

SUB TOPIC THEME:

That's Military Life!

LESSON OBJECTIVE:

To help students understand that despite how overwhelming life as a military kid can feel, God offers us all a sure and true way through it all. By learning about the choices we are responsible for and the impact those have on our lives, students will grow in their ability to live out their faith. This will nurture resilience throughout their life and give them a deeper understanding of God's deep love and abiding provision for us all.

**Set Up Info:***Supplies Needed*

1. Copies of the Student Response sheet (printed below)
2. Bibles so you can look up the Scripture story and central Bible passages
3. A passion to see students transformed in their understanding of God's love and presence in their lives!

Instructive Prep

Military kids experience an upbringing like no other. They move every 1-3 years. Their parents are often away from home for long periods of time. They make friends quicker and in different ways than civilian kids. They deal with regular transition and the constant threat of life as they know it ending abruptly if their Service Member parent experiences trauma, reassignment, or is killed.

Talking openly with them about your own life experiences and the times when you chose to follow God or were overwhelmed by life's challenges will be instructive for them. Through transparency and sharing your gained wisdom, in conjunction with the guidance of God through Scripture and the Holy Spirit, the students will begin to develop a greater resilience to the chaotic life of a Military Kid.

The progression of these studies is four-fold: *learn, feel, do and what next*. We want students to learn something new, connect at an emotional level to some degree, and participate in doing something during the study (like making a hand gesture as a tool/reminder). Finally, the *what next* focuses on a change in attitude and/or behavior, which you will find in the challenge of the Life Application section. Remember, the movement is toward spiritual and emotional transformation in kids'

lives, so the application section based on God's truth is really the crux of the time together! Have fun and lead well.

INTRO:

We all have times when life and all it's junk seems to overwhelm us. For you as military kids, this is particularly true. So what are we supposed to do when life becomes too hard to handle? How do we deal with life being overwhelming?

INTRO STORY:

This story is one you might recognize. It's about the different choices two men made when they were in overwhelming circumstances. One chooses to act in faith and the other chooses to try and control things. Pay attention as you read to what things those choices impact and what things they don't. Consider how your choices might be radically changing your life experiences.

Once upon a time there was a prince. He was handsome and tall. He was an archer and chariot driver and led many men in battle. His father the king was proud of him and taught him all he knew about ruling the kingdom.

Then one day, the kingdom was attacked by a nearby kingdom, and a vicious battle ensued. After many deaths and lots of battles, the enemy king was beheaded by a young foot soldier. The country loved him and sang songs about his heroism and how he saved the whole land!

He became a general in the army and won many more battles. Soon the whole land wanted him to be their next king. They shouted his name when he rode down the street and the maidens and young children threw flowers from rooftops as he passed. He was beloved by all.

The prince saw this and knew it to be a good thing. So he welcomed the soldier into the palace. They became friends and the prince never said a bad word about him. When the people shouted for the soldier to be their king, the Crown Prince would smile and say, "If God wills it, it will be."

But the king did not feel that same way. He was angry that the soldier was so loved by the people. He wanted his son to be the next king. So he refused to teach the soldier what it meant to rule. He was rude and demeaning to him. Once, the king became so angry with him that he hurled a spear at the young soldier.

Years passed and when the time came for a new king, the king refused to step down and give his throne over to the soldier. He demanded the kingship go to the prince, despite his protests, and the country became divided.

The war did not last long though. God caused an arrow to find the king on the battlefield, and he died with an angry and vengeful heart, leaving his country in ruins. The soldier became the new king and was the greatest king the land would ever know. And the prince? The new king remembered his kindness and friendship. He remained a close friend until the end of his life and the new king watched over the prince's descendants and kept them safe.

(1 Samuel 17:41-54; 18:6-16; 19:1-10; 31:1-7; 2 Samuel 1:1-27; 5:1-5; 9:1-13)

INTRO QUESTIONS

1. What changed because the king refused to let go of control?
2. What remained the same?
3. Do you think the prince did the right thing? Why or why not?
4. Which choice would you have made?

PERSONAL REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

Whoever has the shortest hair goes first!

1. On a scale of one to ten, how overwhelming does life as a Military Kid feel for you? Any specific reason why? (use Student response sheet)
2. How do you think choosing to act in faith would change things? (use Student response sheet)
3. How do you think God might be asking you to change? Write down three ways you sense God might be asking you to live in faith right now. (use Student response sheet)

CENTRAL BIBLE PASSAGES

This Scripture passage tells the story of Rahab and it takes place just before the walls of Jericho fell down (which makes this even cooler since her house was part of the wall!) As you read, notice when people choose to have faith even during overwhelming situations.

Joshua 2:1-21

Then Joshua sent two spies from the camp at Acacia with orders to go and secretly explore the land of Canaan, especially the city of Jericho. When they came to the city,

they went to spend the night in the house of a prostitute named Rahab. The king of Jericho heard that some Israelites had come that night to spy out the country, so he sent word to Rahab: "The men in your house have come to spy out the whole country! Bring them out!"

"Some men did come to my house," she answered, "but I don't know where they were from. They left at sundown before the city gate was closed. I didn't find out where they were going, but if you start after them quickly, you can catch them." (Now Rahab had taken the two spies up on the roof and hidden them under some stalks of flax that she had put there.) The king's men left the city, and then the gate was shut. They went looking for the Israelite spies as far as the place where the road crosses the Jordan.

Before the spies settled down for the night, Rahab went up on the roof and said to them, "I know that the LORD has given you this land. Everyone in the country is terrified of you. We have heard how the LORD dried up the Red Sea in front of you when you were leaving Egypt. We have also heard how you killed Sihon and Og, the two Amorite kings east of the Jordan. We were afraid as soon as we heard about it; we have all lost our courage because of you. The LORD your God is God in heaven above and here on earth. Now swear by him that you will treat my family as kindly as I have treated you, and give me some sign that I can trust you. Promise me that you will save my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all their families! Don't let us be killed!"

The men said to her, "May God take our lives if we don't do as we say! If you do not tell anyone what we have been doing, we promise you that when the LORD gives us this land, we will treat you well."

Rahab lived in a house built into the city wall, so she let the men down from the window by a rope. "Go into the hill country," she said, "or the king's men will find you. Hide there for three days until they come back. After that, you can go on your way."

The men said to her, "We will keep the promise that you have made us give. This is what you must do. When we invade your land, tie this red cord to the window you let us down from. Get your father and mother, your brothers, and all your father's family together in your house. If anyone goes out of the house, his death will be his own fault, and we will not be responsible; but if anyone in the house with you is harmed, then we will be responsible. However, if you tell anyone what we have been doing, then we will not have to keep our promise which you have made us give you." She agreed and sent them away. When they had gone, she tied the red cord to the window."

Continued in **Joshua 6:20-25:**

"So the priests blew the trumpets. As soon as the people heard it, they gave a loud shout, and the walls collapsed. Then all the army went straight up the hill into the

city and captured it. With their swords they killed everyone in the city, men and women, young and old. They also killed the cattle, sheep, and donkeys.

Joshua then told the two men who had served as spies, “Go into the prostitute's house, and bring her and her family out, as you promised her.” So they went and brought Rahab out, along with her father and mother, her brothers, and the rest of her family. They took them all, family and slaves, to safety near the Israelite camp. Then they set fire to the city and burned it to the ground, along with everything in it, except the things made of gold, silver, bronze, and iron, which they took and put in the LORD's treasury. But Joshua spared the lives of the prostitute Rahab and all her relatives, because she had hidden the two spies that he had sent to Jericho. (Her descendants have lived in Israel to this day.)

LIFE APPLICATION:

1. What are the three main things that keep you from acting in faith? What would it take to overcome them? (use Student response sheet)
2. How do you think our choices impact God's plan? Discuss why or why not you think choosing to follow God is a good decision.
3. Actively pray together after group members have an opportunity to talk about overwhelming situations they may be facing. Make a commitment to pray for each other every day this week! (use Student response sheet)
4. Weekly Challenge: As a group, write an ICE (In Case of Emergency) plan for how to walk in faith even in the most overwhelming of circumstances. Outline a step-by-step process. Include 2-3 Bible verses and a prayer. Once you've finished, have one member of the group make copies and distribute them to everyone. Keep them on hand at all times. You may want to include phone numbers or notes to each other on the back. Use this whenever you need!

4. WHAT ARE THE THREE MAIN THINGS THAT KEEP YOU FROM ACTING IN FAITH? WHAT WOULD IT TAKE TO OVERCOME THEM?

5. WRITE DOWN GROUP MEMBERS' PRAYER REQUESTS: