Preschool–Grade 6

The Walls of Jericho

Sunday School Lesson for Preteens (Ages 11–12), 45–60 minutes

Main point: Faith obeys God's plan all the way, even before it makes sense, and God keeps His word.
Bible passage: Joshua 6 (with Joshua 2). Students read Joshua 6:1–16 and 6:20, 6:22–27 out loud themselves.
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)* and "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days." *Hebrews 11:30 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible for each student, paper or a notebook and a pen for each student, a whiteboard and a marker, and one take-home sheet for each student.
Before class: read Joshua 1–2 and 6, and Hebrews 11:30–31. Write both memory verses on the board. Decide who reads which verses.

1. Opening game: Rate the Plan (5–10 minutes)

Write four plans on the board for getting into a walled city with shut gates: build ladders, dig a tunnel, wait until they run out of food, march around it once a day for a week and then shout. Students vote on which plan would work best and explain why. Say: "Only one of these plans was God's, and it's the one that looks least likely to work."

2. Bible story: Students Read It (15 minutes)

Tell the start in your own words: After Moses died, God told Joshua three times to be strong and courageous (Joshua 1:6, 1:7, 1:9). Joshua sent two spies to Jericho (2:1). Rahab, whom the Bible calls "Rahab the harlot" (a woman who had lived a sinful life), hid them on her roof under stalks of flax (2:6). She told them, "the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath" (2:11). They promised to keep her family safe if she bound a line of scarlet thread in her window (2:18), and she did (2:21).

Read out loud: Joshua 6:1–16. Students take turns, a few verses each. Old words in this passage:

- **straitly shut up** (6:1): shut tight
- **mighty men of valour** (6:2): brave, strong soldiers
- **compass** (6:3): go around
- **ark of the covenant** (6:6): the gold-covered chest that showed God was with Israel; the **covenant** is God's agreement with His people
- **rereward** (6:9): the rear guard, the people at the back
- **bid** (6:10): tell
- **lodged** (6:11): stayed the night; **dawning of the day** (6:15): sunrise

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Read out loud: Joshua 6:20 and 6:22–27. Old words in this passage:

- **fell down flat** (6:20): fell all the way down; **straight before him**: straight ahead
- **sware** (6:22): promised with an oath; **kindred** (6:23): relatives
- **adjured** (6:26): made them promise; **noised** (6:27): talked about everywhere

Tell the part you skipped in your own words: Jericho was **accursed**, set apart to the LORD for judgment (6:17). The city was destroyed and burned, as God had said (6:21, 6:24), and only the silver, gold, brass and iron were kept, for the treasury of the LORD (6:19, 6:24). Rahab and everyone in her house were saved (6:17, 6:25).

3. Questions to ask (15 minutes)

1. God said, "I have given into thine hand Jericho" (6:2) before anyone took one step. How does that change the way you read the next six days?
2. For six days the wall stood. What would have happened if Israel had quit on day six, or gone around only six times on day seven?
3. The people had to stay silent until Joshua said to shout (6:10). Why might silence have been part of obeying?
4. Hebrews 11:30–31 puts the walls and Rahab side by side. Fill in this chart on the board together:
    - Israel: obeyed a plan that made no sense yet (Joshua 6:3–5) and the walls fell "by faith" (Hebrews 11:30)
    - Rahab: believed the LORD before Jericho fell (Joshua 2:11) and "perished not" "by faith" (Hebrews 11:31)
    - James 2:25: Rahab's faith showed in what she did; she received the messengers and sent them out another way
5. Rahab had lived a sinful life, yet God saved her and her family (6:25). What does that tell you about who God will save?
6. What "wall" in your life feels too big? What would obeying God look like while you wait?

4. Memory verse (5 minutes)

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, **whithersoever thou goest** means wherever you go. In Hebrews 11:30, **compassed about** means gone around. Read both verses together. Then students cover one phrase at a time and quiz a partner. Say Joshua 1:9 this week; keep working on Hebrews 11:30 next week too.

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5. What this means for us (5–10 minutes)

Say: "Rahab was saved because she believed the LORD and acted on it, and everyone inside her house was saved with her. God loves you, and 'all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, God who came as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). 'Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures' (1 Corinthians 15:3–4, KJV). Israel didn't only hear God's plan for Jericho; they obeyed it. We obey the gospel the way Peter preached it: '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) We **repent**, turning from sin, and our old self dies (Romans 6:6). We are buried with Jesus by baptism in His name, all the way under the water. **Remission** means our sins are washed away, and we rise to walk in newness of life, a brand-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 utterance, which means as He gives the words (Acts 2:4). Jesus called this being born of water and of the Spirit (John 3:5)."
Pray with the students, 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.

6. Activity: Journal (10 minutes)

Each student writes privately. No one has to share. Write these three prompts on the board:

1. What is one thing God's Word tells me to do that doesn't make sense to me yet?
2. Rahab's faith showed in what she did (James 2:25). What would my faith look like in action this week?
3. Write a short prayer asking God to help you be strong and of a good courage.
   If there is time, invite a few volunteers to share one sentence. Early finishers can do the **walls of Jericho crossword** (vbshq.com/puzzles/jericho-crossword).

This week: read Joshua 2 at home, the story of Rahab and the spies. When you feel afraid, say Joshua 1:9.

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You for keeping Your word at Jericho, and for saving Rahab when she believed. Help us obey You all the way, even before we understand. Thank You that You are with us wherever we go. In Jesus' name, amen."

About the city: answer honestly and gently if students ask. The people of Jericho had heard what the LORD did (Joshua 2:10–11) and still shut their city tight (6:1). God had waited a long time while their sin grew: "the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full" (Genesis 15:16), and He drove the nations out "for the wickedness of these nations" (Deuteronomy 9:5). God is always good and fair, and anyone who believed, like Rahab, was saved. Don't describe it beyond what Joshua 6:21 and 6:24 say.

About Rahab: "the harlot" means she had lived a sinful life. Say that much if students ask, and keep the focus on her faith (Hebrews 11:31).

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