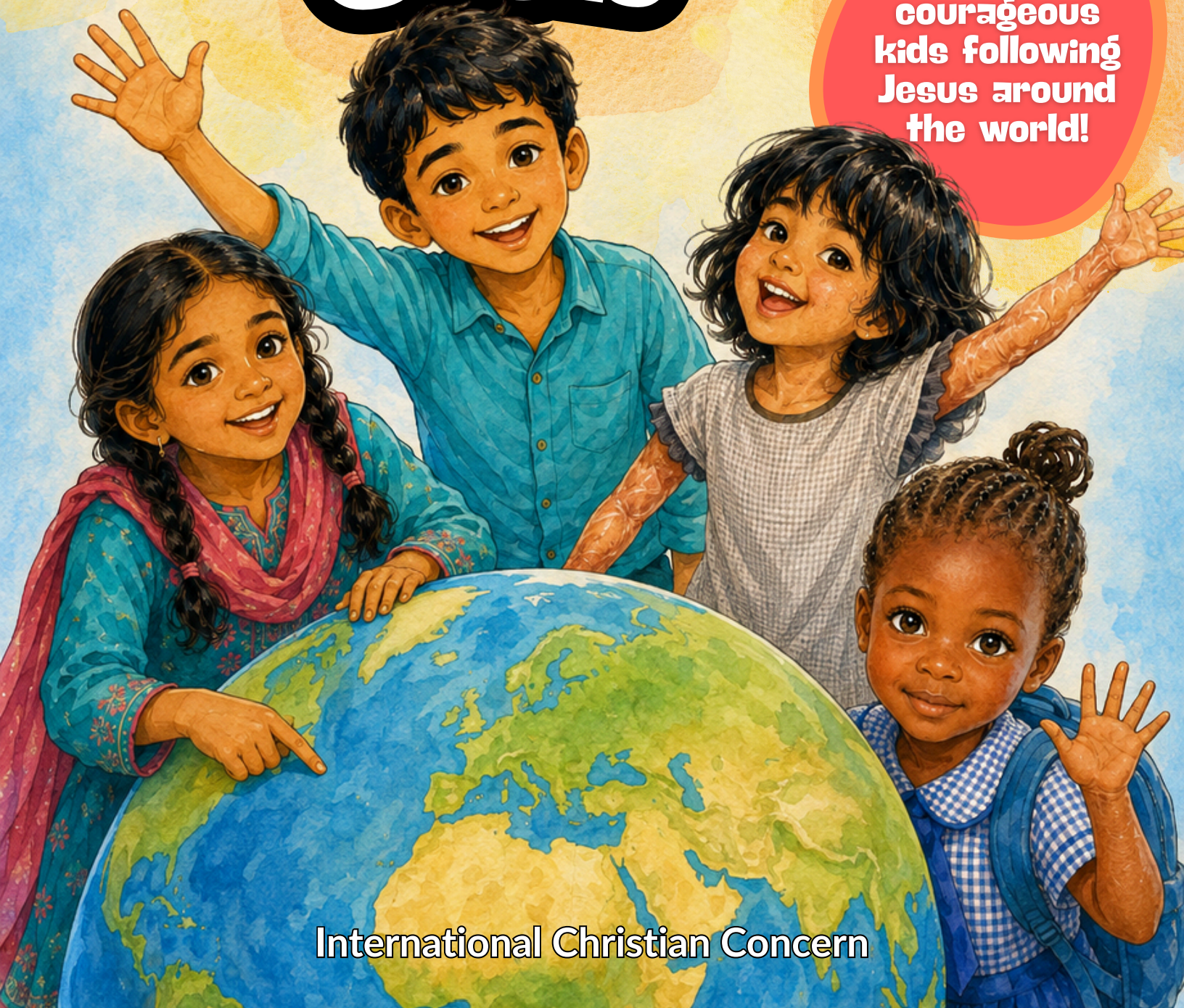


The courage club

Meet four
courageous
kids following
Jesus around
the world!



International Christian Concern

Note to Parents



Hi parents and teachers!

We are so grateful you have chosen to teach your children about the realities of persecution, and we know it can be a heavy topic to navigate with little ones. Our hope is that this magazine equips you with the language, stories, and fun activities to foster conversations on this subject with your kids in a way that feels natural.

Our prayer is that the topic of persecution would never create fear or anxiety in your children, but rather that these pages would spark curiosity about the global church, nudge them toward prayer, and ultimately strengthen their growing foundation of faith.

Together, we hope your children will be just as excited as we are about The Courage Club!

"When I am
afraid, I put my
trust in you."

- Psalm 56:3

Disclaimer: Some of the images of persecuted children have been AI-generated to protect the children's identities.

Welcome to the Courage Club!

Pop quiz! What does Sunday morning look like for you and your family?

