

Elementary Crew Leader Guide



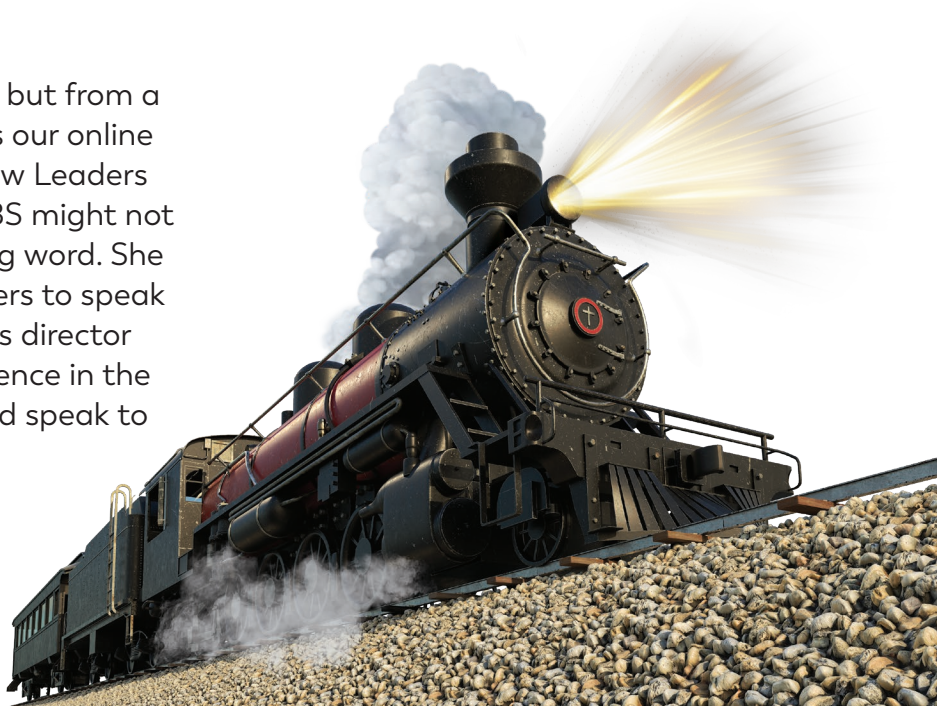
What's a Crew Leader?

If you've been asked to be a Crew Leader, you've met two important qualifications: You love the Lord, and you love children. During Rocky Railway, you'll visit different activities with a group of three to five children. *You're not in charge of preparing or teaching activities; you just get to be there and help kids enjoy them as you shepherd the members of your Crew.* Because your Crew is small, you'll get to know and affirm each member by asking questions, really listening, and being encouraging.



Stay on Track

This isn't from *our* field test but from a VBS director who frequents our online forum. She reminds the Crew Leaders that some of the kids at VBS might not ever hear a kind or affirming word. She encourages her Crew Leaders to speak God's love to *each child*. This director says it makes a huge difference in the way Crew Leaders treat and speak to the kids. Wonderful idea!



Make It Memorable

Bible Memory Buddies®

At the end of each day during Rocky Wrap-Up, you'll give each kid in your Crew a Rocky Railway Bible Memory Buddy and help kids slide the Buddies onto carabiners that will easily attach to kids' clothing or personal items to go with them wherever they go. Each Buddy has the day's Bible Point and verse written on the back, too!

At the end of each day, kids will leave their Rocky Railway Carabiners and Bible Memory Buddies in the Crew bag. This will ensure kids aren't without their carabiners and collection of Bible Buddies each day at VBS.



Tracking With Jesus Bible Books

Kids and families love these fun, interactive student books that continue the VBS week's learning at home! They'll spark meaningful conversations with family members about how Jesus pulls us through life's ups and downs. The Tracking

With Jesus Bible Books are an integral part of Rocky Railway's faith discoveries!

Who's Who in the Crew

During their first Sing & Play Express session, kids will choose Crew jobs. Each child will have one of the jobs listed in the chart. If children can't agree on who should perform each of the jobs, assign jobs to kids for Day 1; then rotate jobs each day so that by the end of the week, all children in the Crew have had an opportunity to do each job. The name badges also list these Crew roles on the back. If your Crew has fewer than five kids, some kids may have more than one job. Kids are excited about having special jobs. Encourage them to fulfill their roles, and provide lots of opportunities for them to do so.

