

*Reformation Site Leader Guide*

For Elementary Children Grades K-5

# Truth Be Told



**Mighty  
Fortress**  
In Jesus, the Victory Is Won!

## Why Truth Be Told Reformation Site?

God's saving Word is the focus of this site. The goals of this site are to learn the Reformation story and "solas" using fun activities and stories that connect those events and biblical principles to the lesson's Bible story, the Take-Home Point, and our lives each day. The Holy Spirit, through God's Word, will have a powerful effect on the children in your VBS as they learn about God, our Mighty Fortress, through His Holy Word.

## How does the Reformation Site work in VBS?

The Truth Be Told Reformation Site can be used as one of five rotation sites for the Teams following the Opening session. You could have as many as thirty children at your site during each twenty-minute rotation. Each rotation group may have five Teams, each with six children and a leader. At your site, Team Leaders will guide their groups to do the activities from this guide as you direct.

## What do Reformation Site Leaders do?

Using the Truth Be Told Reformation Site pages, you will daily share the Reformation story and the truth found in God's Word through a variety of activities.

The Team Leaders will guide their small groups in the activities you describe.

## What You Need:

### Leader Resources

- *Truth Be Told Reformation Site Leader Guide*

### The Basics

- Team supply containers (e.g., *VBS Tote Bags*, knapsacks, or brown paper bags) for each Team to hold lesson supplies
- Team Spots—rugs, large towels, or pieces of canvas tarps to designate a location for each Team
- A Bible for each group and one for yourself
- *Majestic Music Passalong CD and DVD*
- CD/MP3 player

### Lesson 1 Supplies

- The Basics (see above)
- 20–30 blocks (square or rectangle)
- Signs "Heaven" and "He was a good kid, except when he wasn't." (*Director CD or cph.org/TruthBeTold*)



- Lesson 1 Reformation Story Poster (*Director CD or cph.org/TruthBeTold*)

### Lesson 2 Supplies

- The Basics (see above)
- Relics: a short length paper chain; a brown construction paper sandal; a piece of cloth; a chunk of tree wood; a three-leaf clover
- An indulgence (rolled up and paper scroll)
- Signs for each relic: "Chains that held Peter in prison until his miraculous escape"; "Apostle Paul's sandals, worn on his missionary travels"; "Cloth from the tunic of Mary, the mother of Jesus"; "Wood from Jesus' cross"; "A clover from St. Patrick, patron saint of Ireland" (*Director CD or cph.org/TruthBeTold*)
- Ninety-Five Theses Page (*Director CD or cph.org/TruthBeTold*)
- Lesson 2 Reformation Story Poster (*Director CD or cph.org/TruthBeTold*)

### Lesson 3 Supplies

- The Basics (see above)
- Black and red construction paper
- Glue or glue sticks
- Scissors, and scissors with decorative edging (optional)
- Thin ribbon (optional)
- Hole puncher (optional)
- Lesson 3 Reformation Story Poster (*Director CD or cph.org/TruthBeTold*)

## Lesson 4 Supplies

- The Basics (see above)
- Sponge (1 per group)
- Bucket of water
- Towels
- White copy paper and pencils (1 per child)
- Tray or cookie sheet
- At least 6 items for the tray (e.g., tooth-brush and/or toothpaste, alarm clock, healthy breakfast cereal box or breakfast bar, a chapter book, a notebook and pencil, a baseball or baseball glove or hat, a page of sheet music or container of valve oil for a brass instrument, a picture of a turkey leg or coupons for KFC, and pretend tickets to a theme park)
- Lesson 4 Reformation Story Poster (*Director CD* or [cph.org/TruthBeTold](http://cph.org/TruthBeTold))

## Lesson 5 Supplies

- The Basics (see above)
- Luther's Coat of Arms to display (back cover)
- Copies of Luther's Coat of Arms, 1 for each student (*Director CD* or [cph.org/TruthBeTold](http://cph.org/TruthBeTold))
- Crayons, scissors
- Glue or glue sticks
- Large sheet of paper for each child for a banner (e.g., 12 × 18-inch construction paper in several colors)
- Heart stickers or construction paper hearts
- Masking tape
- Lesson 5 Reformation Story Poster (*Director CD* or [cph.org/TruthBeTold](http://cph.org/TruthBeTold))

## Getting Ready

### Do these things in the weeks before VBS to get ready for your week!

1. Read the Bible stories, lessons, and Leader Devotions (*Director CD* or [cph.org/TruthBeTold](http://cph.org/TruthBeTold)) to understand the Scripture and daily themes.
2. Pray, asking God to bless your work and prepare the hearts of the families and children so God's Word would take effect in them and accomplish His purposes for them.
3. Recruit one or two energetic helpers to assist you at your Reformation Site. They will help you set up and prepare, assist with supplies, and aid with small- and large-group activities.

