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## Greetings, fearless small group leaders!

We are so happy and grateful that you have chosen to give your time and energy to Kids Camp this summer. Of all of our adult staff and volunteers, you are the ones who will spend the most time with your campers and the ones who know them best. During your small group sessions, you will be their guides and confidants as they soak in the messages from our camp pastors, explore the scriptures, and apply what they find to their lives. Thank you!



## A Quick Guide to Your Session Guides

Each session has a patch icon to give you a visual reference. Beneath that patch are smaller circles pointing out the session's bottom line, sermon coordination, and scriptural focus. A teaching objective is also provided.



**Anything in bold type** is just a title to help guide you through each session.



Anything that is typed in plain black font underneath the boldface headings is to be read aloud to your campers. This text is given to make leading your group as easy as possible, but we're not going to be patrolling your groups making sure that you read verbatim. If you're a confident group facilitator, feel free to use these as guidelines, not a script.



Anything in a trail sign box is information or an extra tip for leaders.



*Anything in italics* is instruction for leaders only. Do not read these aloud.

**Anything in green** is a discussion question meant to elicit open replies from the campers. There is no single, right answer to these questions.

**Anything in blue** is a more rhetorical or simple-answer question.

## **A Few Overall Pointers**

### **Preparation**

This material will work best if you read it ahead of time. Going through this guidebook before camp will allow you to make accommodations to your personal leadership style or the dynamics of your group, and it will also make it easier and more natural for you to lead the activities and read the text and questions aloud with your campers when the time comes.

### **Supplies**

All activities have a list of necessary supplies beneath their activity heading. Please be sure to check with your church leader about how and when to get your supplies. Different churches may distribute the supplies in different ways.

Many activities require picture sheets to be printed ahead of time. The digital originals of these sheets are available in a PDF document called Small Group Games that was shared with your church leader. Please make sure that you know if your church will distribute printouts to you or if you are responsible for printing your own.

### **Leading Discussion**

This curriculum is not designed on a model of lecture-style instruction, which probably comes as a relief to you. It is designed instead to get the campers themselves thinking and talking. This means that you will have to pay as much attention to your listening as to your speaking. If discussion stalls, be ready to spark it with a quick insight, but always with an eye to engaging the campers. Sometimes, answering the question with an experience from your life can encourage campers to relate the discussion to their lives, too. Whether you share from your own life or not, you are always setting an example for your campers during group time. If you are excited and engaged with the material, your campers are more likely to be excited and engaged, too.



Bottom Line:  
Go with God.  
He Provides.

Coordinates With:  
Day 1 Orientation  
and Evening  
Worship

Scripture Focus:  
1 Kings 17:  
2-16

# Session 1

Day 1, Evening Church Group Time

Teaching Objective: Campers should understand that God provides the strength and encouragement needed to make it through difficult situations.

## Introduction

As you know by now, camp this year is about God's call for us to go, and we're borrowing some images and idea from road trips. How many of you have been on a long road trip before? *Ask for a show of hands.* Keep your hand up if you've been on a road trip that took 4 hours or more. What about 6? 8? *Keep going until you find the longest road trip, and ask what the destination was for that trip.*

Even those of us who haven't been on a long road trip have probably seen a movie or a TV show that depicted one, so we have a sense of what it's like. We're going to do a quick experiment right now on road trip planning.

## Activity: Get Packing (10 minutes)

*Objective: Campers will contrast wants versus needs under different circumstances.*

*Supplies Needed:*

- *At least 2 copies of the "Get Packing" picture sheets from the Small Group Games PDF, pages 4-6 . You will need more copies if you opt to divide your campers into more than two groups.*
- *Writing implements of any kind (optional - only required if you opt not to cut the sheets as indicated below)*

*Preparation Recommended:*

- *Cut the picture sheets into cards along the grey grid lines. This will make the game more hands-on, but it is optional. If you choose to leave the sheets whole, be sure that you have pencils or markers on hand for the activity.*

*Divide your campers into two groups: blue and green. If your group is large, divide campers into sets of two groups: blues and greens. Each group should have no more than 6-8 campers. Give each group a picture sheet or picture cards.*

All of you have been given several items that you could choose to take with you on a road trip to see friends or family on the Pacific coast. Your drive will take at least two full days. Your group's task is to decide which items are wants and which are needs. However, different groups are packing with different goals.

- If you are in a blue group, your job on this road trip is to have as much fun as possible. Boredom must be avoided!
- If you are in a green group, your job is to get everyone in your vehicle to their destination safely and on time. Safety and efficiency are your goal!
- Also, both groups have a space limit. You are all driving in pretty small vehicles, so you can only designate 5 items as needs.

*If you cut your picture sheets into cards, ask the campers to sort them into two piles: want and need. If your campers have whole picture sheets, ask them to circle the items they designate as needs.*

Ready? Set? Go!

*Allow about 3-4 minutes for groups to sort their items. If they finish quickly, move on.*

What items did our blue groups decide to take with them?  
What about our green groups?

**Why do you think that there were differences between groups?**

Now, suppose that instead of a road trip to a friend's house, your destination is a wilderness campground.

- If you are in a green group, your campground has parking right beside the camp site and easy access to running water and electricity.
- If you are in a blue group, your parking area is a 3 miles hike from the camp site, and you'll have to carry anything you bring with you by hand.
- You still have your 5-item limit for needs.

