

Heroes of Faith

BIBLE PASSAGE: Hebrews 11:1–12:2

MAIN POINT: The Bible tells us about people who lived by faith.

KEY PASSAGE: 2 Corinthians 5:17

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Who changes us? God changes us to be like Jesus.

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(20–25 MINUTES)
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Leader BIBLE STUDY

It is common to think of faith as something that is just within us—trust and confidence in God. While that is surely part of it, faith doesn't stop there. Faith starts inside of us and always leads to action.

The writer of the Book of Hebrews wanted to explain the fullness of faith to the early Jewish Christians. One of the best ways he could do this was to walk through examples of how men and women in the Old Testament had proven to be faithful. The result is Hebrews 11, often known as the Hall of Faith.

Abel had faith when he gave an offering to God, and God

accepted his offering. Noah had faith. He believed God when God told him to build an ark to rescue his family.

Abraham had faith when God called him to leave his home. Abraham's wife Sarah had faith when she trusted God to give her a family even though she was too old to have children. Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses had faith too. Rahab had faith when she hid the Israelite spies in Jericho.

All of these people trusted God, and so did many others. Having faith was not easy. Many suffered, and they died before God's greatest promise—the arrival of Jesus—came true, but they believed that God had a wonderful plan. God was pleased with them because they trusted Him.

This week, share the examples of these heroes of faith to help your preschoolers understand faith in action. We can and should learn from these examples; that is why God gave them to us in Hebrews 11. However, emphasize that every person in this list was a sinner in need of salvation. Each of these heroes needed a greater hero. Point your preschoolers to the perfect hero who rescues us from sin: Jesus.



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The BIBLE STORY

Bible Storytelling Tips

Heroes of Faith

Hebrews 11:1–12:2

• Use finger puppets:

Create simple Bible times finger puppets representing the heroes of faith the author discussed in Hebrews 11. Give each person to a preschooler to hold up when you mention him or her in the story.

- **Dress up:** Invite boys and girls to use oversize adult shirts, rope belts, and accessories to dress like a favorite Bible times person. Tell the Bible story and ask a child to stand to represent the writer of the Book of Hebrews and each of the people in the story. Recall parts of the Old Testament stories and allow preschoolers to act out a portion of that story.

People who love Jesus live by faith. Faith is when you believe something that you have not seen. Faith is trusting God. By faith, we believe that God is who He says He is and that He will do everything He said He will do. It is impossible to please God without having faith.

Many people in the Bible had faith, and this pleased God. Abel had faith. He made an offering to God, and God accepted it. Noah had faith too. He believed God when God told him to build an ark and rescue his family. God was pleased with Noah.

Abraham had faith when God told him to leave his home. God made promises to Abraham, and Abraham believed that God was going to keep His promises.

Abraham's wife Sarah had faith. She trusted God to give her a family even though she was too old to have children. God gave Abraham and Sarah a big family.

Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses had faith. Rahab had faith when she hid the Israelite spies in Jericho. King David had faith too. All of these people trusted God, and so did many others. Having faith was not easy. Many suffered, and they all died before God's greatest promise—the arrival of Jesus—came true, but they believed that God had a wonderful plan. God was pleased with them because they trusted Him.

We too know that God has a great plan. He kept His promise to send His own Son to save people from sin. Jesus gives us faith. We can look to Him because He makes all of God's promises come true.

Christ Connection: The Bible tells us about people who had faith, but Jesus is the only true hero of the Bible. He trusted in God's plan even though it meant dying on the cross. Because of Jesus, all of God's promises will come true. One day Jesus will come back, just like God promised.



**WANT TO
DISCOVER
GOD'S WORD?
GET
MORE!**

Invite preschoolers to check out this week's devotionals to discover how God's Word can help them grow in the gospel. Order in bulk, subscribe quarterly, or purchase individually. For more information, check out www.lifeway.com/devotionals.

Introduce THE STORY

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Welcome time

- “From the Inside Out” song
- offering basket
- Allergy Alert download
- favorite toys related to the Bible story theme

Play the unit theme song in the background as you greet preschoolers and follow your church’s security procedures. Set an offering basket near the door to collect at an appropriate time. Post an allergy alert, if necessary. Set out a few favorite theme-related toys, such as puzzles and blocks.

Activity page

- “Find Us Faithful” activity page, 1 per child
- pencils or crayons

Direct preschoolers to draw a line connecting each figure with the Bible story picture in which he or she belongs.

SAY • Do you remember the Bible stories these pictures show? We talked about them quite a long time ago. They are Abel, Noah, Abraham, and Rahab. In today’s Bible story, we will hear about them again. Listen to hear why.

