
EXPLORERS

Seeking God in the Great Outdoors



CAVES

WEEK 3: CAVES

BIBLE VERSE: *Be my strong refuge, to which I may resort continually; You have given the commandment to save me, for You are my rock and my fortress. Psalm 71:3 (NLT)*

BOTTOM LINE: God is able to keep you safe... you can hide in Him!

SUPPLIES

- Pack of copy paper and pencils
- Small poster boards and Sharpies (one for each Upper Elementary small group)
- Copies of WEEK 2 – Take Home Sheet
- Piece of paper and crayon (one for each kid in the Lower Elementary small group)

LEADER NOTES

We live in a world that can often seem scary for kids.

All of us are born with a desire to feel safe, but if we look for that need to be filled by anyone besides God, it will only be temporary.

Pray that kids will understand that they can “hide” in God.

He is all-powerful and ever-present in our lives every day!

WELCOME

Say: Welcome! It's great to see each of you!

Today, we are talking about Caves.

Ask: Have you ever been in a cave?

Allow a few responses from students.

They are pretty cool!

You can find interesting things in caves—animals, beautiful rocks, plants, etc.

You can even find rivers and streams in caves!

Caves are an awesome place to hide, but ONLY if you are with an adult.

Don't ever hide in a cave without someone knowing you are there.

It could be pretty scary for your family and friends if they don't know where you are!

But God can see you, even if you're in a cave.

He sees you no matter where you are – you can never hide from God, but you can hide *IN* God.

And that's what we're talking about today!

We're going to start with a fun Opening Activity that is all about hiding.

Are you good at hiding? We're about to find out!

Before we jump into our lesson, let's start by going over some guidelines that will help us have an awesome day together.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Unless we ask you to stand up, please stay in your seats.
- We will give you time to talk, but when a leader is talking, please listen.
- We want to keep your personal items safe, so keep your phones, toys, and fidget toys under your seat.
- And most of all, we want to take a moment to pray and ask God to help us learn something about Him that we've never known before.

If you don't know God at all, today will be your day to hear who He is.

Ask a leader or student to open in prayer.

WORSHIP

This would be a great time to open with a time of praise and worship.

OFFERING

Encourage students to give their offering willingly and with a grateful heart.

OPENING ACTIVITY: HIDE... AND HIDE!

GAME SET-UP

Divide students into groups of four.

Within each group, give each student a piece of paper with one of the letters that make up the word *HIDE*.

HOW TO PLAY THE GAME

On GO, play music, and instruct students to walk all around while it's playing.

When the music stops, have students quickly get into groups of four—not necessarily be group they started in—and spell out the word *HIDE*.

After they have spelled the word, they will lay their papers on the ground, and curl up in a ball—like they're hiding.

The last team to spell *HIDE* and actually “hide” is eliminated.

Keep playing until there is only one group left.

Optional: Play without eliminating groups.

Give an award (candy) to the first team who spells HIDE and hides in each round.

After the activity, have each team pick up their paper throw it away.

Then, have students return to their seats for the large group lesson.

TEACH

Say: That was a lot of fun! All of you moved really fast while you were trying to get into your groups.

Do you know what doesn't move fast? Caves. I know that wasn't funny. 😊

Today we're talking about caves, and I have some fun facts that I want to share with you!

Show the “Caves Slide Show,” either on TV/projection, or even print the slides and show them to the students.

Slide 1: Title Slide

Slide 2: The word "cave" is mentioned over 40 times in the Bible.

Slide 3: Hang Son Doong in Vietnam is the largest known cave in the world.

Slide 4: In the state of Tennessee, there are over 10,000 known caves!

Slide 5: The longest cave is 215-miles long and is located in Mexico.

Slide 6: In Italy, you can eat in a restaurant inside of a cave!

Slide 7: Bears, Bats, Raccoons, Groundhogs, Leopards, Lions, and Hyenas live in caves.

Slide 8: Think about it... God is able to keep you safe – you can hide in Him!

Slide 9: Title Slide

Say: I hope you learned a couple of things you didn't know before. Caves are really cool!

I want us to start our lesson by reading a Bible verse.

Let's read Psalm 71:3 NLT.

Be my rock of safety where I can always hide.

Give the order to save me, for you are my rock and my fortress.

In our opening activity, you were "hiding," but you didn't really hide.

People could still see you!

When you are truly hiding, you can't be seen.

Whatever is covering you is seen instead.

In the verse we just read, King David is saying that God is His rock of safety where he can always hide.

Ask: Have you ever thought about "hiding" in God? What does that mean to you?

Allow a few responses from students.

Everyone is afraid sometimes... kids... adults... even me.

Ask: What scares you?

Allow responses.

God doesn't want us to be afraid.

He wants us to know that we can give him all of our feelings of fear and worry and He will take care of us.

The Bible verse also says *“for you are my rock and my fortress.”*

Ask: Has anyone ever seen a fortress? What is that?

Allow a few responses from students.

A fortress protects a city from danger, just like God protects us!

That doesn't mean that only good things happen in our lives.

What it does mean is that, no matter what, God is always with us.

Maybe you have things in your life that scare you.

Maybe you feel afraid and need to give those fears to God and trust Him.

We're going to pray and ask God to help us to hide in Him.

Take a few minutes to pray and then, divide into small groups.



CAVES

SMALL GROUPS: LOWER ELEMENTARY**SUPPLIES**

- Piece of paper and crayon (one for each student)

Say: We are going to read one more Bible verse and talk about it.

Read 1 John 4:18 NLT.

Such love has no fear, because perfect love expels all fear.

If we are afraid, it is for fear of punishment, and this shows we have not fully experienced his perfect love.

Ask: Is it possible to be afraid and also believe God can keep you safe at the same time? How?

Allow responses.

You can trust God because He sees you every minute of every day and He loves you very much.

Pass out a piece of paper and crayon to each kid.

On your piece of paper, I want you to draw a picture of God protecting you from something that scares you.

Give kids a few minutes to draw pictures and then following up by asking each kid to explain their drawing to the group.

I want you to hold your drawing in your hand and as we pray together, I want you to thank God for keeping you safe and ask Him to protect you every day.

Close in prayer.



CAVES

SMALL GROUPS: UPPER ELEMENTARY**SUPPLIES**

- Small poster boards and Sharpies (one for each Upper Elementary small group)

Say: We are going to read one more Bible verse and talk about it.

Read 1 John 4:18 NLT.

Such love has no fear, because perfect love expels all fear.

If we are afraid, it is for fear of punishment, and this shows we have not fully experienced his perfect love.

Ask: Is it possible to be afraid and also believe God can keep you safe at the same time? How?

Allow responses.

In the New Testament, the followers of Jesus had a reason to be afraid.

Many times, they were persecuted.

Ask: What does “persecuted” mean?

Wait for answers.

They were punished, many times attacked, for preaching and teaching that Jesus was the Son of God.

That must have been really scary!

But this Bible verse says that when you experience God’s love, it replaces the fear in your life.

God’s love must be very powerful!

We’re going to do an activity that will remind us to give our fears to God, and hide in Him.

SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY

Each group will receive a small poster board and a Sharpie.

On the poster board write, "God is bigger than my fear. I can hide in Him."

Then, as a group, write a list of things that students are afraid of such as making bad grades, the dark, heights, spiders, snakes, etc.

Each group will have 10 minutes to write down their fears.

Then, one person from each group will read their poster to the entire group.

After the lesson, hang the posters up for the kids to see for the remainder of the series.

BONUS: BIBLE QUIZ QUESTIONS

If you have extra time, use the following questions at the end of the lesson.

Call two students to the front.

Hand each student a KJV Bible, read the question, and then give the Bible reference.

The first person to give the correct answer wins that round.

The winner remains up front, and a new "challenger" takes the other student's place.

1. How many kings are mentioned in Joshua 10:16?

But these **five** kings fled, and hid themselves in a cave at Makkedah.

2. How many men fled to the wilderness? Judges 20:47.

But **six hundred men** turned and fled to the wilderness unto the rock Rimmon, and abode in the rock Rimmon four months.

3. What animal is mentioned in 1 Samuel 24:2?

Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the **wild goats**.

4. What did He cut among the rocks? Job 28:10.

He cutteth out **rivers** among the rocks; and his eye seeth every precious thing.

5. What food is mentioned in Psalm 78:20?

Behold, he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can he give **bread** also? can he provide flesh for his people?

6. **What will come out of the rock? Psalm 81:16.**

He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat: and with **honey** out of the rock should I have satisfied thee.

7. **What did the rock turn into? Psalm 114:8.**

Which turned the rock into a **standing water**, the flint into a fountain of waters.

8. **What breaks the rock in pieces? Jeremiah 23:29.**

Is not **my word** like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a **hammer** that breaketh the rock in pieces?