Lesson One
The Challenge to See—Elijah in the Presence of God (1 Kings 19:1-18)

Lesson Two
The Challenge to Know—King Josiah and the Lost Scroll (2 Chronicles 34:1-33)

Lesson Three
The Challenge to Trust—King Jehoshaphat Trusts in God (2 Chronicles 20:1-24)

Lesson Four
The Challenge to Obey—Jonah Runs from God (Jonah 1:1—3:5)

Lesson Five
The Challenge to Believe—Thomas Doubts Jesus’ Resurrection (John 20:19-29)
Introduction

“In God is my salvation and my glory; The rock of my strength, And my refuge, is in God,” (Psalms 62:7).

Are you ready to get lost in a tropical island adventure? If so, then travel with us to the island of Castaway Key and get ready to conquer some amazing faith-building challenges!

In many ways, our lives here on earth can be compared spiritually to being marooned on a deserted island, buffeted by storms, our entire being focused on the day-to-day struggles to survive, but we have a refuge from the storms, a provider ever-present and ready to save us. Sometimes we forget that God is our rock of strength in this shifting sands of the world’s strife. It can be difficult to keep our faith strong in the face of the many challenges we face. But God is always there, standing firm, just waiting for us to call on His name. “In God is my salvation and my glory; The rock of my strength, And my refuge, is in God,” (Psalms 62:7).

A strong and devoted faith in God is a powerful thing. At one time, the nation of Israel understood this. In fact, there was a time when Israel was the most powerful community of people on earth. Led by their faith in an omnipotent God, Israel had risen from the bondage of slavery to a prosperous and influential nation. But it didn’t last. Following the reign of King Solomon, the once great nation of Israel had split into two kingdoms, neither of which was a shadow of the nation that had preceded them. The glory days were over. The emergence of the divided kingdom was the beginning of the end for Israel because, during this time, the only thing that was more divided than the once powerful nation was their once powerful faith. Yet, faith survived. In the midst of turmoil, wickedness, and apathy, there was always a remnant of people who remained faithful to God. Because of their circumstances and environment, these people undoubtedly had to work hard to keep their faith as strong as it should be. There were challenges they had to face and conquer in order to build their faith and keep it strong.

Today, we also have many obstacles that battle against our faith, and we must also work hard to ensure that our faith remains strong. In a world that seems chaotic, apathetic, and sometimes wicked, we too must conquer many challenges if our faith is ever to survive. Through studying Bible stories from the days of the divided kingdom, *Marooned: Steady Faith in Shifting Sands* focuses on five challenges that are vital in building our faith so that we will be equipped, not only to survive, but to thrive in the world in which we live.

Upon closer examination, you will notice that this manual is presented in outline form. This is to enable a teacher of any skill level to present an informative and interesting lesson with minimal preparation time. The outline provides you with all the basic points, Scripture, and illustrations without stifling your creativity.

Each lesson is divided into learning blocks, each of which provides a separate learning experience in a short time period. The purpose of the block system is to break up the one, long session into shorter segments, giving you more flexibility and allowing you to move freely at your own pace. The lesson as you see best. Each block is designed to convey the lesson to the student either by instruction, reinforcement, or application, and some blocks contain activities that allow the student to learn, firsthand, the principles being taught. Depending on your teaching style, there is enough material in each lesson to last easily an hour or more. Determine in advance the amount of time you will have your students in class, and choose the blocks or activities within the blocks that best suit your needs.

In addition to the many learning experiences provided in this manual, this VBS provides many activities to be completed outside the classroom, such as crafts, skits, and Faith Survival Challenges in which the entire student body can come together to compete. Each activity outside the classroom is there for the purpose of reinforcing what is learned inside the classroom. Check with your VBS Director to learn the proper time schedule for such activities and for what your responsibilities are when your students are engaged in them.

Before class begins, be sure you have assembled all the items called for in the lesson and have properly studied each block of instruction. With proper preparation and motivation, we hope this series can provide a positive experience for all.
In Preparation for Class

Before VBS begins, read this book in its entirety. Gather all the materials for each lesson in advance. Last-minute preparation only adds to the stress level. Each lesson has its own materials list for your convenience.

Visual Aid packets are available to help you decorate your classroom and present your lessons. You may also choose to decorate your room with the overall theme for this series. During this VBS your students are castaways on a beautiful tropical island. Go bananas with tropical decorations! Bring in all of your house plants, faux and real. The Tropical Stand-Ups can be scattered around your classrooms and auditorium. You can order several of the Jointed Palm Trees to decorate your walls, and the Bamboo Beach Backdrop will make a wonderful addition to your island theme. Our Island Leis can be used as decoration of your rooms as well as decoration of your students. You could print out several of the tropical flowers found in the clip art section of your Multi-Media CD. There you can also find directions to make a Sandy Tarp. Bring in all the seashells you and others of your congregation have collected on vacations over the years, and don’t forget pieces of luggage that have washed up on the shore. Bring in pieces of driftwood, or learn how to make your own on a Pinterest page.

And don’t forget the Jumbo Cutouts of our castaway, Archibald “Archie” J. Worthington, III, and his friends: Cameron the Chameleon, Floyd the Flamingo, Marvin the Monkey, Stella the Starfish, and Topher the Tortoise. Let our ideas be a starting point for your own creativity. Tap into those creative minds of your congregation early, and give them a chance to create a memorable setting for these lessons.

Strive to go into this teaching opportunity with a positive attitude. You will likely have many of your congregation’s students in your class, along with friends and neighbors who get invited. You never know who God might bring to your class or the lasting impact you might have on students and their families. Early preparation will help your confidence and increase your effectiveness. Be flexible and have fun!

Most importantly, prepare yourself with a good attitude. Teaching can be a stressful experience, especially during Vacation Bible School, when attendance is up and your class is overflowing with students with whom you may not be familiar. Remember that preparation reduces anxiety, and the happier you are, the happier your students will be and the more they will learn. Good luck! Have fun!
Preparatory Considerations:
1. This class is divided into seven “blocks” of instruction. To ensure that all the material is covered, you will want to consider carefully each block of instruction in preparation for class.
2. Read all the Scripture references in the lesson.
3. Make sure that all materials are prepared for the students’ use. The following materials will be required for this class:
   - Student Books
   - Visual Aids—Memory Verse Message in a Bottle; Story Time Bible Book
   - Visual Aids—Marked Lesson Two—Survival Kit Handbook; Message Strip for Lesson Two
   - Beach ball or other soft item to throw and catch (Block Five)
   - Index cards or small slips of paper (Block Five)
   - Small, empty, clean bottles (27 with the same color cap for each team) (Block Five)
   - Wading pool (fill with a few inches of water) (Block Five)
   - Optional: Multi-Media CD printable file—Books of the New Testament Stepping Stones (Block Five)
   - Balloons (Block Five)
   - Bucket or other container (Block Five)
   - Funnel (Block Five)
   - Sand (Block Five)

Memory Verse:
Romans 10:17
“So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

Bible Story:
King Josiah and the Lost Scroll
(2 Chronicles 34:1-33)

Song Suggestions:
The B-I-B-L-E
Give Me the Bible
Thy Word Is a Lamp Unto My Feet

Reproducible Pages
Available on the Multi-Media CD!
Block One

- Introduce the lesson topic, The Challenge to Know God.
- Explain that to build a strong faith we must learn to know God.
- Discover the importance of spending time with God and reading or listening to His Word.

A. Begin by welcoming the students to class. Reintroduce yourself and each of your co-teachers as Shipwrecked Cruise Directors. Be sure to welcome and introduce any students who were not present for Lesson One. If time permits, allow students to find a partner, interview each other, and introduce their partners.

B. Remind the students that the VBS takes place at Castaway Key, a tropical island. Tropical islands are usually very beautiful and can be fun places to visit, but being marooned on one can be frightening and even dangerous. If we were marooned on a deserted island, there would be certain things we needed in order to survive. In a way, we are all marooned on an island we call earth, and we are awaiting the day we will be saved and live in our home in heaven. There are many things we love about living here on earth, but there are also certain things we need if we are going to survive this world before returning to our home. Review the VBS theme verse: “In God is my salvation and my glory; the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God,” (Psalms 62:7). In order to survive, we need to build a strong faith, or a certain and assured belief, in God. A strong faith in God is a steady rock in this world’s shifting sands.

C. In order to have a strong faith, there are several challenges that we must conquer. During this VBS, you will be facing some of those challenges that are faced by our children. Faith is understanding that even if you can’t see Him and are just getting to know Him, you can trust in God, know obeying Him will make you happy, and believe that He can save you. At this time, bring out the Survival Kit as described in Lesson One. Reach into the bag, and pull out the second item, a Survival Handbook (Before class begins, you should assemble the Survival Handbook per the instructions on the Visual Aid titled, Survivor Kit.) Discuss the importance of a survival handbook like this one. The survival handbook is filled with tips on the types of plants and fruit that are healthy and good for food. There are also tips on which plants are poisonous and should not be eaten. There are also tips concerning which plants are medicinal or have healing qualities if we get sick and how to purify water. We cannot drink the water unless we first boil it, and a survival handbook can teach us how to do that. You may choose to read some of the tips listed in the book at this time. After reading the tips, discuss with the students how lost they would be without the handbook. Without it, they could starve or be in danger of getting sick.

A. Before class begins, make sure the Memory Verse Message in a Bottle visual from the Visual Aid Package is prepared as instructed in Lesson One. Cut out the Message Strip for Lesson Two. Roll the strip up, and place it in the bottle.

B. Direct the students’ attention to the Message in the Bottle at this time. Castaways, there is another message in our bottle. Shall we see what it says? Perhaps there is a Bible verse to help us overcome the challenge for this week, the challenge to know God.

C. How can you get to know someone unless you spend a lot of time with them? We can never really have a strong faith in God unless we first get to know Him. How can we come to know God better? We talk to God when we pray; God speaks to us through His Word, the Bible. Without spending one-on-one time with God by reading His Word, we will never come to truly know Him. If this earth is like an island on which we are marooned, the Bible is our Spiritual Survival Handbook. Just as a Survival Handbook helps us find food that will provide physical nourishment and healing, the Bible provides spiritual nourishment and healing.

We have a message from our Spiritual Survival Handbook inside our bottle. Help one of your students to pull the message from the bottle, then unfurl it and read the message aloud. Our message for today is found in Romans 10:17, “So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” The Bible is filled with both instruction and stories that are told to build our faith. It is only through reading it that we can truly know God. Place the Message Strip on the bulletin board near the Message in a Bottle or help a student to do so.

Lesson Two
During the days of the Divided Kingdom, many people did not have a strong faith in God, but there were always a few people who did. In order to survive, these people had to conquer many faith-building challenges. In our Bible story for today, we will learn about a boy who became the king of God's people during the days of the Divided Kingdom.
PICTURE TWO

There was a lot of work to do in cleaning and repairing the temple. Many things needed to be fixed because they had become broken. Josiah ordered lots of people to help clean and repair the temple. One day while they were working in the temple, a priest named Hilkiah found something. It was a scroll, a lot like our books, that had been lost for many years. Hilkiah knew that the scroll must be very important so he told one of the other workers to take it to King Josiah. It turned out that this scroll was not just any ordinary scroll. The scroll was God’s Word that had been lost for so long. Finally, they had found the Bible.

PICTURE THREE

When Josiah heard the words that were written on the scroll, he was very sad and ashamed. He was also very afraid. For years, God’s people had not done the things that God wanted them to do. Because they had lost His Word, they no longer really knew God. Josiah gathered all of God’s people together and made them listen to God’s Word. Then Josiah made an agreement with God. He told God that, from now on, they would only worship Him and that they would never again forget about Him. He promised God that he would read His Word and obey the things that God told him to do. even though Josiah was young, he became a great king because he spent time with God.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What was the name of the good king in our Bible story? Josiah
2. How old was Josiah when he became king? eight-years-old
3. During the days when Josiah’s father was king, what had become lost? God’s Word
4. What were the people doing when they found God’s Word? cleaning and repairing the temple
5. What did Josiah do when he heard God’s Word? read it to all the people and promised God to only worship Him
that teach us about God’s people and the relationship that God had with them as well as the mistakes they made. There are books of Poetry such as Psalms, Proverbs, and others where we can read the words of great men such as David and Solomon and how they spoke to God and about God. There are the books of the Prophets that tell us how God tried to warn His people not to lose their faith in Him. The New Testament begins with the four Gospels that teach us about the life and teachings of Jesus, God’s Son. The book of Acts tells us all about the beginning of the church and how God’s message was spread. The Epistles, or Letters, give us instruction and teach us about what God expects of us. Finally, the book of Revelation, while difficult to understand, teaches us that those who have faith in God will be victorious in the end. Upon conclusion, challenge the students to spend more time with God by reading His Word.

**Block Four**

- Reinforce the lesson.
- Create a hands-on learning experience that will solidify the lesson in the students’ minds.
- Have fun!

Books of the Bible Game

Materials needed: beach ball or other soft item to throw and catch

Bring to class a beach ball or another ball that is soft and easy to catch. Clear a large open area in the classroom and instruct the students to stand in a large circle. Say or sing the books of the New Testament aloud together. Pick up the beach ball, and say the first book of the New Testament, “Matthew.” Then toss the ball to one of the students standing in the circle. That student must then say the next book of the New Testament, “Mark.” If the student is able to say the book correctly, he then tosses the ball to another student who says the third book and so on. When a student is unable to say the next book of the New Testament in order, the student should toss the ball back to you. The process then begins again with “Matthew.” Continue playing until the entire New Testament has been stated in order. Depending on the knowledge of your class, decide how much help from you is needed. Some classes will be unable to say the entire New Testament in order without hints from you. Other classes may know the books well enough to successfully complete the task the first time around. If this is the case, you may decide to move to the books of the Old Testament.)

*Sample Lesson*
**The Challenge to Know**

The students will be competing to find the 27 *LOST* books of the New Testament. Write the name of each New Testament book on a separate strip of paper or index card. Place these 27 pieces of paper inside 27 plastic bottles with the same color cap, the smaller the bottle, the better. You can paint the caps of empty water or juice bottles, or you can collect empty soda bottles with different colored caps. You should have a set of 27 bottles for each team. Each team’s containers should be designated by either a color or a symbol.

Fill a wading pool with water. You only need a few inches of water for your bottles to float. Make sure you have plenty of beach towels on hand. (If you are doing this indoors, lay out several tarps, and place the wading pool in the center.) Drop all of the bottles in the water.

Divide students into teams of 5 to 10 students per team. Teams could be as large as 27 students each, or no larger. However, the fewer students you have per team, the more each student will be able to participate. (See Director’s Manual for team formation information.) Line each team up single file several feet away from the wading pool. Give a brief review of the Bible story of Josiah and the lost scroll. Emphasize the effect that losing God’s Word had on His people. SAY: *In the Faith Survival Challenge to Know,* you will be trying to find the 27 *LOST* books of the New Testament. Remember, “Go,” the first member of each team will race to the wading pool, find a message in the bottle with the correct color cap, for your team, and race back to tag the next person in line. Once a team has found all 27 bottles, you can begin assembling the books of the New Testament in order. The first team to do so wins.

**Other Ideas**
- Easter eggs in a grassy field
- Seashells in a container of sand
- Rubber ducks in a smaller wading pool
- Books of the New Testament Stepping Stones printable file from the Multi-Media CD scattered across a large play area.

Since plastic bottles are so light, unless they are weighted they will end up floating on their sides. You might want to drop something small but weighty in the bottom of your bottles to make sure they float more upright. A few small rocks are an easy solution. Some other options are marbles, some nuts and bolt screwed together, coins, small seashells, bird seed, or beans.

Make sure the bottles are clean and dry when you put the weights and the slips of paper inside them. If you roll the slip, you might want to tape it, or flatten it to make sure it slides easily out of the bottle. Screw the caps on tight so they don’t leak. You may want to keep a thin, rubber jar opener handy to help open stubborn caps.
Place a bucket on the floor in the center of the room, and instruct the students to form a circle around the bucket. Give each student one balloon, and tell them to blow up their balloons without tying off the end. Inform the students that the object of the game is for the students to successfully throw their balloons into the bucket. If they fail, they must say the memory verse aloud. One at a time, allow each student to attempt to throw his balloon into the bucket. The balloon will probably fly around the room with no particular direction. When a student misses, instruct him to say the memory verse. After all students have attempted to successfully complete the task, SAY: Trying to live one’s life without knowledge of God’s Word is much like throwing the untied balloon into the bucket. Full of hot air and going nowhere fast. Help your students use the funnel to fill their balloons with a small amount of sand, then tie a knot in the end for them. Have them try to toss their balloon into the bucket again. SAY: When we have filled ourselves with God’s Word, our lives have weight and meaning. It is much easier to direct our lives when we are filled with something of substance.