After rolling out of your cozy bed, maybe you shuffle over to the kitchen table, where a fresh stack of pancakes is waiting for you—with lots of maple syrup, of course. After a special breakfast, you head back to your room to get ready for church. Maybe you'll wear that twirly dress you got for your birthday or your favorite pair of sneakers. Mom and Dad hustle you out the door because we don't want to be late like last Sunday. You skip into your Sunday school class where the real fun begins.

As the other kids settle into class, you sort through the stack of kids' Bibles on the shelf and pick out your favorite one. The volunteers then gather the kids together to sing a song ("This Little Light of Mine," a personal favorite) before the lesson begins. You finish up with a craft where you build a model of Noah's Ark with a jumble of popsicle sticks, paper plates, and tape.

Mom and Dad scoop you up to bring you home before settling in at home with a plate of grilled cheese, apple slices, and pretzels. Maybe you'll jump on the trampoline later or help Mom out with the garden. It's a free Sunday afternoon, and the sun is shining. Life is good.

Does that sound familiar?

Throughout the United States and other parts of the world, that is what a typical Sunday looks like for many kids. But have you ever thought about what a Sunday morning looks like for kids who live in parts of the world where following Jesus is seen as different or wrong?



Sadly, there are a lot of people who don't know about Jesus and His love.

Sometimes that leads them to treat Christians unkindly. That is called "**persecution**." But courageous families around the world continue to follow Jesus even when others don't want them to. We call them members of The Courage Club. For them, Sunday morning might look something more like this.

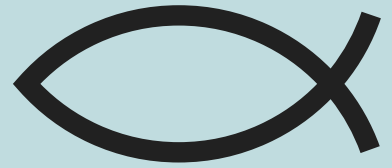
You shuffle out of bed and over to the table where Mom sets a bowl of steaming rice porridge in front of you. Sunday mornings are special, so Mom says we can fry an egg to put on top, your favorite. After clearing your bowl, you slip on your sandals because it's time to walk over to the neighbor's house for prayer.

Eight houses down, your neighbors are the only other Christian family in your village. They have a Bible, so your parents are grateful for the chance to read from it each Sunday since they can't afford one of their own.

The grown-ups lead a few hymns, which you're trying to remember the words to, but they remind you to keep your voice low so that the other villagers don't hear. Your parents warn you that some people broke up a prayer gathering a few weeks ago in a nearby village and called the police after they overheard singing. You hope that this doesn't happen to you too, but that's just what it means to follow Jesus in your village.

The Courage Club is full of brave and bold kids who put Jesus first. We want to introduce you to four real-life children who continue to follow Him, even when it's dangerous or uncomfortable.

Ready to meet them?



Did you know? The Jesus fish, called Ichthys, became a secret symbol used by early Christians to identify one another during times of persecution.