Stay on Track

It can be a challenge to get take-homes to actually make it home throughout the week, so with that in mind, we've suggested the Tracking With Jesus Bible Books go home on the last day of VBS. Your Director may choose to distribute them differently, but no matter the approach, excitedly encourage kids to take the books home and *use them!* Your enthusiasm will help kids know these books designed especially for them have value and are a way to keep the VBS fun going at home.



Guide

▶ chooses action ideas for traveling through Rocky Railway (such as shuffling while making train sounds or using hands to make "elk antlers" while galloping along)

Kit Carrier

▶ distributes and collects supplies and helps carry the Crew's bag

Prayer Person

▶ leads or opens prayer times

Schedule Supervisor

▶ helps monitor the daily schedule to let the Crew know what's coming next

Thank You-er

▶ leads the Crew in thanking Station Leaders each day

I've just completed kindergarten. I'm a unique and important part of my Crew because I have a great imagination. I can help my Crew dive into each wild Bible adventure!



I've just completed first grade. I'm a unique and important part of my Crew because I like to be the best. I can help encourage my Crew to be the best it can be.



I've just completed second grade. I'm a unique and important part of my Crew because I want everything to be fair. I can help make sure we all take turns and treat one another fairly.



I've just completed third grade. I'm a unique and important part of my Crew because I like to be challenged. I can help younger members of my Crew with challenging projects.



I've just completed fourth grade. I'm a unique and important part of my Crew because I like to ask questions. I can help my Crew ask questions to make sure we understand what we're learning.



I've just completed fifth grade. I'm a unique and important part of my Crew because I like to make choices. I can help younger Crew members with tasks and help the Crew Leader guide everyone in showing God's love.



Top 4 Crew Leader Tips

1 Participate!

- Sing the songs and do the motions.
- *Play* the games.
- Be curious in Imagination Station.
- Use your imagination in Bible Adventures to interact with each day's story.
- Share your own God Sightings.
- Give your own insights during KidVid™ Cinema.

3 Lavish your attention on the kids.

- Turn off your cellphone—you can contact your friends after VBS!
- Use kids' names in kind and loving ways.
- Use eye-to-eye contact.
- Be a tuned-in, affirming listener during discussions. Paraphrase kids' answers in a response back to them to show that you've heard and understood what they've said.
- Give hugs or high-fives throughout the day.
- Be there for the kids as they arrive. Get there early. Check with your VBS Director to see when he or she would like you to arrive each day.

2 Support the Station Leaders.

- Quickly sit in knee-to-knee circles for Crew discussions.
- Listen to each Station Leader, and encourage kids to listen too.
- Put the Crew bag out of the way during activities.
- Be enthusiastic.

4 Be positive.

- Model the behavior that you want kids to have.
- Positively acknowledge kids' answers to questions. Rather than saying "No, that's the wrong answer," say "Thanks for sharing. Anyone else have thoughts?"
- Smile! Have fun!



Use Positive Words Like These:

- Let's keep moving so we can do as many fun activities as possible.
- Listen carefully so you'll know what to do next.
- Stay with the Crew; we need your help in this activity!
- That's a unique way of doing things! How did you think of that? Let's try it this way.
- It's important that we all follow the instructions and work together as a team.
- Please move over here so you can see better.
- Let's all sit in a circle so we can see and hear one another better.
- Those Buddies sure are cool! Let's keep them put away so we can hear about this next activity.

What to Do If...

Most of the time, things will go smoothly for your Crew, but every once in a while, you may run into a dilemma. Here's some advice on how to handle different challenges.



If my Crew won't stay together...

Encourage your Guide to come up with creative ways to travel. Or work with your Thank You-er to come up with cheers to say as you travel. Use

fun language such as "Stay on track!"

If I have a clique in my Crew...

Cliques can make the Crew experience unhappy for the outsiders. Encourage friendships among all Crew members by pairing kids with partners they don't know very well during games and other activities. Offer reminders when needed that they're "all aboard" this train and that means caring for each other.



