



All Hands on Deck

Jump In

Although as Christians we celebrate Pentecost as the day God sent the Spirit to the followers of Jesus, Pentecost is not a holiday that originated with Christianity. Pentecost was a Jewish festival known as the Feast of Weeks. Pentecost was one of three pilgrimage feasts when Jews gathered in Jerusalem. Jesus had told the disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the gift of the Holy Spirit. During this time of waiting in Jerusalem, the disciples and other followers were celebrating Pentecost. While they were celebrating, the Spirit arrived. The arrival of the Spirit was not a calm quiet event, but rather the Spirit came sounding like a violent wind and appearing like fire. The concept of the Holy Spirit is sometimes a difficult one for children and adults to understand. It is okay to admit to your children that you don't have all the answers. Mystery is a part of faith.

Dive Deeper Together

Read Acts 2:1-41 together in the Deep Blue Kids Bible.

OR

Read "Courageous Disciples": The believers of Jesus were together in Jerusalem for Pentecost. Suddenly wild wind swept through the house and what looked like flames came to rest upon each of them. The Holy Spirit filled each of them and they began to speak in languages they did not know. When they went out in the street, there were faithful Jews in Jerusalem from all over the world who had come to celebrate Pentecost. They heard the believers speaking the languages of their home nations and were surprised. Peter stepped up and addressed the crowd. He said, "We have been filled with God's Spirit. We come to tell about Jesus the Messiah." The people started to believe in Jesus and were baptized and added to the church.

Grow Stronger Together

Peter and the other disciples were filled with God's Holy Spirit, and they courageously shared the stories of Jesus with the crowds in Jerusalem. God's Spirit can make us brave! Ask your children about times in their lives that they have been brave. Together, plan a time to bravely share God's love through volunteer opportunities at your church or in your community.

Pray Together

Share joys and concerns, and then say this prayer: Dear God, help us to courageously love and serve you. Amen.

June 4

Unit 1: Courageous Bible People

**BV: Hope in the Lord!
Be strong and let your heart take courage.
Hope in the Lord!
(Psalm 27:14)**

AP: God gives me courage.

**Courageous Disciples
(Acts 2:1-41)**

The games in the Deep Blue Adventures app are awesome! Download the app at www.deepbluekids.com/app.





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Jump In

The book of Esther is notable for its lack of religiosity. God is not mentioned a single time in the book of Esther. The story is set in Persia during a time when there were many Jews living in Persia. Although Esther and Mordecai identify as Jews, they appear to have assimilated into Persian culture. Even though the worship of God is not mentioned outright, God's presence is seen throughout the story. When the lives of the Jewish people are threatened, Esther wisely uses the power she is given for the good of her people. She accepts advice and encouragement from Mordecai along the way. Esther's hope in God's protection of the Jewish people enables her to have the courage to do her part.

Dive Deeper Together

Read the Book of Esther together in the Deep Blue Kids Bible.
OR

Read "Courageous Queen": Esther was an orphan who lived with her cousin Mordecai when King Ahasuerus chose her as his new queen. She did not tell the king that she was Jewish. Haman, the king's highest official, wrote a law ordering that all the Jews in Persia be killed. Mordecai tore his clothes and sat in sackcloth and ashes at the city gate in anguish. When Esther asked what was wrong, Mordecai sent her a copy of the law. Mordecai asked her to beg the king for mercy. The law said if she went to the king without an invitation she could be killed. She courageously went to see the king. She asked for the king and Haman to join her at a banquet. At the banquet, the king asked Esther what she desired. She told him that her one request was to spare her life and the lives of her people. The king did not want to kill Esther and her people, so he gave Esther the power to overturn the law and save her people.

Grow Stronger Together

Esther had courage and approached King Ahasuerus without an invitation. Then, she has more courage and asked for her people to be spared. This story is celebrated by our Jewish brothers and sisters during Purim. Part of this celebration is sending gifts of food to friends and family. Bake some cookies this week to share with your family and friends!

