



I Remember You Constantly

Goal: To help children give thanks for adult Christians in their lives.

RECOGNIZING GOD'S GRACE . . .

. . . In 2 Timothy 1:1-14

Our Christian faith comes to us in a variety of ways. In this letter to Timothy, we see the gift of faith had been passed along from Timothy's grandmother, Lois, and his mother, Eunice, to him. Timothy is told, "I'm sure that this faith is also inside you" (v. 5, CEB). *Eunice* means "good or happy victory." *Lois* means "more pleasant, more desirable."

We must always remember and be grateful for those who have gone before us. Through their faith, our faith has come to us and they have helped our faith to grow. These may be our parents, grandparents, or other family members. They may be our teachers, those who belong to our church, our friends, or people we meet. These Christians can have an important effect on our lives. We see their faith, how important it is to them, and through their witness to Jesus Christ, we can come to believe, trust, and understand who Jesus is and what he has done.

God's grace gives us people who are important in our faith development. We are deeply grateful as we remember God has provided others who are meaningful to us. In turn, we are persons of faith who become important to others so their faith can grow and be vital.

. . . In Your Children's Experiences

One of the ways children remember their place in the family is through stories, telling and retelling funny and memorable experiences. In the remembering of the past, they know they are loved and are an important part of their family.

Building on this experience, they are able to make connections with the biblical story and people who were important in the early church. Just as they like to pass on stories of their family, they are also able to learn and tell the stories of people like Lois, Eunice, and Timothy who remembered Jesus and passed on stories about him to others.

Be sensitive to children who, for whatever reasons, lack sufficient networks of love and encouragement. Do not assume that every child comes from a loving home in which his or her gifts and potentials are appreciated. For these children it is especially important that the church community provide what other adults in their lives may not be offering.

. . . In Your Relationships with the Children

You are an example of what Timothy was learning about how the gift of faith is passed on to others. You are passing it on to a wonderful group of children. They may not remember all the content they are learning, but they will remember you.

Timothy's mother, Eunice, and grandmother, Lois, are described as knowledgeable women who mentored Timothy. Few women are named in the Bible. That Eunice and Lois are named indicates that they were important leaders. Emphasize this when you speak of them, rather than simply mentioning the women as Timothy's family.

Today's story is a great chance to talk about pictures in family albums, at home and church. You can help the children name the people who are passing on the faith by living in the ways that Jesus did.

Thank you, O God, for all who have come before and passed their faith to me. Be with me as I do the same. Amen.



Supplies

Music & Melodies

bit.ly/GGGMusicMelodies

Stories, Colors & More (SCM) i–iv, 12, 12a, 12b, 19, 24

basic supplies
(see p. vii)

audio stories (optional)
(see p. vii)

internet-connected
device

white pillar candle

white table covering

picture of your family
ball

Responding

Claiming

invited guest

Grace Notes (GN) 1

Celebrating

Bible storybooks

plastic page protectors,
three-ring binder
(optional)

SCM 12c

Praying

worship bulletin

GN 2

Offering

copies of GN 3

old magazines

GATHERING IN GOD’S GRACE

Post **SCM i–ii**, “Your Visual Schedule,” to provide clear expectations and a visual cue for the group.

See **SCM iii–iv** for the key to icons (for example, **LG** **T**) and ways to adapt for children who have special needs or disabilities.

“Claiming God’s Grace” requires more prep. Plan accordingly.

Welcoming and Preparing TD

Use “I’m Gonna Live So God Can Use Me” as background music.

Welcome each child with, “Grace and peace be with you, (Name).”

Prompt the children to respond, “And also with you.” Make a point of welcoming visitors and introducing them to other children in the group.

Ask some children to help prepare today’s “Responding in Gratitude” activities. Suggest that one or two prepare to lead today’s singing. Ask a volunteer to practice the Scripture reading. Post **SCM 12b**.

Place a picture of your family on the table. Invite the children to draw pictures of their families, including parents, grandparents, caregivers, and anyone else they think of as their family. Ask each person to say one thing they appreciate about someone in their pictures. Encourage the children in the coming weeks to make a point of telling or showing that person that they care about them too.

T *For children who struggle with transitions, consider a quick physical activity—such as doing chair push-ups, squeezing hands together, and stretching.*

Singing

Sing “I’m Gonna Live So God Can Use Me.” As you sing, point out the words on **SCM 19** so the children can sing along. Invite the children to create simple actions.

Praying

Light the candle on the worship table. Say that the candle was extinguished when we read about Jesus’ death. Now we light it to remind us that Jesus lives and is with us always. Invite an older child to share this prayer:

“Thank you for this day, O God. Thank you for Jesus, for his life and for his love. And thank you for our families and for their love. Let us feel your Spirit close to us. Amen.”



Preparing to Hear the Story

M B L D

Post **SCM 12a**. Ask children to guess who the people are and how they are related. When everyone has had a chance to guess, tell them that the people are (left to right) Timothy, his mother, Eunice, and his grandmother, Lois.

Explain that today's Bible story is part of a letter that the apostle Paul sent to a young minister named Timothy. In the early days of the church, leaders like the apostle Paul wrote letters to encourage Christian people and to preserve Jesus' teaching.



Hearing the Story

Invite an older child to open the Bible to 2 Timothy 1 to remind the children that the story comes from the Bible.

Read **SCM 12**. Use your voice, expressions, your own feelings, and your body to make the story more lively. Vary the tone, speed, and pitch of your voice to indicate changes in mood.

Conclude the reading by saying, "Word of wisdom, word of grace," and prompt the children to say, "Thanks be to God."

C Give children time to respond and to share; for some children, listening and speaking may take longer.

Reflecting on God's Grace

Invite the children to act out things they have learned from their parents or guardians (talk, tie shoes, brush teeth, pray, and so on). Wonder how the children have thanked their parents.

Sit with the children in a circle on the floor. Draw attention to **SCM 12b**. Read the words together. Give the ball to a child, who speaks the first word on **SCM 12b** and rolls the ball to another person. The second child says the second word before rolling the ball to a third person. Continue until the verse is completed. Pass the ball more rapidly as the verse becomes familiar.

Comment that today's story reminds us that we belong to God and to each other because of God's grace, God's gift to all. Because we belong to each other, we are to care for each other. Talk with the children about ways they can thank the adults in their lives for caring for them and sharing stories of Jesus with them.

Singing

Sing "The Circle of Love" **SCM 24**. Rock side to side to the beat of the song to celebrate the love of the adults in their lives.



RESPONDING IN GRATITUDE

Select activities appropriate for your group and for the time available.



Claiming God's Grace



Before the session, invite a guest to talk about people who encouraged his or her faith in God's grace and how he or she, in turn, encourages others. Give the invitee a copy of GN 1 as a way to say thank you and to help the person prepare to be with the children.

Before the guest arrives, tell the children the name of the guest you invited. Prepare the children to make a welcome sign and designate a special place for the person to sit when he or she arrives.

Guide the children to wonder about the guest and his or her faith journey with these statements:

- ▼ I wonder who helped our guest learn about Jesus and claim God's grace.
- ▼ I wonder if there is a special person of faith who helped him or her learn about Jesus.
- ▼ I wonder how our guest helps other people learn about God and look for God's grace.

Welcome your visitor. Invite the children to ask the guest to say something about his or her faith journey and to tell about a special person who helped him or her grow in faith. Ask your guest to show mementos and to describe how he or she is helping someone else on the faith journey. Encourage your guest and the children to interact with each other.

Close with the prayer or invite an older child to say a prayer:

Dear God, thank you for *(name of guest)* and for the special people in *(his/her)* life who show God's love. Thank you for how *(Name)* shows your grace and love to others. Help all of us to be a faithful follower like *(Name)*. Amen.

Celebrating God's Grace

Help the children create a book of Bible stories for a group of younger children. Dedicate the book to adults who tell Bible stories to children. This will help children connect how Timothy's mother and grandmother cultivated his faith and how Paul encouraged Timothy to share the faith he had been taught.

Show the group a variety of Bible storybooks. Working in pairs, have them select stories to illustrate for their book. Be sure that each pair has selected a different story. Distribute paper and markers. Each pair illustrates the story and writes two or three sentences about

Option: Place each page in a sheet protector and in a binder.



the story it has selected. When the first pair finishes, invite them to create the cover for the book by cutting out the cover art on **SCM 12c** and adhering it to a sheet of construction paper. As a group, write a dedication on a separate sheet of paper to include at the front of the book. Provide a second sheet of construction paper for the back cover and invite all the children to sign it. Collect the stories and stack them between the front and back covers. Punch three holes along the side and bind the book together with yarn or ribbon.

Deliver the book to the group of younger children.

A *Adapt any activity to suit your children's needs. Ask yourself, "How can I change this activity so this child can do it?"*

Praying God's Grace LD

Writing a prayer for the congregation to pray in worship will help the children thank God for the adult Christians in their lives.

Talk with the group about when your congregation prays together. Point out prayers in a worship bulletin. Explain that praying together in worship is time that we pray for others. Help the children create prayers for the adults who have shared their faith.

Read aloud the prayer starters on **GN 2**. Lead the group in completing the prayers on **GN 2**. Write responses on newsprint.

For example,

- ▼ Dear God, thank you for my family who loves me.
- ▼ Dear God, remember my grandparents and bless them with good health.
- ▼ Dear God, be with our minister who teaches us to follow Jesus.

Give the prayers to the worship leaders to include in the prayers of the people next Sunday.

Offering God's Grace

Remind the children that Timothy's mother and grandmother, as well as Paul, taught him about and helped him to follow Jesus. Ask the children to think of ways that their church and their families teach them to be followers of Jesus. One way the children can thank adult Christians in their lives is by making a bookmark as a gift. Brainstorm the names of adults who have told the children about God, Jesus, faith, and church. Include parents, grandparents, caregivers, teachers, ministers, older friends, etc. Ask the children to select their recipients.

Hand out copies of **GN 3** along with scissors and glue sticks. Make available a variety of old magazines. Invite the children to cut out the pattern on **GN 3**. Help them fold the pocket and tape it together



in the back. Encourage the children to cut photos or words from the magazine to decorate the bookmark. Show them how the heart fits on the bottom corner of a book page.

For older children, encourage them to write a note of thanks on a separate slip of paper to tuck inside their bookmark before presenting it as a gift.

As the children create their bookmarks, talk to them about the people you know and the ways that they have supported your faith through the years.

LG *Focus on the strengths of the children, and learn to see them as gifted members of your community.*

LOVING AND SERVING GOD

Sing “The Circle of Love” **SCM 24**—again. Remind the children that they are part of a big circle of love that includes God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and people who love them. Sing the words one phrase at a time and ask the children to repeat.

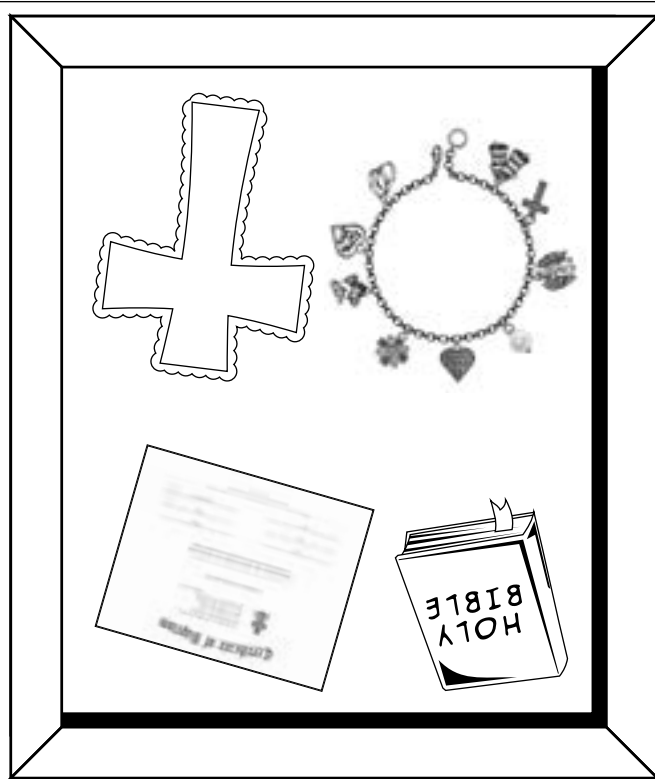
Explain that we can tell others about God’s grace so the circle of love will become bigger and bigger. Invite the children to think about one person who is younger than they are with whom they might share their faith over the next week. Close with a prayer:

“Holy God, thank you for sending people like Lois, Eunice, Timothy, and Paul to share their faith with us. Help us to share God’s love with (*each child names the person with whom he or she will share*). Bless us all as we share our faith with others. Amen.”

Thank the children for coming and encourage them to return next week. To each child, say: “(*Name*), God’s gift of grace is for you.”



Ask parents and caregivers for their email addresses so that you can provide them with the link to www.pcusastore.com/GGGdownloads, where they can download coloring pages, *Grace Sightings*, audio stories, and songs (see p. vii).



Thank you for being our guests!

Before you visit the children:

- Think about your faith journey. Do you have any special mementos that represent your journey, such as a Bible, a note of encouragement, a cross you carry in your pocket, or a baptism certificate? Bring one or more to show the children.
- Think about one person who told you about Jesus and helped you on your faith journey. Why was this person special? What helps you remember him or her as someone who showed you God's grace? Do you have a picture of the person to show? Does this person remind you of someone in the congregation—someone the children may know and can look up to?
- Think about someone you encourage in faith. What do you do to help him or her? Is there anything you do that the children can do today for someone to experience God's grace through them, such as write a prayer, send a note, or befriend someone?

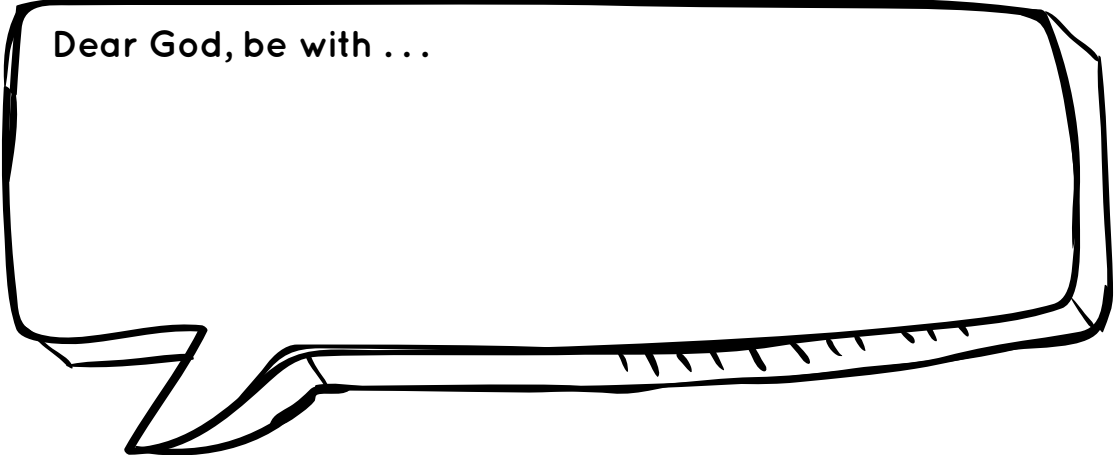
Your memories of faith will be special to the children. They will help the children create their own memories of faith and invite them to be faith guides for others. Thank you for sharing!



Dear God, thank you for ...



Dear God, remember ...



Dear God, be with ...

