

# Doing God's Work

## Small Group Lesson



Ages  
6-7

### Power Point

I will do God's work in our world.

### Scripture Memory Verse

[Jesus said] "I am sending you, just as the Father has sent me."

—John 20:21b

### Bible Lesson

Joshua and Caleb spy out the land of Canaan and come back with a good report despite the negative report of the other spies.

—Numbers 13:1-33; 14:1-35

### Overview

Moses sent 12 spies into the land that God had promised His people. Ten spies became afraid—they knew the people would be powerful enemies, and they didn't trust that God would give them victory. But Joshua and Caleb declared that the land was good, and believed that God was on their side. We can follow their example today by trusting God for the power to do His work, even when we feel outnumbered.

## Discussion Questions

1. How many spies did Moses send to the land of Canaan? (*12—one from each tribe.*)
2. Why did most of the spies say, "We don't want to go to the new land"? (*They were afraid of the other people who lived there. They were afraid of the peoples' great size.*)
3. Which two spies gave a good report? (*Joshua and Caleb.*)
4. What made Joshua and Caleb more brave than the other spies? (*They believed that God would help them in the new land.*)
5. Why was God unhappy with the people? (*God had told Moses to take the land of Canaan. It was God's gift for them. But they did not trust that God would help them.*)
6. Do you believe that God will help you do His work, even when it's scary? Why or why not? (*Allow responses.*)

## God Encounter

**Materials:** An "I Spy" or "Where's Waldo?" book (available at your local bookstore or library).

**Preparation:** Before class, find one of the hidden objects in the picture so that you can point it out to the kids in your group.

(*Open up the book to a picture-filled page.*) Does anybody enjoy these types of picture books? Who can find the hidden object? (*Call on a child, tell her the hidden object to look for, and praise her once she finds the hidden picture.*) Kids, doing God's work can be a little like this "I Spy" book. The spies in the Bible lesson went out ahead of God's people on a secret mission. God wanted them to "spy out" the land. He wanted His people to see the hidden blessings there. But only Joshua and Caleb could see the "I Spy"—God's wonderful blessings hidden among their enemies, a rose among the thorns.

Sometimes, *we* can be the "I Spy" picture, because we're hidden in the "puzzle" of God's plan. The work that God asks us to do is a "secret mission." We may not look different from the people around us who don't know Jesus. We may "blend in" like the pictures on an "I Spy" page. But God sees us and He will reward us for serving Him.

Kids, remember how hard (*name of child*) worked to find the hidden picture? In the same way, we should look for chances to **do God's work in our world**. Look at the world with God's eyes and "spy out" opportunities to do His work!

*(Lead the kids in a time of prayer, asking God to give them the wisdom to see God's work and do it.)*



## The Jesus Factor

**If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.**

—John 15:19

**Materials:** Bible.

Kids, how many of you think it's important to be liked? (*Allow a show of hands*). Most of us want to be liked, and there's nothing wrong with that. But sooner or later, we have to deal with someone not liking us. Did you know that when Jesus was on Earth, not everyone liked Him? And, people sometimes didn't like His friends, either. (*Open your Bible to the Jesus Factor verse and read it out loud.*)

So sometimes, the world hates you. Does that mean you should hate the world? (*Allow responses.*) Remember—Jesus treated everyone with God's love and kindness. He wants you to do the same. Every now and then, you might meet someone who doesn't like that you're a Christian. You may be tempted to be mean right back, but resist that temptation! Jesus calls us to show love. Don't think of them as an enemy, but as someone who hasn't met Jesus yet.

*(Have children form a circle and hold hands or link arms. Have one child play the role of "Mr./Miss Worldly" and stand outside the circle, heckling the children in the circle for believing in Jesus. The other children agree on a Christlike way to show their strength. Examples include yelling "God loves us and God loves you, too," or singing "Jesus Loves Me," "I am a 'C'," and other Christian songs. Praise kids for their efforts to stand strong and show God's love to "Worldly.")*

## Small Group Activity

### God's Vision Viewfinder

**Materials:** "God's Vision Viewfinder" handout from *Take-Home Challenges* CD-ROM, crayons, paper brads, scissors.

**Preparation:** Print one "God's Vision Viewfinder" for each child onto card stock. Make a sample craft. Fold one of the dump/fields circles in half so that one side shows only the dump, and the other shows only the field.

Isn't it funny how different people can look at the same thing and see something totally different? (*Hold up the "dump" side of the folded circle.*) When the 12 spies went to Canaan, all of them saw a very good land; but ten of them came back and said they saw a scary dump. (*Flip the folded circle over to show the "field" side.*) Joshua and Caleb told the truth—that it was a land of "milk and honey," of God's blessing. Part of doing God's work is asking Him to help you see the world the way He sees it. We will each make a "God's Vision Viewfinder" to help us remember to see the good things God wants to give us. God wants to bless you when you do His work!

*(Kids decorate the top circle of the viewfinder, then cut out the window on the dotted lines. The disc with the window goes on top. The two are put together with a paper brad. Show kids how to turn the viewfinder to show the blessing of the Promised Land.)*

## Take-Home Challenge

**Materials:** Lesson 4 Ages 6-7 Take-Home Challenge from *Take-Home Challenges* CD-ROM.

Hand out this week's Take-Home Challenge and encourage kids to complete the activities with their families. Remind kids that you'll ask them for responses during next week's K.I.D.S. Church service.

# Doing God's Work

## Small Group Lesson



Ages  
8-10

### Power Point

I will do God's work in our world.

### Scripture Memory Verse

[Jesus said] "I am sending you, just as the Father has sent me."

—John 20:21b

### Bible Lesson

Joshua and Caleb spy out the land of Canaan and come back with a good report despite the negative report of the other spies.

—Numbers 13:1-33; 14:1-35

### Overview

Moses sent 12 spies into the land that God had promised His people. Ten spies became afraid—they knew the people would be powerful enemies, and they didn't trust that God would give them victory. But Joshua and Caleb declared that the land was good, and believed that God was on their side. We can follow their example today by trusting God for the power to do His work, even when we feel outnumbered.

## Discussion Questions

1. How many spies did Moses send to the land of Canaan? (*12—one from each tribe.*)
2. Why did ten of the spies say the land was a bad place? (*They feared the people who already lived there.*)
3. Why did Joshua and Caleb give a different report? (*They knew God wanted to give them the land as their new home. They saw the potential in the land—it would be good for growing crops.*)
4. Whose help were Joshua and Caleb counting on? (*God's. They trusted that God would help them make the new land their home.*)
5. Why was God unhappy with the Israelites? (*They refused to believe in His power.*)
6. Have you ever called on God's help when you went someplace new? (*Allow responses.*)
7. Would it be hard to do God's work among people who don't believe in Him? (*Allow responses.*)

## God Encounter

**Materials:** Binoculars, quarter, nickel, dime, CD player, soundtrack from the *Prince of Egypt* (various artists, Dreamworks, 1998.)

**Preparation:** Before class, find a long space in or near your meeting area. Practice placing the coins at one end and stand far enough away that you cannot identify them with the naked eye, but *can* identify them with the binoculars.

The spies had to have sharp vision to size up the Promised Land. Can you identify things that are far away? (*Recruit two volunteers and give one a pair of binoculars. Place coins in pocket and move an appropriate distance away. Place the coins on a flat surface and ask the children to identify them. One child must try to identify the coins without binoculars; the other child may use them.*)

The child without binoculars was like the scared spies in our lesson. They saw the land the way the world would see it—nothing but fearsome problems. The child who used the binoculars was like Caleb and Joshua. They could see the land clearly because they chose to look at it with heaven's eyes. We're going to listen to a song that talks about looking at life the way God does. Close your eyes and imagine what God sees! Imagine what the Promised Land would look like. And imagine what lies in your future if you **do God's work in our world.**

(Play Track 7, "Through Heaven's Eyes." After the song, ask kids to share the scenes they imagined, or anything they felt the Lord speaking to them. Pray over the kids, asking God to give them the courage to **do His work in our world.**)



## The Jesus Factor

**If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.**

—John 15:19

**Materials:** Whiteboard, dry-erase markers in three colors.

**Preparation:** Before class, draw a two-column chart. Label one column "Loved by the World," and the second column "Loved by Jesus."

