



**Bible Point** ▶

# True heroes follow God's directions.

## Bible Verse

“Make me walk along the path of your commands, for that is where my happiness is found” (Psalm 119:35).

## Growing Closer to Jesus

Students will

- explore what the Bible says about following God's directions,
- follow directions that lead to an affirmation treasure, and
- discover that God's directions always lead to good things.

## Teacher Enrichment

### Bible Basis

#### ■ Joshua leads the people across the Jordan River.

**Joshua  
3:1–4:24**



In many ways Joshua was the most logical candidate to succeed Moses as Israel's leader. Joshua had long served as Moses' loyal personal assistant. The example of Moses' dependence on God must have influenced Joshua and taught him to also depend on God.

Joshua had proven his bravery on more than one occasion. For example, he led the armies of Israel to defeat the Amalekites. Experiences like this honed his skills in battle and bolstered his courage in God.

Courage and confidence in God were what led Joshua and Caleb to return a positive, upbeat report after checking out the land of Canaan. Ten other spies came back dejected and faithless. Joshua exhorted the people to trust God for the victory. The people rejected his reports, however, and as a result, an entire generation was left to wander in the wilderness.

These experiences, coupled with God's empowerment, qualified Joshua to lead the people across the Jordan. This time, would the people follow?

Other Scriptures used in this lesson are Proverbs 3:5-6; Psalm 119:1-5.





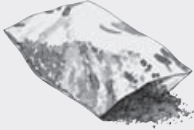
### Prayer

- Read Joshua 1:9.
- According to this verse, why shouldn't we be afraid?
- Is there something God has called you to do for which you need a new sense of courage?
- Pray: Dear God, you promised to be with Joshua no matter what happened. Help me to remember that you are present with me through the challenges I face. Help me to have the kind of courage and faith in you that Joshua had. In Jesus' name, amen.

## Before the Lesson

- Collect the necessary items for the activities you plan to use, referring to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies listed on the chart.
- Make photocopies of the “Hands-On Fun at Home” handout (at the end of this lesson) to send home with your students.
- Pray for your students and for God’s direction as you teach the lesson.

## This Lesson at a Glance

	What Students Will Do	Classroom Supplies	Learning Lab Supplies
<b>Attention Grabber</b>	<b>Following Directions</b> —Run a relay by following directions.		
<b>Bible Exploration &amp; Application</b>	<b>Daffy Directions</b> —Follow silly directions, receive rewards, and read Proverbs 3:5-6.	Bibles, “Daffy Directions” handout (p. 141), scissors, snacks	
	<b>Remember the River</b> —Act out the Bible story in Joshua 3:1–4:24.	Bible, “Remember the River” handout (p. 142), CD player	
	<b>Affirmation Treasure Hunt</b> —Hide treasures, make maps, and read Psalm 119:1-5, 35.	Bibles, pencils, paper, tape	
<b>Closing</b> 	<b>Rocks of Remembrance</b> —Make symbols to remind themselves of God’s love and care.	Wax paper or aluminum foil, pencils, scissors, resealable plastic bag	

## Welcome



As kids arrive, ask them how they applied last week's lesson to their lives. Ask questions such as, "What worry did you trust God to help you with?" and "How were you a hero by helping someone else trust God?"

Tell kids that whenever you blow the *trumpet* twice, they are to stop talking, raise their hands, and focus on you. Explain that it's important to respond to this signal quickly so the class can do as many fun activities as possible.



It's important to say the Bible Point just as it's written in each activity. Repeating the Bible Point over and over throughout the lesson will help kids remember it and apply it to their lives.

## Attention Grabber

### ■ Following Directions

**SUPPLIES:** none



Take two volunteers aside, and say: **I'm going to give the class directions to run a relay. Your job is to offer kids directions that are different from my directions. I'll tell the kids to roll a *plastic egg* with their noses, take one *prism shape* from the egg, place the shape in the *miniature trophy*, and then roll the egg back to their teams. As a person reaches the trophy during the race, you'll say, "Pick up the egg and run back!" or "Put two *prism shapes* in the trophy—not just one!"**

Place the *miniature trophy* on the floor at one end of the classroom. Form two teams, and have each team form a line at the opposite end of the room from the trophy. Have the volunteers stand by the trophy. Give the first person in each line a *plastic egg* filled with 10 *prism shapes*.

Say: **To start the relay, I'll say, "Roll those eggs." If you're the first person on your team, get on your hands and knees, and use your nose to roll your *plastic egg* across the room to the trophy. Open your egg, take out one *prism shape*, put it in the *miniature trophy*, close the egg, and use your nose to roll the egg back to the next team member.**

**The next person in line will do the same thing until everyone has had a turn. The first team to follow my directions and complete the race wins. The two volunteers standing across the room will watch to be sure you put the *prism shape* in the trophy. Ready? Put your nose to the ground and roll those eggs!**

After all the team members have completed the relay, blow the *trumpet* twice, and wait for kids to respond. Declare a winner according to the number of students who followed your instructions. Collect the *miniature trophy*, *plastic eggs*, and *prism shapes*. Have kids sit in a circle, and ask:

- **What did you think about the volunteers' directions?** (I was confused; I knew they were lying.)
- **How did you decide whose directions to follow?** (I didn't think you'd notice if I followed their instructions; you said we had to follow your directions to win.)



- If your classroom is small, you may want to do this activity in a fellowship hall or large meeting room.
- If you have fewer than eight students in your class, choose one volunteer to stand by the *miniature trophy*, and have the rest of the students form one line to run the relay.



## BIBLE POINT

• **How is following directions in this game like following God's directions?** (Different people tell you to do different things; God's directions are sometimes hard to follow; people try to get you to turn away from God's directions; God's directions are always the right ones.)

Say: ► **True heroes follow God's directions. Sometimes people try to get us to do the opposite of what God wants us to do, just as the two volunteers in our game did. But when we listen to God, he always leads us to good things because he loves us and wants what's best for us. Today we're going to discover why God's directions are so good.**

## Bible Exploration & Application

### ■ Daffy Directions

**SUPPLIES:** Bibles, "Daffy Directions" handout (p. 141), scissors, snacks

Before class, photocopy the "Daffy Directions" handout, and cut apart the directions. You'll need one directions slip for each student. Place a container of snacks, such as doughnut holes or fruit, out of sight.

Distribute the directions. Have kids form a line along one end of the room. Stand at the opposite end of the room, and say: **One at a time, read aloud your directions, do what the directions say, and then take the number of steps it says to take toward me. Follow your directions even if they seem silly. When everyone has had a turn, I'll ask you to exchange directions with the person standing closest to you. Then we'll continue by reading and following the new directions until someone reaches me. Although it may seem silly, this game will produce a good result. Trust me!**

When someone reaches you, say: **All right! Because you followed your directions so well, everyone will receive a snack as a reward!**

Have kids sit in pairs. Distribute the snacks. Have pairs discuss the following questions while they eat.

Ask: • **What was it like to follow the directions?** (Fun; silly; embarrassing; I didn't understand why I had to do it; I liked seeing other kids follow their directions.)

• **How did you feel when you learned you'd get a snack for a reward?** (Great; hungry; glad I followed my directions.)

• **How was following these directions like following God's directions?** (We get a reward when we follow God; we had to trust you like we have to trust God; we don't always understand God's directions either; God's directions aren't this weird.)

When kids have finished eating their snacks, say: **Following God's directions is always better than relying on our own ideas. Let's look in the book of Proverbs to find out why.** Distribute Bibles, and help kids find **Proverbs 3:5-6**. Have pairs take turns reading the verses. Pause after you ask each of the following questions and allow time for discussion.

Ask: • **What does Proverbs 3:5-6 tell us about following God's directions?** (God will show us which path to take; trust God to lead us; trust God with all our heart.)

• **What's wrong with depending on our own understanding?** (We don't know everything; God is leading us, and he knows the way; we don't always understand what God wants us to do.)



Move from being the principal player and information giver to being a guide and facilitator. Active learning takes a lot of pressure off you because the spotlight shifts from you to the students. Become a choreographer of sorts! This doesn't mean that you "check out" of teaching. Now it's your job to guide students to the point of the lesson—the Bible Point!

• **What does it mean to trust God with all our heart?** (Listen to him; follow God's directions; believe that he will take care of us, no matter what.)

• **Why is it sometimes hard to trust God to lead us?** (Sometimes we don't understand what God wants us to do; we might want to do things our way; God's way might be harder.)

• **How can we trust God and follow his directions?** (Read the Bible; pray; ask advice from parents and teachers.)

Blow the *trumpet* twice to bring everyone together, and wait for kids to respond. Invite them to share insights from their discussions.

Say: ► **True heroes follow God's directions. Sometimes even heroes don't understand what God's directions mean or where they're leading. But depending on our own understanding doesn't get us very far. That's why it's important to pray, read the Bible, ask advice from other Christians, and trust that God will help us understand. Let's hear a story about someone who followed God's directions and became a hero!**



### HANDS-ON BIBLE

Give each student some newspapers, mud, string, straw, grass, leaves, small sticks, cotton balls, and a small ball. Make sure kids have their *Hands-On Bibles*.

Have students turn to page 618 in their Bibles and complete the "God's Nest" activity found there. When kids are finished, ask:

• **What do you think it would be like to live in God's nest? Why?** (Cozy; comfortable; happy; safe; God would take care of me and give me everything I need.)



Research shows that kids remember about 90 percent of what they *do*, but less than 10 percent of what they *hear*. Kids need to be actively involved in lively experiences that bring home the Bible Point!

## Remember the River

**SUPPLIES:** Bible, "Remember the River" handout (p. 142), CD player



Make one photocopy of the "Remember the River" handout. Cue the CD to "Remember the River" (track 14).

Say: **Our Bible story comes from Joshua 3:1–4:24.** Open your Bible, and show kids the passage. Give a volunteer the photocopy of the "Remember the River" handout. As you play the "Remember the River" track on the CD, have the volunteer pantomime the story. Say: **God's directions may not have made much sense at first to this Bible hero. Listen carefully and watch [name] pantomime the story. Then I'll play the story again, and we'll all act it out.**

Play "Remember the River" on the CD. After the story, stop the CD player. Then say: **Now that we're familiar with this story, let's act it out together as we listen to it again. I need another volunteer to lead us.**

After kids have acted out the story, have them sit in a circle.

Ask: • **Which of God's directions might have been hard to understand?** (That the priests had to lead them across the water; that they had to pick out 12 rocks.)

• **Why do you think Joshua followed God's directions?** (Because he loved and trusted God; because he'd seen God's miracles; because he didn't know what else to do.)



## BIBLE POINT

### Bible Insight

The Jordan River is more than 70 miles long and 10 to 12 feet deep. It descends from 230 feet to 1292 feet below sea level. It stretches from Mount Hermon, through the Sea of Galilee, all the way to the Dead Sea. When Joshua conquered Canaan, he crossed the river near Jericho, about 10 miles north of the Dead Sea.

### teacher tips

If groups have trouble thinking of affirmations, suggest these ideas:

- A note attached to a *prism shape* that reads, "You are all sparkling stars."
- A note attached to the *color cube* that reads, "Your group adds color and fun to our class."
- A note attached to the *spy disguise* that reads, "There's no disguising it. God really loves you."

## BIBLE VERSE

• **What might have happened if Joshua hadn't followed God's directions?** (God would've been angry; the people would've been stuck at the river; the people wouldn't have thought so much of Joshua.)

• **What happens when we don't follow God's directions?** (We do the wrong thing; we get frustrated; we make God sad.)

• **How do you feel when you do follow God's directions?** (Good; happy; like I know I'm doing the right thing.)

Say: ► ***True heroes follow God's directions. Because God loves us, he always leads us in the right direction.***

## Affirmation Treasure Hunt

**SUPPLIES:** Bibles, pencils, paper, tape



Form four groups. Set out pencils, paper, tape, and the Learning Lab box with all the items in it.

Say: **To learn how important directions are, we're going to go on a treasure hunt! Each group will hide a treasure and create a treasure map. As a group, select an item from the Learning Lab box to be your treasure. Then think of a fun way to use that item to affirm the group you'll trade maps with.**

**For example, you might take the *wall walker* and attach a note that says, "You show us how to follow Jesus anywhere." Or you might attach a note to the *miniature trophy* that says, "The great hero award. You guys follow God's directions." After you attach an affirmation to your treasure, hide it on a shelf or in a closet, drawer, or behind some books. Then draw a map on your sheet of paper to lead others to your treasure!**

After each group chooses an item from the Learning Lab box, allow about five minutes for groups to attach affirmations to their treasures, hide them, and draw their maps. After five minutes, blow the *trumpet* twice, and wait for kids to respond.

Say: **Trade maps with another group. Then follow the map you receive, and find the treasure. When you find it, bring it back and sit in a circle.**

When all groups have found their treasures and are sitting in the circle, have volunteers share their groups' affirmation treasures.

Ask: • **What was it like to follow the directions on the treasure map?** (Fun; it was easy to read and follow; we had a hard time figuring out the map.)

• **How did you feel when you found the treasure?** (Happy; relieved; proud.)

Say: **We have a map that can lead to treasure in our lives. It's called the Bible. Help kids find ► Psalm 119:1-5, 35 in their Bibles. Have a volunteer read the passage aloud, including today's Bible verse: "Make me walk along the path of your commands, for that is where my happiness is found" (Psalm 119:35). Encourage others to follow along in their Bibles.**

Ask: • **How is following God's Word like following a treasure map?** (They both lead to something good; God's Word is like a map that tells us which way to go; sometimes they both can be confusing.)

• **Why is the Bible sometimes hard to follow?** (Because we don't understand it; we get confused.)

• **How can we learn to understand and follow the Bible?** (Study it at Sunday school; read it with our parents, and ask questions; go to church.)

• **What are some of the treasures we find when we read the Bible and follow God's directions?** (God's promises; knowing that Jesus died for us; learning that God loves us.)

Say: ► ***True heroes follow God's directions.*** Those directions are given to us right here in the Bible—God's Word. Reading the Bible is like following a map made by God that leads us to wonderful treasures!

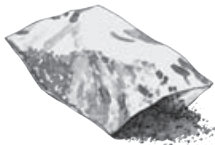


Say: **The best treasure we find in the Bible is the treasure of salvation through Jesus. God loves us so much that he gave us his Son, Jesus, so that we could have eternal life with him. Now that's what I call a real treasure!**

## Closing

### ■ *Rocks of Remembrance*

**SUPPLIES:** pencils, wax paper or aluminum foil, scissors, resealable plastic bag



Before class, open the bag of *celluclay* and pour the contents into a resealable plastic bag. Add one-third to one-half cup of warm water, a little at a time. Knead the mixture as you add water until the *celluclay* is the consistency of clay or stiff dough. The mixture will be somewhat sticky; if it seems to be too sticky, leave the plastic bag open to allow the *celluclay* to air dry for a few hours. Do not expose the *celluclay* to the air overnight. You can make the *celluclay* the day before you need it and keep it stored in the resealable plastic bag.

Ask: • **In today's story, why did God tell Joshua to have the men collect the 12 stones from the river?** (To build an altar; so their children would ask what the stones meant and learn about how God stopped the water; so they would always remember God's miracle.)

Say: **There are lots of places in the Bible where people used rocks to remember the good things that God did for them. Remembering how God has helped us in the past is a good way to help us follow God's directions in the future. Let's think about how God has helped us already in our lives.**

Form pairs. Say: **Tell your partner how God encouraged you and took care of you during a hard time. For example, maybe you were lonely because your best friend moved away, and God sent a new friend into your life.**

After two minutes, blow the *trumpet* twice, and wait for kids to respond. Say: **When we remember how God encouraged us and took care of us in the past, it's easier to trust and follow God's directions in the future. ► *True heroes follow God's directions.* We'll use this *celluclay* to help us remember how God cares for us.**

Give each person a 6-inch square of wax paper or aluminum foil. Say: **We'll each form a shape to symbolize God's love and care. For example, you might make a circle shape to show that God's care never ends, a heart shape to**





If you have enough *celluclay*, make a few extra shapes for visitors and kids who are absent.



### BIBLE POINT ►

show God's love, or a cross shape to show Jesus' forgiveness. Poke a hole in your shape. Next week, we'll decorate the shapes, and thread yarn or string through them to make medallions.

Portion out the *celluclay* onto kids' foil or wax paper squares, making sure to have enough *celluclay* for everyone. Let kids form their clay into the desired shapes. Have kids set their shapes on a table to dry. Then have the kids form a circle around the table. Say: **One at a time, point out your shape, and tell us what it symbolizes.**

After each person shares, leave the shapes to dry overnight. If you can, leave the shapes in your classroom until next week. If someone else will be using your room, carefully remove and store the shapes until your next meeting. You will use the shapes during next week's Closing activity.

Say: **Good job! Now, let's close in prayer. Dear God, we know that ► true heroes follow your directions. Help us to remember the great things you did for us in the past and to trust you to do great things in the future. Help us to follow your directions. We know you'll always give us the right directions because you love us. In Jesus' name, amen.**



### Growing closer to Jesus extends beyond the classroom.

Photocopy the "Hands-On Fun at Home" handout (at the end of this lesson) for this week, and send it home with your kids. Encourage kids and parents to use the handout to spark meaningful discussion on this week's topic.



