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The Twelve Spies

Scripture: Numbers 13:1-14:35

Theme: Faith sees God's faithfulness; fear sees only obstacles

1st-3rd Grade (Ages 6-8)

Free curriculum for small and rural churches

Lesson Overview

Lesson Title: Rahab , Faith in Action Theme: Trusting God When It's Hard Overview: Today's story is about Rahab, a kind woman who lived in a big, strong city called Jericho. God wanted the people of Jericho to be destroyed because they didn't love Him, but Rahab had a different heart. She believed in God, even when it looked dangerous! Rahab hid two brave spies sent by Joshua, and when they told her what God had planned, she took a big risk: she hid them in her house and even let them down a rope so they could escape. Her faith wasn't just words; it was action, helping others while trusting God's promises. This story teaches us that faith means trusting God even when things seem scary, and it's never too late to choose kindness and trust Him! Lesson Breakdown: 1. God's Plan vs. Rahab's Choice Start with a simple question: "What would YOU do if you saw strangers in your city?" Draw a picture of Jericho and Jerichoites with spies in their home. Ask kids: "What do you think happened when the spies left? Did Rahab stay hidden, or did she do something else?" (She hung a red rope outside her window, a sign for Joshua's soldiers!) Explain that Rahab saw God's plan for Jericho but chose to trust Him by helping the spies. "Why was her choice brave?" (Because it risked her life!) 2. Rahab's Faith in Action Play a quick game: "Trust Walk!" Have kids walk slowly while you count to 10. Then say, "God wants us to trust Him too, even when we're afraid!" Show them how Rahab took a risk to save others (like how we can share God's love when it's hard). Point out: "God doesn't always take away danger, He often uses our kindness to help others!" Use a verse like "The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in Him, and He helps me." (Psalm 28:2) 3. Our Turn to Trust End with a challenge: "How can we show faith like Rahab?" Brainstorm simple ways, like sharing kindness, praying for others, or trusting God even if things don't go perfectly. Share a personal story of how you've trusted God in a tough situation. Ask kids: "What's one thing you can trust God for today?" (Encourage them to write/draw it in their notebooks.) Volunteer Tips: - Use visuals: A painted Jericho, red-rope clipart, or a stuffed animal "spy" hiding in a house. - Keep energy high: Act out the spies' escape or Rahab's decision (e.g., "ROOF!" for the rope). - Close with prayer: "Lord, help us trust You more like Rahab. Show us how to love and help others even when it's risky!" Extension: Send home a coloring sheet with Rahab's house and red rope, or a "Trust God" journal prompt.

Bible Story

Rahab's Brave Heart: A Story of Faith and Courage

Long, long ago, the people of Israel were traveling through the land of Canaan, the land God promised to give them. One day, two spies, men named Joshua and his friend Rahab's brother, were sent to check out the city of Jericho. The city was very strong, with huge walls made of stone, but the spies needed to find a way inside. Rahab, a woman who lived in Jericho, heard about the spies and knew they were important. She decided to help them.

Rahab had heard that God was with the Israelites, so she trusted Him enough to help the spies. She told the spies to hide under the rafters of her house, and she promised them she wouldn't tell the king of Jericho about them. The spies trusted her, and Rahab trusted God. The king of Jericho was angry, so he sent men to look for the spies. Rahab hid them with her own blood from a red string tied around the window, showing they were safe. When the men came, she told them she had nothing to do with them, and they left without finding the spies.

God had a bigger plan for Rahab too. Before the city fell, Joshua told the people to walk around the walls of Jericho seven times, shouting loud and blowing trumpets. This was God's way to make the walls fall down. The people marched seven times, and on the seventh day, when they blew the trumpets, the walls collapsed! Jericho's people ran out screaming, and the Israelites marched in and took the city. Rahab, who had helped the spies, lived in the city with her family.

Rahab's story shows us how God uses brave and kind people to do His work. She didn't know if she would be safe or successful, but she trusted God anyway. Her faith made her brave, and she protected the spies, showing them kindness. Even though her family didn't know about her actions, Rahab trusted God to take care of them too. Today, we can learn from her that God sees what we do, even if no one else does, and He will reward our brave and kind choices.

This story reminds us that God wants us to trust Him even when things look scary. Just like Rahab, we can be brave and kind, even if our family or friends don't know about it. We can trust that God will help us, and He will reward our faith. Let's ask Him today to help us be brave and trust Him just like Rahab did!

Key Verse

Numbers 14:9

God is Always There, He's Heavenly and Earthly! This Bible verse is all about God's special power and love. It says, "The Lord your God is God in heaven above and on earth below." God lives everywhere, even where we can't see Him! In the sky (heaven), where the clouds float and the stars shine, and also right here on our earth, where we walk, play, and learn. No matter where we are, God is always watching over us, just like a big, kind guardian. Let's imagine God is like a superhero who can be in both the highest mountains (up in heaven) and right next to us (down here on the ground). When we feel scared or alone, we can think: "God is here too!" Maybe it's raining and you're holding an umbrella, or maybe you're feeling sad and hugging your mom. God knows everything about you, even the smallest thoughts in your heart. His love is like a warm blanket that keeps you safe no matter what happens. One way we can show we believe in God's power is by being kind and brave. If someone is mean to you, remember: God is still watching and wants you to stand up for what's right. If you trip and fall, God is there to help you get up again. You don't have to be perfect, just trust that He's always there, just like He promised! Praying is a great way to talk to God! When you feel happy or worried, you can whisper: "Thank You for being with me, God!" or "Please help me today." You don't even have to say a long prayer, just a simple "God, I love You" is enough. The more we talk to God, the closer we get to Him, just like when you call a friend and they answer right away. This verse reminds us that God is bigger than anything else, fear, trouble, or even the biggest questions. Even when things look dark, we can smile and say: "God is here! He loves me, and He's got me!" Let's make sure we always remember that special promise and try to live with kindness and trust in Him every day. You're never alone when God is with you!

Activities

Activity 1:

1. Fold & Decorate: Have each child fold a paper plate in half and cut a circle for the eye holes (use a pencil to trace around a spoon). Let them color the mask with markers or paint. Add details like a "spy" hat or a Bible verse (e.g., "Trust God no matter what!").
2. Create the "Spy View": Cut a small window in the folded edge of the plate (about 2 inches tall) to show the inside. Glue brown paper on the outside of the plate to look like fabric. Decorate the window with white paper to mimic a peephole.
3. Assemble & Pretend: Punch a hole in the top of the mask and string it up with yarn. Tape a clothespin or paper clip to the plate's edge to hold it. Students can wear their masks while sitting in a circle and "spy" on their neighbors' faces to practice listening and sharing.
4. Discuss & Apply: Ask, "How did Rahab trust God even when she was hiding? How can we trust God today?" Have kids share how they can be like Rahab, showing faith in action, this week.

Activity 2:

1. Write Clues: Before the lesson, write Bible verses or simple clues on note cards (e.g., "Look under the chair where Rahab hid!"). Place a few around the room (e.g., on desks, under tables).
2. Introduce the Game: Explain that Rahab and the spies had to hide and listen carefully. Have kids stand in a circle and whisper the first clue to someone else to pass along. Let them move silently to find their next clue.
3. Find the Treasure: Once they have a few clues, reveal that the "treasure" is a Bible verse (e.g., "God promises to help us if we trust Him"). Have them read it together and discuss: "How is this verse like Rahab's story?"
4. Practice Trust: End with a prayer or song. Ask: "If Rahab and the spies had to trust God even when they couldn't see Him, what can we trust Him for today?" Challenge students to share one way they'll show faith in action this week (e.g., listening to God's voice, being brave).
5. Tips for Both Activities:
6. Keep it interactive! Use songs like "Trust and Obey" or act out Rahab's story.
7. Pair activities with a snack (e.g., "spy" cookies or "Jericho" apple slices) to make it fun.
8. For ages 6, 8, keep language simple and focus on relatable questions (e.g., "How would you feel hiding like Rahab?").