Now which five items will you bring? Ready? Set? Go!

*Allow another 3-4 minutes for groups to sort their items.*

What items did our blue groups decide to take with them?  
What about our green groups?

How does our job or purpose change what we think of as a want or a need?

### Discussion (12-15 minutes)

Supplies Needed:

- blank paper
- markers or colored pencils

Tonight and this afternoon, we heard two parts of a pretty incredible story. First, a prophet named Elijah is sent by God on an extreme wilderness camping trip. Elijah has just delivered bad news about a drought to a very bad king, and he's probably feeling pretty vulnerable. God tells him to go to a specific brook, where he will be fed by ravens. Then, when the drought dries up the brook, Elijah is sent on a trip to a different country, where he is to find a widow who will feed him. But when he turns up, the widow and her son are nearly starving.

To help us go deeper into this story, I'm going to divide you into two groups and ask each group to focus on a different part of the story. One group will focus on Elijah in the wilderness, and the other will focus on Elijah and the widow. *Divide your campers into two groups—even if your group is large. If you have enough sponsors, it is best to have a sponsor attached to each group to read the scripture passage and facilitate the design activity.*

Each group should start by reading the story from the Bible.

- Our wilderness group will read 1 Kings 17:2-7.
- Our widow group will read 1 Kings 17:8-16.

Then, because it's sometimes hard to really connect with a story when you're just listening to it, each group should take a few minutes to imagine this story in a way that's probably familiar to many of you: imagine it as a game. Take some blank paper and markers or pencils and design what the story would look like in game format. It can be a video game, an app, or a board game. Consider these questions:

1. Who or what from the story would the player be?
2. What obstacles would the player face?
3. What actions could the player take to overcome those obstacles?
4. How would the game be won?

You only have a few minutes, so be creative, but be quick. Ready? Set? Go!



Owing to time constraints in this game, it is easiest for adult leaders to read the passages aloud.

*Allow 5-7 minutes for game design, adjusting time to suit your schedule and your group's engagement in the activity. If you have large group of 15 or more or a group that needs strong leadership, let the sponsor act as a scribe or illustrator gathering the group's ideas. Sponsors can also delegate specific design tasks to individual campers or sub-groups if needed.*

Time's up, groups. Let's see what you came up with. Pick one person from your group to give a quick overview of your game in one minute or less. *Allow the spokespeople to very briefly share their game designs.*

Now, let's talk over a few questions. I'm going to direct this question to our wilderness group: **How do you think Elijah felt when he first received God's instructions to go to the wilderness and be fed by ravens?**

Now to our widow group: **Most people are taught that sharing is a good thing, but what makes sharing really hard in the case of the widow? Was she sharing something she wanted or something that she needed?**

Now to anyone: **What do you think went through Elijah's head when the widow told him that she and her son were close to starving? How do you think that his experience with the ravens may have influenced how he felt?**



This is a lot of questions in a row, but some should elicit brief answers and keep discussion flowing.

**What risks was Elijah taking when he went where God called him to go?**

**What risks was the widow taking when she agreed to feed Elijah before herself and her son?**

**Why do you think that both Elijah and the widow chose to take those risks?**

**If a total stranger told you to stop what you were doing and go to a new location or give something of yours away, would you do it? What if it were a close friend, a trusted teacher, or a parent asking? Would you do it then?**

**Why does the person who is asking make a difference?**

Thanks for sharing your thoughts, everyone. So far tonight, we've explored how our mission or our purpose can change what qualifies as a need or a want and how trust

can shape our response to challenging situations. When it comes to need and trust, Elijah and the widow were both asked to step pretty far outside of what we might think of as “comfort zones.”

What do you think comfort means?

**Activity: Comfort Zones (5-8 minutes)**

*Objective: Campers should think about the differences between being comfortable and being comforted.*

*Supplies Needed:*

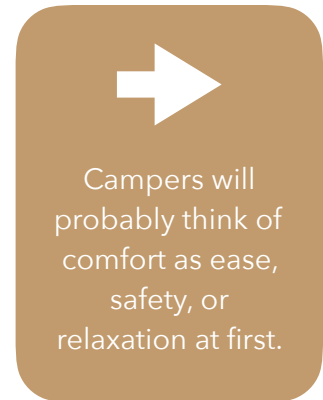
- blank paper
- markers or colored pencils

Everyone please take one more piece of paper and something to write with. When you have your paper, draw or describe your comfort zone. This can be a real place or set of circumstances you already have in your life, or it can be a design for the ultimate comfort zone of your dreams. Ready? Set? Go!

*Allow 3-5 minutes for individual writing and drawing.*

I’m guessing that many of your comfort zones are pretty nice places. All of you who said that comfort means rest, relaxation, or security are right. That is how the word comfort is most often used today. But that wasn’t always the case. Comfort comes from two words in the older language of Latin. “Com” means “with,” and “fort” means strength: just like an army fort or a castle fort. Hundreds of years ago, when early English speakers first started using the word “comfort,” it meant strengthening and encouragement. If we borrow this old meaning of comfort, then a comfort zone isn’t necessarily a place of ease and relaxation. It’s not a place where you go to stay. Instead, it’s a place of refreshment and strengthening, where you go knowing that you’ll be sent out again. Instead of a home theater room with a cushy chair, it’s the corner of a boxing ring where the coach gives the boxer a towel and a quick shoulder rub before sending the athlete back to the challenge.

Here’s one more question to think about as we close: **What modifications would you make to your comfort zone to change it from the comfortable kind of comfort zone to the strengthening sort?**





*If you have time, allow the campers a few minutes to draw or write modifications to their comfort zones. If you're out of time, let this be an idea for them to think about on their own.*

### **Closing Prayer**

Let's close in prayer now.

God, thank you for being trustworthy. Thank you for providing for Elijah and the widow and for letting us hear their story. Help us to trust you in our lives, too. Help us to see needs and wants through your eyes. Help us to be more than comfortable; help us to be comforted: strengthened and encouraged by you to go out into the world and make a difference. Amen.



## Session 2A

Day 2, Daytime Small Groups

Teaching Objective: Campers should explore how they can connect to other people for encouragement and strength.

### Activity: Meet Your Match (7-10 minutes)

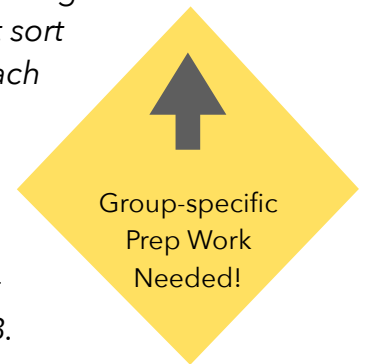
Objective: Campers should begin thinking about the situations, jobs, or qualities that link people or things together.

Supplies needed:

- Pre-printed "Meet Your Match" picture sheets from the Small Group Games PDF, pages 7-9
- 2 opaque bags; paper lunch sacks would do nicely

Preparation Required:

- Cut the picture sheets into cards along the grey grid lines.
- Sort the cards into two bags: A and B. Each bag should have an even number of cards that sort into pairs. There should be one card for each of your group members. If your group has an odd number, a sponsor should play, too, in order to even out the total.
- You can pick and choose which pairs from the picture sheets your group will use, but do not repeat pairs between bags A and B.



Bottom Line:  
Go with God.  
We belong.

Coordinates With:  
Day 2  
Morning  
Worship

Scripture Focus:  
Ruth 1: 8-22

We're going to start today with a game that gets us moving a bit. Everyone please draw a card from this bag. You may look at the picture on your card, but do not show it to anyone else yet.

Allow the campers to draw one card each until one of your bags is empty. The campers should not know that the cards make pairs—like Batman and Robin—instead of identical matches.

Now, your job is to find your card's match within our group. It's sort of like a memory game, but instead of flipping over the cards, you have to move around and see what your fellow campers have. But there are two rules:

- You have to do this silently. No talking allowed!
- You can only show your card to one person at a time.

Is everyone clear on your mission? Find your match, but don't talk, and only show your card to one person at a time. When you have met your match, stand together.

Ready? Set? Go!

*It will probably take a few minutes for the campers to realize that they are looking for famous pairings, not identical matches. Do not help them figure this out. Let them work it out themselves as non-verbally as possible.*

Well done, everyone. Let's see what we have. *Ask each pair to share what they have.*

*If you have time, proceed with Round B of the game. If not, move on to the questions listed below after "Ready? Set? Go!"*

Now that we have an idea of how this game works, let's play one more round. *Repeat the game, this time drawing from bag B.*

Ready? Set? Go!

As you have figured out by now, this game isn't looking for identical matches. Instead, it's looking for famous pairs of people, characters, or things.

What are some of the things that link these individual people or things as pairs?

If you could be part of a famous pair, like Batman and Robin, who would you be and why? What draws you to the other member of that pair?

### **Discussion (10-12 Minutes)**

Pairs can come together in all sorts of ways. Before this morning's worship, you may or may not have heard of Naomi and Ruth. They're certainly not as famous as any of the pairs from our game, and they're not as well known as some other Bible pairs either, like Adam and Eve, David and Goliath, or Paul and Barnabas.

But if we think of Naomi and Ruth as a sort of dynamic duo, then the scripture we heard about this morning is their origin story. Let's read through it together.

Naomi and her husband and sons were Israelites from Bethlehem. The country of Moab was often the Israel's enemy, but a famine caused Naomi's family to move there, and her sons married Moabite women. After about ten years, both of her sons and her husband died. We pick up the story in Ruth chapter 1, verse 8.

*Read Ruth 1: 8-18*

Why do you think that Naomi tried to send Orpah and Ruth away?

Why do you think that Orpah left? Why do you think that Ruth stayed?

Moab and Israel were such enemies that in earlier generations, there was a rule that no one from Moab could enter the assembly of the Lord (Deuteronomy 23:3). *What are some risks that Ruth was taking? What opportunities was she turning away from?*

It is clear that Naomi felt empty, sad, and perhaps angry. Have you ever tried to help someone who felt hurt like this? Was it easy?

How were Naomi and Ruth both outside of their comfort zones?

Let's continue reading. (*Read Ruth 1:19-22*)

Let's look closely at verse 22, which says that "Naomi returned from Moab accompanied by Ruth the Moabite, her daughter-in-law." *Why do you think that the title "Ruth the Moabite" is important here? How do you think Ruth felt as "Ruth the Moabite" in the land of Judah?*



Having your supplies ready to go can make a big difference to discussion flow.

### **Mini Activity: What's In a Name? (5 minutes)**

*Objective: Campers should come to a deeper understanding of Naomi's sorrow and Ruth's risk by comparing them to experiences in their own lives.*

*Supplies Needed:*

- *Unlined index cards*
- *Good quality washable markers—light colors work best*

Everyone please take a notecard and a marker and think about this question in your minds: Have you ever felt like an outsider? *Pass around notecards and washable markers, remembering that light colors work best for this activity. Keep one card and marker for yourself.* Chances are, we have all felt like we did not belong at some time or another. Think in your mind about

a time when that feeling was strong for you. Ruth is called “Ruth the Moabite” coming into the land of Judah. *If you had a title when you felt like an outsider, what would it have been?* Write it down on your notecard. Please not try to look at each other’s writing. I’m going to write “Ruth the Moabite” on this sample card. *Write “Ruth the Moabite” in clear letters on your card, leaving room for another name, too. You can also fill out your own personal notecard if you think that would set a helpful example for your group.*

We also see here that Naomi is so sad and so empty that she tries to change her name from Naomi, which means pleasant, to Mara, which means bitter. Think in your mind of a time when you have felt sad, lonely, angry, or bitter. *In that time, if you had given yourself a name that fit your emotions, what would it have been? Or, if naming yourself in your sorrow is too hard, what name would you give to the situation itself?* Once again, write it on your notecard and fold it up, and please respect each other’s privacy by looking only at your own card. I’m going to write “Mara” on my sample card.

Tuck this card away with your Bible or FOB book. We’ll look at it again during church group time tonight.

**Activity: Use the Force (2-5 minutes)**

*Objective: Campers should see and feel the push and pull of the magnets and reflect that they, too, have the ability to push others away or stay close to them.*

*Supplies Needed:*

- *2 magnets– bar magnets with marked poles would work best, but any two rigid, strong magnets larger than nickels should do*

In this origin story of an unlikely pair, we see that one member of that pair, Naomi, would rather not be a pair at all. She is like a magnet pushing away another magnet with the same pole. *Demonstrate magnetic repulsion with your magnets.*

But Ruth is stubborn. She refuses to be pushed away. Instead, she holds on. She is like a magnet attaching itself to another magnet with the opposite pole.

*Demonstrate magnetic attraction with your magnets.*

I’m going to pass these magnets around so that you can feel the push and pull of the magnets as their poles attract and repel one another. *Pass the magnets around.*

When we are sad or angry, we may feel like Naomi, pushing others away. But we can choose to be like Ruth: drawing close to others even in tough situations. When we

stick to others, we can both give and receive comfort. We can strengthen and encourage those around us. As we conclude today, think of a way that you could be a sticky friend and encourage someone else, whether it is someone here at camp, or someone back at home.



Only plan for this activity if time, group dynamics, and supply budget permit.

*The following activity is optional. If you choose to do it, see below. If not, proceed to the closing prayer.*

**Optional Activity: Magnet Making (5-7 minutes)**

*Objective: Campers will make something tangible to remind them to stick to others and be encouraging.*

*Supplies Needed:*

- Blank magnetic business cards
- Markers and/or colored pencils

I have some magnets here. They are not as strong as the magnets we've passed around, but they'll stick to metal surfaces. Take one of them and write or draw something on it to remind you to stick to others both in good times and bad times.

You could write a phrase like "Be a sticky friend!" or you might draw a picture of Ruth and Naomi or one of the other pairs from our starting game. Or, you might write today's bottom line: Go with God. We Belong.

These magnets are for you to use to encourage yourself to be encouraging!

*Allow any time remaining in your session for the campers to make their magnets.*

**Closing Prayer**

Thanks for your creativity and discussion today, everyone. Let's close in prayer.

God, sometimes life makes us feel bitter. We feel anger and sorrow when we experience loss, isolation, and hardship. At times like these, please surround us with sticky friends who will show us your love. And at times when we see others around us hurting, help us to be sticky friends to them. Let us embrace every opportunity to share your hope and encouragement. Amen.



Bottom Line:  
Go with God.  
We belong.

Coordinates With:  
Day 2  
Evening  
Worship

Scripture Focus:  
Ruth 2: 1-20

## Session 2B

Day 2: Evening Church Group Time

Teaching Objective: Campers should understand God's love for the broken and his welcome to those who seek Him. Campers should also consider the possibility of healing for themselves when they feel broken as well as their responsibility to be helpers in healing for others around them.

