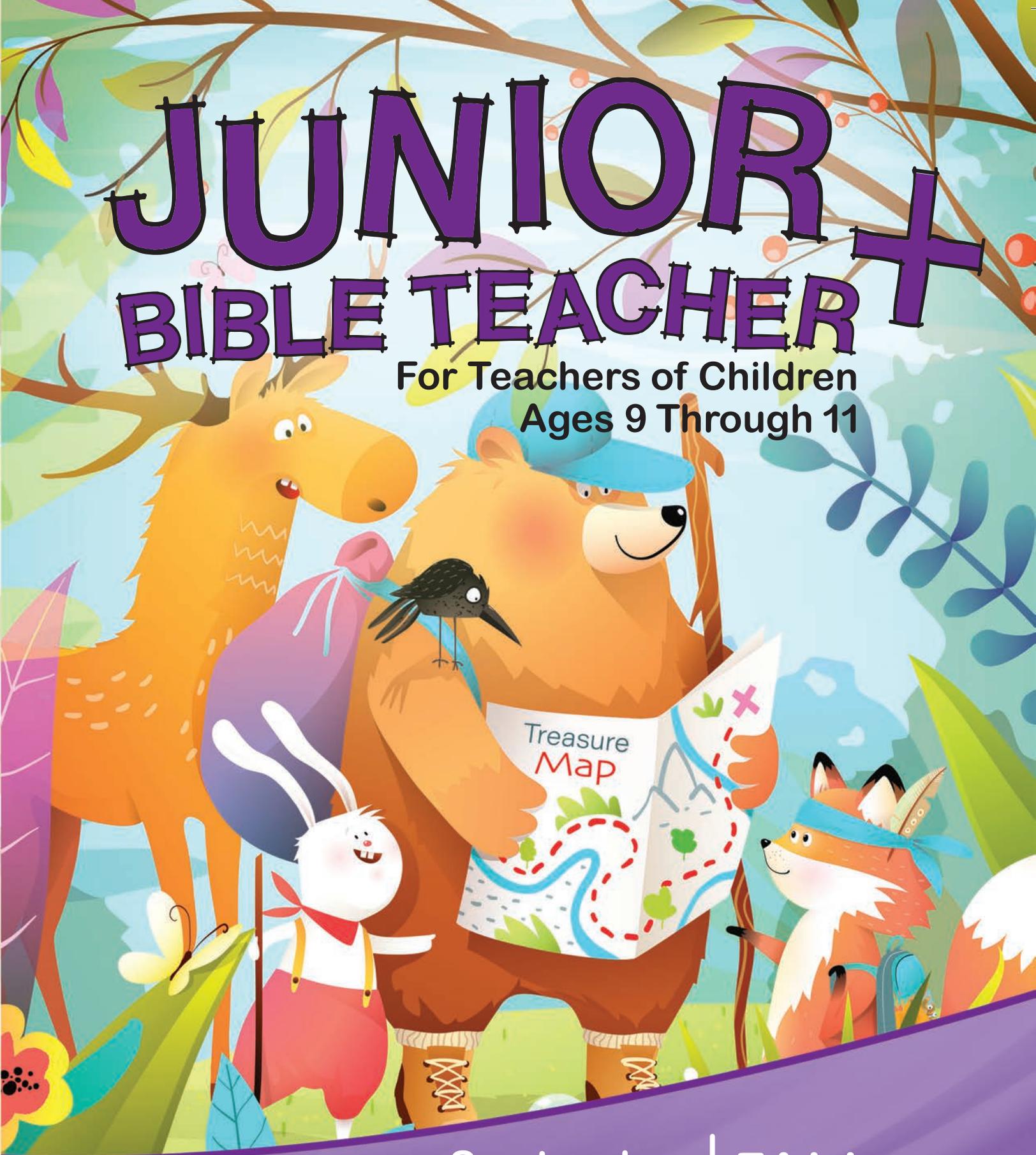


JUNIOR BIBLE TEACHER +

For Teachers of Children
Ages 9 Through 11



September
October
November

FALL
2023

Junior Bible Teacher⁺

FALL QUARTER

September, October, November 2023

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Dear Junior Teacher,

Welcome to *Junior Bible Teacher*⁺! As witnesses for Christ in a changing world, we have to think creatively about how we minister, while still holding firmly to the Word of Truth. Our Plus Series contains the same robust Bible lessons and background information that you love, but they have been carefully crafted to help you excite your students to learn God's Word.

Here are a few old favorites reimagined:

- The **Big Idea** is the main point of the lesson (replacing the Purpose).
 - **Prepare Your Mind** and **Prepare Your Heart** will prepare you to teach with background information and a short devotional (replacing Approaching the Lesson).
 - **Explaining the Memory Verse** explains the Scripture in language familiar to juniors (replacing Talking About the Golden Text).
-

PURPOSE



Big Idea: God wants us to remember His blessings.

APPROACHING THE LESSON



Prepare Your Mind

Prepare Your Heart

TALKING ABOUT THE GOLDEN TEXT



Explaining the Memory Verse

Please note: In an effort to provide more flexible material and encourage teachers to model Bible reading for their students, we have chosen to leave the Scripture block out of these lessons.

Here are some new features:

- **Introductory pages** for each unit will point toward the quarter’s major themes.
- **Supplies** and **Prepare the Room** give you all the practical information you need to prepare for class time.
- The **Conversation Starter** helps you kick off your class and get your students invested in the lesson.
- **Discussion Questions** help students engage with the Scriptures intellectually and emotionally throughout the lesson. These questions appear in both the class and teacher books.
- **Teacher Tips** in the lesson will give you short ways to involve your students or deal with difficult subject matter.
- **Just Curious** prepares you to respond to questions students might ask about the lesson.
- **Prop Prompt** symbols notify you when to use a prop in the supply list at the beginning of the lesson. All props and supplies are in **bold** the first time they appear.
- **Action** symbols help you see opportunities to invite your class to take part in the lesson.
- The **Activity** helps juniors get their energy out while thinking about the lesson.
- The **Big Question** addresses common doubts or fears junior students might have about God and His Word from a biblical worldview.
- **Next Steps** help your students apply the lesson to their lives.
- **Prayer Points** give you some prompts to pray for the students.
- The **Christ Focus** encourages thought about how the Scripture passage and lesson point to our loving Savior.
- **Bonus activity pages** for your students will be included each quarter as supplements in the back of this book.

KEY:

Teacher Tips



Just Curious



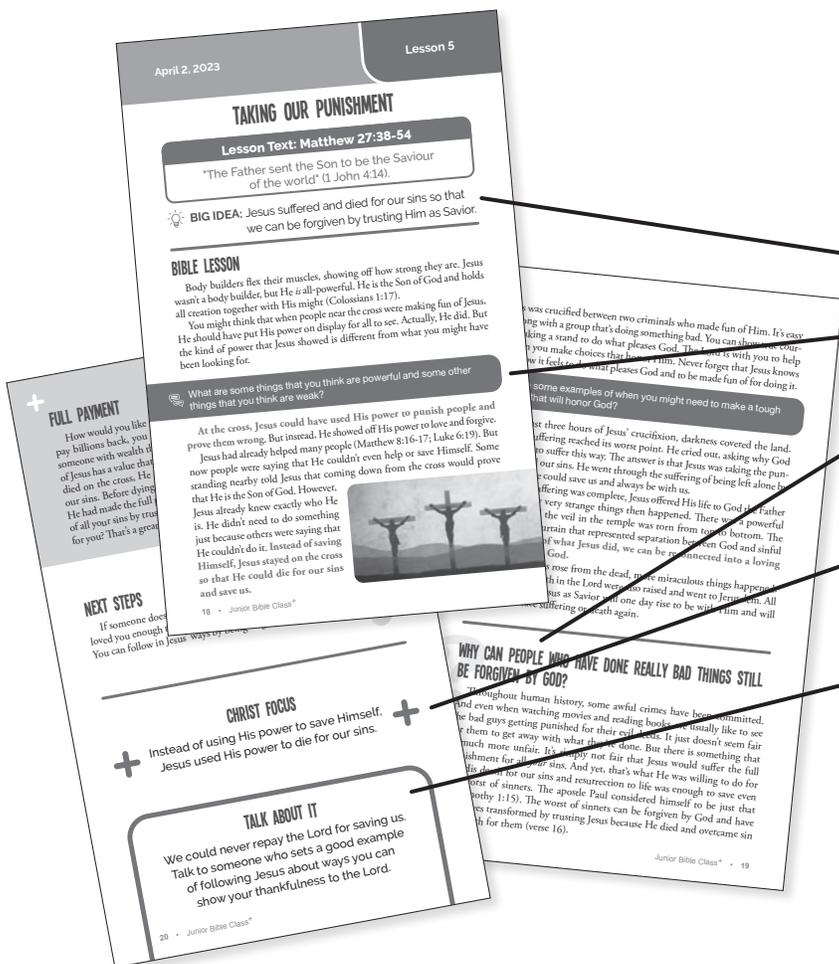
Prop Prompts



Actions



Discussion Questions



Here’s a peek at the new Junior Bible Class⁺:

- The **Big Idea** helps the student focus on the main point of the lesson.
- **Discussion Questions** are interjected within the Bible lesson to help students engage with the Scriptures intellectually and emotionally.
- The **Big Question** addresses common doubts or fears junior students might have about God and His Word from a biblical worldview.
- The **Christ Focus** encourages thought about how the Scripture passage and lesson point to our loving Savior.
- **Talk About It** prompts students to engage Christian adults in their life in conversation about God’s Word.

UNIT I:

Obedience and Success

Lesson 1: Joshua 1:1-6; 11:16-19, 21-23

Be Strong and Courageous

Lesson 2: Joshua 2:3-9, 15-16, 22-24

Rahab and the Spies

Lesson 3: Joshua 6:2-4, 12-20a

The Fall of Jericho

Lesson 4: Judges 3:15-25, 29-30

Ehud Frees Israel

Lesson 5: Judges 7:2-4, 13-15; 8:22-25

God Helps Gideon Trust Him

Juniors may look at obedience to God as just following rules. God's way of doing life is much more! God gives us the right way to live because He loves us, wants us to succeed, and wants to bless us. Obedience is about love. In this unit, Joshua learns about strength to step up to leadership after Moses. Rahab shows us that God uses whoever is willing—in spite of a sinful reputation. She is even included in Jesus' family line! Ehud and Gideon let God use them to deliver Israel from powerful enemies. We must be willing to obey God and let Him use us!



Be Strong and Courageous

Lesson Text: Joshua 1:1-6; 11:16-19, 21-23

“Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the Lord said unto Moses (Joshua 11:23).”



Big Idea: God is with us and gives us courage when we trust Him to keep His promises.

Prepare Your Mind

The phrase “be strong and courageous” is mentioned three times by God to Joshua—all in the space of one chapter. But Joshua was no coward. Previously, he was one of the spies sent into Canaan to scout the land for Moses, and his report was filled with optimism and bravado. He was then mentored under Moses’ leadership for decades, so he was no slouch.

Yet the task set before him in leading the Israelites into Canaan was so monumental, so terrifying, that God told him over and over that he needed strength and courage to succeed. Joshua wasn’t expected to muster such bravery in his own strength, of course; he was to lean into God. “I will never leave you nor forsake you” is His glorious promise that we cling to even today. And then, as we see from the memory verse, Joshua’s great victory was the result of his obedience to the Lord.



Supplies

- dark sunglasses
- hat
- overcoat
- wig (optional)
- fake mustache (optional)

Prepare Your Heart

Under the leadership of Joshua and his obedience to God, the promise made to Moses came into fruition when Israel entered Canaan. The Israelites were able to see God’s power, presence, and provision at work. Obedience to God is an important aspect of our faith whether we are children or adults! It challenges us in our daily decisions and causes us to consider how being obedient to God and His Word requires the bravery and courage only He can give. The story of Joshua may be familiar to some children in your class, but bear in mind it could be completely new to others. They will need a little background—some context to help them make sense of this particular segment of the story. And then they can dig into the beautiful truths of God’s promises to us, knowing we can be strong and courageous because He is with us always.



Prepare the Room

Put on **wig, mustache, hat, sunglasses,** and **overcoat** to greet students in disguise. Ensure there is adequate space to play Simon Says later on.



Conversation Starter

Have you ever dreamed of being a spy?
In stories, spies have been smart, brave characters and *really, really cool!*
Can you name any famous spies?

Bible Lesson 🕒 10-15 min



Spying might seem cool, but it's also extremely dangerous, taking a great deal of courage. In today's lesson, we are learning about Joshua. To give a little bit of background, when he was younger, Joshua was chosen by Moses to be an actual spy. He was sent to scout out a new land that God had promised to His people, the Israelites. Moses needed to know what to expect there, and he trusted Joshua and a few others to take on that risky task without getting caught. Joshua was a brave guy—he did the job, and he came back with good reports about the land. (👉 Take off spy disguise.)

Now we pick up the story after Moses died. Joshua was chosen by God to be the new leader of the Israelite people. Because of his spying mission, we know he was courageous, and we know that God had a plan for his life. The plan was to lead the thousands upon thousands of Israelite people into the Promised Land, called Canaan, and to defeat all their enemies in the process.

It was a huge mission. But with God, it was not impossible—because nothing is impossible for our God! However, there was one thing that was hugely important: Joshua had to *obey* God—not just a little bit but completely.

God knows all things—He even knows what we are thinking and what we are scared of. (🗨️) He knew Joshua would be nervous about the huge mission and would like a little reassurance that everything would be fine. Sometimes we all need a few words of encouragement, don't we? The Bible is full of encouragement for us—and God had some wonderful words of encouragement for Joshua.

God told Joshua not once (👉 have class raise one finger up), not twice (👉👉 have class raise two fingers up) but three times (👉👉👉 have class raise three fingers up) all in one conversation that he needed to “be strong and courageous.” (👉👉👉 Have class put all fingers down.) What did God say? (👉👉👉 Have class repeat, “Be strong and courageous.”)



There's a really cool word that describes God super well, and it means “all-knowing.” The word is “omniscient” (print on board) and sounds like “om-NI-shent.”

🗨️ Can you think of a time when you needed to be strong and courageous?

The good news for Joshua was that he didn't have to rely on his own strength and his own courage. He did not have to be the best commander or the best swordsman. He didn't need the best battle plans or the best soldiers. All Joshua needed to do was trust in God's promise and be strong and courageous. God promised that He was going to be with him (Josh. 1:5). That meant Joshua could trust in God's strength to win Israel's battles.

Just as God promised to be with Joshua all those years ago, He also promises to be with you and me today. (🗨️) He is with us right this minute, right this week, when we're hanging out with friends, attending school, playing sports, or at home. Wherever you are, no matter the time of day, God is there too, watching over you and taking care of you. He promises to never leave us—ever.



Right after Jesus told His disciples to teach others to obey Him, He promised that He would be with them (and us) always—just as God told Joshua years before!

🗨️ Do you think God always keeps His promises? Why?

God is perfect and holy. He never makes mistakes, and He always keeps His word. Joshua trusted God would keep His promise. And therefore, he put his faith into actions. He raised his sword and led the people into battle and into the Promised Land, knowing they could defeat their enemies because God was with them.

And, of course, the Bible tells us God kept His promise to Joshua. We read in our memory verse that Joshua captured all the Promised Land for the Israelite people. He really trusted in the Lord, didn't he? Joshua was obedient to God because God *always* keeps His promises.

Jesus talked about obedience too. In Matthew 28:19-20, Jesus told His disciples they were to teach people everywhere to obey His words. This applies to us today. He wants us to obey Him because He loves us and wants the very best for us. He longs for us to trust Him with every little bit of our lives—the things that scare us, worry us, interest us, and bring us joy. We can be brave like Joshua and trust God with our whole lives because we know for sure that He will never leave us and that He will always keep His promises to care for us.

Explaining the Memory Verse

Because Joshua was courageous and completely obedient to God, he was successful and victorious in his battles, and the people were able to enter the beautiful land God had promised them.



Activity: Simon Says ⌚ 5–10 min

To reinforce how Joshua was obedient to God, play the Simon Says game. One child is chosen to be Simon. Facing the class, Simon gives action commands, such as stand up, clap, or stomp feet. If Simon gives a command beginning with the words “Simon says,” (“Simon says, ‘Stand up.’”), the class must obey. If Simon gives a command that does *not* begin with the words “Simon says,” (“Stand up!”), the class must *not* obey. Whoever obeys when the command does not include “Simon says” is out. The winner is the last child standing, and that child will be Simon next.

Big Question: Why does God ask us to do brave things?

Wouldn't it be easier if life were simple and we never had to be courageous? Perhaps—although it would be rather boring! It would also mean that we would never get to rely on God and trust Him in big ways. God asks us to do brave things, just as He asked Joshua. But remember, God doesn't

expect us to do brave things alone. He promises to be with us and promises He will never, ever leave us. Jesus also tells us in Matthew 28:20 that He is with us always. Today our world needs more strong and courageous followers of Jesus. Are you ready to be strong and courageous for Him?

Next Steps

God keeps all His promises because He is perfect and holy. He is God! Get together with a friend or grown-up, and find three promises that God makes in the Bible. You will see how He always keeps His promises. And then be strong and courageous, knowing God is with you!

Prayer Points

- Thank God that He will never leave us—He is always with us. •
- Ask God to give us the strength and courage we need to follow Him daily. •
- Ask Jesus to help us be obedient to what He wants us to do and say. •

Christ Focus

Jesus asks us to be obedient to Him because He loves us!

Break the Joshua Code Answers:

1. God told Joshua, “Be strong and of a good courage” (Joshua 1:6).
2. Joshua took the whole land, just as God had promised.