Read Bible storybooks

Set out a variety of Bible storybooks for preschoolers to examine. Ask a preschooler if he has a favorite Bible story. Find the Bible story he mentions in a Bible or Bible storybook and read the story to the group. Show the corresponding Bible story picture on the giant timeline or big story circle if possible. Continue reading favorite Bible

LOW PREP

- Bibles
- Bible storybooks
- Giant Timeline or Big Story Circle (optional)

stories as time allows.

SAY • Today's Bible story mentions many people we have heard about in other Bible stories. These are all people who showed faith in God. Faith is trusting God and believing what He says is true, even when you cannot see it with your eyes. The best part about faith is that it is not something we have to work to get on our own. Jesus gives us faith. Listen to the Bible story.

Feel inside a mystery box

Gather several empty tissue boxes. Consider adding a sheet of paper with a slit to each opening to keep the box's contents hidden. Before the session, place a different item in each box. Set out the boxes. Invite a child to place his hand in the box and feel the object. Give him at least three tries to guess the contents of the box before allowing him to pull out the object. Switch out objects in the boxes as needed while preschoolers continue to play.

- empty tissue boxes
- various items
- paper (optional)
- tape (optional)
- scissors (optional)

SAY • You felt inside the boxes without knowing what was inside. That is kind of like having faith. *Faith* is when you believe something that you have not seen. People who love Jesus live by faith. Listen to today's Bible story to hear about people who lived by faith.

Transition to teach the story

To gain the attention of all the preschoolers to move them to Bible study, show the countdown video, flip off the lights, or clap a simple rhythm for the children to copy. Lead preschoolers to Bible study one at a time by taking each preschooler by the hand.

- countdown video (optional)

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Introduce the Bible story

SAY • Who is a hero? [*Invite responses.*] Jesus is the ultimate hero! He trusted in God's plan even though it meant dying on the cross. In today's Bible story, we will hear about many people who had faith, but Jesus is the only One of all those people who makes all of God's promises come true.

Watch or tell the Bible story

Place a bookmark at Hebrews 11 in your Bible. Invite a preschooler to open it. Reverently display the open Bible.

SAY • Jesus is the true hero of the Bible. The Bible tells us who Jesus is and what He did for us. Everything the Bible says about Jesus is true. Today's Bible story is from Hebrews in the New Testament.

Show the video or tell the Bible story using the provided storytelling helps. Use the bolded version of the Bible story for young preschoolers.

Talk about the Bible story

SAY • **The Bible tells us about people who lived by faith.** Many suffered, and they all died before God's greatest promise—the arrival of Jesus—came true,

- Bible
- bookmark
- "Heroes of Faith" video (optional)
- Bible Story Picture Poster

- Main Point Poster
- Giant Timeline or Big Story Circle

but they believed that God had a wonderful plan. We too know that God has a great plan. We can look to Jesus and He will give us faith.

Point to the Bible story picture on the giant timeline or big story circle as you ask the following review questions:

1. What is faith? (*believing something that you have not seen*)
2. Can we please God without faith? (*no*)
3. Name some people mentioned in our Bible story who showed faith. (*Abel, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Rahab, King David*)
4. Is having faith easy? (*no*)
5. Who gives us faith and makes all God's promises come true? (*Jesus*)

Learn the big picture question

SAY • This is the last week for our big picture question:

Who changes us? God changes us to be like Jesus.

One day Jesus will come back, just as God promised. And when He does, the work God is doing to change us to be like Jesus will be finished! We will be perfect, like Jesus!

• Big Picture Question
Poster

Practice the key passage

Open your Bible to 2 Corinthians 5:17. Read the key passage aloud several times. Sing together the key passage song, "A New Creation."

SAY • God makes us a new creation the moment we put our trust in Jesus to save us from sin. When Jesus comes back, the new creation will be complete!

• Key Passage Poster
• "A New Creation" song

Transition to experience the story

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• blindfolds (optional)

Walk by faith

Clear the room of obstacles. Blindfold a child or invite him to close his eyes. Tell him to listen to an adult leader as she holds his hand and guides him around the room. After a few minutes, choose another child and play again.

SAY • You had to trust [*adult leader's name*] as she led you around the room. Faith in Jesus is kind of like that, but not exactly. **The Bible tells us about people who lived by faith.** We have all these wonderful stories in God's Word to show us how He always cares for His people. Our God is all-powerful, in control, and good. He sent His very own Son to rescue us from sin. We can trust God!

