

TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Use Somebody
Gideon
Judges 6–8

TODAY'S KEY QUESTION

How could God use you?

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

God can use you no matter what.

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

I remain confident of this:
I will see the goodness of the
Lord in the land of the living.
Psalm 27:13, NIV

MONTHLY LIFE APP

**Confidence—Learning to see
yourself the way God sees you**

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

PRELUDE: Setting the tone for the experience

See the **Getting Ready** pages at the end of this document for a detailed description of what you'll need for today. In the **Prelude** folder of your curriculum, you'll find a variety of other resources to help you prepare.

SMALL GROUP

15
MIN

LARGE GROUP

35
MIN

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- MONTHLY CHALLENGE - CONFIDENCE
- **THIS WEEK -- LOVE WORKS SUNDAY** - collecting for Helen's Hope Chest

WORSHIP:

- THE BEST IS YET TO COME
- GRAVES INTO GARDENS

SMALL GROUP

25
MIN

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

10 MINUTES

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LARGE GROUP

ENGAGE KIDS' HEARTS THROUGH A DYNAMIC AND INTERACTIVE BIBLE STORY, WORSHIP, AND PRAYER EXPERIENCE IN A LARGE GROUP SETTING.

AUDIO: PLAY HIGH-ENERGY MUSIC AS STUDENTS ENTER.

SLIDE: THEME

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP

WORSHIP

Worship Leaders enter as Host exits.

WORSHIP LEADER: "This is the best part of my week. I love being in this room and gathering with all of you to worship our God. He gives us a joy like no other. Let's celebrate the life that Jesus gives. Come on and sing!"

AUDIO: THE BEST IS YET TO COME

AUDIO: GRAVES INTO GARDENS

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): COUNTDOWN (30- OR 60-SECOND VERSION)

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME

WELCOME

Host has lots of energy as he or she welcomes everyone to [Name of Environment]. Host is relatable and inviting. Host can talk about something that happened culturally throughout the week like a big sports game, movie opening, a viral video on YouTube, etc. Host tells them how excited he or she is that they're there and briefly runs through what they can expect. This is especially helpful for first-time guests to make them feel like they know what's happening.

OPENER

HOST: "What's going on, everyone?! We've got such a great day planned. It begins with another musical challenge as we Press Play today. This one will showcase your leaders in a way you have never seen them before! OR should I say HEARD before. In just a moment, you'll get to hear some of the best singing you possibly have ever heard. Your leaders will take turns stepping up behind this divider and secretly sing "Mary Had a Little Lamb" for you. But . . . they'll sing it in a different style of music. At the end, we'll find out if your small group can identify which leaders went with which style of music. So don't say anything before or after each round. We'll save it until the end. Make sense? Okay listen up!"

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Have leaders all stand behind the divider/curtain and sing one at a time. If possible, don't let any of the leaders be seen until the end. Choose from the following styles to assign ahead of time (add or subtract based on the number of leaders) – Country, Hard Rock, Beatles era pop/rock, Boy band, Rap, Opera, Reggae

After everyone has sung, bring all of the leaders out on

stage at the same time, in no particular order.

"Alright, it's your job to figure out which leader sang which style. (You can have them write it on paper or just show of hands)."

Reveal answers. "Will the leader who sang the beautiful opera version, please step forward."

HOST: *"(After the game) That was a lot of fun. Alright, let's all stand up and worship together . . . in our normal voices!"*

COMMUNICATOR SCRIPT (STORY)

SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND

Communicator enters as Worship Leaders exit.

INTRODUCTION

COMMUNICATOR: “Hey, everyone! Glad to see you all here today. Question time: Have you ever seen a show or a movie with a superhero and thought, ‘Well, of course, that person has confidence! Look at them! They are literal super heroes!’ I mean, their arms are bigger than my head, and they have more muscles on their left pinky than I have on my whole body. When you’re big and strong like Thor or Hulk, being a superhero doesn’t seem like it would be all that hard.”

“That’s why I’m thankful for the stories about underdogs, like Peter Parker or Miles Morales. You know, they’re kind of strange and awkward at times, maybe even picked on or overlooked. But then something extraordinary happens and they become someone that NO ONE expected. Sure, it may take a radioactive spider bite, but those are just details!”