If older kids are unhappy being grouped with mixed ages...

Highlight their helping role. Encourage them to help younger kids with snack experiences and other activities. Acknowledge them by telling younger kids, "[Name of older child] is really

good at that. Why don't you ask him [or her] to help?"

If a Crew member won't participate...

Help shy children feel welcome by calling them by name and asking them questions directly. Respond to their questions with a smile and a statement such as "That's really interesting!" Also try giving children special jobs. For example, assign them the task of finding a place for your Crew to sit at each station.

If someone *really* doesn't want to participate in Loco Motion Games, that's okay. Rocky Railway can be tiring! Let children rest until they're ready to participate.

If people in my Crew don't get along...

Quietly take the children aside. Tell them you've noticed that they're not getting along. Let them know that although they don't have to be best friends, they do have to be together all week, so things will be a lot more fun if they can at least be kind to one another. (Use the daily Bible Points for these teachable moments!)

If I have an overly active child...

Pair this child with yourself for partner activities, and suggest that he or she sit with you during quiet times. Or give him or her a focused role of helping you keep the Crew on task and setting an example for everyone else. If those suggestions don't work well enough, ask your Director if you could have an assistant Crew Leader to help the child focus and participate.

If my Crew is out of control and unruly...

You can be direct in calling out behavior, but maintain the fun in your voice and language. It'll help you avoid setting a pace for a battle of wills between you and the kids in your Crew. Use these fun Rocky Railway puns to call attention to behaviors that need to stop:

- Cheating in games or other activities: "You've derailed; let's get back on track!"
- Not paying attention to Station Leaders: "Are we tracking along with the Station Leader?"
- Distracted by side conversations or horse play: "Let's stick to the track."
- Complaining about activities at stations: "Let's show respect on the rails. You may not love everything we do, but if you don't participate, you might miss out on something you didn't expect to be *amazing*."

If by midweek there are two or more kids in your Crew who just won't listen no matter what you try, it might be necessary to move a child or two to a different Crew. Talk to your Director about making a few Crew roster adjustments to help make sure each child gets the most out of the time at Rocky Railway VBS.

If my Crew gets too big...

Rocky Railway is a blast, so it's likely that kids will want to bring friends. However, the activities at Rocky Railway are designed to work with a mixed-age Crew of no more than five kids. If you have a small Crew, you'll welcome a few additional friends into your Crew family. But if your Crew grows past five children, talk with your Rocky Railway Director as soon as possible. He or she will need to form a new Crew so kids can have the best experience possible.



What Do I Do at Each Station?

Sing & Play Express is where kids worship by singing upbeat action songs. Your job at Sing & Play Express is to

- greet your Crew members in your designated seating area.
- follow the motions and sing out loud.

Imagination Station is where kids can experiment, play, and discover as they use amazing Sciency-Fun Gizmos! Your job at Imagination Station is to

- listen carefully to the instructions because you'll most likely need to repeat them for some members of your Crew!
- use *your* imagination and share your curiosity as kids explore their gizmos. It's time to play!
- help kids complete their activities (*only* when they need help).
- help clean up your area before leaving.

KidVid™ Cinema is where kids watch a daily video of *real* kids trusting Jesus in their lives. Your job at KidVid Cinema is to

- encourage kids to tune in and watch the video.
- lead your Crew in participating in the activities before and after the video.
- lead kids in discussion when it's called for. (Expect surprising insights and answers from kids. And don't be afraid of deep, personal conversations—those are where impact and transformation happen.)

In KidVid™ Cinema, kids will discuss real-life examples of needing Jesus' power to get through hard things, to have hope, and to be good friends. Each of these is handled in a kid-appropriate way. The kids in your Crew may share very real experiences with you. Don't feel like you have to have all the answers! Use the Bible Points to reassure kids that even through the valleys and mountaintops we face in life, we can...*trust Jesus!*

If a child brings up a serious issue, such as indicators of neglect, abuse, or violence he or she has experienced, say, "Thank you for telling me about that. It's very important, and we need to talk about it with our VBS Director [or children's minister if he or she isn't the VBS Director] to give you a chance to say everything you need to say—and help

you with your feelings." Involve the appropriate person at your church who can follow through with necessary steps after the conversation, as there is not only a moral but a legal obligation to report circumstances where a child might be in danger.

Chew Chew Snacks is where Crews come for a tasty snack. Your job at Chew Chew Snacks is to

- gather your Crew in a designated area.
- help your Crew focus on the Chew Chew Snacks Leader as he or she explains the way snack time will work.
- help a different child each day to lead from the provided snack card to guide a fun snack experience that connects to the day's Bible verse.
- help kids clean up your area before leaving.

Loco Motion Games is where kids play team-building games. Kids also learn about Operation Kid-to-Kid in this station. Your job at Loco Motion Games is to

- listen carefully to the instructions so you can help your Crew members follow them.
- participate in each activity, and cheer on your Crew members as they participate.
- participate during one day's game time in a "photo shoot" for the day's Spotlight VBS slideshow (a customized slideshow featuring the kids and leaders at Rocky Railway)!

Bible Adventures is where kids experience the Bible story. Your job at Bible Adventures is to

- line up with your Crew outside the door.
- listen carefully to hear how Crew Leaders should help out that day.
- encourage Crew members to participate.
- share your own discoveries during discussion times and your excitement during each Bible Adventures.

Rocky Wrap-Up is where kids experience an exciting review of the day's lesson. Your role at Rocky Wrap-Up is to

- lead kids to your assigned seating area.
- participate in singing and other activities.
- remind your Crew to participate without being rowdy or disruptive.
- give kids the special Bible Memory Buddies each day.
- make sure each child leaves with his or her Sciency-Fun Gizmo from Imagination Station.
- collect Crew members' name badges and Bible Memory Buddies and store them in your Crew bag until the last day of VBS.

BIBLE POINT

Day 1

Jesus' power helps us do hard things.

Bible Story: Ananias helps Saul. (Acts 9:1-19)

Bible Verse: "For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength."
(Philippians 4:13)

Consider This...

- ▶ The Bible makes it evident that God often asks his followers to do hard things. Noah built an ark. Abraham prepared to sacrifice his son. Mary bore the Son of God. Ananias had the terrifying job of reaching out to Saul.
- ▶ To understand the difficulty of Ananias' job, it's important to realize just how much Saul hated the early church. He approved the stoning of Stephen, arrested Christians in Jerusalem, and set his sights on imprisoning Christians living in Damascus. Christians ran away from Saul—not toward him!
- ▶ Ananias' name means "protected by the Lord." It's likely that his parents didn't know the importance of such protection during this important, history-altering mission.
- ▶ In Acts 9:15, God doesn't ease Ananias' misgivings with words of comfort or empowerment. He simply shares his life-changing plan for Saul and urges Ananias to go.
- ▶ Because of his selection and obedience, Ananias got to be the first person to welcome Saul as a Christian. In spite of any misgivings or fear, Ananias warmly greeted Saul with the phrase "Brother Saul."



Why It Matters...

Jesus still asks his followers to do hard things. The kids at your VBS know it's hard to forgive when someone hurts their feelings. They've experienced the difficulty of splitting time between parents' homes after a divorce. Kids can tell you how tough it is to make new friends, do what's unpopular, learn a new skill in school, and reach out in friendship to someone who's lonely. That's why today's activities will encourage kids with the truth that Jesus' power can fortify them through life's challenges. Just as Ananias drew strength from God's reassurance and plan, kids will come away with renewed inspiration that *they* can trust in Jesus' power to tackle the hard things they face.



DAY 1

Bible Point:
**Jesus' power helps us
do hard things.**

God Sightings^o

Every day at Rocky Railway, kids and leaders will share evidence they've seen of God. We call these *God Sightings*, and they're an easy, practical, and powerful way to help kids realize that God is still active in our everyday lives. The more you incorporate God Sightings into your conversations with kids, the more they'll "get it."

► Today help kids talk about the hard things in their lives and how Jesus' power can get them through even when it feels impossible. Here are a few examples:

- Talk about times they've struggled to learn something new and wanted to give up, and how when they feel that way, they can pray for Jesus' power to help them keep trying.
- Suggest Bible verses and songs that offer examples of how Jesus' power is strong and mighty, a power that can overcome any challenge.
- Point out ways you see your Crew members working together and helping each other through challenges during each station's activities.

WRAP-UP QUESTIONS: HOLD THE TRACK LINE

Ask:

- ❓ What part of the game was the most fun?
- ❓ What part of the game was the hardest?

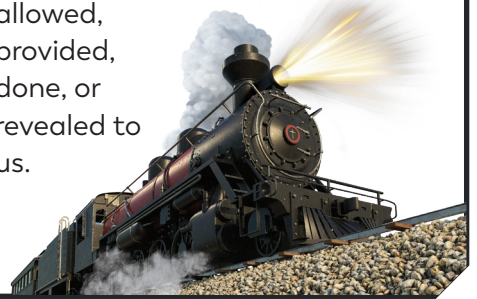
Say: It could get pretty hard to hold on and stay together! That's true when we have to do something hard in our lives, too. When we're struggling, it can pull us apart from friends.

- ❓ How have hard times in your life been hard on your friendships? Share an example of your own, such as a time of struggle that made you grumpy or tired so you argued with a friend or just wanted to be left alone.

Say: It's normal to be frustrated or upset when we're trying to do something hard, but that's when we need our friends most! Let's hold on to our friends, because a lot of times it's through the help and love of friends that **JESUS' POWER HELPS US DO HARD THINGS.** (Trust Jesus!)

Stay on Track

A God Sighting is not "I see God in that tree." A God Sighting is "I see God's creativity and power because only God can make a tree." God Sightings are seeing things that God has created, allowed, provided, done, or revealed to us.



Stay on Track

Sit in knee-to-knee circles for discussions. Call on kids by their Crew roles. For example, say, "I'd like to hear our Guide's and our Prayer Person's answers."



BIBLE POINT

Day 2

Jesus' power give us hope.

Bible Story: Paul encourages others in a storm and shipwreck. (Acts 27)

Bible Verse: “So be strong and courageous, all you who put your hope in the Lord!” (Psalm 31:24)

Consider This...

- ▶ After Paul became a follower of Jesus, he fervently shared the news of Jesus everywhere he went. In Jerusalem, Paul encountered a group of men who opposed his teachings. These men began a riot, accusing Paul of spreading false doctrine and of defiling the Temple. Guards arrested Paul and threw him in prison. The following years included trials, death threats, secret transfers to other prisons, and finally a trip to Rome where Paul could plead his case before Caesar.
- ▶ In Acts 27:9, Paul notes the sailing season in connection with Jewish observances. Sailors typically only sailed from Pentecost (May–June) through Tabernacles (after the Day of Atonement in late September or early October). Roman sailors resisted sailing in November, as it typically proved dangerous.
- ▶ The sailors battled the fierce storm for at least three days, using every trick they knew to secure the ship and survive hurricane-force winds and waves. Finally, the weary seamen lost hope of ever being saved. At this low point, Paul shares the hopeful news given by God.
- ▶ God’s message of hope, conveyed through Paul, rang true for the soldiers, the sailors, and the prisoners. God’s angel assured Paul that “none of you will lose your lives” (Acts 27:22). However, after the shipwreck, the soldiers planned to kill the prisoners so they wouldn’t escape. (Roman law mandated that a soldier who lost a prisoner had to take that prisoner’s place!) “But the commanding officer wanted to spare Paul, so he didn’t let them carry out their plan” (Acts 27:43). And, just as the angel said, not even a prisoner died.



Why It Matters...

In many ways, Paul was powerless in the stormy sea. He didn’t have experience as a sailor. Guards held him prisoner. And, of course, he couldn’t stop the crashing waves and howling winds. But Paul *did* have Jesus’ power on his side!

In the same way, the kids at your VBS may feel powerless through life’s storms. The world can seem turbulent, dark, and confusing. Bad news crashes over us. Fear blows relentlessly, leaving kids feeling hopeless. Yet God promises to strengthen us with *his* power! And we can trust that God’s promises are true. Like Paul, we have Jesus’ power on our side. Today, celebrate that truth and give kids the hope of victory and comfort during life’s uncertainties.



DAY 2

Bible Point:
Jesus' power gives us hope.

God Sightings®

God Sightings are a great way to help kids see that God is active all around us. Remember, the more you incorporate God Sightings into your conversations with kids, the more they'll "get it."

▶ Today help Crew members identify people or things in their lives that give them hope and how those hope-givers are blessings from God. Here are a couple of examples:

- Thank God for family members and friends who are encouragers.
- Keep watch for unique moments during the day to lead your Crew members in bringing hope to one another through encouraging words. Lead the way with personal affirmations, and be sure to encourage each child in your Crew at some point in the day.

Stay on Track

As a Crew Leader, you are the chief God Sightings encourager! Have fun with your Crew members as you look for God in action each day.



WRAP-UP QUESTIONS: H.O.P.E. BALL

Say: The game had some challenges. People could score against you, you could use only one arm, and you had to stand in a weird way. But you kept playing with some smiles and laughs and fun. So...

Ask:

- ❓ **What gave you hope to keep playing through the game's challenges?**
- ❓ **Tell about a time you had hope through another challenge.** Share an example of your own first, such as not giving up on a friend after an argument because of the hope that your friendship was stronger than a disagreement.

Say: We face big challenges—some might be so hard that they seem hopeless. But there's always hope through any challenge when we're friends with Jesus. **JESUS' POWER GIVES US HOPE!** (Trust Jesus!)

On-Track Tips From Your Director ++++++

BIBLE POINT

— Day 3 —

Jesus' power helps us be bold.

Bible Story: Peter and John teach about Jesus. (Acts 3:1–4:31)

Bible Verse: “He gives power to the weak and strength to the powerless.”
(Isaiah 40:29)

Consider This...

- ▶ In the name of Jesus, Peter and John healed a lame man at the Temple gate. The man celebrated the miracle so loudly that a crowd gathered. Peter, making the most of this instant audience, stood up and boldly shared the good news of Jesus.
- ▶ The priests who heard Peter's message were most likely Sadducees. Sadducees didn't believe in the resurrection, nor did they believe in the existence of angels or spirits. These leaders also maintained loyalty to the Roman government and sought to maintain the status quo.
- ▶ At the time, most Jews could read and write, but few—if any—received rabbinical training. Such an education would have made them skilled at lengthy theological discussions. So when Peter and John boldly preached before the Sanhedrin (a crowd of highly trained priests), the judges marveled at their ability and noted that they must have been with Jesus.
- ▶ After Peter and John's release from prison, the church gathers around them for prayer and praise. It's interesting to note that they *don't* pray for the persecution to stop but that God would give them the boldness to continue sharing the news of Jesus *in spite of* their suffering.



Why It Matters...

Like Peter and John, most kids at your VBS are ordinary and “untrained.” Speaking out about their faith can be intimidating, especially in the face of a culture that often feels “anti-Christian.” Many kids feel shy about praying before a restaurant meal, inviting a friend to church, or even mentioning Jesus in regular conversation. Other kids may feel unsure when it comes to showing Jesus' love, playing with a new friend, or reaching out to someone who's lonely. Today, give kids the chance to practice speaking about Jesus with ease and confidence. Provide opportunities for kids to daringly step out of their comfort zones. Bolster their bravery and cultivate a courageous faith, encouraging kids to rely on Jesus' power to help them be bold.



DAY 3

Bible Point:
**Jesus' power
helps us be bold.**

God Sightings®

Keep looking for evidence of God all around you. Throughout the day, point out opportunities for kids to step outside their comfort zones. God can help kids be bold by...

- getting more involved during games or taking on a role they wouldn't normally try in a game.
- sharing during Crew discussions.
- bravely eating an odd-looking snack.



WRAP-UP QUESTIONS: BOLD BOPS

Ask:

- ① What were some bold moves our Crew made as we played?
- ① How did encouraging words from the games leaders and each other help you be bold?

Say: Being bold can be hard all on your own, but teamwork and encouraging friends can make it easier. Jesus can help us through the encouraging words of others. It's just one way **JESUS' POWER HELPS US BE BOLD.** *(Trust Jesus!)*

On-Track Tips From Your Director ++++++

BIBLE POINT

— Day 4 —

Jesus' power lets us live forever.

Bible Story: Jesus' death and resurrection. (Matthew 26:17–28:10)

Bible Verse: “The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you.”
(Romans 8:11)

Consider This...

- ▶ The Passover meal shared between Jesus and his disciples commemorated God's miraculous provision for his people centuries earlier. In this traditional celebration, Jews remembered the sacrificial lamb, whose blood (marked on their doorposts in Egypt) saved them. How appropriate that Jesus—our sacrificial lamb—completes his work on earth with such a symbolic event.
- ▶ In Jesus' culture—and in some Middle Eastern cultures today—eating together equaled friendship. Scholars equate sharing a meal with trust and intimacy, adding weight to Jesus' comment to Judas: “One of you who has just eaten from this bowl with me will betray me” (Matthew 26:23).
- ▶ The Roman government had deprived the Sanhedrin of the right to carry out most capital punishments. Therefore, even though the chief priests and elders found Jesus guilty, they had to turn him over to Pilate for execution.
- ▶ At Jesus' death, Matthew 27:51 records that “the curtain in the sanctuary of the Temple was torn in two, from top to bottom.” There were actually two curtains in the Temple. One divided the Most Holy Place from the Holy Place; the other separated the Holy Place from the court. Matthew doesn't specify *which* curtain tore, but a rending of either one would symbolize changes between God, ritual law, and humanity.
- ▶ Even Jesus' followers found his resurrection hard to believe! Matthew 28:17 tells us, “but some of them doubted!” Yet Jesus eased their doubts by appearing to them repeatedly over 40 days (Acts 1:3; 10:40-41).



Why It Matters...

Death is an uncomfortable—and even scary—topic for children *and* adults. Even though we don't like to talk or think about it, it's likely that most kids will experience the death of a pet, friend, or relative. That's why it's critical that we help children understand the hope we have through Jesus. Even though death may mean the end of *this* life, kids can celebrate the astonishing promise of eternal life with Jesus. Use today's lesson to help children understand their need for Jesus. Guide them as they discover that through Jesus' miraculous power, we can live forever in heaven.



DAY 4
 Bible Point:
**Jesus' power
 lets us live forever.**

Helping Children Follow Jesus

During the week, if you sense that a child might like to know more about what it means to believe in Jesus, give this simple explanation:

God loves us so much that he sent his Son, Jesus, to die on the cross for us. Jesus died and took the punishment for all the wrong things we do. But Jesus is stronger than death, and he came back to life! Jesus wants to be our friend forever. If we ask him to, he'll take away the wrong things we've done and fill our lives with his love. Jesus will always be with us and will help us make the right choices. If we believe in Jesus and ask him to forgive us, someday we'll live with him forever in heaven.

Be sure to share the news of the child's spiritual development with his or her parent(s).



God Sightings®

Today help your Crew members think of God Sightings that are reminders of how God is forever and how Jesus made a way for us to live with God forever in heaven.

- God gave us the ultimate gift and display of his goodness through his Son, Jesus, who bridges the gap our sin places between all of us and God. You'll have many opportunities to help this truth sink in during Bible Adventures and in the closing at Rocky Wrap-Up.
- Help kids unpack and reflect on the lyrics of the song "This Train Is Bound for Glory" and how Jesus made a place in heaven for each child.

**WRAP-UP QUESTIONS:
 CROSS THE DIVIDE**

Ask:

- ① What happened in the game as the gap grew bigger?
- ② What was it like to reach your limit for getting the ball across successfully?

Say: **This game shows us what sin—the wrong things we all say and do—does to us and God: Sin puts an impossible divide between us and God. Pause. But nothing's impossible for Jesus! Jesus made a way for all our sins to be forgiven so the divide between us and God goes away, forever. JESUS' POWER LETS US LIVE FOREVER! (Trust Jesus!) We'll learn all about what Jesus did in Bible Adventures and Rocky Wrap-Up.**

On-Track Tips From Your Director ++++++

BIBLE POINT

Day 5

Jesus' power helps us be good friends.

Bible Story: The church is united. (Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-35)

Bible Verse: "Love each other in the same way I have loved you."
(John 15:12)

Consider This...

- ▶ The book of Psalms mentions prayer more than 60 times—more than any other section of Scripture. The book of Acts comes in second, recording the importance and occurrence of prayer about 34 times. Clearly, the early church relied on prayer for hope, communion, healing, provision, and unity. Communication with God became a critical part of their community.
- ▶ Scholars believe that the early church probably met in Solomon's Colonnade, a porch along the inner side of the Temple wall.
- ▶ Many of the first Christians came from Jewish backgrounds, meaning they probably already followed God's command to give to the poor (Deuteronomy 15:4-8). Uniting and caring for others may have been a natural connection with their faith family.
- ▶ Acts 4:33 records the great power with which the apostles testified about Jesus' resurrection. It's likely this refers to a boldness given by the Holy Spirit but might also indicate that their life of unity and joy became a powerful witness to those around them.
- ▶ While Acts shines a light on the rapid growth of the early church (Acts 2:47; 4:4; 6:7; 9:31; 21:20), in a city of around 200,000 people, they still represented a minority of the population. This small band of believers needed to stick together and support each other!



Why It Matters...

Are the kids at your VBS like or unlike the early Christians? Why? Do they have a heart to serve, share, and bear one another's heartaches? What would happen if kids today had the same spirit of that first faith family? What would the church of tomorrow look like? You have the opportunity to send kids off with a passion for sharing Jesus' love in powerful and practical ways! With Jesus' power, we can transform tomorrow's faith community into an environment of belonging, sharing, caring, and community. Today, help kids discover how Jesus' power can help them be faithful friends who truly care for each other.



DAY 5

Bible Point:
**Jesus' power helps us
be good friends.**

God Sightings[®]

Today help your Crew members reflect on how friendships have grown this week at Rocky Railway and how Jesus' power helps us be good friends.

- Point out friendships you've seen grow between your Crew members.
- Thank Jesus for helping us find friends, and pray for Jesus' help to keep in touch with friends after VBS.
- Offer each child an affirmation of how you've seen him or her be a good friend this week.

Thank You to You!

Thanks for all you've done to help children discover that Jesus' power is very real and active in our lives and in the world all around us!

WRAP-UP QUESTIONS: BOXCAR BOLT

Say: This has been a great week, and I've had a blast getting to know you all! **Ask:**

- ❓ **What's your favorite memory from the week?**
Share an example of your own.
- ❓ **How has being at Rocky Railway helped you make new friends or become even better friends with people you already knew?**

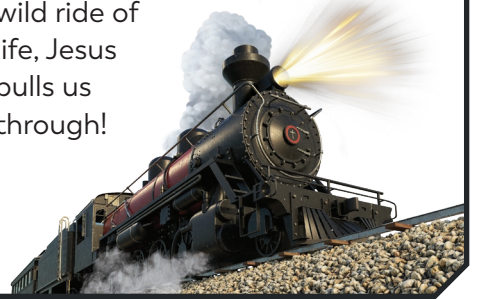
Say: Some of us maybe also started a friendship with Jesus this week or got to know him better. We've learned so much about Jesus' power and love. **JESUS' POWER HELPS US BE GOOD FRIENDS** (*Trust Jesus!*), and we can take all the friendships we've started or strengthened here at VBS with us.

Close with a quick prayer of thanks for the friendships your Crew has built this week and for the friend we have in Jesus.

On-Track Tips From Your Director ++++++

Stay on Track

- ▶ Find out if the kids in your Crew have age-appropriate Bibles or Christian music at home. Talk with your VBS Director about providing these basic resources for kids.
- ▶ Continue building friendships long after VBS is over. Fill out the "All About My Crew" information on each Crew member. After VBS, you'll be able to send postcards and birthday cards and greet kids who attend your church.
- ▶ Give each child his or her Bible Memory Buddies and other fun goodies from Rocky Railway.
- ▶ Thank your VBS Director for all he or she has done to bring Rocky Railway to your community to show in a fresh way that in the wild ride of life, Jesus pulls us through!



All About My Crew

Name: _____

Address: _____

Birthday: _____

Family members: _____

Favorite things: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Birthday: _____

Family members: _____

Favorite things: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Birthday: _____

Family members: _____

Favorite things: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Birthday: _____

Family members: _____

Favorite things: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Birthday: _____

Family members: _____

Favorite things: _____