### Introduction & Activity: Walking Water, Part 1 (2-3 minutes)

*Objective: Campers will observe a visual representation of Naomi's transformation from emptiness to fullness and the role of God, Ruth, and Boaz in bringing it about.*

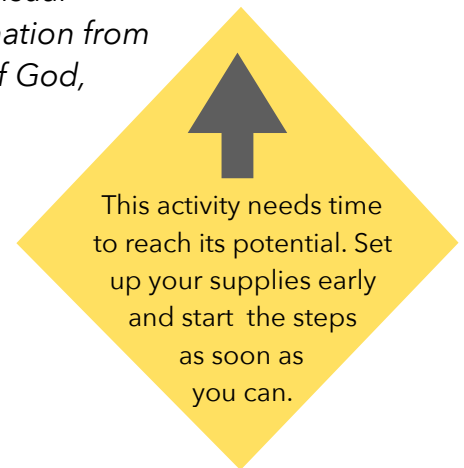
*Supplies Needed:*

- Three clear, smooth-sided 8-10 oz. plastic cups
- 2 paper towels
- Food coloring

*Preparation Required:*

- Fill two cups about 80-90% full of water. Warm water seems to work somewhat better than cold water if you have access to it. Leave the third cup empty.
- Add enough food coloring to the two full cups to visibly change their water. Choose one of the following color pairs: yellow and blue, yellow and red, or blue and red.
- Cut your paper towels into 8 x 3 inch strips. Set them aside.

This afternoon, we talked about how Naomi felt sad and bitter after the loss of her husband and sons. She was so upset that she tried to push her daughters-in-law away from her, and when she returned to her homeland, she tried to change her name, saying that she had left full, but was returning empty. *Place the empty cup out on a table or other flat surface which your campers can clearly see.*



But one daughter-in-law, Ruth, decided to stick with Naomi. *Bring out one of your full cups and place it an inch or two to one side of the empty cup.* Somehow, Ruth had hope inside of her, and she came with Naomi to Bethlehem even though she had never been there herself.



Step-by-step photos of this activity are part of the Small Groups Games PDF, pages 10-11.

*Take one 8 x 3" section of paper towel and insert one end to the bottom of the empty cup. Then, take the other end and insert it into the full cup, making a bridge. Try not to let your bridge be too long or have too high of an arch.*

Tonight, we heard how Ruth took action to find food for herself and Naomi and how this drew the attention of a man named Boaz. *Bring out your second full cup and place it to the other side of the empty cup.* Boaz had the position and ability to help Ruth and Naomi with more than just scraps. *Take the second paper towel and make a bridge between the second full cup and the empty cup.*

Before we talk more about Ruth and Boaz, though, let's play a quick game.

### **Activity: Who Belongs? (8 minutes)**

*Objective: Campers will understand they have to figure out what a group has in common in order to decide who belongs and discover that there can be different opinions about both steps.*

*Supplies Needed:*

- *Pre-printed picture sheets from the Small Group Games PDF, pages 12-22*

I am going to show you a picture with three things or people on it. Then, once you've had a good look, I'm going to show you a picture with three other things or people. Your job is to decide which member of the second set belongs with the first set.

For example, if I showed you this group—*hold up the picture sheet A*—and then this group—*hold up the picture sheet B*—which one would you say belongs? *Let the kids respond. They should choose the red rose.* Does everyone get the idea? Alright, then. Ready? Set? Go!



A guide to this activity is included as the last page of the picture sheets.



Proceed with the game, holding up first one picture sheet and then another in numerical order: 1 with 2, 3 with 4, and 5 with 6, and 7 with 8. With each set, let the kids decide who or what from the second group belongs in the first.



Encouraging and facilitating different ideas is key to this game's success.

*Ideally, there will be different suggestions from them as to who belongs. The groups are designed so that any member of the second group could fit into the first depending on how the first group is interpreted. An answer key of sorts is provided at the end of the picture sheet PDF.*

*If your group is not providing you with different suggestions, prompt them, saying something like: "That's a good point. \_\_\_ would fit with the first group because of \_\_\_\_\_. But what about \_\_\_? How could he or she fit in?"*

Were the groups in this game as easy to figure out as the example groups we gave at first? Why?

Why do you think we could come up with different ideas about who belongs? What do we have to figure out about the first group in order to decide who belongs?

### **Discussion (8-10 minutes)**

Thanks for participating in that game, everyone. Now, let's turn our attention back to the story of Ruth and Naomi. Remember that chapter 1 of Ruth left us by saying that Naomi returned to Bethlehem with "Ruth the Moabite." Ruth was definitely an outsider: a foreigner coming to a nation that prided itself on its unique identity. Many people may have felt that she did not belong. Let's see what happened to her.

*Read Ruth 2:1-3*

How can we already see the story reminding us who is an insider and who is an outsider?

*Read Ruth 2:4-6*

How do the Boaz's harvesters view Ruth?

*Read Ruth 2:8-12*

How does Boaz view Ruth? What does he notice about her? How does he help her?

We asked this afternoon if you've ever felt like an outsider. Now think about Boaz, who the Bible calls "a man of standing." This doesn't mean that he stands up a lot. It means that he has a good reputation and position in their society.

Have you ever felt like an insider in a particular group?

If you are an insider in a group, is it easy or hard to act like Boaz acts toward Ruth? How so?

What risks might Boaz be taking helping Ruth?

The story goes on to tell us how Boaz helped Ruth even more, sharing his workers' meal with her and making her gathering easier. She went home to Naomi with a full load of grain. Let's see how Naomi responded.

*Read Ruth 2:19-20*

Is Naomi's attitude changing at all? How can you tell?

### **Mini-Activity: What's in a Name Revisited (1-2 minutes)**

*Objective: Campers will apply the idea of God's protection and belonging to their own lives by washing away the sorrowful or isolated names they wrote down during the afternoon session.*

*Supplies Needed:*

- *Campers' notecards from Session 2A*
- *Your sample notecard from Session 2A*
- *A large pitcher or bowl of water*

This afternoon, we asked you to think of a time when you felt like an outsider and a time when you felt sad or lonely, and we asked you to write down names for those times or how you felt about yourself during those times. Please take those notes out now. If they are folded, you don't have to open them. Bring them up to this pitcher (or bowl) and toss them in. I am going to put our Ruth and Naomi card in as well. *The notes are written in washable marker, so the water should begin to erase what is written.*

### **Continued Discussion (5 minutes)**

We will leave those there for a while and continue the story. As Naomi began to hope again, she directed Ruth to follow ancient Israelite customs, and Boaz decided to


marry Ruth and claim Naomi's family's land in their name. Ruth and Boaz go on to have a son, and when this son is born, the women of Bethlehem tell Naomi: "Praise be to the Lord, who this day has not left you without a guardian-redeemer. May he become famous throughout Israel! He will renew your life and sustain you in your old age. For your daughter-in-law, who loves you and who is better to you than seven sons, has given him birth." (Verses 14-15)

How has Naomi gone from feeling empty to feeling full? What role did God play in her transformation? What role did other people around her play?

How did Ruth, Naomi, and Boaz all have to go outside of their comfort zones?

How is Ruth's love for Naomi like God's love for us?

How is Boaz's love for Ruth and Naomi like God's love for us?



No set-up or new supplies are needed here. You are just wrapping up what you started when the session began.

**Activity: Walking Water, Part 2 (5 minutes)**


*By this time, some of the water from the colored cups should have wicked up the paper towels and into the empty cup. Direct your campers' attention to them now.*

When this story started, a family was broken. Naomi felt empty and bitter. *Point out the center cup.*

But Ruth stuck with her and shared her hope and her willingness to work. *Point out your first full cup.*

This drew the attention of Boaz, who shared his resources and his kindness and ultimately joined with Ruth to renew the family. *Point out your second cup.*

God used Ruth and Boaz to fill Naomi and make something new. And from this new family, he made something even better. When the book of Ruth concludes, we find out that her son, Obed, was the father of Jesse, who was the father of David, King of Israel. Any of you who were at camp last year will remember David for his famous battle with Goliath. David was the ancestor of an even greater king: Jesus.



If your demonstration did not work, you can use the test photos from the Games PDF as examples.

Now that you know Ruth's whole story and how it extends even to the story of Jesus, if you were to give Ruth, Naomi, and Boaz each a nickname, like a superhero name or pilot call sign, what would it be? Does Ruth stay Ruth the Moabite? Does Naomi stay Naomi the Bitter?

Just as God erased Ruth's outsider status and healed Naomi's bitterness, he can heal whatever loneliness or sorrows you carry with you, too. *Bring your sample card back out of your bowl or pitcher now. It should have faded considerably.*

God's love is powerful. It can make our burdens fade until they are only shadows of what they once were. Left in the water long enough, this notecard and all of those with it will be washed completely clean.

God does not call us to remain outside or to remain broken. He calls us to be healed. He calls us to belong. In our game of "Who Belongs", we learned that we have to figure out what a group has in common in order to decide who else could belong. When we have God in common, we all belong.

### **Closing Prayer**

Let's close in prayer.

God, when we feel like outsiders, remind us that we belong with You. Remind us that You promise to be with us, that you see our struggles, and that if we go to you, you can fill what is empty and heal what is hurting. Please give us patience when this takes time. Remind us, too, that we can be part of your healing for others. Amen.



## Session 3A

Day 3: Daytime Small Groups

Teaching Objective: Campers should begin to explore the remarkable humility and courage of the centurion in recognizing his servant's need and seeking Jesus as the one who could heal him.

### Introduction & Activity: Who You Gonna Call? (10-12 minutes)

*Objective: Campers should understand that recognizing a problem and knowing where to go for help are essential parts of getting the problem fixed.*

*Supplies Needed:*

- *Pre-printed list of clues and answers from the Small Group Games PDF, pages 23-35*
- *Optional: a writing surface and pen to keep score if you choose a competitive version of this game (see below)*

*Preparation Required:*

- *There are non-competitive and competitive versions of this game. Decide ahead of time which version best suits your group's size and dynamics.*
  - *Non-competitive: play as a large group with each set of clues open for anyone to answer and no score kept*
  - *Competitive: Divide your group into two teams and play for speed, awarding a point for whichever team raises a hand first and answers correctly. At the end of the list, the team with the most points wins. If you think that the speed element would be chaotic, you can alternate reading sets of clues to each team, but you could end up with a tie this way.*

We're going to start off today by playing a game called "Who You Gonna Call." I will read you a series of three clues about things that need fixing, and your job is to tell me what kind of professional person you would need to seek out in order to fix those things.

Bottom Line:  
Go to God.  
Jesus Saves.

Coordinates With:  
Day 3  
Morning  
Worship

Scripture Focus:  
Matthew  
8: 5-7

For example, I might say:

- \* You are at school.
- \* Your stomach feels a little bit uneasy.
- \* Your forehead feels really hot.

Who You Gonna Call?

*Give the kids a moment to respond; The correct answer would be school nurse or teacher.*

*For Non-Competitive Play:*

Do you get the idea of the game? Alright.

Ready? Set? Go!

*For Competitive Play:*

Do you get the idea of the game? Excellent. Then to spice things up, we're going to divide into two teams and play for points. *Divide your campers into groups.*

When I read the clues, the first team to raise a hand and answer correctly gets a point. If the first team to answer is incorrect, the other team gets a chance to answer for the point. Does everyone understand?  
Ready? Set? Go!

*Proceed through the game with as many cards as time and the group's attention span allow.*

Thanks for playing that game, guys. It helps underline a few key ideas for us. When we are faced with problems, the first step to solving them is simply to recognize them for what they are. We have to admit that there is a problem and observe what sort of problem it is.

Sometimes, we may have problems that we can fix ourselves.

**What are some problems that you face in your daily life that you can fix on your own?**

At other times, though, we encounter problems that we cannot fix on our own, like many of the sample problems in our game. When we identify problems like these, we need to know where to go. A surgeon isn't going to be much help fixing your broken van. An electrician probably isn't the best fit for fixing a broken dinner table. We need to take our problem to the right person.

## Discussion (15-18 minutes)

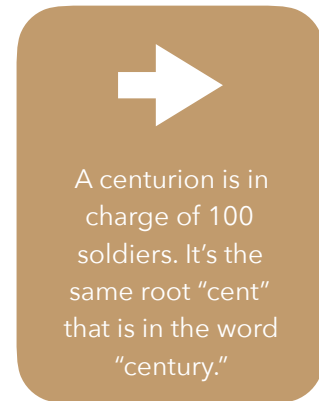
This morning, we heard about a Roman soldier who had a problem he could not fix. Let's take another look at his story together.

*Read Matthew 8:5-7.*

These are just a few short verses, but if we look closely, there is a lot of meaning packed into them. Let's start with verse 5.

Does anyone remember what the title "centurion" means? What does this man's rank tell us about him? How do you imagine him?

When we look elsewhere in the New Testament and in world history, we know that the people of Israel and the Roman Empire did not have a happy relationship. Rome was a very large empire that conquered other countries and then ruled them whether the inhabitants liked it or not. To many of these people, Rome must have felt like the evil empire from *Star Wars*.



In Luke chapter 2, which tells the story of Jesus' birth, we see that Mary and Joseph had take a long and expensive trip to Bethlehem while Mary was very pregnant just because the Roman emperor wanted everyone within Rome's control to be counted. In the book of John, chapter 11, we see how afraid of Rome people could be. [Can someone find the verse John 11:48? Select a student capable of finding and reading the verse aloud.](#)



While we're finding the verse, here is a bit of background. Jesus had just raised his friend Lazarus from death. It was an amazing miracle, and it should have made people really happy. But instead, several high priests got together and had an emergency meeting. Let's read what some of them said. *Have your volunteer read John 11:48.*

What does this verse tell us about how the Jews viewed the Romans?

Based on this kind of fear, how would you think that Romans thought of the Jews?

Given all of this information, do you think that it was easy or difficult for the centurion to go to Jesus?

What risks was the centurion taking?

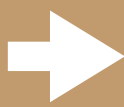
How is the centurion like Ruth? How is he different?

Now let's look again at what the centurion said and how Jesus responded.

*Read Matthew 8:6-7.*

Where else do you think the centurion could have gone to help his servant?

Why do you think he went to Jesus?



If your campers are stumped on how the centurion knew about Jesus, you can direct them to Matthew 4:23-25, which tell about how word of Jesus spread throughout the region.

The centurion couldn't whip out a smartphone and Google "miraculous healers." How do you think he knew about Jesus? Why is that important for us to think about today?

The centurion was a powerful man within a powerful culture. But he still recognized that his servant had a problem which he couldn't solve. What are some problems which you face in your life that you cannot solve on your own? \*\*

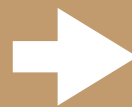
What are some problems which you see other people face which they cannot solve on their own?

Now let's think about the servant. We don't see the servant in person in the story, but we know what the centurion says about him, and it doesn't sound good.

What is the most sick you have ever been? \*\*

Do any of you know what sin is?

How is sin like a sickness?



If the questions marked with asterisks at the end are too personal for your campers to answer aloud, have paper or notecards handy, and make these writing questions like the "What's in a Name" activity.



If we were to go back to our opening game of “Who You Gonna Call,” what clues would you give if the answer was supposed to be Jesus?

Thank you once again for your participation and discussion, everyone.

### **Closing Prayer**

Let's close in prayer.

God, we all face problems in our lives, from little problems that annoy us to big problems that make us afraid. Please help us know what we can fix on our own and what we can't. When we have problems that we can't fix alone, please give us wisdom to know where to go. When we feel like we cannot bring a problem to You, remind us of the centurion, who came to You despite boundaries of culture, habit, or pride that could have stopped him. Amen.



Bottom Line:  
Go to God.  
Jesus Saves.

Coordinates With:  
Day 3  
Evening  
Worship

Scripture Focus:  
Matthew  
8: 8-10 & 13

## Session 3B

Day 3: Evening Church Group Time

Teaching Objective: Campers should think about the centurion's humility and faith in his approach to Jesus and compare his situation with that of anyone who goes to Jesus to be saved.