(Look up the verse and have a child read it aloud.)

Kids, in this verse, Jesus is talking to His disciples. Are we also His disciples? (Yes, if we believe in Jesus.) Let's break this down to make it easier to understand. Do we belong to the world? (No.) Does the world love us? (No, not always.) Why don't they love us? (Children may struggle with this one. Remind them that people who don't obey God sometimes feel guilty inside, and may feel this more when they see Christians living the right way.)

Let's compare what the world loves with what Jesus loves. Name some things that the world loves. (Write each on the white board with one color. Examples include money, looks, power, skills, popularity.) Now, name some things that Jesus loves. (Use a different color to write these. Examples include humbleness, serving, truth, kindness, worship, etc.) How do we know He loves these things? (His word tells us.) Have you ever had a time when you don't feel loved by the world? (Allow responses.) It hurts when people make fun of you for walking with Christ. But remember, Jesus predicted that the world would not always love us for serving Him. Show God's love to your non-Christian friends and classmates, but don't love their worldly point of view. If you can do this, you'll truly be **doing God's work in our world.**

## Small Group Activity

### God's Vision Viewfinder

**Materials:** "God's Vision Viewfinder" handout from *Take-Home Challenges* CD-ROM, crayons, paper brads, scissors.

**Preparation:** Print one "God's Vision Viewfinder" for each child onto card stock. Make a sample craft. Fold one of the dump/fields circles in half so that one side shows only the dump, and the other shows only the field.

Isn't it funny how different people can look at the same thing and see something totally different? (Hold up the "dump" side of the folded circle.) When the 12 spies went to Canaan, all of them saw a very good land; but ten of them came back and said they saw a scary dump. (Flip the folded circle over to show the "field" side.) Joshua and Caleb told the truth—that it was a land of "milk and honey," of God's blessing. Part of doing God's work is asking Him to help you see the world the way He sees it. We will each make a "God's Vision Viewfinder" to help us remember to see the good things God wants to give us. God wants to bless you when you do His work!

(Kids decorate the top circle of the viewfinder, then cut out the window on the dotted lines. The disc with the window goes on top. The two are put together with a paper brad. Show kids how to turn the viewfinder to show the blessing of the Promised Land.)

## Take-Home Challenge

**Materials:** Lesson 4 Ages 8-10 Take-Home Challenge from *Take-Home Challenges* CD-ROM.

Hand out this week's Take-Home Challenge and encourage kids to complete the activities with their families. Remind kids that you'll ask them for responses during next week's K.I.D.S. Church service.



# Doing God's Work

## Small Group Lesson



Ages  
11-12

### Power Point

I will do God's work in our world.

### Scripture Memory Verse

[Jesus said] "I am sending you, just as the Father has sent me."

—John 20:21b

### Bible Lesson

Joshua and Caleb spy out the land of Canaan and come back with a good report despite the negative report of the other spies.

—Numbers 13:1-33; 14:1-35

### Overview

Moses sent 12 spies into the land that God had promised His people. Ten spies became afraid—they knew the people would be powerful enemies, and they didn't trust that God would give them victory. But Joshua and Caleb declared that the land was good, and believed that God was on their side. We can follow their example today by trusting God for the power to do His work, even when we feel outnumbered.