“We love underdog stories because we love to see others do what seems to be out of reach. And a lot of times, we can relate to them more than to the actual superheroes.”

TENSION

COMMUNICATOR: “But it makes me wonder, can real-life underdogs succeed, or is that just in the movies? Chances are high that we’ll never get bitten by a radio-active spider and end up with super-human strength and spider-sense. When I’m feeling like an underdog, winning might feel more than just out of reach—it feels completely impossible. So what, then? How can we move forward with confidence when we can’t guarantee we’ll succeed?”

“That’s a great question. Actually, it’s a question people have thought about for thousands of years, including some people we read about in the Bible. Remember, when you have a big question about life, the best place to check first is the Bible. We can find all sorts of people who had experiences with God. And then God prompted them to write down those experiences so we could read and learn from them.”

TRUTH

COMMUNICATOR: “Our story today is all about someone who wondered if he was the right person for the job—a true underdog story. His name was Gideon. We find his story in the Old Testament book of Judges. Judges tells the story of a pretty dark time in the nation of Israel’s history. It was a time when God’s people often turned away from worshipping and following God and soon found the enemies around them causing them trouble. The people of Israel would then cry out to God, and He would send a deliverer to rescue them. This happened over and over again.”

“During this particular time of trouble for Israel, a powerful and wicked nation called Midian became a real problem. It was so bad that God’s people were hiding in caves and holes in the mountains. Every time God’s people came out of hiding, the Midianites would attack them.”

“God chose an Israelite named Gideon to lead the charge against them. Check this out!”

Open the Bible to Judges 6:12 (NIRV) and read.

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“The angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon. He said, “Mighty warrior, the Lord is with you.””

“Did you hear what he called him? ‘Mighty warrior,’ which is kind of funny because Gideon hadn’t actually done anything yet. I imagine Gideon looking around like, ‘Who, me?’ Gideon was not so sold on the idea.”

“Gideon asked why all of this was happening with the Midianites, and this is the response he got . . .”

Open the Bible to Judges 6:14 (NirV) and read.

“The Lord turned to Gideon. He said to him, “You are strong. Go and save Israel from the power of Midian. I am sending you.””

“Gideon: you’re going to save Israel from the Midianites! You guys think Gideon was pretty fired up about this? How do you think he was going to respond?” (Pause for responses.)

Open the Bible to Judges 6:15 (NirV) and read.

““Pardon me, sir,” Gideon replied, “but how can I possibly save Israel? My family group is the weakest in the tribe of Manasseh. And I’m the least important member of my family.””

“Did you catch that? Gideon was all, “Not me! I can’t save Israel! I’m a nobody from nowhere! I’m the least of the least of the least!”

“Gideon was thinking, ‘There MUST be somebody better for this, right? Maybe some kind of superhero?’”

“But God basically told Gideon, ‘Nope. You’re the one I’ve chosen. Don’t worry, I will be with you.’”

“Now, I’d like to say that from here on out Gideon was completely settled on the task at hand, but that wasn’t quite the case. Gideon kept second-guessing that God wanted to use him. In fact, Gideon asked God to actually PROVE to him that God was still with him and would still use him.”

“Okay, now what happens next might be hard to picture, and so I brought something to help us . . .”

Communicator takes out bulk size container of cheese balls.

“Everybody clear now? Just kidding. I think it will be clear in a moment. Let’s get into the story. One day, God came to Gideon. The day had arrived. It was time for Israel to defeat the Midianites. Israel had an army of about 32,000 men! (Pat the bulk container of cheeseballs.) That is quite an army, right? Well, not compared to the Midianite army. They were clearly bigger and stronger. Israel would need every last cheese ball—I mean soldier—in this battle. That’s what made what God said next so unbelievable.

Open the Bible to Judges 7:2-3a (NirV) and read.

“The Lord said to Gideon, “I want to hand Midian over to you. But you have too many men for me to do that. Then Israel might brag, ‘My own strength has saved me.’ So here is what I want you to announce to the army. Tell them, ‘Those who tremble with fear can turn back.’””

"Too many men? Those who were scared could go back home? Does this seem strange to anyone else? So let me ask you, how many people do you think left? *(Pause for responses.)* Well, it says that 22,000 men left, leaving an army of 10,000 men!"

Communicator takes out a smaller container of cheeseballs and puts away the bulk size container.

"Now 10,000 men was still a good-sized army. They should be okay, right? Well just hold on a moment."

Open the Bible to Judges 7:4 (NIRV) and read.

"The Lord said to Gideon, 'There are still too many men. So take them down to the water. There I will reduce the number of them for you. If I say, 'This one will go with you,' he will go. But if I say, 'That one will not go with you,' he will not go.'"

"Still too many! You can never have too many men in an army! Well, actually, yes you can, especially if you're trying to show that army where their strength and power comes from."

"God gave Gideon a unique way of sorting out the men who would stay and those who will go. God had Gideon take the men down to the water to drink. Some men brought the water to their mouths and lapped it up like dogs, while others knelt down to drink. God told Gideon to keep the ones who lapped up the water. Guess how many men that was?"

Pause for responses. Communicator takes out a sandwich bag of cheeseballs and puts the other container away.

"300! So Gideon, along with 300 men, went up against the army of Midian. But once again, God reassured Gideon that he would have the victory."

"Well, with such a small army, they must at least have had incredible weapons, right?"

Communicator takes out a kazoo and a flashlight.

"Here you go, folks. Okay, so maybe not exactly like this, but close. Gideon gave them the plan. They were to surround the Midianite camp at night. As soon as he played the trumpet *(blow kazoo)* they were to blow their trumpets as well and yell out a battle cry. Then they were to break the containers they were holding, revealing torches inside *(Turn on flashlight)*. As soon as Gideon and his men did this, the other camps did so as well. The sound of noise and the flash of light surrounded the Midianites!"

"We read in the Book of Judges that there was SO MUCH panic that the Midianites started fighting against each other! And it wasn't long after that that the entire Midian army was defeated. Not with 32,000 men *(hold up bulk size cheeseballs)* . . . not with 10,000 men *(hold up normal container)* . . . but with 300 men *(hold up sandwich bag of cheeseballs)*."

"And really, it wasn't even because of this *(reference sandwich bag)*. The whole point of the small army—the whole point of the trumpets and lights—was to show Gideon that God can use anyone."

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

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25 MINUTES

APPLICATION

COMMUNICATOR: "I imagine that Gideon probably thought there was NO WAY things would end the way they did when God shrunk his army down from 32,000 to 300! But you know what I think Gideon thought was even more unbelievable? That God would use *him*. Gideon was pretty unsure about God using him, and yet, God called Gideon a mighty warrior before any of the rest of the story took place!"

"Maybe God knew more than Gideon about how God could use him."

"Are we ever like Gideon? Or do you ever have Gideon moments? Maybe you get a part in the school play and you start to second guess how you'll learn all those lines. Or maybe you're on the free throw line with seconds on the clock and everyone watching as you prepare to take your shot. It's easy to think you're the wrong person for the job. Or maybe your friend is struggling, and you feel like you should help but are afraid you'll make things worse. You wish there was another person who would help.

"What Gideon forgot was that it wasn't about the size of his army. He was able to be a 'mighty warrior' because God promised to be with him. Confidence isn't about being the best of the best or having the most of the most. We can have true confidence because we know who we are and, more importantly, who God is. And we know that we can trust God no matter what."

LANDING

COMMUNICATOR: "Today as you head to Small Groups, think about this:"

SLIDE: KEY QUESTION SLIDE

"How could God use you?" In other words, think about how God made you. What are some big or even small ways God might be looking to use you? It's okay if you're not sure how you'd answer that question. We're all learning how God can use us to make a difference in the world. Thankfully, you have a great Small Group Leader who can help you think through it some more. Before you head out, let's talk to God and ask Him to help us understand how He can use us. Let's pray."

Communicator leads group in a prayer related to what they just heard. After prayer, Communicator dismisses kids to Small Group.

AUDIO: PLAY HIGH-ENERGY MUSIC AS STUDENTS EXIT.

SLIDE: THEME

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP