

# Stories, Colors & More

for Multiage  
(Ages 5-10)



Summer 2024





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# Your Visual Schedule



Welcoming  
and  
Preparing



Singing  
and  
Praying



Hearing  
the  
Story







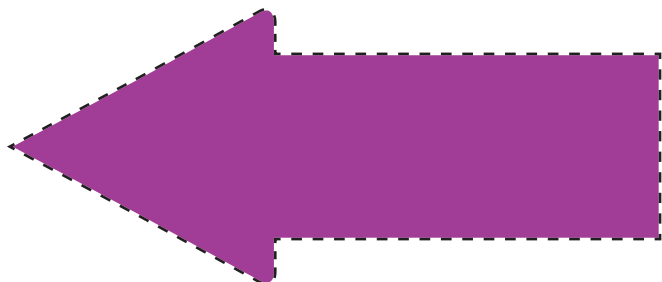
Reflecting  
on God's  
Grace



Activity  
Choices



Loving and  
Serving  
God





## M Movement

Some children need to move more than others. Setting boundaries for appropriate movement can allow the leader to meet the needs of the group while also meeting the needs of the child. Mark a place on the floor with tape, a mat, or a pillow. Be clear that the child can move within this space. Sometimes having two spots (chairs and pillows or mats) can be helpful.

## T Transitions

Transition times provide a challenge to children. Clear expectations, follow-through, and routine help with those times, but they may not be enough for some children. For children who struggle with transitions, consider quick physical activities—such as doing chair push-ups, squeezing your hands together, and stretching—before or after the transition.

## TD Tactile Defensiveness

Sometimes children struggle with textured objects such as glue, clay, finger paint, and chalk. For some children, textures create real anxiety. Allow and encourage children to explore textures without pressure, and provide opportunities to wash or wipe their hands right away. For children who struggle with texture, find a way to participate in the activity without getting their hands dirty, such as being a timekeeper.

## A Adapting Activities

You can adapt an activity by process, product, or environment—the way that something is done, what is done, or the setting in which it is done. Giving extra support in the completion of a task is an example of changing the process; having children make something different is an example of changing the product. Instead of thinking, “This child can’t do this,” think, “How can I change this activity so that this child can do it?”

## B Behavior

Children’s behavior can challenge us, disrupt the group, and lead to unsafe situations. Be clear about what you expect before you do the activity. If you don’t want children to touch one another while they are in a circle, tell them that before they touch one another. Clear expectations let children know what the rules are. Using the included visual schedule is a great way to provide clear expectations and a visual cue for children to remember.

## C Supporting Children Who Have Difficulty Communicating

Reach out to parents and caregivers about alternative forms of communication used by children. Learning a few words in American Sign Language, becoming familiar with the Picture Exchange Communication System, or exploring how to support with other assistive technologies are examples of showing hospitality to the children. In addition, give children time to respond and to share; for some children, listening and speaking may take longer.

## FA Food and Other Allergies

Remove all food and other products containing allergens. Post signs to help people remember the allergy. Have all children wash their hands and faces to avoid triggering a reaction.

## L Listening

Attending to a story or comprehending instructions can be a challenge for children who struggle with attention. Supporting these children requires consistency, clear expectations, and organization. Some hints that may help include clearly communicating expectations before the activity, checking for understanding, providing visual support as well as verbal instructions, building movement into activities, and supporting transitions.



# Children with Disabilities and Special Needs

## Support Map

### **LG** Leadership and Generosity

Focus on the strengths of the children, and learn to see them as gifted members of your community. Look for opportunities for them to express generosity. Offer them ways to practice leadership, such as passing out items, holding visual aids, helping other children, or serving as the example in games and activities.

### **LD** Supporting Children Who Have Difficulty with Reading and Writing

Whenever children read aloud, ask for volunteers. Calling on a child who does not read at grade level may make him or her feel embarrassed and unwelcome. Always encourage children to write or draw pictures as part of their responses. Children then can share their drawings.

### **MS** Supporting Children with Mobility Supports

As you set up, think about ample space between furniture to maneuver a wheelchair or walker. Think about materials and how they are positioned. Doing a roll-through in a wheelchair or walker can be a helpful way to make sure that your room setup is accessible. Think about including your children who use assistive devices. For example, seating all children on chairs or placing materials for a game on a table instead of on the floor are simple ways to create a more welcoming community.

### **VI** Visual Impairment/Blindness

Talk with parents, caregivers, and children about the strengths and abilities of the child, as well as the best ways to offer support. Large print or special lighting may allow full access to the materials. Talk with parents or caregivers about the use of the copy machine or scanned images and a computer or tablet to enlarge print. Encourage children to describe their pictures and other creations in words as they share them.

### **D** Deaf/Hard of Hearing

To create a welcoming environment for children who are deaf or have difficulty hearing, provide visual supports, such as written instructions and copies of the stories told. Employ an interpreter, and encourage children and adults in the community to learn to communicate through American Sign Language. Limit background noise. Face a person before speaking. Become familiar with children who use assistive technology. Be sure to check with parents or caregivers of children who use cochlear implants or hearing aids about any special considerations.

### **F** Fairness

To make every child feel welcome and successful, think about fairness in a different light. Fairness is not every child getting the same thing; it is every child getting what she or he needs.

### **SD** Sensory Defensive

Some children have strong reactions to different stimuli. Help them feel more comfortable by putting them in charge of the challenging sensations, allowing them to take actions such as turning the lights on or off.

#### Ask for Help

A team approach to including people with disabilities in your congregation helps build understanding and knowledge in the congregation, provides support for the child and family, and makes including all of God's children in church school an attainable goal.



## Keep Calm and Speak Boldly

(based on Acts 4:1-31)

Peter and John wanted everyone to hear the amazing story of Jesus, so they talked about Jesus to anyone who would listen. Thousands of people in Jerusalem heard their stories and became followers of Jesus too.

*I wonder, “What did Peter and John tell the people about Jesus?”*

Still, not everyone was happy to hear what Peter and John had to say. Some of the religious leaders wanted the disciples to stop talking about Jesus. They sent temple guards to arrest Peter and John and put them in jail for the night.

The next day, there was an important meeting. All the religious leaders, rulers, and teachers were there. They stood Peter and John in the middle of the crowd and started to bombard them with questions.

It must have been scary, but Peter and John stayed calm. They knew God was with them. They knew the Holy Spirit would give them the right words to say. Finally, Peter spoke. He told these important leaders all about Jesus, how he had been killed on the cross, and how God had raised Jesus back to life.

The leaders were astonished by how brave Peter and John were. They could see that Jesus must have changed their lives. They knew that the two disciples had not done anything wrong, so they couldn't keep them in jail any longer.

“We will let you go this time, but you must never ever speak or teach about Jesus again,” the leaders threatened.

Peter and John looked at each other and smiled. “Do you think we should obey you or obey God?” they asked. “We can't keep quiet about Jesus. We won't.”

*I wonder, “Why could Peter and John not keep quiet about Jesus?”*

The leaders were not happy to hear these words, but they knew they couldn't hold Peter and John anymore. So they told the disciples that they would be in big trouble if they didn't keep quiet about Jesus. Then they let them go.

Peter and John ran back to their friends and told them what had happened. When the rest of Jesus' followers heard the story, they immediately gathered to pray.

“Oh God,” they prayed, “you have heard the threats that have been made against us. Please make us brave and help us keep telling others about Jesus. Please help us to show your love in everything we say and do.”

*I wonder, “How can we show God's love?”*

When they had finished praying, the whole house shook. Everyone was filled with the Holy Spirit and boldly went out to tell others about Jesus.





## Grace in Action

(based on Acts 6:1-7)

The church was growing. At first, only a few people were meeting together. Then more people heard about Jesus and became followers.

*I wonder, "Where did they meet to worship and share Jesus' words?"*

The people lived together and shared everything they had. The church was full of love. More and more people joined every day. It was an exciting time.

After a while, so many people were part of the church that it was hard to be fair. When food was shared, some people got more than others did.

"They got more food than we did," complained some of the women. "It's not fair."

And the people began arguing.

The church leaders could see lots of people needed help. They met together to pray and talk about what to do.

"Let's choose seven helpers," they decided. "We need to find some people who will help us make sure that everyone is treated fairly."

*I wonder, "Why did they choose only seven helpers?"*

So the disciples began to look for some people who would be good helpers.

"Our helpers need to be filled with the Holy Spirit," they said. "Let's find people who want to share God's love by giving food to the hungry."

Everyone liked this idea. The disciples started by choosing a follower of Jesus named Stephen. He was a good man who followed in Jesus' way of love. Then they chose six other helpers from the church.

The seven helpers were brought to the leaders. The disciples prayed and placed their hands on them. They wanted to show everyone that these seven helpers had been called to do this important work.

*I wonder, "Why did the disciples lay their hands on the seven helpers?"*

When the service was over, the seven helpers went out to make sure everyone had enough food to eat. They worked hard to see that all the people were treated fairly. And the church kept on growing.





## The Spirit in Action

(based on Acts 8:26–40)

Philip loved to tell everyone about Jesus and God’s love. One day, an angel came to Philip and told him to go to a certain road that went south from Jerusalem.

*I wonder, “What did the angel look like?”*

Now it just so happened that a very important man was traveling along that road in his chariot. The man was from a country called Ethiopia. He was the chief treasurer for the queen of Ethiopia. He had gone to Jerusalem to worship God and was on his way home.

The Holy Spirit told Philip to run and catch up with the chariot, so Philip ran very fast. When he was close to the chariot, Philip could hear the man reading from a scroll, which was an ancient book. He recognized the words. It was a passage from the scroll of the prophet Isaiah.

“Excuse me,” Philip shouted. “Do you understand what you are reading?”

“Not really,” the man answered. “Will you ride in my chariot and help me understand what it means?”

Philip jumped into the chariot and sat down. He and the man had a very interesting conversation about the words on the scroll. Then Philip told the man the good news of Jesus.

*I wonder, “What did Philip tell the man about Jesus?”*

As they were going along the road, they came to some water.

“Look!” the man exclaimed. “Here is some water. I can be baptized as a follower of Jesus right now.” He ordered the chariot to stop. Then Philip and the man got out of the chariot and went into the water for the baptism.

When they came out of the water, the Holy Spirit whisked Philip away. The man never saw the disciple again, but he was very happy to be a follower of Jesus. He went back to Ethiopia and told many people about Jesus and God’s love.

Meanwhile, the Holy Spirit led Philip to other towns, so more and more people heard about Jesus. The good news began to spread everywhere.

*I wonder, “How can we spread the good news to many places?”*





## All One Family

(based on Acts 10:1–48)

Peter and Cornelius didn't know each other, but they had a lot in common. They prayed to God every day. They shared God's love by helping others. They worshiped God in their own ways. They could have been friends except for one big difference: Peter was Jewish, and Cornelius was not.

In those days, there was a big divide between those who were Jewish and those who were not. They wouldn't even eat the same food. It was as if there was an invisible line between them. No one wanted to step over the line.

That was about to change. The Holy Spirit was erasing that line. This is how it happened.

*I wonder, "What will the Holy Spirit do?"*

God sent two dreams, one to Cornelius and another to Peter. In the first dream, God told Cornelius to invite Peter to his house. In the second dream, Peter saw a very big sheet with all sorts of animals, birds, snakes, and frogs on it. Peter heard a voice saying, "Go ahead. Eat."

Peter said, "I have never eaten these kinds of animals, birds, snakes, and frogs. They are unclean."

*I wonder, "Why were these animals unclean?"*

"Peter," he heard the voice say. "God has made them clean. You must not call them unclean."

This happened three times—not just once. Then the dream was over. Peter was puzzled about his dream.

As Peter awoke, the men sent by Cornelius arrived. "Come in," he told the men. "You have come a long way. Spend the night here."

The next morning Peter, the men, and some of Peter's friends went north to where Cornelius lived.