## Discussion Questions

1. Why did Moses send spies to the land of Canaan? (*He wanted them to see if the people already there were strong, so the Israelites could prepare for battle. He wanted to see what crops the land produced.*)
2. Which spies gave a good report? (*Joshua and Caleb.*)
3. Why did ten of the spies say the land was a bad place? (*They were fearful of the fierce people who inhabited the land. They did not trust in God's help to overcome the people of the land.*)
4. Why was God upset with the Israelites? (*He wanted to give them the land as His special gift, and they refused it. They saw with the eyes of the world instead of trusting Him.*)
5. Can you think of a modern-day situation where a Christian needs to trust in God's protection and help? (*Examples might include those in combat, police officers, and those in countries where Christians are persecuted.*)
6. What can you do to change your viewpoint from "the world's view" to "God's view"? (*Examples might include prayer, reading the Bible, and choosing the support of Christian friends.*)

## God Encounter

**Materials:** A variety of disguise props, such as a spy might use: wigs, sunglasses, fake beards, hats. Plan to bring something for each child in the group.

(*Have kids sit in a circle with props in the middle. Invite kids to try on various disguises.*) Have you all ever seen a TV show or movie where a spy used a disguise? (*Allow responses.*) What other gadgets would a modern-day spy use? (*Hidden cameras, GPS devices, hidden cell phones.*) A modern-day spy would use disguises to conceal his identity. But the Israelite spies probably didn't. In this context, "spying" meant to go ahead of the people, looking at the new land so the people could prepare for the challenges there. The Israelites probably looked like all the other peoples in the land of God's promise—the only difference was on the inside. The people in Canaan worshipped many gods and did many immoral things. The Israelites were set apart from them because they served the one true God and followed His commands.

(Direct kids to put away the props.) Kids, look carefully at one another. Just as God sent the Israelite spies long ago, He also sends us today to **do God's work in our world**. You don't need hidden cameras or GPS devices to do God's kind of spying....you simply need to know His word and be obedient to do it.

(Lead the group in a time of prayer, asking God to show each one the mission He has for them each day.)



## The Jesus Factor

**If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.**

—John 15:19

**Materials:** “Backpack” handout from *Take-Home Challenges* CD-ROM, markers, cardstock, CD player, CD of teen-oriented praise and worship music.

**Preparation:** Before class, print one “Backpack” handout onto cardstock for each child.

(Look up the Jesus Factor verse and choose a student to read it aloud.) Can you name a situation where a Christian would not be “loved” by the world? (Examples include speaking up for what's right, refusing to cheat, etc. Pass out “Backpack” handouts.) A boy or girl who believes in Jesus can “carry” God's presence into hostile situations. Your faith is with you, just like the backpack on your back! You put your school supplies in your backpack before you leave the house, right? In the same way, fill up the “backpack” of your heart and mind with Christian ideals and principles every day. Carrying these with you will help you **do God's work in our world**.

(Play CD as kids write Christian ideals on their backpack. Examples include faith, loving others, honesty, kindness, God's grace, etc. Invite boys and girls to share the contents of their “backpack” with the group.)

## Small Group Activity

### Milk and Honey Sandwiches

**Materials:** Loaf of wheat bread, jar of marshmallow creme, jar of honey, paper plates, plastic knives, Bible.

(Have a child look up Numbers 13:27 and read it aloud to the group.) Okay, so how would you feel about a place that's “flowing with milk and honey”? Sounds kind of sticky and filled with puddles—bet you'd need a good pair of boots! But remember, in ancient times, people didn't get their food from a store—they grew, raised, or gathered their own. Everyone needed a land rich in natural resources so they could obtain the food they needed easily. And the milk and honey wasn't really oozing up from the ground. The land had a lot of grass so cows could produce milk, and there were many bee hives for honey. If you lived in a land “flowing with milk and honey,” you could be sure you'd have enough to eat!

(Give each child two pieces of bread, and have them spread one with honey and the other with marshmallow fluff to signify “milk.” After everyone has made their rich snack, have another group member look up Psalm 34:8. The New International Version reads, “Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him.” Before enjoying the snack, lead your group in a prayer, thanking God for His goodness, and thanking Him for His protection and help.)

## Take-Home Challenge

**Materials:** Lesson 4 Ages 11-12 Take-Home Challenge from *Take-Home Challenges* CD-ROM.

Hand out this week's Take-Home Challenge and encourage kids to complete the activities with their families. Remind kids that you'll ask them for responses during next week's K.I.D.S. Church service.