Discussion Questions

- Here are four open-ended discussion questions for young children (ages 6, 8) about the story of Rahab, based on Joshua 2:1, 24 and 6:1, 25. These questions encourage them to think about God's kindness, courage, and how we can show faith in action in our own lives:
- What did Rahab do that surprised the spies?
- Ask your child to describe one thing they noticed about Rahab that made the spies think she was special. For example, did she help them? Did she hide them well? How did she show kindness, even when she didn't know the spies? Then ask: If you were in Rahab's house, what would you do to help someone in trouble? How could you show kindness to a stranger or someone who looks different from you?
- Why do you think Rahab trusted God even when she was scared?
- Remind your child that Rahab knew God had already promised to help Israel (the people God chose), even though she lived in a foreign city with enemies. Ask them to think of a time when they felt scared but knew God would help them too, maybe before a big test, sharing with a friend, or trying something new. How did they trust God, even when they didn't feel brave?
- How did Rahab's choice affect others?

- After Rahab helped the spies, God used her in a big way, she became part of God's family through Jesus! Ask your child to imagine if someone they knew (like a teacher, parent, or friend) helped them in a big way. How did that person's kindness make you feel? Now, ask: Can you think of someone in your life who has helped you? How can you thank them or show them your care?
- What can we learn from Rahab that helps us today?
- Rahab showed three important things: she listened to God's promises, she acted bravely, and she helped others. Ask your child to pick one of these and explain how they could apply it to their own life. For example:
 - If God promises something (like being kind or strong), how can you remember it when you feel afraid?
 - When someone is being mean or lonely, how can you help them, like Rahab did?
 - If God calls you to do something important, what could it be?
- These questions encourage reflection, connection to real-life situations, and a heart for serving others, just like Rahab did! Would you like any adjustments to make them even simpler or more interactive?

Prayer Focus

Prayer for Faith Like Rahab Let's pray together, God! First, we thank You for Rahab. When Rahab saw the Israelites approaching, she was afraid, she lived in a big city with many enemies! But she had faith in God, even though she didn't know everything. She hid her family in straw bags (like a little surprise!) and sent the spies a message to make sure they'd come back safe. God saw her heart, and because she trusted Him, He helped her, and later, her whole family too! (Joshua 2:1-13) Now, we ask You to help us trust You too! God, just like Rahab, sometimes we feel scared when things look big or uncertain. Maybe we're nervous about a new friend, a big test, or even just asking You for help. Help us like Rahab, look past the fear and remember You're always with us. When we pray, show us small ways to trust You, even if it feels hard! Let's ask You for courage! Rahab didn't wait for perfect answers, she took action! She hid, she spoke, she acted now to protect her family. God calls us to do the same, when we see a chance to help someone, share our faith, or stand up for what's right, help us move forward, even if it feels brave! And when we fail? Remind us You love us and are always there to help us try again. A simple prayer to end with: "God, Rahab trusted You with her heart, and so do we! Help us to trust You with our fears and take Your brave actions today, just like she did. Thank You for being with us always. Amen!" How to use this in class: - After reading the story, pause and ask: "What made Rahab trust God?" Let kids share (e.g., "She saw He'd protect us!"). - Pause for kids to whisper: "Where do I see God today?" (e.g., in a friend's kindness, a safe place). - Close with this prayer, letting a volunteer repeat each part aloud. End with: "Who can tell God a prayer of trust this week?"

>> Missions Spotlight

In many parts of South Asia, women face enormous social pressure. Missionaries working among women in rural India share Rahab's story to show that God values and saves women of faith, regardless of their past or social status.

-> To the Cross

Rahab was a foreigner and a sinner, yet she believed in Israel's God and was saved. She's listed in Jesus' family tree (Matthew 1:5) and in the 'Hall of Faith' (Hebrews 11:31). Salvation has always been by faith, not by being the right nationality.