Pray Together

Share joys and concerns, and then say this prayer: Dear God, help us to courageously love and serve you. Amen.

June 11

Unit 1: Courageous Bible People

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AP: God gives me courage.

**Courageous Queen
(Book of Esther)**

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Jump In

King Nebuchadnezzar made a gold statue and decreed that at the sound of music everyone must bow down and worship the gold statue. Anyone not bowing down to the statue would be thrown into a fiery furnace. As Jews, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego followed God's laws. They knew they were to only worship God. Therefore, they refused to bow down before the statue. When King Nebuchadnezzar finds out about their refusal, he gives them one final opportunity to bow down, but they refuse. The response of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego is interesting. They essentially tell the king, "If our God is able to save us, God will save us. But even if God doesn't save us, we will never bow down to your statue." What an act of courage! Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego believe in God so much they are willing to risk dying in the fiery furnace.

Dive Deeper Together

Read Daniel 3:1-30 together in the Deep Blue Kids Bible.

OR

Read "Courageous Friends": Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were three friends who lived in the foreign land of Babylon. King Nebuchadnezzar ordered everyone to worship an idol, but they knew the commandments and refused to worship the idol. This made the king mad! He demanded his guards to throw three friends into the furnace. The king was watching the flames, when suddenly he jumped up. He said, "They are not hurt by the fire!" The King went over to the furnace and shouted, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, come out and come here!" The three friends stepped out of the fire, and everyone was amazed. The fire had not burned a single hair on their head, and their clothes did not even smell of smoke. The king praised God.

Grow Stronger Together

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were very brave! They chose to follow God instead of doing what everyone else was doing. Ask your children what this looks like today. What popular things distract us from following God?

Pray Together

Share joys and concerns, and then say this prayer: Dear God, help us to courageously love and serve you. Amen.

June 18

Unit 1: Courageous Bible People

BV: Hope in the Lord! Be strong and let your heart take courage.

Hope in the Lord! (Psalm 27:14)

AP: God gives me courage.

Courageous Friends (Daniel 3:1-30)

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All Hands on Deck

Jump In

The stories in Daniel are set during the time of the Babylonian exile. The Jews were living in a foreign land, surrounded by people who worshipped different Gods and had different religious practices. These circumstances made remaining faithful to God a challenge. Daniel was up to the challenge; he chose to remain faithful to God even when it wasn't easy. Some of the king's advisors came up with a plan specifically designed to get Daniel in trouble. The king's advisors knew Daniel was faithful to God. In ancient times, kings were very powerful and were sometimes worshipped as gods. King Darius' advisors appealed to his vanity by suggesting people should worship him and nobody else for an entire month. King Darius agreed to their recommendation that anyone who broke this law should be fed to the lions. And the trap was set. Daniel could have chosen to turn his back on God and worship the king in order to save his life. Or he could have continued to pray to God but done so in secret. Instead, Daniel makes a courageous choice to continue praying to God three times a day in front of his window, just as he had always done. Daniel is an early example of nonviolent civil disobedience.

Dive Deeper Together

Read Daniel 6:1-28 together in the Deep Blue Kids Bible.

OR

Read **"Courageous Daniel"**: Daniel was a faithful follower of God. Three times a day he would kneel in front of his window and pray to God. Daniel worked for the king. The other workers were jealous of Daniel. They talked the king into making a law that would punish anyone who prayed to anyone but the king. Daniel had to decide whether to follow this new law or God. If he broke the law, he'd be sent to a den of lions. Daniel chose to be brave! He prayed to God. He was caught praying and was sent to the lions, but he was kept safe. Daniel's example of faith convinced the king decided to follow God, just like Daniel.

Grow Stronger Together

Daniel was very brave! He chose to follow God even though it was against the law. He prayed three times a day—at morning, noon, and night. This week, pray together as a family three times a day.

Pray Together

Share joys and concerns, and then say this prayer: Dear God, help us to courageously love and serve you. Amen.

June 25

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**Courageous Daniel
(Daniel 6:1-28)**

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