

I Can Hear From God

Older Elementary Small Group Guide

Week 1 • September 5/6/7

Side 1 • Small Group # 1 • 10 minutes



PRO TIP

The back to school season brings a lot of pressure for older kids; new teachers, new dynamics, new friends, and expectations they don't always know how to handle. During kZones, pay attention to who's quieter than usual, maybe seems distracted, or is hanging back from the group. At this age, kids are less likely to say something is wrong, so don't wait for them to come to you. Pull up next to them, keep it casual, and try: "Hey, how's school been going – for real though?" You don't need to have answers. Just being the adult who notices and asks is sometimes exactly what they need.



WELCOME

Welcome each kid by name.

Ask: If you were in charge of taking care of something really important; a team, a pet, or a group of people, what would you do to make sure they were safe and taken care of?



PRAY

Pray: Dear God, thank you that Jesus is our good shepherd. Thank you that he knows us by name and loves us enough that he gave everything for us. Help us stay close to him, listen for his voice, and follow wherever he leads. Amen.



BIBLE

Give each kid a Bible.

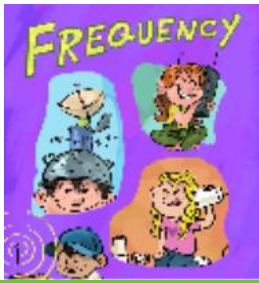
Say: Have you ever had someone in your life who you knew no matter what is going on has your back? Or someone who would do anything for you? Today we're going to read about someone who loves you more than that, and he's been looking out for you since before you were even born.

Read: John 10: 14-16

Review:

- What does Jesus say he will do for his sheep?
- What does Jesus say he knows about his sheep?

Continue to review and discuss until Large Group.



I Can Hear From God

Older Elementary Small Group Guide

Week 1 • September 5/6/7

Side 2 • Small Group # 2 • 15 minutes

Say: In our Bible Story, we learned that God speaks to us in different ways. We're going to think about each one and draw or write an example.

Hold up the Ways God Speaks Activity Page and point to each box as you review the instructions.

Point to Box 1: God Speaks To Your Heart

Say: Sometimes God puts a thought in your heart – to be kind, tell the truth, or help someone. Draw or write a time that might happen.

Point to Box 2: God Speaks Through The Bible

Say: When we read the Bible, we learn what God is like and what he wants for us. Draw or write something the Bible teaches you.

Point to Box 3: God Speaks Through People

Say: God can use a parent, teacher, or friend to help you know what he wants. Draw or write someone who helps you hear from God.

Point to Box 4: God Speaks Through His World

Say: Look around at what God made – animals, mountains, the ocean, the stars. Draw something in God's creation that reminds you of him.



ACTIVITY



CHALLENGE

Encourage kids to invite their friends to Block Bash Weekend.

Say: Every day this week, find one moment to put your electronics down, get somewhere quiet, and do this: Close your eyes, talk to God honestly by telling him what's really going on, and then stop and listen.



DISCUSSION
QUESTIONS

Ask: Jesus doesn't just know ABOUT you- he actually KNOWS you. He knows your thoughts, your fears, what makes you laugh, and what keeps you up at night. So, what does it mean to you personally that the God of the universe knows you that deeply and still chooses you?

Remain in Small Group until Parent Pick Up.



TAKE HOME

- Block Bash Weekend Invites (a few per kid, at the door)
- Ways God Speaks Activity Page (1 per kid, in Small Group)

**My sheep listen to my voice.
I know them, and they follow me. John 10:27**



I Can Trust Jesus

Older Elementary Small Group Guide

Week 2 • September 12/13/14 • Trust Jesus Gathering

Side 1 • Small Group # 1 • 10 minutes



PRO TIP

Today's message invites kids to take their next step with Jesus and at this age, some will be ready to go all in while others will need more time to process. Don't rush it. Your job is to create a space where kids feel safe enough to ask hard questions and be honest about where they are. Stay present, keep the conversation open, and if a kid starts to engage, lean in, ask good questions, and be ready with resources to help them take that step.

Welcome each kid by name.



WELCOME

Ask:

- If you had to pick a superhero to guard your valuable treasure, who would it be? Why do you trust them?
- If your pet could talk, what do you think it would say about you?



PRAY

Say: Prayer is just talking to Jesus. You don't need a special voice. You don't need fancy words. You don't even have to be loud! We pray because Jesus hears us. Jesus isn't distracted or too busy to listen. We also pray because Jesus wants to help us. Sometimes he helps us feel brave, make good choices, or feel peaceful inside. Let's talk to him now.

Pray: Dear Jesus, trust can be a confusing thing to figure out. We might not fully understand who to trust, how to trust, or why we should trust the people or things around us. Today, help us to focus and learn to trust you in new ways. Help us discover that your love, peace, and security are bigger than anything we might experience in the people or things around us. Help us experience your BIG love today. Amen.

Give each kid a Bible.



BIBLE

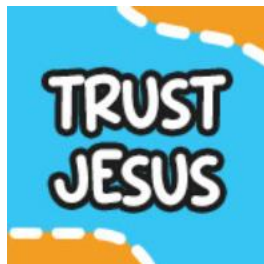
Say: One of the most powerful tools God gave us is the Bible – not just a book of rules, but a direct line into who God is, what he cares about, and how he sees us. When you open the Bible, you're not just reading words on a page – you're finding out what the God of the universe actually thinks and says. Let's open our Bibles and discover why God gave us this book and what it tells us about knowing him for real.

Read: 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Review:

- If God wrote the Bible, do you think it's important to read it?
- Think about it this way – if your favorite athlete, musician, or someone you really looked up to wrote you a personal letter, would you read it? Now what if God wrote you one? The Bible is exactly that. So why do you think it's hard for people – even us – to actually open it and read it?

Continue to review and discuss until Large Group.



I Can Trust Jesus

Older Elementary Small Group Guide

Week # • September 12/13/14 • Trusting Jesus Gathering

Side 2 • Small Group # 2 • 15 minutes

Take out the ABC Adventure Game Card Set. Complete each challenge before moving onto the next. Place the envelope in the middle of the group.

#1 A - Admit: Give each kid a piece of paper. Each kid writes or draws one thing they sometimes struggle with on the paper (they don't have to share it if they don't want to). They place it in the envelope in the center of the group.

- **Say:** *We all need God's help. Trusting Jesus starts by admitting we can't do life perfectly on our own.*
- **Ask:**
 - *Why can it be hard to ask when you need help?*
 - *Who do you ask for help when something is difficult?*



ACTIVITY

#2 B - Believe: Open the folded Card and read the surprising facts one at a time. Kids will vote whether they think the fact is true or false before you reveal the answer.

- **Ask:**
 - *Why do you think it was hard for people to believe Jesus rose from the dead?*
 - *What helps you believe Jesus today?*

#3 C - Choose: Open the folded Card and read out loud the directions for the This or That activity. Take out the This or That Activity Page and have kids work together to determine which choice represents following Jesus.

- **Ask:**
 - *Is it always easy to choose Jesus' way?*
 - *What is one wise choice you could make this week?*

Say: *It's Block Bash weekend, and today we learned about the building blocks of what it means to trust and follow Jesus. A means to admit that we all need God's help. We can't do life perfectly on our own. B means to believe that Jesus died for our sins. C means to choose to accept the gift of forgiveness. We all have the opportunity to trust Jesus and choose to follow him. If this is something you've never done before, I would love to pray with you.*

Ask kids who would like to trust Jesus and then lead them in this simple prayer.

Pray: *Dear Jesus. I know that I am not perfect. Thank you for dying for my sins, and for forgiving me. I choose to trust you today and believe that you have rescued me. Amen.*

Celebrate any kids who have trusted Jesus. Write their names down and submit it to your Captain so we can celebrate them.



CHALLENGE



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

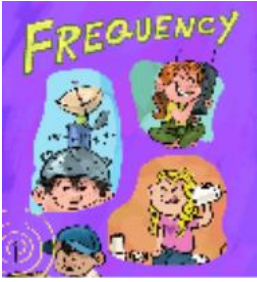
- *Have you ever received a letter or card from someone you love? How did it make you feel?*
- *If your best friend wrote you a note, would you read it? What if GOD wrote you one?*

Remain in Small Group until Parent Pick Up.



TAKE HOME

- Trust Jesus QR Code Card (1 per family, at the door)
- Building Block Straw (1 per kid, at the door)
- Block Vinyl Sticker (1 per kid, at the door)



I Can Grow When I Stay Close To God

Older Elementary Small Group Guide

Week 3 • September 19/20/21

Side 1 • Small Group # 1 • 10 minutes



PRO TIP

Kids are back in school and already running into moments where someone needs help – a friend sitting alone, someone having a hard day, or a classmate who got left out. Use those real moments to bring today's lesson to life. At this age, kids are starting to figure out right from wrong – they just need someone to help them connect that feeling in their gut to what God says. Ask them what they've seen this week and let their stories lead the way.



WELCOME

Welcome each kid by name.

Ask: If you could grow ANY fruit in your backyard, what would it be and why?



PRAY

Pray: Dear God, thank you for being the vine that keeps us alive and growing. Honestly, it's easy to get disconnected and busy with school, friends, and everything else. Help us choose to stay close to you every single day. Not just on Sundays but in the real moments of our week. We want to grow into who you made us to be. Amen.



BIBLE

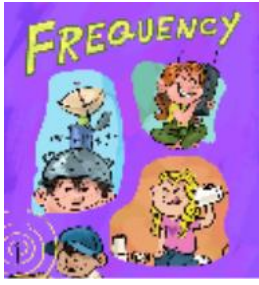
Give each kid a Bible.

Say: Have you ever forgotten to water a plant and watched it slowly start to die? No water, no life it's that simple. Jesus actually uses that same idea to describe our relationship with Him. Today we're going to read what He said and figure out what it means when WE start to disconnect from the source that keeps us alive.

Read: John 15:1-2

Review: Jesus says something super important here. He says he is the true vine. Not a good teacher, not a nice guy the TRUE vine. What do you think he means by that? Why does it matter that he said TRUE vine and not just vine?

Continue to review and discuss until Large Group.



I Can Grow When I Stay Close To God

Older Elementary Small Group Guide

Week 3 • September 19/20/21

Side 2 • Small Group # 2 • 15 minutes



ACTIVITY

Take out the Solo Cups with words from the Memory Verse on them. Give every kid a Bible and direct them to look up John 10:27. Help kids find the verse using the table of contents, then read it together out loud several times. Review any words that might be unfamiliar.

- Set Bibles aside and place the Cups in the middle of the Group and mix them up.
- **Say:** *Each cup has a word from our verse on it – but they're all mixed up! Let's work together to put them in the right order.*
- Let kids grab Cups and work together to arrange them in a line until the full Verse is in order.
- Once assembled, read the verse together: "My sheep listen to my voice. I know them, and they follow me." John 10:27
- Mix the cups up and repeat 2-3 times, trying to go faster each round.

Say: *Every time we did that, it got a little easier – right? That's exactly how hearing God's voice works. The more we listen, the more we recognize it. Jesus said his sheep know his voice. That means you can learn to hear from God too. Let's say it together: I can hear from God!*



CHALLENGE

Say: *We can grow closer to God when we try to listen for him. This week, sit quietly for 60 seconds then grab a crayon and draw or write anything that comes to your heart.*



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Ask:

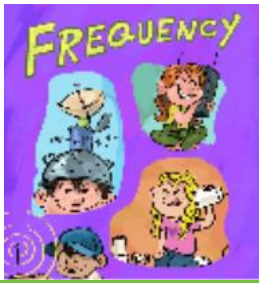
- *What is one thing you learned from today's Bible story?*
- Review the Bottom Line
- Review the Memory Verse

Remain in Small Group until Parent Pick Up.



TAKE HOME

**My sheep listen to my voice.
I know them, and they follow me. John 10:27**



I Can Ask God To Speak To Me

Older Elementary Small Group Guide

Week 4 • September 26/27/28

Side 1 • Small Group # 1 • 10 minutes



PRO TIP

Kids say incredible things when they talk about prayer and don't let those moments stay in the room! When a kid shares how they've been talking to God, mention it to their parent at pick up. It takes just a moment and will mean a lot to the parent. It reminds kids that talking to God is worth celebrating – not just something we do on Sundays.



WELCOME

Welcome each kid by name.

Ask: *If you got a phone call from someone really important, who would you MOST want it to be from?*



PRAY

Pray: *Dear God, it's wild to think that you – the God who made everything actually knows my name. Help me slow down enough to hear you. In the middle of school, friends, and everything going on, help me be someone who actually stops and listens. Speak, Lord – I'm listening. Amen.*

Give each kid a Bible.

Guide kids to open their Bibles to the front and find the Table Of Contents.

- Once there, lead them to find the name of the Book in the list. (1 Samuel)
- When they find the Book, lead them to look at the Page Number beside it.
- Explain that the Page Number tells them on what Page they can find that Book.
- Help the kids find the Page. When they find the Book, explain that the big numbers on the page are the Chapter numbers.
- Help them find the correct Chapter. (3)
- Then explain that the small numbers are Verse numbers. Help them find the correct Verse in that Chapter. (4 & 9)



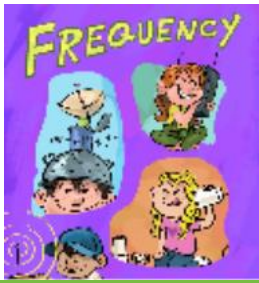
BIBLE

Read: 1 Samuel 3:4 and 1 Samuel 3:9

Review:

- *Is it easy or hard for you to be quiet and listen?*
- *Have you ever heard someone call your name and you could tell who it was by the sound of their voice?*
- *Did you know God knows your name too? How does that make you feel?*

Continue to review and discuss until Large Group.



I Can Ask God To Speak To Me

Older Elementary Small Group Guide

Week 4 • September 26/27/28

Side 2 • Small Group # 2 • 15 minutes



ACTIVITY

Take out the Blind Fold Mix & Match Memory Verse Card Set and the Bandana. Spread out and mix up the Memory Verse Card Set in the middle of the group.

Say: *The words are all mixed up! But we are going to add another layer to make it a bit more challenging! Blindfolds!*

- Choose one kid to be the "listener" and have them put on the Bandana.
- Explain the that the Group will help the "listener" by giving simple directions like: "Move left," "Pick that one up," or "That comes first." Next, the "listener" will pick up and place the Cards in order based on what they hear.

Begin the activity by guiding the kid to pick up one Card at a time. Let the group help direct where it should go. Continue until the Verse is in the correct order. Once complete, remove the blindfold. Read the Verse together as a group. Rotate in a new kid as the "listener" if time allows.



CHALLENGE

Say: Every day this week find ways to be still and listen. Maybe you can take an extra few minutes when you wake up to sit and pray or listen for God. Or, you can try sitting outside in the fresh air asking God to guide you. God wants us to take time to listen to him!



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Ask:

- *Who called Samuel's name? (God!)*
- Review the Bottom Line
- Review the Memory Verse

Remain in Small Group until Parent Pick Up.



TAKE HOME

**My sheep listen to my voice.
I know them, and they follow me. John 10:27**