



SESSION 3

Bible Story

Jesus Walks with
Zacchaeus

Luke 19:1-10

Rapid Reminder

Find Joy on the River!

Rafting Ready Verse

“When you pass through the waters, I will be with you.” Isaiah 43:2

Materials

- △ Paddle Captain costume
- △ Romper the River Otter Puppet
- △ Music Video DVD or Complete Music CD
- △ Adventure Video DVD
- △ audio/video equipment
- △ Message Alert effect
- △ prop remote

- △ Closing Assembly only: a raft with the **Rapid Reminder Mobile** for Session 3 on it (or a handmade sign that reads “Joy”)
- △ 3 or more plastic medals on neck ribbons

Opening Assembly

Intro Song/Video: “Life With You”

Paddle Captain and Romper enter.

Paddle Captain: Hello, Rafters! Welcome back to Rolling River Rampage, where we experience the ride of a lifetime with God! I’m Paddle Captain ____ and this is my friend and mentor, Romper.

Romper (*with a tiny bow*): Hello!

Paddle Captain: We’ve been on quite a ride together already! We’ve found two missing rafts; who remembers their names?
[Point to the recovered rafts/signs onstage if needed.]

Yes! Let’s all say our Rapid Reminders so far together with the motions I taught you *[with Rafters and motions]*:
Find Adventure on the River!
Find Acceptance on the River!

Romper: You guys are amazing! You know, I think this might be my favorite ride of all.

Paddle Captain: Really? I heard that it might be rainy this time.

Romper: Exactly! Rain equals mud, and we river otters LOVE to play around in the mud. You know, Paddle Captain ____, I wasn’t always the popular paragon of the animal kingdom that you see before you today.

Paddle Captain (*rolls eyes dramatically*): Oh, really?

Romper: It’s true! I used to have no friends at all. Then one day, I discovered mud-sliding. I started sliding down muddy banks into the river all the time. Some other otters joined me, and we became a world class competitive synchronized sliding team. We even made it to the Otter Olympics in Orlando!

Paddle Captain: That’s amazing! Synchronized sliding? I didn’t know there was such a thing.

Romper: It’s great! You should try it sometime.

Message Alert sounds.

Paddle Captain: Maybe later; right now, we need to open the new video from the R.O.C. Team!

Paddle Captain points the remote to simulate opening the video.

▶ Begin Video

Safety Sam: Hello again from The R.O.C.! I’m your safety leader, Samantha Rivers, but you can call me Safety Sam. I hope you’re ready for another great ride on the river! Before we go through the details of your new mission, let’s check in with the rest of the team. Max, how’s the weather out there?

Max Breezy: Max Breezy here again, with your Rolling River weather forecast! It looks like this cold front has stalled over us, meaning we can expect quite a bit of rain. Visibility may be poor today. Because of the rain, you



will need to be prepared for higher water levels and a much swifter current. This often occurs in times of intense rain.

I'm Max Breezy, saying... *[with a wink]* ...Take it easy. And now back to you in the studio.

Safety Sam: Oh Max, it's still not a studio. It's the R.O.C.—in a cabin, remember?

Max Breezy *(as if it were obvious)*: Of course!

Safety Sam: Thank you, Max. So far, Rafters, you have mastered the smallest of rapids; class I. Today, you may need to be prepared for class II or III rapids, and be extra alert for unexpected things in the current. *[To Jean-Michel]* Yakov McDriver, can you help us with that?

Jean-Michel *(deflates as he hears his name gone wrong again)*: That was kind of close, but it's Jean-Michel McDiver. Capital 'M,' little 'c,' Capital 'D,' little i-v-e-r.

Anyway, one thing to look for on a swollen river is fallen trees, which can lay across the river and cause a strainer that ensnares your raft. If you ever get stuck on a tree or against the banks, it may be tempting to try and get out and swim to shore, but don't do it! Instead,— *[pulls a flash light and/or a dummy flare from thin air]* —use a flashlight or have your Paddle Captain light a flare to signal other rafts to come save you.

Of course, you have to watch for trees above, too. One time I was rafting in Alaska, and the river was so high that my life jacket got snagged on a low-lying tree branch. The raft kept on going down stream, and there I was, hanging from a tree with my feet dangling. Three large sockeye salmon jumped right into my arms! I didn't have a flare or flashlight, so I had to use the face of my watch to signal for help. Some park rangers showed up to rescue me and found me hugging three large salmon still wiggling around in my arms!

Of course, that was nothing compared to the time some salmon ended up hugging ME. See,

there was this bear and—

Safety Sam: Oh dear, we're almost out of time! Thanks for all your helpful advice, Jean-Luc.

Jean-Michel *(with a sigh)*: You're welcome.

Safety Sam *(to camera)*: Your new mission is to find raft number three, named Joy, located here *[points on the map]*. You know, Joy can come when you least expect it, even on a rainy day like this one! That's because of what God tells us in our Rafting Ready Verse, Isaiah 43:2: "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you."

We now return you to your Paddle Captain. We'll post another update at the end of your trip. Have a great ride, and remember: Find Joy on the River!

 **End Video**

Paddle Captain: OK, Rafters. As the R.O.C. Team said, be on the lookout for unexpected things in the water out there, and be sure to help others whenever you can, too.

Romper: You know, all this talk about helping each other reminds me of our Bible story today. Wanna' hear a song about it?

Paddle Captain: Sure, but do we know any?

Romper: I bet *[Music Leader]* does! *[Music Leader]*, do you know a song about today's Bible story that you could come teach us?

 **Song/Video:**
"Zacchaeus (Wee Little Man)"

Paddle Captain: Wow, that was a great song! I can't wait to hear more about Zacchaeus at the Bible Story Station!

Romper: And I can't wait to get out there and slide in the mud! But don't you have a new Rapid Reminder to teach us first?



Paddle Captain: Of course! Let's do our first two Rapid Reminders together one more time.

[with Rafters and motions]

Find Adventure on the River!

Find Acceptance on the River!

Excellent! Now, as the R.O.C. Team shared with us, sometimes rain and strong rapids may reveal unexpected things or obstacles in the water.

When that happens, we need to hold up our paddles so they don't hit the obstacles or get knocked out of the raft. To do that, everyone

crouch down and hold your imaginary paddles straight up in front of you with the T-grip down and paddle end pointing up. *[Demonstrate.]*

Perfect! Every time we say our Rapid Reminder for this session, we will practice this motion. Try it with me! *[with Rafters and motions]* Find Joy on the River!

Romper: Great job, everyone! I can't wait to see what unexpected things we discover on our ride together. Have fun!

Allow for special messages related to your VBS.

Closing Assembly

 **Intro Song/Video:**
"Life With You"

Paddle Captain: Wow, what a ride today! The water was definitely up, but we still helped each other. *[points to the Joy raft, positioned onstage]* That way, we were able to Find Joy on the River!

It feels like something is missing, though. Does anyone know where Romper is?

Romper pops up, wearing several prize medals conspicuously around its neck.

Romper: Here I am! Notice anything different about me?

Paddle Captain: Oh, my. Hi, Romper! Whatcha' wearing, there?

Romper: Oh, these old things? They're just some of my Otter Olympics Synchronized Sliding team medals. Do you like them?

Paddle Captain: Very impressive. It must have given you so much joy to make new friends and do what you love at the same time!

Romper: It really did! That reminds me of what we learned about Zacchaeus. He didn't expect Jesus to see him, and he found so much joy when Jesus wanted to be his friend and come over to his house.


Paddle Captain: You're so right. I'm glad that God always sees us and is with us to help us.

Message Alert sounds.

Sounds like the R.O.C. Team video is going live!
[points the remote to simulate opening the video]

 **Begin Video**

Safety Sam: Wow, what a great job today guys. It was a very swift and powerful ride, but



you helped each other and accomplished your mission to Find Joy on the River. Great job!

That makes three found rafts so far: Adventure, Acceptance, and now, Joy. Only two more to go!

Now here's the rest of our team with a preview of what we can expect on our next mission.

Max Breezy: Max Breezy here. It looks like the cold front is finally moving on, so the weather will be clearing and warming up. You will probably be able to leave your rain poncho at home next time. I'm Max Breezy, saying—

Jean-Michel (*interrupting*): Excuse me, Max, but I, Jean-Michel McDiver, am the survivalist expert around here, and I can tell you that you should NEVER leave a poncho at home. It has so many uses—why, I can think of NINETY of them off the top of my head! It can serve as a makeshift tent, a wet bag, a rain water collector, a screen, a fishing net, a stretcher, a sail, a tarp...

Safety Sam: Okay, I think that's all for today, guys. We'll sign off for now and check in with you next time. Until then, remember what God says in our Rafting Ready Verse: When you pass through the waters, I will be with you. Bye!

Jean-Michel (*still listing in the background*): ...a cold compress, a wound wrap, a garbage bag, a hammock, a rope...

End Video

Romper: Wow, now THAT was unexpected. Who knew you could do so much with a poncho?

Paddle Captain: That Jackie McDoodle guy sure knows his stuff!

Speaking of knowing our stuff, Rafters, let's review our Rapid Reminders one more time before we go. Ready? [*with Rafters and motions*]

Find Adventure on the River!

Find Acceptance on the River!

Find Joy on the River!

Romper: And now let's hear that Rafting Ready Verse! [*puts a paw up to its ear*]

Paddle Captain (*with Rafters*): When you pass through the waters, I will be with you.

Romper: Way to go, Rafters! You know, Paddle Captain _____, knowing that God is with me still helps me to Find Joy on the River every day.

Paddle Captain: Me too, Romper. And we can have joy every day knowing that Jesus sees us, and loves us, and will always be our friend. Just like he did for Zacchaeus. We are never alone.

Let's pray. Dear God, thank you for seeing us, for accepting us, and for loving us. Thank you that we can find joy in you. Amen.

Allow for special messages related to your VBS.