



# You Can Trust God No Matter What

Older Elementary Small Group Guide

Week 1 • August 2/3/4

Side 1 • Small Group # 1 • 10 minutes



PRO TIP

Sharing aloud with a whole group can be uncomfortable for some kids. When asking kids to share, allow them a few moments to think by themselves. Then invite them to share with a friend sitting near them. This helps them contribute to a faith community while remaining comfortable.



WELCOME

**Welcome each kid by name.**

**Say:** *I want everyone to take a minute and think of the best thing that happened to you this week. Pause to allow kids to think. Then share the best thing that happened to you and pass a bean bag around your Group allowing everyone else to share.*



PRAY

**Say:** *When we pray, we talk to God. It is helpful during this time to fold our hands and close our eyes. This shuts out any distractions that might be around us. Is there anything that anyone would like to talk to God about today?*

**Pray:** *God, thank you so much for helping us learn and understand your big story. You knew from the very beginning that we would need help from you and Jesus. We are so thankful that you love us so much. Amen.*

**Give each kid a Bible.**

**Say:**

- In today's true story from the Bible, we're going to hear how God made the heavens and the Earth and everything in them—including people. It was wonderful! Let's go find out more!*



BIBLE

**Read:**

- Genesis 1:27

**Review:**

- If we are created in God's image, what do you think that says about God? (He is powerful, he knows everything about us, he shares himself with us)*
- If we are created in God's image, what do you think that says about the people in this world? (We should respect the people God makes and not look down on them as less than)*
- Do you have a hero or someone you look up to? Do you think God loves them?*
- Do you have an enemy, or someone you stay away from? Do you think God loves them?*

**Continue to review and discuss until Large Group.**



# You Can Trust God No Matter What

Older Elementary Small Group Guide

Week 1 • August 2/3/4

Side 2 • Small Group # 2 • 15 minutes



## ACTIVITY

Give each kid a Comic Activity Sheet. Guide the kids to fold the page in half along the dotted line to create a book. Use these questions to help kids fill in the empty spaces.

### Ask:

- What do you think is happening here?
- What are some ways you can remember God's love when you're feeling hurt or rejected?
- How do you think God could bring something good out of this situation?

Repeat the same steps for the second page:

- Have you ever felt like you did something so bad that you really messed up a relationship?
- How do you think God sees you, even when you have messed up?
- What do you think God wants you to remember when you have messed up?
- How can you show love to this person like Jesus?

*I love reading all your comic books! It's cool how they all started the same way, but you each made them your own. In life sometimes people hurt us or we hurt other people, like in our comics. But that doesn't mean God doesn't still love us. He always, always loves us.*



## CHALLENGE

*God has never given up on us, He has never stopped loving us, and we can trust that nothing will ever change God's love for us. The point is this: you can trust God no matter what. Because even when you make a bad choice, you can always trust God!*

*This week, your challenge is to tell three people that God loves them!*



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### Ask:

- How can we show kindness to someone even when they have been unkind to us?
- How can we show God that we love him?

**Remain in Small Group until Parent Pick Up.**



## TAKE HOME

Comic Activity Sheet

- We learned that we can trust God no matter what! This helps us to remember that God is always with us.

**Faith is being sure of what we hope for. It is being sure of what we do not see. Hebrews 11:1**



# You Can Trust God Even When You Don't Understand

Older Elementary Small Group Guide

Week 2 • August 9/10/11

Side 1 • Small Group # 1 • 10 minutes



PRO TIP

This week's Bible Story may be familiar to many kids. It is important to remember that just because they have heard a story, they may not have thought about it in a new way or applied it to their lives. Encourage kids to engage with the story and think about it in new ways, even if they have heard it before.



WELCOME

Welcome each kid by name.

Say:

- I want everyone to take a minute and think of the best thing that happened to you this week. Pause to allow kids to think. Then share the best thing that happened to you and pass a bean bag around your Group allowing everyone else to share.
- Last week, you were challenged to tell three people God loved them. How did that go?



PRAY

Give everyone a Bible to hold onto as you pray.

**Pray:** Dear God, as we are about to open our Bible and learn more about you, I would love everyone here to be inspired by your big story. You have created this world and everyone in it. And in this book are the most important stories that show us who you are and who we are. Thank you for this gift. Amen.

Give each kid a Bible.

Say:

- In the very beginning, God made the whole world—light and land, animals and oceans, people and plants. And people were extra special—they were made in God's image! That means we're made to show others what God is like: loving, kind, and fair.
- But people turned away from God. They stopped trusting him and started doing whatever they wanted—even things that were hurtful and wrong – but one man stood out. His name is Noah.

Read:

- Genesis 6:9

Review:

- This Verse is the beginning of an epic story. The way it is written sounds like the beginning of a movie!
- What do you think it means when it says Noah was without blame among the people of his time?
- What do you think it means when it says Noah walked faithfully with God?

Continue to review and discuss until Large Group.



BIBLE



# You Can Trust God Even When You Don't Understand

Older Elementary Small Group Guide

Week 2 • August 9/10/11

Side 2 • Small Group # 2 • 15 minutes



## ACTIVITY

**Say:** Noah trusted God to lead him through the EPIC assignment of building the ark and God brought animals to him two-by-two.

- Shuffle the Animal Matching Card Set.
- Lay the cards face down in grid pattern on the floor (five columns and four rows).
- Allow kids to turn over two cards to make a match.
- If a match is made, the kid keeps the match and takes another turn. If no match is made, set the two cards back in place. The kid to their left goes next.
- After the first round, add a twist:
  - Match by 'category' (ex: 2 animals that growl, 2 animals that are white, etc)
  - Add a time limit
  - The person flipping can look at the first card flipped, and the second card the Group lets them know if it is a match but they can't see what it is
  - The person flipping must pick 2 cards with their eyes closed



## CHALLENGE

**Say:**

- *When we think about Noah, we can remember that even though we might not know exactly what God is doing, we can trust Him. He is always good! So even if we can't see what's ahead, even when we don't understand, we can trust that he is good, and he is doing something good!*
- *Because God is always good, we can trust him no matter what! So, when we face hard things and don't understand what is happening, we can ask him for help. We can ask him to help us hold his hand through the dark and scary parts and trust he will lead us through.*
- *This week, your challenge is to memorize the Memory Verse and share it with one other person!*



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**Ask:**

- *What's your favorite animal that God made?*
- *Would you obey God if he asked you to build an ark?*

**Remain in Small Group until Parent Pick Up.**



## TAKE HOME

As kids leave, remind them of their challenge this week.

**Faith is being sure of what we hope for. It is being sure of what we do not see. Hebrews 11:1**



# You Can Trust That God Has A Plan

Older Elementary Small Group Guide

Week 3 • August 16/17/18

Side 1 • Small Group # 1 • 10 minutes



PRO TIP

Make this week personal by asking kids what they can trust God with. Then next week, refer back to it again. Whether you are writing a note of encouragement for them during the week as they trust God with a big game, praying with them as they show trust in God through a difficult friendship, or providing a verse for them to refer to as they trust God with feelings of anxiety as a new school year begins, you are showing up for kids in a big way, and pointing them to Jesus.



WELCOME

Welcome each kid by name.

Say:

- I want everyone to take a minute and think of the best thing that happened to you this week. Pause to allow kids to think. Then share the best thing that happened to you and pass a bean bag around your Group allowing everyone else to share.
- Last week you were challenged to memorize this month's Verse. How did you do?



PRAY

**Pray:** God, thank you for the reminder that we can trust you because you are good and you have a good plan. Teach us to know you are good, so we trust you in everything. Amen.



BIBLE

Give each kid a Bible.

Say:

- God never gives up on us. We can trust that God is with us always. Today's story is about a family who God had big plans for.

Read:

- Genesis 12:1-3

Review:

- God asked Abram to leave where he lived because he had BIG plans for his family. Do you think Abram trusted God and left right away?
- If you heard God telling your family this message, do you think it would be easy or difficult to follow what God was asking?
- Just because the Bible is done being written doesn't mean God is done writing stories. Did you know that you're part of God's big story too?

Continue to review and discuss until Large Group.



# You Can Trust That God Has A Plan

Older Elementary Small Group Guide

Week 3 • August 16/17/18

Side 2 • Small Group # 2 • 15 minutes



## ACTIVITY

**Say:** *We're going to play a game where we have to take turns trusting! You won't be able to see - you'll just have to listen to our voices as we call out instructions to lead you back to our group. Make sure to listen closely so you know how to come back to us!*

- Place the Paw Print Squishes on the floor as "obstacles."
- Instruct your Group to sit off to the side away from the Squishies.
- Choose a kid to be "the walker."
- Blindfold them and lead them to a starting spot.
- The Group is to help the "walker" move safely to the identified finishing spot using only their voice (no touching!), and without stepping on any Paw Print Squishies.
- They can say things like, "Take one step forward," "Turn right," or "Stop!"
- Continue until every kid gets a turn to walk.



## CHALLENGE

**Say:**

- *Just like you trusted our Group to guide you, Abraham trusted God to lead him to a brand-new place. Even though he couldn't see where he was going, he believed that God had a good plan.*
- *Your challenge this week is remember God is with you in three different places. Maybe you will be at the pool, the grocery store, or driving in the car with your grown-ups. Stop and imagine God being with you wherever you are.*



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**Ask:**

- *What was it like to trust someone when you couldn't see?*
- *Was it hard or easy to follow their voice?*
- *Share an age-appropriate story of a time you trusted God even though you didn't know how things were going to work out.*
- Review the Bottom Line
- Review the Memory Verse

**Remain in Small Group until Parent Pick Up.**



## TAKE HOME

As kids leave, remind them of their challenge this week.

**Faith is being sure of what we hope for. It is being sure of what we do not see. Hebrews 11:1**





# You Can Trust That God Is With You

Older Elementary Small Group Guide

Week 4 • August 23/24/25

Side 1 • Small Group # 1 • 10 minutes



PRO TIP

**Older Elementary Schoolers are beginning to develop a sense of right and wrong. This week as they explore the selfish choices they have made, remember to continue to reassure them that God's grace and forgiveness is for us-no matter what!**



WELCOME

**Welcome each kid by name.**

**Say:**

- *I want everyone to take a minute and think of the best thing that happened to you this week. Pause to allow kids to think. Then share the best thing that happened to you and pass a bean bag around your Group allowing everyone else to share.*
- *Last week, you were challenged to imagine God with you in three different places. Where were you and what was it like to imagine God there with you?*



PRAY

Give every kid a Bible to hold as you pray.

**Pray:** *Dear God, thank you for this book, which shows how faithful you are. When we feel like we can't see you, help us know that you are with us. Teach us to live every moment knowing that you are with us. Thank you for loving us so much. Amen.*

**Give each kid a Bible.**

**Say:**

- *Last week, we learned how God chose Abraham and promised to bless the whole world through his family. Abraham's son Isaac had two sons: Esau and Jacob. Jacob ended up betraying his brother and ran away because he was afraid of the consequences.*
- *One night while Jacob was alone, he had a dream of a stairway reaching up to heaven with angels going up and down. God spoke to Jacob, let's see what he said.*



BIBLE

**Read:**

- Genesis 28:15-16

**Review:**

- *Even though Jacob made mistakes, God never gave up on him. God kept His promise—and through Jacob's family, Jesus was born to rescue us all.*
- *Have you ever felt alone or far from home like Jacob? What does it mean that God is always with you?*
- *Jacob made mistakes, but God still loved him. What does that teach you about how God sees us when we mess up?*

**Continue to review and discuss until Large Group.**



# You Can Trust That God Is With You

Older Elementary Small Group Guide

Week 4 • August 23/24/25

Side 2 • Small Group # 2 • 15 minutes



## ACTIVITY

Take out the Construction Paper Strips and give two to each kid.

- **Say:** *On one strip, you will write about a time when you made a selfish choice (For example: being impatient, not sharing, always thinking about ourselves first, etc.) On the other strip, you will write the Bottom Line.*
- Have the kids tape the two strips together at the end with the strips, forming a right angle.
- Fold each strip over the other to "interlock" the pieces. Once folded, it will form a chain.
- Tape the top of the chain to secure the papers.
- *Wow! You all did a great job making your Jacob's Ladder paper chains! This paper chain reminds us of Jacob's dream when he saw the stairway with angels going up and down and God standing beside it.*
- *We also made those ladders personal. On one piece of paper, you wrote down some of your bad choices. On the other are some of the promises God made to us as His friends. These promises are truths about God! God will always love us! He is always with us! He always forgives us!*



## CHALLENGE

**Say:**

- *Remember: God's promises are always true. God will always love us, God will always forgive us, and God will always help us. You can always trust that God is with you, even when things are hard or we mess up.*
- *Your challenge this week is to hang your Jacob's ladder beside where you sleep at night and remember at the end of each day that you can trust that God is with you.*



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**Ask:**

- *How do you think Jacob felt when he realized God was with him in that place?*
- *Have you ever felt like you made a mistake and God wouldn't love you? What does Jacob's story say about that?*
- *Share an age-appropriate story of a time you knew God was with you after you messed up.*
- Review the Bottom Line
- Review the Memory Verse

**Remain in Small Group until Parent Pick Up.**



## TAKE HOME

Jacob's Ladder Paper Chains

- *Take these ladders home and remember: God's promises are always true. God will always love us, God will always forgive us, and God is always with us.*

**Faith is being sure of what we hope for. It is being sure of what we do not see. Hebrews 11:1**





# You Can Trust God When Things Get Tough

Older Elementary Small Group Guide  
Week 5 • August 30/31/September 1  
Side 1 • Small Group # 1 • 10 minutes



PRO TIP

**Remember that this time of year is a big transition for many kids! As they get ready to start back to school, take extra time to connect with them. Ask them about their teachers, classrooms, and friends. Listen for the things they may be worried with and pray with them as they move into a new grade and start a fresh school year!**



WELCOME

**Welcome each kid by name.**

**Say:**

- *I want everyone to take a minute and think of the best thing that happened to you this week. Pause to allow kids to think. Then share the best thing that happened to you and pass a bean bag around your Group allowing everyone else to share.*
- *Was anyone able to hang their Jacob's ladder by where they sleep and remember God is with them every day? How did that go?*



PRAY

**Pray:** *Dear God, thank you so much for the reminder today that we can trust you when things get tough. Help us, Holy Spirit, turn to you when we feel worried or don't know what to do. Help us remember to trust and believe that you love us and want to help us. Thank you for loving us so much. Amen.*

**Give each kid a Bible.**

**Say:**

- *A long time ago, God promised Abraham that he would bless the world through his family. Abraham's great-grandson, Joseph, was his father Jacob's favorite son. Joseph's brothers were jealous and sold him as a slave.*
- *Then, many years later, Joseph became a great leader and ran into his brothers again.*
- *Let's see how Joseph responded to his brothers after they treated him so awfully!*

**Read:**

- Genesis 45:4-8

**Review:**

- *Wow, Joseph had every right to blame his brothers for selling him into slavery. Joseph could have just accepted his fate and finished his life as a slave. But he didn't. He worked hard, he believed in God's plan and purpose on his life, and he forgave his brothers!*
- *When something hard happens in your life, how can you remember that God is still with you?*
- *Why do you think Joseph chose to forgive his brothers instead of staying angry?*

**Continue to review and discuss until Large Group.**



BIBLE



# You Can Trust God When Things Get Tough

Older Elementary Small Group Guide  
Week 5 • August 30/31/September 1  
Side 2 • Small Group # 2 • 15 minutes



## ACTIVITY

Have your Group sit in a circle and pass around the Glow Baton. Whoever is holding the Baton shares their answers.

- *What's one of your favorite memories?* (Give each kid a chance to share).
- *Let's list things we can trust God with starting with each letter of the alphabet.* (As you pass the baton, let kids think of one thing they can trust God with as you go through the alphabet. Ex: A=Answering our prayers, B=battles we might face, C=choices we might have to make)



## CHALLENGE

### Say:

- *Joseph's story reminds us that even when things go wrong, God is still working. We can trust God when life gets hard.*
- *Your challenge this week, is whenever you face something that is tough, like going back to school, being kind to someone who is unkind to you, or listening to a grown up when you are distracted, think about trusting God with that moment. Close your eyes, take a deep breath, and think of the words, "Trust God." You've got this!*



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### Ask:

- *Have you ever had something unfair happen to you? What did you do?*
- *Is it hard or easy for you to trust God when things are tough?*
- *Is there someone you need to forgive, like Joseph forgave his brothers?*
- Review the Bottom Line
- Review the Memory Verse

**Remain in Small Group until Parent Pick Up.**



## TAKE HOME

As kids leave, remind them of their challenge.

**Faith is being sure of what we hope for. It is being sure of what we do not see. Hebrews 11:1.**