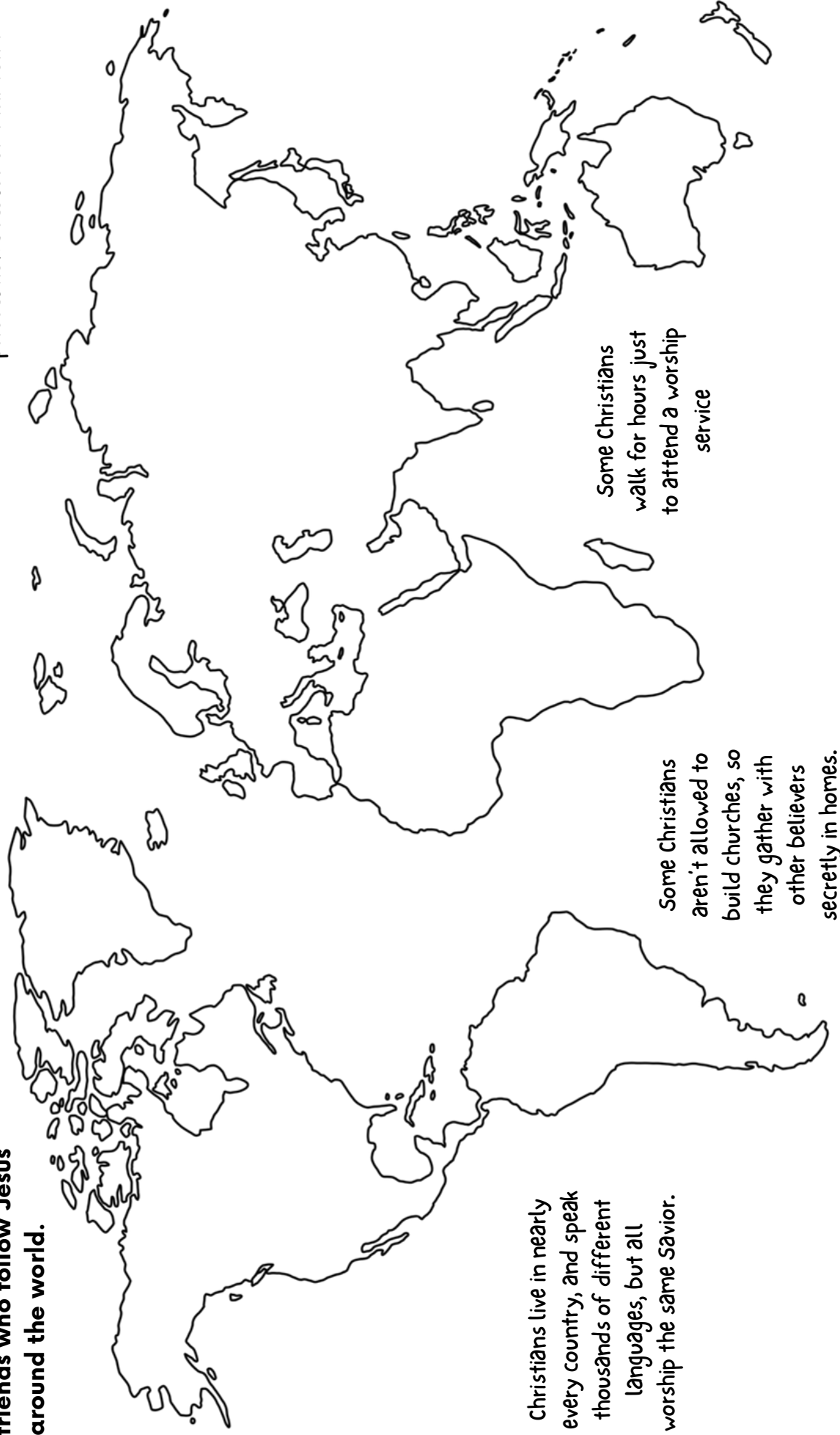
Courage Club Challenge



Some children cannot freely
talk about Jesus at school

Grab your favorite crayons and
bring the map to life! Color the
map and get ready to meet
friends who follow Jesus
around the world.

388 million Christians around the
world face some form of
persecution because of their faith



Christians live in nearly
every country, and speak
thousands of different
languages, but all
worship the same Savior.

Some Christians
aren't allowed to
build churches, so
they gather with
other believers
secretly in homes.

Some Christians
walk for hours just
to attend a worship
service

1.5+ billion people call
Africa home!

Did you know?
There are 54
countries in Africa.

Africa Overview

Across Africa, millions of people love and follow Jesus. But in some African countries, it can be very dangerous to be a Christian. Violent groups sometimes threaten Christian families and treat them unfairly because of their faith. These groups attack churches, force Christians out of their homes, and destroy their farms. Still, these brave believers continue to trust God to provide as they walk through hard times.

Christians across Africa continue to place their hope in Jesus in the aftermath of attacks by rebuilding their churches, caring for their neighbors, and worshipping even when it feels hard. Their persistent faith reminds us that even in difficult times, God never leaves His children and that we can call on Him when we feel scared or alone.



The world's largest river, the Nile River, and the world's largest desert, the Sahara Desert, are also in Africa.

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters."

-Psalm 23:1-2

Courage Club Challenge

Find and circle the hidden words that remind us that
our true courage comes from Jesus!



P	D	C	X	X	H	K	S	B	V	O	J	O	T	M	W	P	J
H	E	H	J	C	F	U	N	D	E	R	G	R	O	U	N	D	P
Z	R	R	J	F	G	O	S	P	E	L	Q	Y	J	I	S	D	E
W	I	I	S	B	R	A	V	E	R	Y	U	M	W	G	T	Q	A
O	G	S	E	E	L	J	E	C	H	U	R	C	H	J	E	P	C
R	W	T	P	W	C	O	X	Y	J	O	Y	E	Z	N	A	R	E
S	X	I	H	P	X	U	F	A	C	U	N	P	A	M	D	A	W
H	D	A	O	F	A	I	T	H	H	K	H	F	G	L	F	Y	Y
I	B	N	P	K	X	E	Q	I	B	I	B	L	E	D	A	E	K
P	J	R	E	B	C	W	A	B	O	L	D	N	E	S	S	R	J
D	L	D	K	T	Z	H	Q	W	Q	N	Y	K	B	P	T	J	V
O	C	O	U	R	A	G	E	S	S	P	W	V	Y	Y	E	B	L

Find the following words in the puzzle.

Words are hidden → and ↓ and ↘

BIBLE
BOLDNESS
BRAVERY
CHRISTIAN
CHURCH
COURAGE

FAITH
GOSPEL
HOPE
JOY
PEACE
PERSECUTION

PRAYER
STEADFAST
UNDERGROUND
WORSHIP

Africa Courage Club Spotlight: Ruth

Meet Ruth. She is six years old and lives in Nigeria. She has an incredible story of survival and resilience.

When she was just a tiny baby, only two months old, a group of dangerous people entered their village to hurt the Christians in their community.

Ruth's mother, Hannatu, held her baby girl close to protect her as they ran along the river through the dark night, fleeing from the dangerous people. Although Ruth's mother lost her life that night, her brave actions helped save her daughter.





When the sun eventually rose, a group of survivors found baby Ruth, cold and muddy from the nearby river, but miraculously alive. Another family in the village took Ruth into their home, raising her as one of their own children.

Even though Ruth has faced very hard losses, God never left her side. While she will see her mom again one day in Heaven, she is surrounded by people who love her and teach her about Jesus until then. Ruth's adoptive mother, Talatu, says that Ruth loves to sing in Sunday school, especially hymns about God's love.

Ruth and her adoptive parents still live in an area that is dangerous toward Christians, but they have bravely chosen to pray for the people that persecute them, instead of leaning on fear or anger.

Talatu shared, "We pray not for revenge but for forgiveness — for the attackers to find Christ. Only God can change the heart of a man." She concluded: "We trust God for protection. He has brought us this far, and he won't abandon us now."

"We trust God for protection. He has brought us this far, and he won't abandon us now."

—Talatu, Ruth's adoptive mother

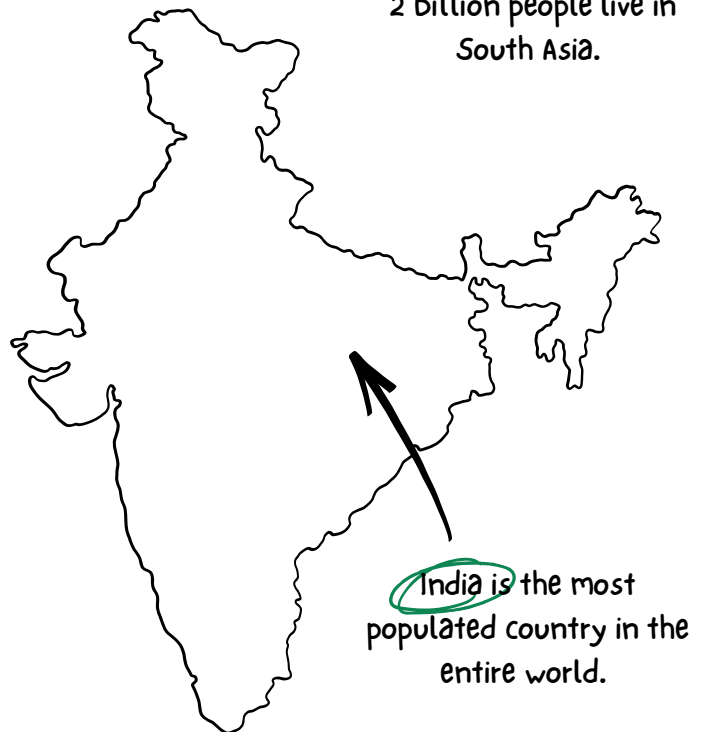


South Asia Overview

South Asia is a diverse place that is home to many different cultures and religions, and sometimes these differing groups clash with each other. In some countries, Christians face unfair laws because of their faith. In parts of India, rules called anti-conversion laws can make it risky to choose to become a Christian or tell other people about Jesus. In Pakistan, laws are unfairly twisted to falsely accuse Christians of insulting other religions, putting innocent people in danger.

Even when they are treated unfairly, Christians in South Asia can trust that God is in control. He is a God of truth and justice who never forgets His children. As believers across South Asia look forward to the day when they don't have to fear being mistreated by unfair laws, they can rest knowing that God hears every prayer and will one day make all things right.

Did you know? Nearly
2 billion people live in
South Asia.

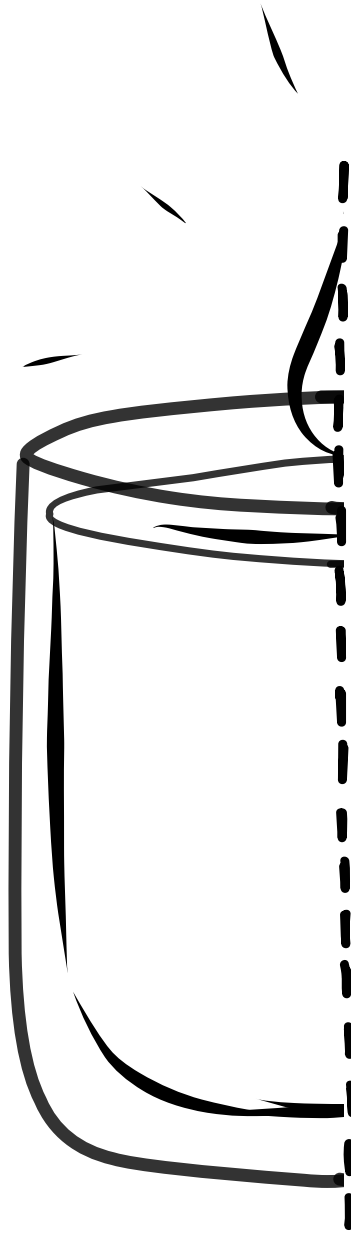


"And we know that in all
things God works for the good
of those who love him, who
have been called according to
his purpose."

—Romans 8:28

Courage Club Challenge

Finish the drawing! Complete the candle and color it in.
Let it remind you to shine God's light wherever you go.



South Asia Courage Club Spotlight: Fatima

Meet Fatima! She is 8 years old and lives in the country of India. Fatima's father was struggling with problems that affected their whole family in a painful way. As a result of her father's choices, Fatima often felt unsafe and lonely in her own home.

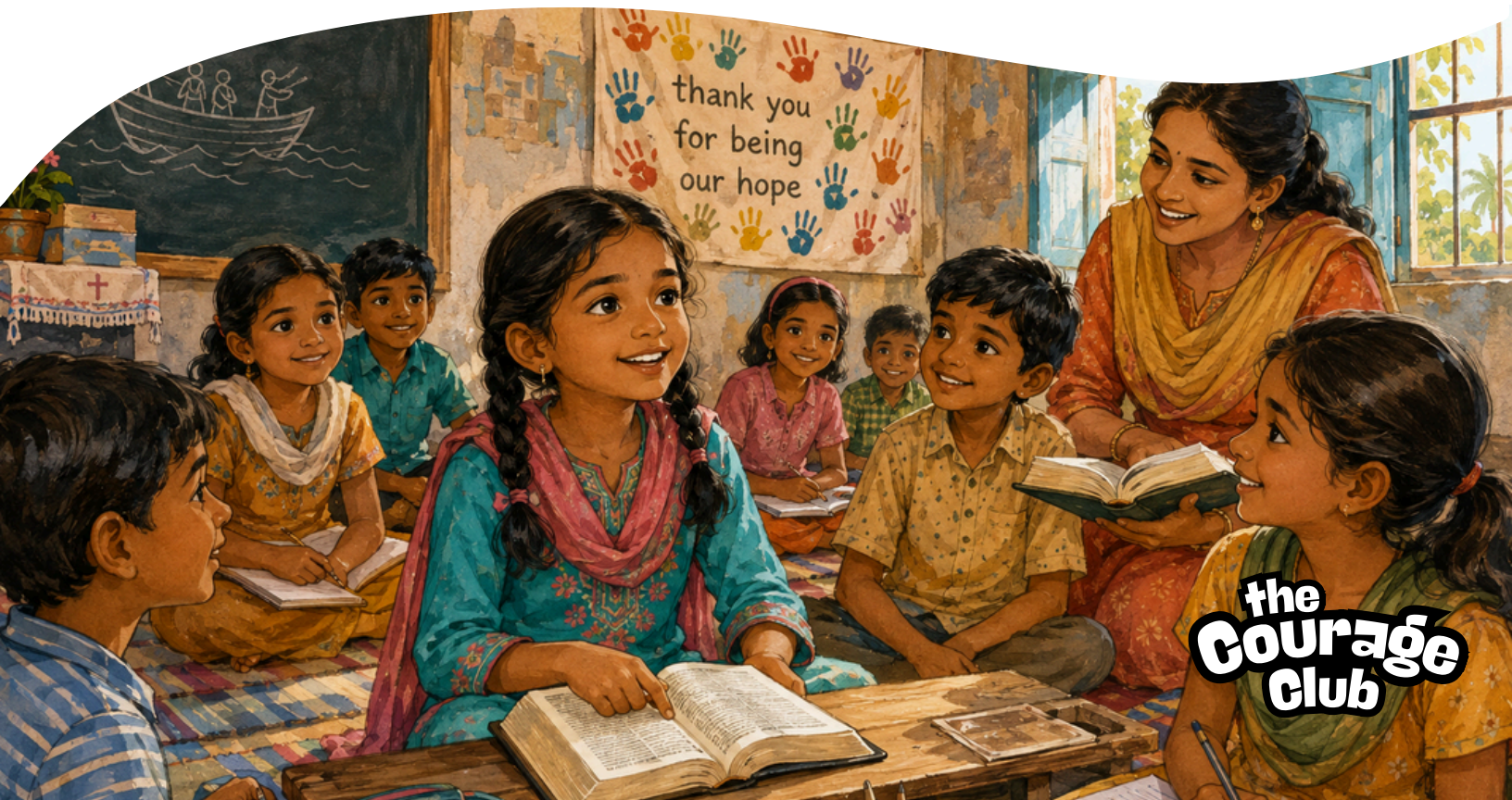
As the situation grew worse, the family often struggled to afford basic things, like groceries and school fees. Unable to attend school anymore, she felt stuck...until God placed a special opportunity in her lap.

Throughout India, Christian kids like Fatima often struggle to afford the cost of schools and, therefore, don't have the same access to education that others do. But through a program called Hope House, these kids can learn in a safe environment of fellow Christian students and receive other forms of support, like food and counseling.

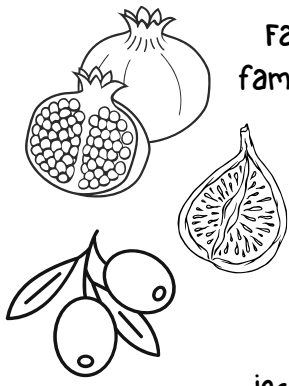
When Fatima first attended classes, she was very quiet and withdrawn. Gradually, she began to read and engage with her lessons. More importantly, Fatima's teacher saw a spark of potential in her and nurtured it with care. Today, Fatima is one of the brightest students in her class.

Despite all of the struggles their family went through, Fatima's mother was rooting for her daughter. "If it wasn't for Hope House, Fatima never would have gone back to school," she said.

For years, Fatima felt hopeless, knowing that she wasn't safe at home, but could no longer attend her safe haven of school. When all felt lost, God provided encouragement and practical help through caring Christians in their community, reminding Fatima and her mom that they were not alone.



**the
courage
club**



Farms in the Middle East are famous for growing dates, olives, figs, and pomegranates.

Jesus was born in the Middle East, in the town of Bethlehem.



Middle East Overview

The Middle East is home to some of the oldest cities in the world.

The Middle East is where many of the stories in the Bible took place and where Jesus and his first followers lived. But today, some Christians are the only followers of Jesus in their neighborhood, or even in their own family. Choosing to follow Jesus can mean losing friends or facing rejection, but Christians remember that God promises to be with them and that He will never leave them.

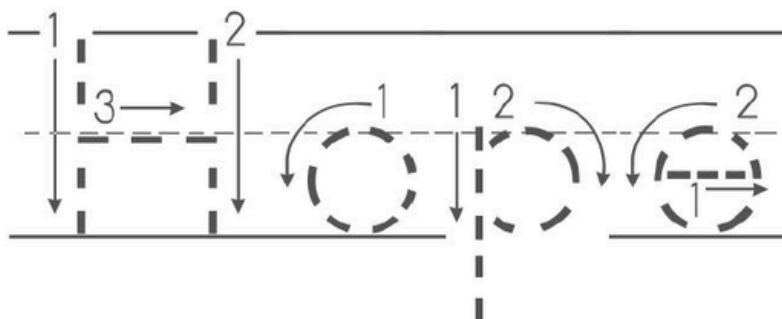
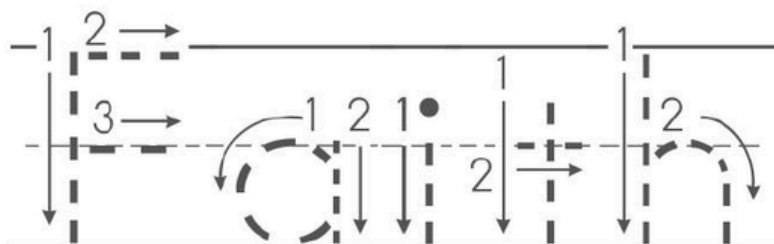
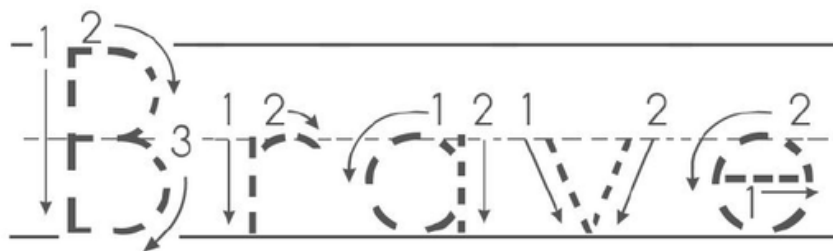
Even when they can't worship openly, many believers continue to grow stronger in their faith. They quietly gather with other Christians, share their faith, and encourage new believers to follow Jesus. Even though they must worship secretly, one of the fastest-growing churches in the world is in the Middle Eastern nation of Iran. Their stories remind us that no matter what happens, God is always with us.

**"Have I not commanded you?
Be strong and courageous. Do
not be afraid; do not be
discouraged, for the Lord your
God will be with you
wherever you go."**

—Joshua 1:9

Courage Club Challenge

As you trace each word, pray for Christians around the world who are following Jesus with courage.





Middle East Courage Club Spotlight: Samir

Meet Samir! He lives in Egypt and he is the oldest of six children in his family. Samir and his siblings often went to church with their mom until one day, their dad announced that he had decided to choose a different religion.

Samir's father soon began acting harshly toward the rest of the family and trying to convince them to stop following Jesus. He even asked the police to follow Samir's mom around to prevent her and the rest of the family from going to church or escaping their unsafe home.

Still, despite the threats, Samir and the rest of his family continued to trust Jesus.

One day, during a rare time when they knew that the police guards wouldn't be following them, Samir and his family made a quick escape.

It wasn't easy, but God always met their needs. They had to sleep on the cold floor until God provided them with a safe home. They had to leave behind the comfortable lifestyle they had with Samir's dad, until God provided Samir's mom with a new job. They had to leave behind friends in their hometown, but God made sure that they were never alone in their struggles.

Samir's mom expressed, "I considered all things to be loss in comparison to the surpassing value of the knowledge of [Jesus]."

Samir's mom was right; following Jesus is more valuable than anything they could have left behind. Although their journey has been difficult, God has faithfully cared for them every step of the way. As Samir helps his younger siblings build a new life, they continue to trust that God has good plans for their future.



Many experts believe China will have more Christians than any other country within the next few years.

Southeast Asia Overview

Southeast Asia is a diverse part of the world, bursting with tropical islands, bustling cities, and many different cultures.

In some countries, however, governments try to control what people believe. They use cameras and other technology to spy on people who live there, making it difficult for Christians to worship openly or tell others about Jesus. Some people, especially pastors, are even questioned or punished for following Jesus.

Even while they are being watched, Christians continue to find creative ways to follow Jesus and share their faith, in what we call the "underground church." Don't worry—they don't actually meet underground! Instead, this just means they gather secretly in homes or other safe places so they can worship God without getting into trouble. While some countries try to stop people from learning about Jesus, we know that no government can stop His kingdom from growing.



The world's largest flower (which is also one of the stinkiest!), the rafflesia, grows in Southeast Asia.

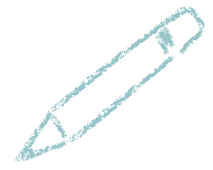


Southeast Asia has hundreds of volcanoes, many of which are active today.

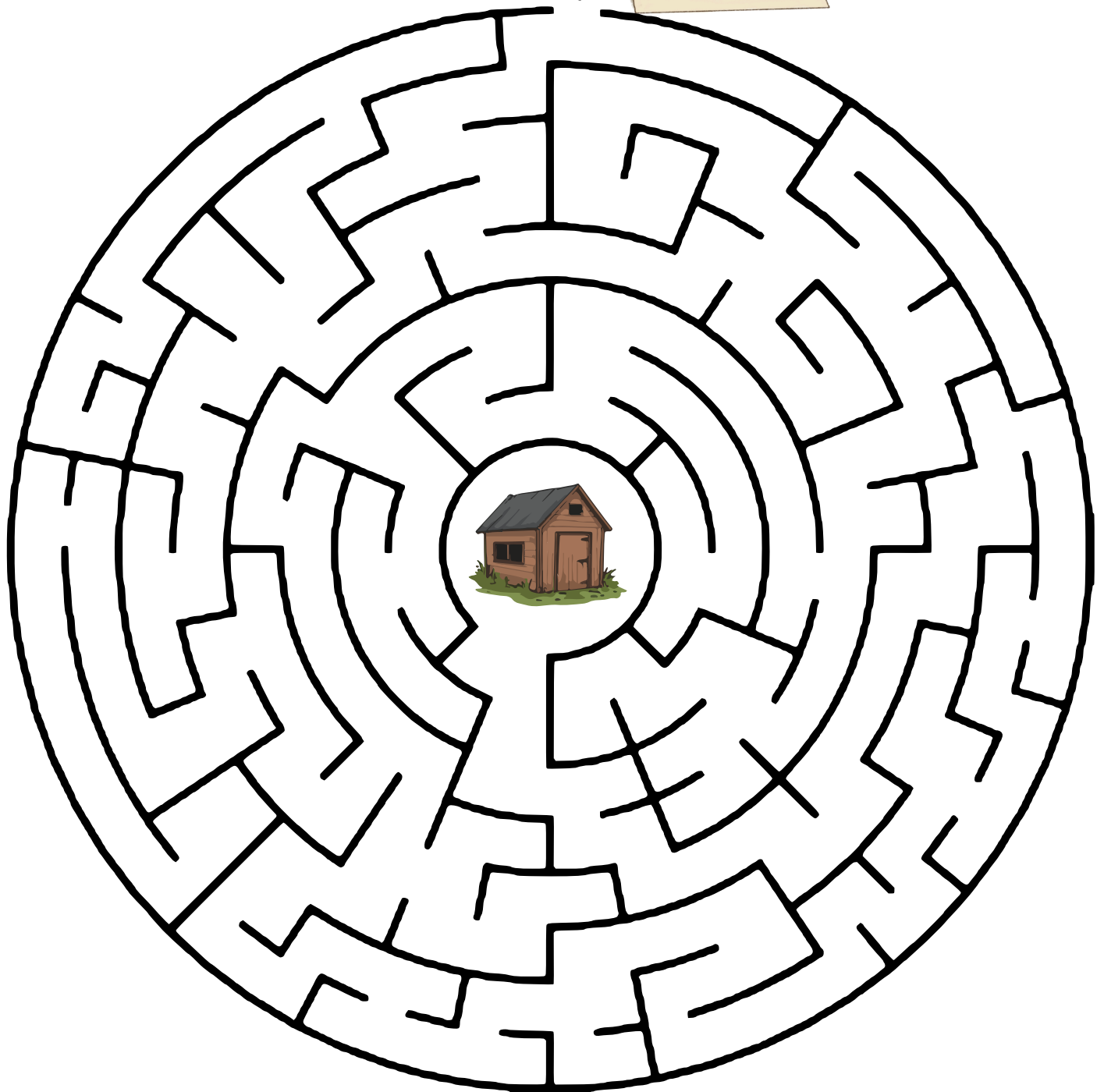
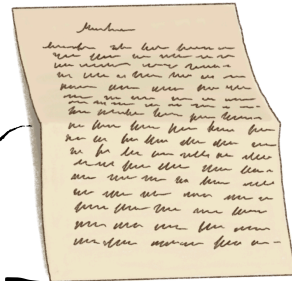
"The Lord is my light and my salvation – whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life – of whom shall I be afraid?"

–Psalm 27:1

Courage Club Challenge



Solve the maze to help us deliver a letter of encouragement to the underground church!



Southeast Asia Courage Club Spotlight: Trinity

Meet Trinity! She lives in the country of Indonesia and she loves Jesus. She also loves to sing and dance. When she was only three years old, she went to church just like she did on any normal Sunday.

She and some of the other young children were playing together outside after the church service when a sudden loud bang broke up their fun. A sudden act of violence outside the church left Trinity and several other children hurt, requiring Trinity to go to lots of doctor's appointments in the years that followed.

She even had to fly on an airplane to another country to visit a special doctor to receive treatments that were not available in her town.

As for Trinity's family, they are grateful that their little girl is healing and are hopeful for the future. Trinity's mother said, "I don't have any hatred towards the [attacker]. I forgave him already. The most important thing is for my daughter to recover well."

Despite the pain she has gone through, Trinity maintains the same joy that she always had, bringing smiles to others as she sings hymns and dances, even in her hospital room. This act of violence may have left scars on Trinity's body, but her attackers could not steal her joy.



Even when life is hard, God is always with His children. Trinity's joyful heart is a beautiful reminder that God's love is bigger than any fear or pain we may face. Because of Jesus, we can have joy no matter what our circumstances are.

**Scan the QR code to listen
to Trinity singing:**



Discussion Questions

Use these questions to talk about what you learned together:

- What surprised you most about the kids in this magazine?
- How did each of them show courage?
- What does it mean to trust Jesus when things are hard?
- How can remembering who God is help us be brave?
- How are Christians around the world alike, even when they live very different lives?
- If you could send a message to one of the children in this book, what would you say?



Ways to Pray

**Pray for protection for kids
in persecuted countries**

**Pray for them not to
be afraid, but to find
peace in Jesus.**

**Pray for them to be surrounded
by Christian friends and family
members.**

**Pray for courage as you
tell your friends and
family about Jesus.**

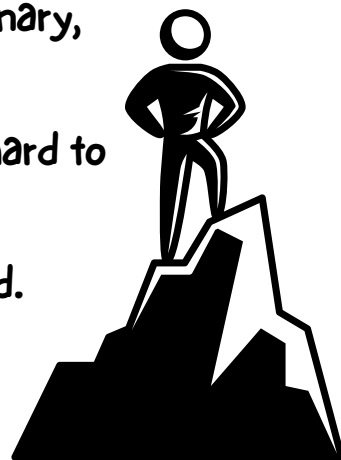




Become a Courage Club Member!

Complete the checklist below to become a certified member of The Courage Club:

- ☐ Pray for a different country every day this week
- ☐ Read a Bible story about someone who showed courage for God (Queen Esther; Daniel and the Lions' Den; Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, etc.).
- ☐ Invite a friend or family member to church who might not know Jesus.
- ☐ Memorize Hebrews 13:3: "Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering."
- ☐ Ask your family to pray together for persecuted Christians.
- ☐ Write an encouraging note to a pastor, missionary, or church volunteer.
- ☐ Ask God to help you be courageous when it's hard to do the right thing.
- ☐ Share a story from this magazine with a friend.



Note to Parents and Teachers

Note to Parents and Teachers

Thank you for taking the time to teach your child about persecution. We encourage you to continue the conversation and pray with them about this subject, as they may have questions in the days ahead.

For more information and additional resources, visit www.persecution.org



Activity Answer Key

