

Explore It

FOR LEADERS

SESSION
01

HOPE IN JESUS GIVES ME STRENGTH

 **Luke 5:1-11: Jesus calls the disciples**

Please refer to the Introduction document for more details

Start it

Ask the children to go around their homes and collect four items that start with the letters H.O.P.E. (one item for each letter). The first person back with all four items wins! (Set a strict time limit for this.)

Share screen: Display the word HOPE on screen (you may choose to share some images which prompt discussion).

🗨 **Say:** What do you think hope is? Give time for response and discussion.

🗨 **Say:** Some people see hope as a wish; 'I hope I can have chocolate for breakfast tomorrow' or 'I hope I can play video games all day today'. God tells us hope is much more than a wish. Hope is trusting God and knowing he will do what he says he will do even when it is hard.

It is confusing and hard time at the moment for everyone. You have probably felt a range of different emotions and asked lots of questions: Why am I not at school? Why can't I see my friends or family? Why do I have to avoid contact with other people? It is good to ask questions and important to talk to those you trust around you. In our story today, we will see how Jesus made close friends with people who he could share with. Those friends went through lots of change and, at times, struggled on their journey with Jesus but they stayed close to Jesus as he filled them with hope.

Screen share: Type out the following Bible verse on your whiteboard screen and read together:

But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

(Isaiah 40:31)

🗨 **Say:** This is a really descriptive verse in the Bible about having hope in God. Underline your favourite part. Give time for response and discussion.

🗨 **Say:** Isaiah tells us not to rely on our own ability but to hope in what God has promised. When we hope in God, he gives us the strength to face any challenges that come our way, as we will see in our story.

Sing It

The song 'My Hope Is in The Lord' (Jay Stocker) reminds us to hope in God who provides for what he knows we need. Teach this song to your group as you will be using it across the next three sessions. Encourage children to sing the song throughout the week as well! (You could email the links below to the children after the session.)

Lyrics version - <https://youtu.be/T0hxlgV2tqI>

Lyrics and actions - <https://youtu.be/tJePCzTaQo4>

Tell It

● **Say:** We are going to watch the story of when Jesus called his first disciples.

Share screen: God's Story: Peter Fishes for Men
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F120aeswBx0>

(If this version becomes unavailable, there are other versions of this story online.)

Or read Luke 5:1-11 together.

Share screen: Display the verses from Luke 5:8-11 on whiteboard screen.

● **Say:** Let's discuss the story. Give time for response and discussion between each question.

I wonder:

- How did Simon feel having spent all night fishing and returning with empty nets?
- How did Simon feel after trusting in Jesus and returning to the shore with nets full of fish?
- Is there a time you have felt you haven't had any hope?
- When has God done something amazing in your life?

● **Say:** Some people find it hard to place hope in God. Even Simon Peter struggled to have hope in Jesus when he said to go and fish again. And, after Simon Peter returned with nets of fish and had reason to hope in Jesus, he didn't feel he deserved it. But Jesus' response was to assure Simon Peter and give him the strength he needed, 'Do not be afraid,' commanded Jesus. Jesus offers that hope for each of us.

Action It

Some weeks there will be an action or activity to do, other weeks it may be to introduce the 'Explore It' ideas to the children in your group. For this first session, we suggest you take time to talk the children through the different ideas included in the Explore It (For Me) and Explore It (Together) for this session. They are designed to help children continue to reflect on this week's theme at home.

Pray It

Share screen: Draw an image of a candle on the whiteboard screen. (Alternatively, you could light one next to you and just display the whiteboard.)

Play the song 'Made In Your Image' by Hillsong Kids quietly in the background.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8AC-KtJriw4>

● **Say:** Let's pray together.

Even though Simon Peter hadn't caught any fish after working hard all night, hope in Jesus gave him the strength to get back into the boat and continue fishing.

Even though Simon Peter had felt he wasn't good enough for Jesus, hope in Jesus gave him the strength to leave everything he had and follow Jesus

Even when we are experiencing difficult challenges and circumstances, hope in Jesus can give us the strength to overcome them.

● **Say:** I wonder what you need strength for at this time?

Give time for response and discussion.

● **Say:** I wonder who else we can pray for who needs strength at this time?

Give time for children to write or draw their contributions on the whiteboard.

Finish your time together with a prayer for the children and those they have prayed for.

Explore It

Remember to share the Explore It (For Me) and Explore It (Together) ideas for children and families.

Explore It FOR ME

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Here are some ideas and activities you could do on your own



Draw

Reread the Bible story and draw the scene when Peter pulls up a net full of fish. What would his face show? How would the crowds around be looking?



Write

Have you ever written an acrostic poem? Here is an example:
H is for happiness, felt when knowing God.
O is for obedience, following God's plan for my life.
P is for promise, God never fails.
E is for everyone, God is for all!
Could you write your own acrostic poem or prayer for yourself or to share with a friend?



Create

Trying something new can be difficult. We might worry about how long it will take us to achieve it or feel the challenge is just too hard. Remember, having hope in Jesus gives us strength. Think about something new you can try at this time. It could be small like saying remembering to always say 'please' when asking for something. Or it could be learning to draw illustrations by following some video clips. There are so many things you could try. Whatever you choose, keep trying, and don't lose hope.



Hear

Find our song for this month on YouTube.
Lyrics version - <https://youtu.be/T0hxlgV2tgI>
Lyrics and actions - <https://youtu.be/tJePCzTaQo4>
Spend some time listening and learning the words. Could you teach it to someone else after?



Play

Each day do the 5,4,3,2,1!
5 star jumps; 4 squats; 3 sit-ups; 2 press up; 1 hi-5 to someone in your house.
As you hi-5 thank God for someone special in your life.



Build

Everyone loves building a fort! Using pillows, cushions, blankets, and anything else that is safe, build a strong fort to play in.

KIDS ALIVE ONLINE

<https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/kidsalive>

Kids Alive! The UK's only weekly Christian comic - is filled with jokes, competitions, Bible-based cartoons and much more... and is now available to read online!



Explore It TOGETHER

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Here are some ideas and activities you could do as a family



Sense

As you go for your walk, look at the different shapes, sizes and colours of the trees and leaves. The roots of trees spread far under the ground to hold the tree strongly in place. Trees go through seasons of growth. The leaves growing and signs of spring and new life and can be a symbol of hope for us.



Watch

Find a nature documentary on Netflix, BBC iPlayer or Disney +. Watch it together and admire the beauty of all God has created. Talk about the strength of the animals in different environments.



Play

With your family, set up a tug of war or an arm-wrestling competition. Test your strength and find out who is physically the strongest.



Investigate

Gather a collection of different materials and set up an investigation to find out the strength of each one. Ask someone to guess which they think will be the strongest material. Conduct your investigation to find out.



Bake

Find a recipe for rock cakes online and bake together.



Pray

After your meal together, light a candle of hope and pray together, thanking God for the people showing great strength by serving their communities.