When Peter arrived, he found Cornelius, his family, and all his close friends gathered in one place. They had all come to listen to Peter. When Peter heard about Cornelius's dream, he was very excited. "That's what my dream meant," Peter said. "We are all meant to be together as part of God's family. Now I know for sure that God loves everyone the same."

*I wonder, "How does God love everyone the same?"*

Cornelius asked Peter to teach them, so Peter told them all about Jesus and God's grace. While Peter was speaking, the Holy Spirit came upon every person in the house. Everyone started to speak in different languages as the Holy Spirit helped them. It was very noisy and very exciting.

Peter was amazed. "The Holy Spirit has come upon everyone," he said. "It doesn't matter if you are Jewish or not Jewish, rich or poor, male or female. We are all part of God's family."

Cornelius, his family, and all his close friends became followers of Jesus that day. They were all baptized. They invited Peter to stay with them for a few days.

Everything had changed. Everyone was welcome. Everyone belonged in God's family.





## All One Church

(based on Acts 15:1-18)

More and more people were starting to follow Jesus. People were hearing the good news and joining the church. It was a very exciting time.

*I wonder, "What did people have to do to join the church?"*

Occasionally there were problems in the new church. Sometimes people disagreed about the best way to follow Jesus. It wasn't long before people in the church began to argue about who could join the church.

"Only those who follow the law of Moses can join the church," proclaimed some people.

"That's rubbish," said others. "Anyone who loves Jesus and trusts him is welcome."

This matter caused so many arguments that the church finally decided to send Paul and Barnabas to meet with Peter, James, and some of the other church leaders. It was their job to decide who could join the church.

"We need an answer," declared the people.

The leaders gathered in Jerusalem and talked for many days. They talked and talked and talked. Then they talked some more. Finally, Peter stood up to speak.

"Friends," Peter announced. "I was sent to tell the good news of Jesus to everyone. Right from the start, it was clear that God did not have favorites. It didn't matter if people were Jewish or anything else. They all received God's gift of the Holy Spirit."

After Peter's speech, Barnabas and Paul stood up and told stories about how God had given them the power to work many wonders and miracles for everyone, not just the people who followed the law of Moses.

A long silence followed. Finally, James stood up and spoke.

"Friends," he said. "We need to stop fighting. God has made it clear that we are all one. We are all God's children, and we all belong to God's family."

*I wonder, "Did Jesus' followers stop fighting?"*

So the question was decided. It didn't matter if you followed the law of Moses or you didn't. It didn't matter where you came from or who your parents were. It didn't matter what language you spoke or where you had been born. It didn't matter what shade your skin was. God's love was for everyone. The church was open to all. Everyone was welcome.







**You are all God's children through faith in Christ Jesus.  
All of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed  
yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek;  
there is neither slave nor free; nor is there male and  
female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.**

**—Galatians 3:26–28 (CEB)**













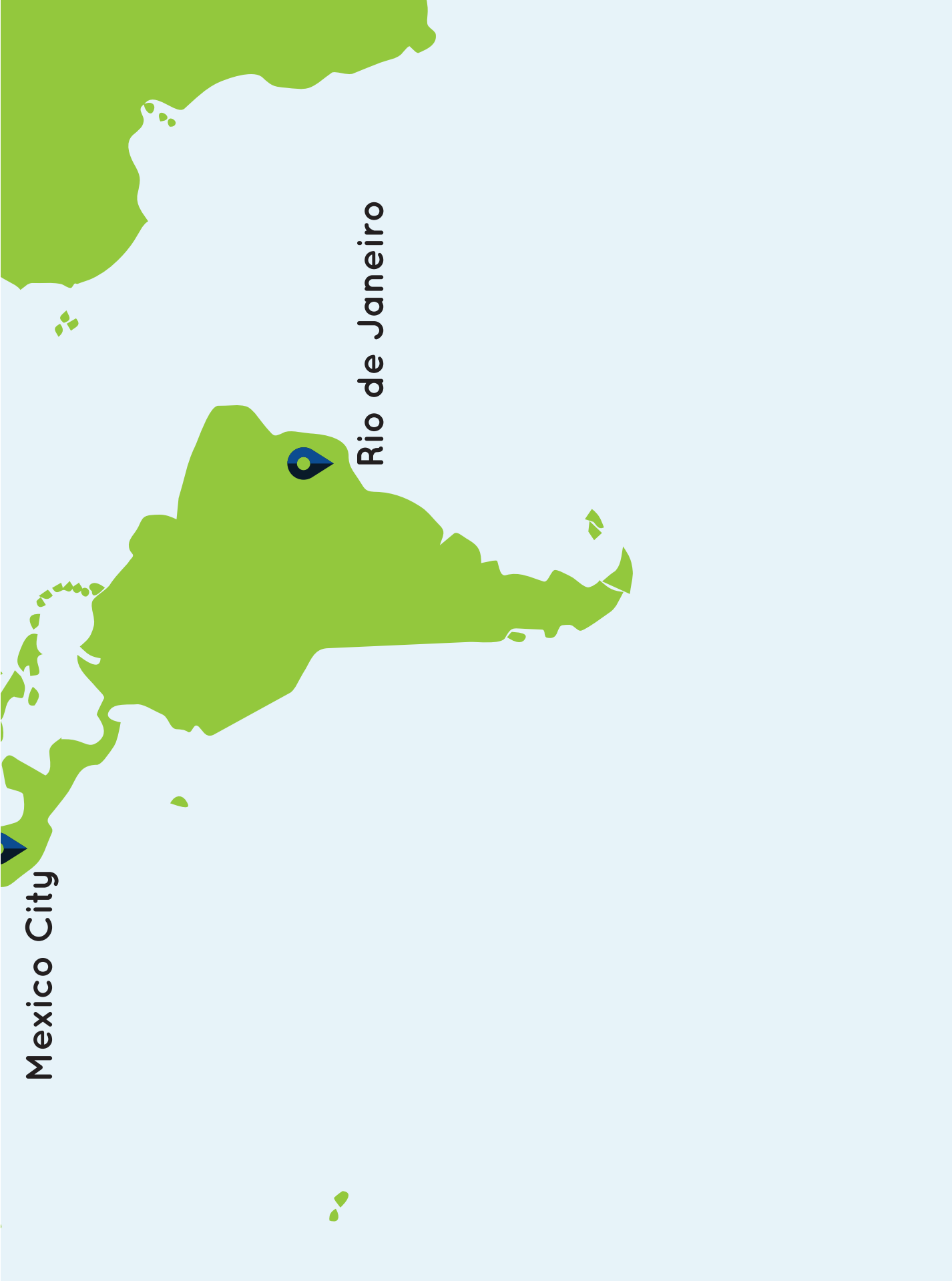












Mexico City

Rio de Janeiro



## Honoring God

(based on 2 Timothy 1:1-14)

Once there was a woman who loved God and was a follower of Jesus. Her name was Eunice. When Eunice had a baby boy, she called him Timothy. Eunice and her mother, Lois, looked after Timothy as he grew. They told him all about Jesus and God's love.

*I wonder, "What stories did Timothy's mother and grandmother tell him about Jesus?"*

When Timothy grew to be a young man, he met Paul and Silas. The two men had come from a very important meeting in Jerusalem. The church leaders had met to talk about who could join the church. Paul and Silas had been told to go out and tell people that everyone was welcome.

Eventually Paul and Silas came to Lystra (LIHS-truh), where Timothy and his family lived. The followers of Jesus told Paul what a fine young man Timothy was. Paul could see for himself that Timothy had grown up learning all about Jesus and God's grace. Paul was very impressed and asked the young man to go with them as they traveled from church to church. Therefore, with the blessing of his mother and grandmother, Timothy left on a big adventure to travel with Paul and Silas.

*I wonder, "What kind of adventure would they have?"*

It took some time, but eventually the three men visited all the churches and told everyone what had been decided in Jerusalem—that all were welcome to be followers of Jesus.

Paul then asked Timothy to go with him on his journeys to tell others about Jesus. As they traveled, Paul helped and encouraged Timothy. Timothy was a helper and a friend to Paul, even when Paul was put in jail. Timothy helped Paul write letters to churches so they could learn about God too.

*I wonder, "Who encourages you?"*

Eventually Timothy stopped traveling and became a leader of a church. Sometimes it was hard for him. He missed Paul. He was still a young man, and some of the older people did not listen to him. Paul prayed for Timothy every day. He also wrote letters of help and encouragement to his young friend. He reminded Timothy of the things his mother and grandmother had taught him. He urged Timothy to be bold and loving in everything he did.

Paul's letters encouraged Timothy and helped him to keep on teaching people about Jesus. Timothy was glad for the love and encouragement of his mother and grandmother when he was growing up. He was also glad for the help and encouragement of his good friend Paul.







## All in Prayer

(based on 1 Timothy 2:1-7)

Marina and Alexander and the church that met in Timothy's house gathered to worship God, to learn more about following Jesus together.

One day, a letter from Paul arrived for Timothy. The letter was full of teachings about what it means to follow Jesus. Everyone gathered around Timothy to listen as the letter was read aloud:

Dear friends in Christ,

The first thing I want you to do is pray. There are many ways to pray, so let's use them all. Let us pray for all people. Pray especially for the leaders of the world so we can live in peace, because this is what God wants for us.

There was silence in the room as the people thought about what the letter said. They thought about the different ways they prayed.

*I wonder, "How many ways are there to pray?"*

A woman jumped up. "I know," she said. "We can bring our requests to God. If I know someone who needs God's support and comfort, we can ask God to help them."

"That's a good way to pray," said the people. "We can pray like that."

Another woman had an idea. "Sometimes I look at everything I have, and I want to say thank you," she said. "We can give thanks to God for all our blessings."

"That's a good way to pray," said the people. "We can pray like that."

An older man spoke up. "It is wonderful to see God bless others," he said. "We can ask God to bless and help others."

"That's a good way to pray," said the people. "We can pray like that."

Alexander raised his hand. "Sometimes I get worried or scared," he said. "If we are worried or scared about something, we can talk to God about it."

"That's a good way to pray," said the people. "We can pray like that."

"We mustn't forget to pray for our leaders," another person said. "We can ask God to help them rule wisely and fairly."

"We can do this together," said one of the church leaders. "Let's pray like this every time we meet."

And that's what the people did. They helped one another remember what the letter had said, and they met together to pray. They prayed for all people and especially for the leaders of the world. Because this is what God wants us to do.

*I wonder, "What can we pray for?"*






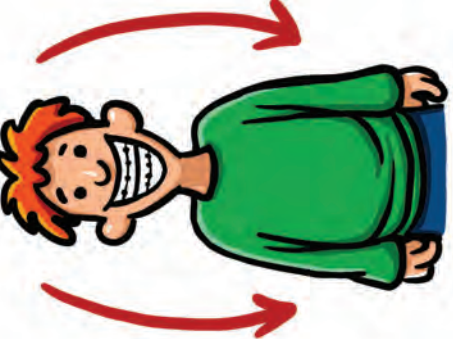




Our Father, who art in heaven,  
 (Lift one arm over head,  
 fingers pointing up, and hold.)



hallowed be thy name.  
 (Lift other arm over head,  
 fingers pointing up.)



Thy kingdom come,  
 thy will be done,  
 (Slowly lower both arms  
 to sides.)



on earth as it is in heaven.  
 (Sweep one arm across body.)




Give us this day our daily bread;  
 (Cup hands in front of body as  
 if holding something.)



and forgive us our debts,  
 (Move fist to chest.)






as we forgive our debtors;  
(Bow head and fold hands as if praying.)



and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
(Hold hands in front of face,  
palms toward face.)



For thine is the kingdom  
(Arms down, angled out from  
body, hands open, fingers  
pointing down.)



and the power  
(Make fists with hands; cross  
arms at chest height by  
touching wrists.)



and the glory, forever.  
(Open arms and hands; lift  
arms over head.)