### Activity: Global Greetings (10 minutes)

*Objective: By trying out some unfamiliar greetings from around the world, campers should think about humility and how we show or do not show it in our daily lives.*

*Supplies Needed:*

- Pre-printed list of greetings from the Small Group Games PDF, pages 26-27

*Preparation Required:*

- Be familiar with the greetings ahead of time so that you can demonstrate them if necessary.

It may seem odd to think about saying "hello" on our last night of camp, but we're going to start out tonight by looking at different ways people greet one another around the world. Let's divide up into pairs or groups of three. *Allow your campers to divide up into groups with other campers whom they are comfortable with.*

Here's what we're going to do. I'm going to call out the name of a country, and you are going to demonstrate to your group what you think a greeting gesture in that country might look like. These greetings are not words for hello. They are non-verbal gestures, like waves or handshakes.

For example, if I said United States, what sort of greetings would you give each other?

*Campers should wave, shake hands, fist bump, etc.*

Excellent. Let's try a few other places now.

Again: I will call out a country's name, and you will demonstrate what you think a greeting might look like there. If you don't know—and it's totally OK not to know—take a respectful guess. Just remember that God values everyone, and some of us at camp or even in this room may have friends and family from any of these places. Don't do anything representing another culture that you wouldn't want someone else to do representing yours.

Ready? Set? Go!

*Proceed through the provided list, first calling out a country's name and letting the campers guess. Once they have guessed, demonstrate the correct greeting as described in Small Group Games PDF. If the greeting has additional information in the PDF, share it with your campers.*

Thanks for trying something new! You can go ahead and sit down now.

Which greeting was the most surprising to you? Why? How did you feel when you were doing it?

How do these greetings compare with greeting gestures here in the United States?

Which of these greetings show humility toward the person being greeted?

If we don't show humility so openly in our gestures, how do we express humility?

### **Discussion (5-8 minutes)**

With this in mind, let's return to the story of the centurion. When we left off this afternoon, the centurion had asked Jesus to heal his servant, and Jesus had basically replied, "Do you want me to come to him?" Let's look now at how the centurion responds. *Read Matthew 8:8-9.*

We don't know what gestures the centurion uses, but how do his words show humility?

Why do you think that humility is part of asking for help and healing?



You needn't be too strict on a no-talking rule, but you'll need to keep the game centered on the gestures and make sure guesses stay respectful.

Have you ever felt truly humble toward another person? When? Why?

Now, let's look at how Jesus replies. *Read Matthew 8:10 and 13*

Why do you think that Jesus was so amazed by the centurion's statements?

How does the centurion use something familiar to him to help him understand Jesus and have faith in Him?

How can we draw on our own experiences to help us understand Jesus, too?

### **Activity: Static Can Roll (5 minutes)**

*Objective: By watching static electricity move an aluminum can without touching it, campers should reflect on Jesus' power to heal the centurion's servant without being with him in person.*

*Supplies Needed:*

- 1 latex balloon, inflated with air (not helium)
- 1 empty aluminum can

*Preparation Required:*

- Pre-select a flat surface in your meeting area where the can will not roll on its own but has room to move when the balloon attracts it.

The centurion had great faith that Jesus could heal his servant without even coming to him in person. *Place the aluminum can on a flat surface.*



The question in blue is rhetorical. You're not looking for specific plans or attempts.

Do any of you think that you can move this can without touching it, blowing on it, or changing the surface that it sits on? It's a bit of a challenge without tools. But this balloon can be a very helpful tool indeed. To show you, I'll need a volunteer who isn't too picky about his or her hairdo. *Ask one camper to come forward.*

I'm going to rub this balloon around in your hair for a bit. *Rub the balloon around the camper's head to charge it up with static.*

Now watch what happens when the balloon gets near our can. *If you've gotten enough static on the balloon, the can should be attracted to it when they are in close proximity but not touching. With a bit of trial and error, you should be able to lead the can to roll following the balloon, but not touching it.*

### **Further Discussion (7-10 minutes)**

Just as this balloon can cause the can to move without touching it, Jesus could heal the centurion's servant from a distance. He didn't need to go in person. But notice this, too: someone *did* have to go to Jesus. Jesus didn't just walk through town and heal the servant at random; He healed the servant because the centurion asked in humility and faith.

If we have a problem that we think Jesus can fix, who needs to go to Him?

What are some ways in which this can following after the balloon is like us following Jesus?

As we wrap up, let's consider one more passage from the Bible. Can someone find Philippians 2:5-11? *Select a camper who can find the passage and read it confidently aloud.*

We've talked about how the centurion was a powerful man who humbled himself. *How is Jesus like the centurion?*

*How is Jesus different and totally unique?*

Listen one more time to verse 10, which says that "at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth." *Thinking back to our greetings from around the world earlier, how does the posture described in this verse compare with some of the greetings you tried out?*

*Even if you don't physically bow your knee to Jesus every day, how can you show humility and recognize his awesomeness?*

### **Closing Prayer**

Let's close in prayer.

God, thank you for Jesus. Thank you that he was humble enough to become human and die on the cross, but mighty enough to rise again. Please help us to be humble like the centurion and to have faith in Jesus' power. Show us ways to seek and to follow Jesus every day. Amen.