4. Check "What You Need" to gather materials in advance. The daily list has even more detail and can be found on the lesson pages.
5. Gather materials, decorate, and make props. Additional resources and ideas are available on the *Director CD*.
6. Practice any activities you will do with the Teams ahead of time, such as the block story about Marty on Lesson 1.
7. Print the *Director CD* resources.
8. Learn to say the *Mighty Fortress* daily Take-Home Points!
9. Attend VBS training. Offer to demonstrate your site activities for the Team Leaders.
10. Have a Bible and refer to it often as the source of truth!

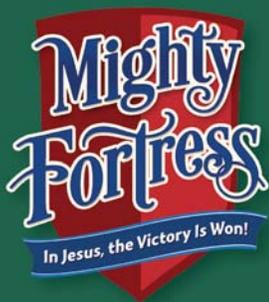
### Do these things each lesson at VBS!

1. Arrive early each day to make final preparations and pray with other volunteers.
2. Go to the Opening with the other Leaders and Teams to hear God's Word.
3. Put out or check the daily supplies for the Teams.
4. At the end of the day, put out the supplies you need for the next day. Put the next day's items in the Team Supply Containers for the Teams.
5. Put the next lesson's Reformation Story Poster in position.

### Decorating and Organizing Your Site

These decorating suggestions and tips will help you set the stage for teaching God's Word!

- You will need a space with room for up to thirty-five people to move around in. Ideally, your site will be in a large open space where the children can move and be active as they learn the Reformation story and participate in the activities.
- Decorate the Truth Be Told Reformation Site with the setting of a medieval village! See Truth Be Told Decorating Instructions on the *Director CD*.
- Each lesson, ask Team Leaders to pick up and return the daily supplies.
- Post the Truth Be Told Reformation Site Sign (*Director CD* or [cph.org/TruthBeTold](http://cph.org/TruthBeTold)) to identify your site.
- Hang up the five Reformation Story Posters around your room.



# Lesson 1 Faith Alone

## Martin Luther's Early Years

Thanks be to God,  
who gives us the  
victory through our  
Lord Jesus Christ.  
1 Corinthians 15:57

### Advance Preparation

**Gather materials:** 20–30 blocks (square or rectangle); Heaven Sign; Good Kid Sign; Lesson 1 Reformation Story Poster (*Director CD* or [cph.org/TruthBeTold](http://cph.org/TruthBeTold))

Print the signs “Heaven” and “He was a good kid, except when he wasn’t.” (Find both on the *Director CD* or [cph.org/TruthBeTold](http://cph.org/TruthBeTold).) Decorate the Heaven Sign with colorful embellishments. Post the sign somewhere in your room, at the opposite end of an open playing area.

### An Opening Story

Welcome Teams and direct them to sit with their Leaders on the Team Spots.

**SAY:** Welcome to Truth Be Told Reformation Site. My name is (your name). I am excited that you are here to learn about God’s Word, the Bible! When we trust in God’s Word, we grow our mighty faith so that we can always remember the victory we have in Jesus! Each day, you will come to Truth Be Told to learn about the Reformation and the truths God tells us in the Bible.

Use blocks to tell a story about a boy named Marty. Start slowly, then read a little faster and louder right before you knock down the blocks.

**SAY:** Marty was generally a pretty nice fifth-grade boy. He would get up on time for school each morning . . . on his own, without his mother shaking him out of a sleeping stupor. (Set out a block.) He would even throw back the covers and make his bed . . . without being asked a million times. (Set out a block.) He would even remember to eat a healthy, whole-grain, low-fat, gluten-free, lactose-free breakfast (Set out a block.) . . . and remember to brush his teeth. (Set out another block.)

Hold up the Good Kid Sign.

**SAY:** He was a good kid, except when he wasn’t. Except when his older sister stood in front of the bathroom mirror for a million years and hogged the bathroom he needed so that he got so frustrated he yelled at her and called her horribly mean things that

I can’t repeat here. (Knock down tower.)

**SAY:** But Marty was generally a pretty nice fifth-grade boy. At school, he would actually break up arguments on the playground instead of start them. (Set out a block.) And he would always let the other kid use the playground ball first. (Set out a block.) He was a good student and always turned his homework in on time. (Set out a block.) And he even did extra credit whenever he had the opportunity. (Set out a block.) In band, he was the first chair of his trumpet section (Set out a block.) because he practiced each day, (Set out a block.) and he never talked when the teacher was talking. (Set out a block.)

Hold up the Good Kid Sign.

**SAY:** He was a good kid, except when he wasn’t. Except one day, he didn’t understand something in math and got so frustrated that he ripped up his paper and told his friend to leave him alone and he thought horribly unkind things about his teacher inside his head that I can’t repeat here. (Knock down block tower.)

Hold up the Good Kid Sign.

**SAY:** He was a good kid, except when he wasn’t. We try to do good things too. For the most part, we try to do things right. But we can never be perfect. We do things that are wrong, and that is called *sin*. And that means that we can never be good enough to make it to heaven on our own.

Our tower of good works is never tall enough or strong enough. But thankfully, God had a plan to make an indestructible tower that will never crash down. He sent His Son, Jesus, to be perfect in our place. When God looks at us, He doesn’t see our tumbled tower of sin, He sees Jesus’ perfection.

And God gives us *faith* to believe this—that Jesus is our Savior from sin and the only way to heaven. Faith is God’s gift of believing in Jesus for forgiveness of sins, life, salvation, and all that we need. Our ability to trust in Jesus is a gift from God.

## The Reformation Story (Large Group)

### Luther's Storm and Tower Experience

Move to the game area. The children should stand at one end, with the goal of reaching "heaven" on the opposite side.

**SAY:** Five hundred years ago, just before Christopher Columbus sailed to find the New World, there was another person named Marty who struggled with being good all the time. His name was Martin Luther.

Let's play a game to learn more about him. Walk slowly to the other side while you listen to my story about Martin. Try to make it to heaven.

Students will move forward as you talk, but your directions will always move them back. They will never make it to "heaven." (Note: If you have a small playing area and they will start already close to "heaven," only let them take a step each time you pause at the end of a sentence.)

1. Martin went to school when he was four. He tried hard, but he made the older boys late because he couldn't walk as fast as them. Go back to Start.
2. Martin was a good student, but the teacher made a mark each time a child did something wrong, so Martin was still punished a lot. Go back to Start.
3. Martin went away to a boarding school for high school. He worked very hard. But his parents were very strict. He didn't please them all the time. Go back to Start.
4. Martin worked hard, but he was still poor and had to sing in the streets of town to get money for food. Go back to Start.
5. Martin's dad wanted him to become a lawyer and help with the family business. After only two months in law school, Martin decided he didn't want to be a lawyer. His father was very upset. Go back to Start.  
Hold up the Lesson 1 Reformation Story Poster.
6. Martin tried to listen to his parents, so he walked back to school. On the way, he was caught in a bad thunderstorm. Martin prayed for mercy and promised to become a monk if he lived through it. Go back to Start.
7. Martin worked hard as a new monk in training. He was chosen to study to be a priest. But he was still afraid of God. Even when he led his first church service, he felt unworthy to talk to God. Go back to Start.
8. Martin went back to college to study the Bible. He tried even harder to please God. He even starved himself and beat himself to prove he was sorry for his sins. Go back to Start.

9. Martin worked hard and became one of the most popular preachers in the area. He became a professor at the university. But at first, Martin still had doubts about God's love. Go back to Start.

Hold up the cover of the *Truth Be Told Leader Guide*. Let the children walk all the way to "heaven."

**SAY:** While Martin was studying the Bible, he learned that God wants to *save* sinners, not punish them. He also learned that doing good things doesn't remove sins—Jesus, our Savior, does! God gives us faith to believe this good news, and faith in Jesus is the only thing that opens heaven to us. We're saved through faith alone!

**God is mighty! He has taken care of our sin, once and for all. We don't need to have any fears about Him punishing us, and we never need to doubt His love for us. Nothing is more powerful than God, and nothing will separate us from His love, eternally in heaven. Jesus has won the victory over sin, death, and the devil, conquering our fears.**

**LEADER:** (Cup hands around mouth.) **HEAR YE! HEAR YE! SHOUT! GOD IS MIGHTY! TEAMS:** (Point up.) **SHOUT! GOD IS MIGHTY!** (Make V with fingers.) **THE VICTORY IS WON!**

### The Children's Story

Build a good tower with the blocks. **SAY:** I want you to imagine a tall, strong tower, reaching to heaven. Jesus has done all that is required of us, in our place. Since Jesus has won the victory over sin by His perfect life, His death on the cross, and His resurrection, *He* is the way to heaven, not our *own* tower of good works.

So because we have faith in Jesus and don't need to build our own tower of good works, what can we do with our blocks? Should we still do these good things? (Yes! But since we don't need them to get to heaven, we can give our blocks away and share God's gifts and love with others. We can show others what Jesus has done for us. And we don't ever need to worry about our own block tower, because our faith is in what *Jesus* has done, not what we have done. We are free to love others!)

Have the children work together to make a heart out of the blocks, using at least ten on each half, or to spell out the word *LOVE* with thirty blocks, with groups of children working together to form each letter.

**ASK:** What kinds of things can we do to show love? How can we point others to what Jesus has done for us? Each time you set down a block, share an idea.

**PRAY:** Dear God, / You are our mighty God. / Help us to trust / that we are saved by faith alone. / In Jesus' name we pray. / Amen.

Dismiss the Teams to their next site.