Preschool–Grade 6

Caleb Asks for the Mountain

Sunday School Lesson for Kindergarten to 2nd Grade, 45 minutes

Main point: Follow the LORD all the way, with your whole heart, like Caleb did.
Bible passage: Joshua 14:6–15. Read it before class.
Memory verse: "Nevertheless my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt: but I wholly followed the LORD my God." *Joshua 14:8 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible, pillows or cushions (or a few chairs) to make a "mountain," 6 paper strips, a marker, tape, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: write the memory verse on the 6 paper strips (see part 4). Pile the pillows in a corner to make a mountain. Put a bookmark in your Bible at Joshua 14:8.

1. Opening game: Follow Me All the Way (5 minutes)

Kids line up behind you. Lead them around the room: hop three times, tiptoe, walk around a chair, climb over the pillow mountain, and wave your arms. Anyone who skips a part goes to the end of the line. Then ask: *Was it hard to follow every single thing I did?* Say: "Today we will meet a man who followed God **all the way**. His name was Caleb."

2. Bible story: Caleb Asks for the Mountain (10 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to Joshua 14, so the kids can see the story comes from God's Word. Tell it in your own words:

A long time before this story, God's people were camped in the wilderness. God was giving them a land of their own. Moses sent twelve men, one from every family group, to spy out the land (Numbers 13:2–16). **Caleb** was one of them. He was forty years old (Joshua 14:7). Moses told them, "go up into the mountain" (Numbers 13:17). The men walked through the land, and they came to a city called **Hebron** (Numbers 13:22). It was a very good land, but big, tall people lived there. They were called the **Anakims** (Joshua 14:12; Numbers 13:33).

The other men were afraid. They said, "We be not able," which means we can't do it (Numbers 13:31). They made all the people afraid too (Joshua 14:8). But Caleb trusted God. He said, "Let us go up at once... for we are well able to overcome it" (Numbers 13:30). **Read Joshua 14:8 from your Bible:** "but I wholly followed the LORD my God." Say: "**Wholly** means all the way, with your whole heart."

Moses made Caleb a promise: "the land whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine." That means, the land you walked on will be yours (Joshua 14:9).

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The story continues: The people did not trust God, so they wandered in the wilderness for forty years (Numbers 14:33). But God kept Caleb alive (Joshua 14:10). Then God brought His people into the land, and Joshua was their leader.

One day Caleb came to Joshua at a place called Gilgal (Joshua 14:6). Caleb said, "I am this day fourscore and five years old" (14:10). **Fourscore and five** means eighty-five. That is very old! But Caleb said, "I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me" (14:11). *(Make big strong arms.)*

Then Caleb said, "**Now therefore give me this mountain**" (14:12). It was the same mountain he had walked on forty-five years before. The Anakims still lived there, in big cities with strong walls (14:12). But Caleb was not afraid. He said that if the LORD was with him, he would be able to drive them out (14:12).

Joshua blessed Caleb, and he gave him Hebron to keep for his family (14:13). Why? The Bible tells us: "because that he wholly followed the LORD God of Israel" (14:14). God kept His promise to Caleb!

3. Questions to ask (5 minutes)

1. How old was Caleb when Moses sent him to spy out the land? *(Forty, Joshua 14:7)*
2. What did the other men say? *("We be not able," Numbers 13:31)*
3. How did Caleb follow the LORD? *(Wholly, all the way, Joshua 14:8)*
4. How old was Caleb when he asked for the mountain? *(Eighty-five, 14:10)*
5. What did Joshua give Caleb? *(Hebron, 14:13)*

4. Memory verse: Six Strips (5 minutes)

Tape the 6 strips up in order: *Nevertheless my brethren / that went up with me / made the heart of the people melt: / but I wholly followed / the LORD my God. / Joshua 14:8.* Explain the old words: **nevertheless** means but, **brethren** means brothers (here, the other men), **made the heart of the people melt** means they made the people afraid, and **wholly** means all the way. Read the verse together. Then take one strip away and read it again. Keep taking strips away, one each time, until the kids can say the whole verse by themselves.

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5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "Caleb followed God all the way, even when everyone else was afraid, and God kept His promise to him. God loves you very much. But everyone has done wrong things. The Bible calls that sin: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God who came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins, He was buried, and He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us how to obey the gospel, the good news about Jesus: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means we are sorry for our sin and we turn away from it. We are **baptized**, buried all the way under the water, in Jesus' name, so our sins are washed away (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). **Remission** means God takes our sins away. And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, His own Spirit, and we speak in other tongues, words God gives us, just like the believers did in the Bible (Acts 2:4)."
Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.
This week: when you are scared to do what is right, say, "I will follow God all the way!"

6. Activity (10–15 minutes)

Choose one: the **Caleb word search** (vbshq.com/puzzles/caleb-word-search), crossword, maze or worksheet, the craft (vbshq.com/crafts/caleb-craft), or **Strong Like Caleb:** each child takes a turn to march up to the pillow mountain, make big strong arms, and say, "Give me this mountain!" The class answers, "Caleb wholly followed the LORD!"

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You that You always keep Your promises. Help us follow You all the way, with our whole hearts, like Caleb did, even when other people are afraid. Thank You for loving us and coming to save us in Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a child asks about the Anakims: the Bible says they were very big, tall people (Numbers 13:33). Keep it simple: God helped Caleb, and later Caleb drove them out of Hebron, just as he said (Joshua 15:14). We don't need to be afraid of big problems when God is with us.

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