

# Faith: Depending on God

**OBJECTIVE:** *To contemplate what it means to have faith and to encourage each other in our faith.*



## WORSHIP

Sing praise and worship songs as well as songs about faith that are familiar and meaningful to your group. Here are some suggestions.

"Be Still and Know That I Am God"

"God Will Make a Way"

"God With Us"

"Great Is Thy Faithfulness"

"O Lord, You Have Been Good"

"O Most High"

"Surely the Arm of the Lord Is Not Too Short"

"The Name of the Lord Is a Strong Tower"

## STORY

**Jesus Heals a Paralyzed Man and a Sick Woman, Matthew 9:1-8, 20-22**

- Some men bring a paralyzed friend to Jesus, and Jesus heals him.
- A sick woman touches Jesus' cloak and is healed.
- Jesus tells the woman that her faith has healed her.

Ask everyone to crowd around you. Choose one person to stand on the outside of the group. Now slowly walk around the room as you tell the story. Instruct the group to stay right with you while the one person on the outside tries to squeeze through and touch the hem of your clothes.

## MEMORY VERSE

"Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see" (Hebrews 11:1).

Help the children learn the verse by asking them to start a pat-clap rhythm. First they pat their lap, then clap their hands. Repeat this pat-clap-pat-clap rhythm, interrupting it only as shown below. Pat on the italicized syllables and clap on syllables in bold type.

Now *faith* is being **sure** of what we  
*hope* for (cross hands over chest)  
 And *certain* of what **we** do not  
*see* (hands around eyes like glasses)

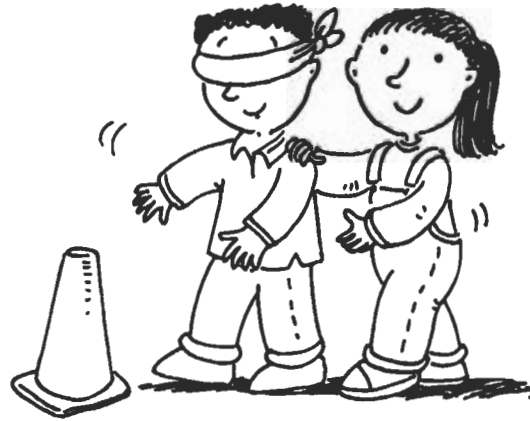
After everyone gets used to doing the rhythm and hand motions together, start the rhythm, call out someone's name, and that person must say the verse in rhythm with the motions. Then that person calls out someone else's name. That person says the verse, and so on.

## ACTIVITIES

Choose one or more of the following activities to support the story or theme and to provide a springboard for discussion.

**BLIND WALK.** Choose partners. Blindfold one partner in each pair. The other partner is the leader and must lead the blindfolded one around obstacles in a house or yard, telling him when to turn, step up, step down, and so on. The blindfolded one has to trust, put faith in, his partner to lead him the right way. Then switch places. Talk about having faith.

**Option:** Children set up a maze in a house or yard that adult pairs (one blindfolded) have to walk through. They can label the areas of obstacles with names like Gloomy Gulch, Mountain of Bills, Sea of Sickness, Straits of Success, Valley of Worry, and so on. After passing the obstacles, everyone sits down to a feast (snack) the children have prepared. Discuss faith.



**FALLING.** Ask a child to stand in front of an adult with his back to the adult, making his body stiff. Say: "Without bending your knees, fall backwards into the adult's arms. Do you trust the adult to catch you?" Discuss faith.

**WHAT WILL HOLD YOU?** Turn a paper grocery bag upside down. Set it beside a sturdy chair. Ask: "Which do you trust to hold you up? Which will you put your faith in?" Try standing on each.

**GOD'S NAMES.** Give each person four or more index cards or 3-by-5-inch pieces of paper. On each card, everyone writes a different name of God with its meaning. Then punch a hole in the top and the bottom of each card and tie them together with yarn or string so they will hang on a wall, one above the other in a column. Make a loop in the top card to hang it with. Some names to use: Jehovah-nissi (God my Banner), Jehovah-jireh (God my Provider), Jehovah-shalom (God my Peace), Jehovah-rapha (God my Healer), Jehovah-sabaoth (God of Hosts), Jehovah-raah (God my Shepherd), Jehovah-tsidkenu (God our righteousness). Discuss God's names, their meanings, and how we depend on these characteristics of God when we have faith.

**LOOKING FOR THE INVISIBLE.** Take a walk outdoors and look for things we know about nature, but we can't see. For example, we know the wind is very real, but we can't see it. So if the wind is blowing, look for the evidence of the invisible wind. We know that trees have roots that go down and out as far as they go up and out. Even though we don't see the roots, they are a very important part of the plant. Listen for insects that you can hear, but can't immediately see. Think about the law of gravity. Gravity is invisible, but it is still very real. Test it by throwing a leaf or light twig into the air. Say: "Faith is believing in what we can't see."

## QUESTIONS

1. What is faith?
2. How do we get faith?
3. How does faith show in people?
4. What are some things in life that people try to trust or put their faith in? Will these things "hold them up" when they go through hard times? Why or why not?

## KIDS' COUNCIL

### BRING IT HOME

- You can't see the wind, but you can see what it does. You can't see God and Jesus, but what do they do that you can see?
- Do you have faith in Jesus?
- Have you ever asked Jesus to be your Lord and Savior? (This is a good opportunity to lead children to the Lord.)
- How can you show your faith to other people this week?

### SHARE AND PRAY

- Ask the children to share their concerns and pray for each other.
- If children have faith in God and Jesus, encourage them to tell God so.
- Encourage children to pray for friends and family members who may not have faith in God.

## ADULT STUDY QUESTIONS

- When you hear of God working powerfully in someone's life, what does that do to your faith? What has God done for you (or for people you know) that has increased your faith?
- Some people say that believing in God is blind faith, and they won't believe because the existence of God cannot be proved. But most people trust, believe in, have faith in something. What are some things that people have faith in?
- Read and discuss Hebrews 4:1, 2. The woman who touched Jesus' cloak combined what she had heard about Jesus with faith. What did she do as a result? Discuss the principle of hearing, believing, and responding.

## SNACK AND FELLOWSHIP

**Treasure Cookies.** Wrap a gum drop or jelly bean inside two circles of refrigerated ready-made sugar cookie dough. Be sure the edges of the dough are sealed. Bake according to package instructions. Tell everyone that there is a treasure inside each cookie. Do they believe you? What makes what you say believable? They believe you if you have shown that you can be trusted. Say: "God has shown us that he can be trusted. He is faithful. We can believe what he says. We can have faith in him."