

GOD, GUTS, AND GALLANTRY

Discussion Questions for Children, Children's Church or Sunday School Classes, and Your Own Children or Grandchildren

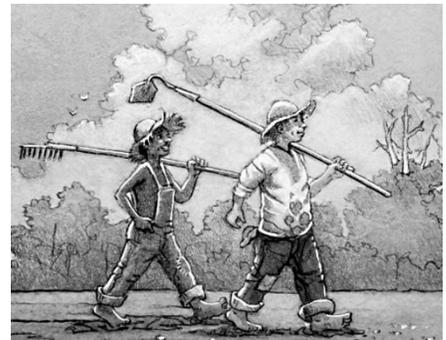
Parents, teachers or leaders who lack a copy of the book may purchase it here:
<https://www.westbowpress.com/en/bookstore/bookdetails/792059-god-guts-and-gallantry>

Smile at the child or children and tell them they are about to learn an exciting story of an brave and adventuresome boy who was faithful to God and became famous. Then, aloud, either skim-read aloud or verbally summarize the first two chapters, carefully showing the pictures in [Chapter 1](#) and the beginning of [Chapter 2](#). Emphasize the end of Chapter 1, where you may simplify the wording of James's life calling as "Most of the families near the Cokers were poor, could not read, and did not even have a school or church. This made young James sad, and he knew that God wanted him to spend his life helping people like this."

Questions : teacher - feel free to improvise!

1. When James Lide Coker was a boy, he saw poor farmers and wanted to help them. Even as a boy, he felt that God wanted to use him to reach out and give others a better life.

Have you ever seen someone who is sad, that you wanted to help? How do you think you might help or comfort others, now or in the future? Do you have any other thoughts on how God might use you?



James and York as childhood friends.

2. When you come to know God personally by trusting in Jesus for forgiveness of your sins, He also wants to give you a vision or an idea for how you will serve Him and help others. Could we pray together for God to begin to give you this kind of vision? Let's pray.

Now read out 1 Samuel Chapter 3 about when God called the boy Samuel to serve Him.

3. How did young Samuel learn to hear God's voice? By running to other people or by slowing down and listening carefully to what God was saying?

4. When Samuel realized it was God who was speaking to him, what did he say?
5. How does God speak to us today? (Give them a chance to answer, and if they hesitate, let them know it is by prayer and by the Bible.)

Now let's read about Israel's young King Josiah from 2 Chronicles 34:1-2, 32-33. Read these verses out loud.

6. How old was King Josiah when God called him to serve as king?
7. From the lives of Samuel and Josiah, do you think a young person needs to wait until they are older to serve God?
8. What kind of service do you think God might have in mind for you?

Pause to give them time to answer.

9. If you don't know your place of service yet, that's okay. You can keep praying about it (you may use this as an opportunity to talk about the importance of having a daily time alone with God).

10. In the Good News Translation, Proverbs 20:11 says: "Even children show what they are by what they do; you can tell if they are honest and good." As a youngster, James was glad to help his family by doing hard farm work like planting and picking cotton and watering the crops. What do you do when your parents need your help with hard work like watering the garden, raking and bagging leaves, or helping them clean out the garage? Are you eager to help? If not, can you ask God to help you want to help them?

11. Major Coker's vision was to live for God and others, not only for himself. Do you think we will be happy deep down inside if we have no better purpose than to live for ourselves?

Note to Leader: This would be a good place to have a brief Q&A about ways the children might already realize they are being selfish at home, at school, or with friends. Kids know! If they have a chance to talk about it and laugh about it together in class, it will help them to realize they are not alone. Hearing their friends' stories will create new bonds among the kids in the class and make it easier for everyone to admit they have selfish tendencies at times. With this as a foundation, you may then lead into other questions such as:

12. Because of our own selfish and sinful ways, we cannot serve God and others from pure hearts until we receive new life by fully trusting in Jesus as our own Savior, as Major Coker did when he was sixteen. John 3:16 says: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (NIV). Would you like to be free of selfishness and let Jesus help you live for others? This will happen if you trust Jesus today and let Him start to work in your life. *(The leader/parent should now assist the child in praying to trust Christ if he/she is ready.)*
13. For whom will you live? How do you think things might be different for you (at home, at school, or with friends) if you were living for Christ?
14. What is the first real step you will take today to show whom you are living for?
Generate discussion here about real situations in a few of the children's lives.
15. What about tomorrow?