**Topic: Courage**

**Bible Passage: David and Goliath—1 Samuel 17**

**Activity: “20 Seconds”**

This activity can be done in small groups or as individuals in a larger group. Create a list of physical activities such as running in place, jumping jacks, singing a nursery rhyme, or whistling. Think of as many crazy activities as possible.

Call out the physical activities one at a time and instruct preteens to perform the physical activity for exactly 20 seconds. At the end of the 20 seconds, move to another activity. Move through several activities and allow preteens to burn off some energy.

*To make this activity a competition, have small groups compete to do the most sit-ups, jumping jacks, and/or verses of the nursery rhyme in a 20 second time limit.*

**After the activity, say:** Each of those activities lasted 20 seconds. Does that seem like a long or short amount of time to you? If I said you had to stand on one leg for 20 seconds, would that be easy? What if you had to get into the wrestling ring with an 800 lb Grizzly Bear for 20 seconds? Would that be easy? Most of the time, 20 seconds flies by like nothing, but there are certain things that can make 20 seconds feel like an eternity.

God often calls us to have courage and take risks to build up His Kingdom. Look through the Bible at Abraham, Moses, Daniel, the Disciples—the all took risks for God and God used them in great ways. Taking risks starts with that first 20 seconds of courage.

One of the great examples of courage is seen in the life of David. David knew God and did his best to be obedient to God. When it came time to take a risk for God, David had courage. 20 seconds of courage turned a lowly shepherd boy into a hero to an entire nation.

1 Samuel 17 tells us the story of this epic battle. The Israelite army was facing a mighty opponent, the Philistines. The Bible tells us that both armies were all prepared for battle. The Israelites were camped atop one hill, and the Philistines were camped atop another hill with a battlefield between them.

There was a practice in those times that started with the Greeks to do a special type of battle. Rather than having every man fight, the two armies would settle the war by sending their best fighter out for a one-on-one battle. For the Philistines, that fighter was Goliath. Listen to the description of this warrior from 1 Samuel 17.

**Read 1 Samuel 17:4-7**

Goliath was no joke. He was big, mean, and nasty. For forty straight days, Goliath would come out and taunt the Israelites. He would dare anyone to come out and fight him, but no one would take the challenge. Every time Goliath spoke, the Israelites were terrified and hid.

Long before David was King of Israel, he was just a lowly shepherd boy. David’s older brothers were all part of the Israelite army, and were camped out on the hill in front of Goliath. One day, David visited the camp to deliver some food and check on his brothers. While he was visiting, Goliath came out just like he did every day.

David heard Goliath challenge the Israelites and mock their God. David saw everyone tremble with fear and hide from this beast of a man, but David didn’t flinch. This was David’s 20 seconds to run or have courage. What do you think David said?

Before we look at what David said, I want you to write down what you would’ve said and done in that moment. If you had 20 seconds to respond to Goliath, what would you say and do?

***Give preteens a chance to write down what they would’ve done in that situation. Ask a few preteens to share their responses.***

David displays insane courage. After hearing Goliath’s challenge, David responds. Listen to what David says.

**Read 1 Samuel 17:32-37**

Courage comes by knowing God and trusting Him. The more we know Him, the more understand and accept the things that He promises us. David knew God, and He knew the protection that God had promised. When we understand all that God has promised us, it makes it easier for us to take risks and face challenges to build His Kingdom!

So what happened next? Remember the quote from the movie clip? It said that 20 seconds of courage would lead to something great. This was true for David.

David took his staff, his sling, and 5 smooth stones to the battlefield to face Goliath. Let’s look at what happened next.

**Read 1 Samuel 17:41-51**

David had courage. He took a risk for God. We may not be asked to face a 9-foot tall man, but there are some giants in our lives. Maybe it’s sharing your faith, or maybe it’s befriending someone at your school. When God asks you to take risks and have courage, remember all the He has promised you. When you know Him and what He has promised, you can be confident that He will do something great in you and through you.

**Break into small groups for the following activity:**

**“Facing the Giants”**

Give each small group a sheet of butcher paper of 9-10 feet in length. Instruct the group to draw a silhouette of a person on the sheet. Next, have the group list some ways they can show courage and take risks for God. Give guidance to groups that may be struggling to think of ideas. Possible ideas are go on mission trip, serve their neighbors, share their faith, give time or money to the church for ministry, etc.