our praise. Help us follow You and worship You alone. Thank You for Jesus, who died for our sin, so we can live with You forever. In Jesus' name, amen. 🙏

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





LOVE

THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the Old Testament Mediterranean Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Joshua 23:14-16. Explain that throughout the book of Joshua, God commanded Joshua to be strong, courageous, and obey His commands. Before his death, Joshua also told the people to be strong and obey God (Joshua 23:6). The book of Joshua reminds us how God desires obedience and complete loyalty to Him. However, because we can't obey God perfectly, God sent Jesus to be perfect for us.

Consider pointing out the location of Canaan (F10) on the Old Testament Mediterranean Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Joshua 23:14-16 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verses aloud.

SAY 🗨️ Joshua reminded the Israelites of God's faithful promises. God's promise to give His people the land of Canaan had come true. But Joshua warned the people that God could easily take the land from them if they worshiped other gods. The Israelites had to decide if they would only worship God.

Like the Israelites, we have to decide where we are going to place our trust. What does it mean to place our trust in Jesus? [Allow responses.] Jesus loved us so much that He died on the cross to take the punishment our sin deserves. When we place our trust in Jesus, we believe only He can save us from our sin since only Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross, and rose again. We can trust Him with our lives because He has saved us from sin and death. He is worthy of our worship! 🗨️

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

| **SAY** 🗨️ What does it mean to worship only God? 🗨️

Tell kids that worshiping God means to show Him love, honor, and obedience. Discuss how only God is worthy of worship because He is Creator and King.

| **SAY** 🗨️ Do you think God's people would keep their promise to worship only Him? Why not? 🗨️

Prompt kids to recall how, in the past, the people of Israel had not kept their promise to worship only God. Remind kids of how they worshiped the golden calf at Mount Sinai. Discuss how the Israelites turned away from God because of their sinful hearts. Explain that the Bible tells us all people need new hearts. Share how Jesus came to change our hearts when we trust in Him.

| **SAY** 🗨️ How can we follow God's commands? 🗨️

Remind kids that because of sin we can't obey God perfectly. Explain that through Jesus' death, He has given us His righteousness. When we trust our life to Jesus, He sends the Holy Spirit to live inside our hearts. Discuss how the Holy Spirit gives us the desire and power to obey God as we continue to depend on Jesus.

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

☐ OPTION 1: ALL ABOUT JOSHUA

Provide each kid with an “All about Joshua” printable and some markers. Remind kids that God’s promise to always be with Joshua helped him be a faithful leader for the Israelites. For the different events listed, direct kids to draw pictures on the printable to help illustrate how Joshua led Israel with God’s help. Assist kids if they need help finding the specific Bible references on the printable and invite them to either write a few words to describe the verse or draw a picture to help them remember what the verse says. Encourage kids to remember how God gave Joshua success and allowed him to be a part of fulfilling God’s promise to give the Israelites the land of Canaan.

SAY “Joshua was a leader who trusted God’s faithfulness to His people. Joshua reminded the Israelites to worship and obey God. **We can also trust God because He is faithful and does everything for His glory and our good.**”

☐ OPTION 2: WHO WILL YOU FOLLOW?



Provide kids with various options and challenge them to decide which option they will follow. Read each statement below and direct kids to walk to the right of the room if they choose the first option. If kids choose the second option, they walk to the left of the room.

- Follow your heart or follow God’s Word
- Forgive others or seek revenge
- Do what other people want you to do, or do what God wants you to do
- Rejoice when you suffer or complain when you suffer
- Love your enemy or only love your friend

SAY “Each choice showed whether we will follow God’s ways or our own ways. Today, we learned how Joshua told the people to choose who they would follow. **JOSHUA REMINDED THE ISRAELITES TO WORSHIP AND OBEY GOD.** When we follow God’s ways, we are worshiping and obeying Him. Through faith in Jesus, we can live to please God.”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids. If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.