# Daffy Directions

Say your favorite hobby and why you enjoy it. Then take two giant steps toward the teacher.

**Do three jumping jacks.  
Then take two tiny  
steps toward the teacher.**

Sing "Happy Birthday to You" to yourself. Then take one giant step toward the teacher.

Clap as loudly as you can five times. Then take one giant step toward the teacher.

Crow like a rooster. Then take five steps toward the teacher.

Describe your favorite person in the Bible. Then take two giant steps toward the teacher.

**Link arms  
with someone,  
and take four  
giant steps toward  
the teacher.**

Tell about your best family vacation. Then take four tiny steps toward the teacher.

Tell a joke, and then take three tiny steps toward the teacher.

# Remember the River

Listen to this story on the CD. As you hear the words in the left column, lead the class in doing the actions in the right column.

The Lord said to Joshua, "Today I will begin to make you great in the opinion of all the Israelites so the people will know I am with you just as I was with Moses."

***Point to your chest, look surprised, and silently say, "Me?"***

The Lord said to Joshua, "Tell the priests who carry the ark of the covenant to go to the edge of the Jordan River and stand in the water."

***Hold a hand to your ear, and silently say, "What?"***

Joshua thought, "OK, God. I may not understand, but I'll follow your directions."

***Shrug your shoulders, and then give a thumbs-up sign.***

Joshua told the Israelites, "The priests will carry the ark into the Jordan River ahead of you."

***Bend down, and pretend to pick up a heavy object.***

"When the priests step into the water, it will stop flowing."

***Scratch your head and look puzzled.***

So the people left the place where they had camped, and they followed the priests who carried the ark. When the priests came to the edge of the river and stepped into the water, the water upstream stopped flowing.

***Put your hands in front of you as if you're stopping the water.***

The priests stood in the middle of the river on dry ground and waited there while all the people of Israel walked across on dry land.

***Motion with your arm for people to follow you.***

After the people had crossed, the Lord said to Joshua, "Choose 12 men to get 12 rocks from the middle of the river."

***Count to 12 on your fingers.***

So Joshua chose one man from each of the 12 tribes to go to the river and bring back 12 rocks. The Israelites obeyed Joshua and carried the 12 rocks with them and put them down where they made their camp.

***Pretend to carry a huge rock and then set it down.***

Joshua told the Israelites, "In the future, your children will ask you, 'What do these rocks mean?'"

***Point, and then scratch your head.***

"Tell them, 'Israel crossed the Jordan River on dry land. God caused the water to stop flowing until the people crossed!'"

***Point to heaven with one hand. Then push the other hand out to signal "stop."***

That day the Lord made Joshua great in the opinion of all the Israelites. They respected Joshua all his life, just as they had respected Moses.

***Gently pat a neighbor's back.***

# Hands-On Fun at Home

LESSON 12



## True heroes follow God's directions.



### Bible Verse:

"Make me walk along the path of your commands, for that is where my happiness is found" (Psalm 119:35).



Read about four disciples who followed Jesus' directions in Mark 1:16-20. Then join hands with your family members. Take turns saying one way

you want to follow God's directions this week; for example, you might say, "I want to read the Bible more," "I want to ask my new neighbor to come to church with me," or "I want to make a cake and give it to Grandma." After each person has had a turn, have each person pray, "God, help me follow you this week." End by saying "amen" together and having a giant family hug.

### Faith Walk

Give each family member a sheet of paper. Have each person create a treasure map to follow this week, drawing dotted lines that lead to directions such as "Monday: Hug a family member," "Tuesday: Do my best work at school," and "Wednesday: Read a chapter in the Bible." Make the treasure at the end of each map be your family's favorite meal. Then switch maps with each other, and follow the directions. At the end of the week, cook and eat the "treasure meal" together, and talk about what happens when you follow good directions.

### Check It Out

**Read John 10:3-5.**

This verse talks about how sheep know the shepherd's voice and follow it. How do you follow Jesus?

**Read Jonah 1:1-17.**

Describe a time it was hard for you to follow God's directions. What happened?

**Read Galatians 6:9.**

What are some good things that come from following God's directions?

### Talk It Over

True heroes follow God's directions.

- What decisions will your family be making soon? How can you seek and follow God's direction as you make those decisions?
- What's the best way to know God's direction for you? Make a plan to spend some time as a family reading God's instruction book.