Look at the Old Testament

Cut 12 strips of paper from 6 colors (2 strips per color). Place one set of paper strips in a gift bag. Use the other 6 strips as Bible markers, placing a strip at the Old Testament story of Abel (Genesis 4:4-8), Noah (Genesis 6:13-22), Abraham (Genesis 12:1-4), Moses (Exodus 2), Rahab (Joshua 2:8-24), and David (1 Samuel 16). Invite a child to choose a strip from the bag and open the Bible to the place with the matching strip. Briefly review how that person had

- construction paper
- scissors (adult-use only)
- Bible
- Giant Timeline or Big Story Circle

faith in God. Show the corresponding Bible story picture on the giant timeline or big story circle.

SAY • The Bible tells us about people who lived by faith, but Jesus is the true hero of the Bible. He trusted in God's plan even though it meant dying on the cross. Because of Jesus, all of God's promises will come true. One day Jesus will come back, just like God promised.

Make a superhero cape

Use the "Cape Pattern" as a reference to cut out a fabric cape for each preschooler. Use a fabric marker to write *FAITH* on the back of each cape.

Put a smock on each preschooler and roll up sleeves. Allow a preschooler to use fabric markers to decorate her cape. Help her put on her decorated cape.

SAY • The Bible tells us about people who lived by faith. We called the people in our Bible story today heroes, but they really are not heroes at all. They are ordinary, sinful people who trusted their extraordinary God. God used them to do amazing things, and He can use ordinary, sinful people like you and me too. Jesus is the true hero of the Bible, and when we trust in Him, God can do amazing things through us too.

- "Cape Pattern" printable
- fabric
- fabric scissors (adult use)
- fabric markers

Tip: Cut capes to be shorter than a child's height to avoid choking.

Paint on a mirror

Place a large shatter-proof mirror on a table covered with a plastic tablecloth. Put a smock on each preschooler and roll up his or her sleeves. Set out small cups of washable paint and paintbrushes. Invite children to paint on the mirror. Consider doing this activity outside if weather permits.

- shatter-proof full-length mirror
- plastic tablecloth
- washable paint
- paintbrushes
- smocks
- wipes for cleanup

SAY • Was it fun to see yourself in the mirror as you painted? Could you see yourself when the mirror was covered with paint? **The Bible tells us about people who lived by faith.** When we trust God, we do not look at ourselves and what we can do. We look to Jesus and what He has done. Jesus trusted in God's plan even though it meant dying on the cross. Because of Jesus, all of God's promises will come true. One day Jesus will come back, just like God promised.

Work Jesus puzzles

- puzzles depicting Jesus
- previous Bible Story Pictures depicting Jesus (optional)
- scissors (optional)

Set out a variety of puzzles depicting Jesus. If puzzles depicting Jesus are not available, print previous Bible story pictures that feature Jesus onto heavyweight paper and cut them into four to six pieces. Invite preschoolers to work the puzzles.

SAY • The Bible tells us about people who lived by faith.

Many of the people in today's Bible story suffered, and they all died before God's greatest promise—the arrival of Jesus—came true, but they believed that God had a wonderful plan. Because of Jesus, all of God's promises will come true. One day Jesus will come back, just like God promised.

Snack

Play the countdown video to signal the end of activities. Guide preschoolers to clean their areas. Take a restroom break and wash hands. Gather preschoolers for snack time. Thank God for the snack.

Serve a snack. As preschoolers eat, ask them if they could meet any person from today's Bible story, who would they choose. Remind preschoolers that the people in today's Bible story believed that God had a good plan. We too know that God has a great plan. He kept His promise to send His own Son to save people from sin. Because of Jesus, all of God's promises will come true. One day Jesus will come back, just like God promised.

- countdown video (optional)
- Allergy Alert download
- snack food
- paper cups and napkins

Transition

When a child finishes her snack, guide her to throw away any trash. She may select a book or puzzle to examine, play quietly with play dough or a favorite toy, or color the Bible story coloring page.

Offer the journal page. At the top of each paper, write *By faith, [child's name]* and invite preschoolers to draw a picture of themselves below. Remind preschoolers that Jesus gives us faith. We can look to Him because He makes all of God's promises come true. Pray for the children.

SAY • God, make these boys and girls mighty men and women of faith. Give us faith and help us to live trusting that You are who You say You are and that You will do everything You said You will do. Amen.

If parents are picking up their children at this time, tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session. Distribute the preschool big picture cards for families.

- books
- puzzles
- play dough
- Journal Page printable, 1 per child
- Bible Story Coloring Page
- crayons
- Big Picture Cards for Families: Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers