Preschool–Grade 6

The Walls of Jericho

Sunday School Lesson for 3rd to 5th Grade, 45–60 minutes

Main point: God's people obeyed God's plan exactly, even when it seemed strange, and by faith the walls of Jericho fell down.
Bible passage: Joshua 6 (and Joshua 2 for Rahab). Read them before class.
Memory verse: "Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest." *Joshua 1:9 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible for each child (or one for every two children), paper and a pencil for each team, a whiteboard or large paper, a marker, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: write the memory verse on the board (see part 4).

1. Opening game: Does This Plan Make Sense? (5–10 minutes)

Put kids in teams with paper and a pencil. Say: "Your team has to get into a city with a big wall around it, and the gates are shut tight. You have two minutes to write a plan." Let each team share its plan. Then say: "God gave Joshua a plan for a city just like that. Listen to God's plan and see if it is anything like yours." Ask afterward: *Would you have thought of God's plan? Why do you think God chose that plan?*

2. Bible story: By Faith the Walls Fell (15 minutes)

Kids open their Bibles to Joshua 6. When you reach a **Look up** line, a child finds the verse and reads it out loud. Tell the rest in your own words.

The city and the spies. After Moses died, God made Joshua the leader of Israel and told him, "Be strong and of a good courage" (Joshua 1:9). Joshua sent two men to spy out Jericho (2:1). They came to the house of a woman named Rahab. The Bible calls her "Rahab the harlot," which means she had lived a sinful life. But Rahab believed in the LORD. **Look up Joshua 2:11.** She said, "the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath." When the king of Jericho sent men to find the spies, she hid them under stalks of **flax**, a plant used to make cloth, on her roof (2:3, 2:6). Her house was on the town wall, so she let them down through her window by a cord (2:15). They told her to bind a **line of scarlet thread**, a red cord, in that window, and everyone in her house would be kept safe (2:18–21).

God's plan. Look up Joshua 6:1. Jericho was **straitly shut up**, shut tight: none went out and none came in. **Look up Joshua 6:2.** God said, "I have given into thine hand Jericho." It was already as good as done! The men of war were to **compass** the city, which means go around it, once a day for six days (6:3). Seven priests would carry seven trumpets of rams' horns before the **ark**, the gold-covered chest that showed God was with His people. On the seventh day they would go around seven times, and when the priests made a long blast with the ram's horn, all the people would shout, and the wall would fall down flat (6:4–5).

Six quiet days. The armed men went first, then the seven priests blowing their trumpets, then the ark, and the **rereward** (the rear guard) came after the ark (6:9). The priests blew the trumpets as they went, but the people made no sound. **Look up Joshua 6:10.** "Ye shall not shout, nor make any noise with your voice... until the day I bid you shout." They went around once and came back to camp (6:11), and so they did six days (6:14).

Day seven. Look up Joshua 6:15. They rose early about the dawning of the day and went around the city seven times. **Look up Joshua 6:16.** The seventh time, Joshua said, "Shout; for the LORD hath given you the city." **Look up Joshua 6:20.** The people shouted with a great shout, "the wall fell down flat," and the people went up into the city, every man straight in front of him. God's people took the city. It was destroyed and burned, as God had said (6:17, 6:21, 6:24), and the silver, gold, brass and iron went into the **treasury** of the LORD, the place where God's things were kept (6:19, 6:24).

Rahab saved. Look up Joshua 6:23. The two spies went into her house and brought out Rahab, her father, her mother, her brothers and all her family. Joshua saved Rahab alive, and she lived among God's people (6:25).

By faith. Look up Hebrews 11:30. "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days." **Look up Joshua 6:27.** The LORD was with Joshua, and everyone in the country heard about him.

3. Questions to ask (10 minutes)

Thinking questions (no single right answer; let kids talk)

1. God's plan didn't look like a battle plan at all. Why do you think God chose a plan where only He could get the credit?
2. The people walked around the city for six days and nothing happened. What would you have been thinking on day five?
3. Why do you think Joshua told the people not to say a word until the shout (6:10)?
4. Rahab believed in the LORD before she ever saw the wall fall (2:11). How did she show it?
5. Hebrews 11:30 says the walls fell "by faith." What does faith have to do with obeying?

Recall questions

1. How many priests and how many trumpets were there? *(Seven priests, seven trumpets of rams' horns, Joshua 6:4)*
2. How many times did they go around the city in all? *(Thirteen: once a day for six days, then seven times on day seven, 6:14–15)*
3. What did Rahab bind in her window? *(The line of scarlet thread, 2:18, 2:21)*

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4. Memory verse: Seven Times Around (5 minutes)

Explain the old words: **commanded thee** means told you to do it, **of a good courage** means brave, **dismayed** means so worried you want to give up, and **whithersoever thou goest** means wherever you go. Say the verse together seven times, a different way each time: whisper, deep voice, high voice, fast, slow, and with one word erased from the board each time. On the seventh time, everyone shouts it!

5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "God's people obeyed God's plan all the way, and by faith the walls fell down. Rahab believed, and God saved her whole family. God loves you. The Bible says: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means all of us have done wrong, and none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, which means God came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again the third day (1 Corinthians 15:3–4). How do we obey the gospel? '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 to turn away from sin; our old self dies (Romans 6:6). We are **buried with Jesus in baptism**, all the way under the water, in Jesus' name. **Remission** means our sins are washed away, and we come up to live a new life (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, and we speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives the words (Acts 2:4). The Bible calls this being born again (John 3:5)."

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: obey God's Word all the way, even when you can't see the reason yet. When you feel afraid, say Joshua 1:9.

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6. Activity: Bible Look-Up Race (10–15 minutes)

Kids work in pairs with one Bible. Read a reference and a question. The first pair to find the verse and read the answer out loud wins the point. For early finishers: the **walls of Jericho crossword** (vbshq.com/puzzles/jericho-crossword) or **worksheet** (vbshq.com/worksheets/jericho-worksheet).

1. Joshua 2:1: How many men did Joshua send to spy? *(Two men)*
2. Joshua 2:6: Where did Rahab hide the spies? *(On the roof, under the stalks of flax)*
3. Joshua 2:15: Where was Rahab's house? *(Upon the town wall)*
4. Joshua 6:6: What did the priests carry besides the trumpets? *(The ark of the covenant)*
5. Joshua 6:11: Where did they sleep after going around the city? *(In the camp)*
6. Joshua 6:15: What time did they get up on the seventh day? *(Early, about the dawning of the day)*
7. Joshua 6:19: What was "consecrated unto the LORD," set apart for God? *(The silver, gold, and vessels of brass and iron)*
8. Joshua 6:27: What does the chapter say at the very end? *(The LORD was with Joshua, and his fame was noised throughout all the country)*

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You for keeping Your word at Jericho. Help us obey You all the way, even when we don't understand Your plan. Thank You that You are with us wherever we go. In Jesus' name, amen."

About the city: tell it in one plain sentence, as the lesson does, and don't describe it further. If a child asks why, the people of Jericho had heard what the LORD did for Israel (Joshua 2:10–11) and still shut their city tight (6:1), and God had waited a long time while their sin grew (Genesis 15:16; Deuteronomy 9:5). God is always good and fair, and He saved Rahab and her family, who believed.

About Rahab: if a child asks what "harlot" means, say simply that she had lived a sinful life, and don't explain further. The point is what God did: she believed, and she was saved (Hebrews 11:31).

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