Amen.  
(Bring hands together and fold  
as if in prayer.)



## A Generous Sharing

(based on 2 Corinthians 9:6-15)

Many years ago, in a city called Corinth, there lived some followers of Jesus. They met to sing to God and learn about living in God's way.

*I wonder, "What songs did they sing?"*

The people in the church wanted to live like Jesus and help others. They were collecting money to share with those who had nothing.

One day, a messenger named Titus arrived with an urgent letter from one of the leaders in the church. The leader's name was Paul. Paul had heard about the Corinthian church's plan to help others. Everyone came to listen to the letter being read out loud. It was a long letter, and this is part of it:

Dear friends in Corinth,

I am so proud of you. Everyone has heard about your plans to collect money to give to the poor. Other churches are starting to do the same.

Remember, God blesses you with everything you need so that you can help others.

God loves it when we share. We can all share what we have because there is more than enough for everyone. Sharing what God has given us is a wonderful way to say thank you to God.

Your friend, Paul

For a moment, there was silence while the people thought about the things Paul had written. Then everyone started talking at once.

*I wonder, "What were they thinking?"*

"Did you hear that?" someone exclaimed. "God loves it when we share! God has given us so many good things. We can share them all."

So that is what the people did. They shared all kinds of things. They soon discovered that sharing with others made them happy. Following Jesus' way of love was exciting.

*I wonder, "What do we have to share?"*







## Searching for God

(based on Acts 17:22–31)

Paul wanted everyone to hear the amazing story of Jesus. He traveled far and wide, bringing good news to anyone who would listen.

After many adventures, Paul arrived at the great city of Athens. Athens was a famous Greek city. The people of Athens loved to talk about religion and new ideas. Reading and thinking, studying and learning were very important to them.

When Paul got to the city, he walked around looking at all the interesting things. Paul could see that the people living in Athens were very religious. There were statues and altars everywhere to many gods and goddesses they worshiped.

*I wonder, "What did the statues and altars look like?"*

"These people are searching for God," thought Paul. "I must tell them about God's love. I must tell them about Jesus."

So Paul went to the big meeting place in the middle of the city. He began to teach about God and God's love. Paul told the people that he could see they were searching for God.

"I was going through your city looking at all the things you worship," explained Paul. "I found an altar for the unknown God. I know who this God is."

*I wonder, "How did Paul know who the unknown God was?"*

Paul explained that the unknown God made the whole universe and everything in it.

"This God doesn't live in temples or statues made by human hands," proclaimed Paul. "God is much bigger than that. God gives us life and breath. Just reach out, and you will find that God is close. God is deep inside and all around. We are all God's children."

The people were interested. They listened and listened to all that Paul had to say. Some wanted to know more. Paul told them about Jesus and how he died and came back to life! Some of the people believed when they heard the good news. They became followers of Jesus too, and the message of Jesus continued to spread throughout the world.































## Vine and Branches

(based on John 15:1-8)

Jesus was talking with his friends. It was the last time he would see them for a while, and he wanted them to know that he would be with them again. They had shared a meal together; Jesus reminded them to remember his love and to love each other. Now he wanted to let them know that, even though he was going away, they would always be connected. He was saying “goodbye” but only for a little while.

*I wonder, “Where was Jesus going?”*

At their supper table, Jesus and his friends shared some bread and some wine. Jesus knew that he could help his friends understand better if he told them some stories about nature and things they knew. So he told them this:

I’m the true vine (*branches*). God is like the vine (*branches*) grower, like a gardener that takes good care of the vines (*branches*). The Good Gardener has to trim the branches (*vine*) and sprigs away from the vine (*branches*), so that the whole vine (*branches*) and all the other branches (*vine*) can grow lots of beautiful sweet grapes.

The branches (*vine*) can’t grow all alone; they can’t grow if they are cut off. The only way the vine (*branches*) and branches (*vine*) grow is when they all stay connected. So stay connected to me. That way you will be able to do wonderful things, just like the branches (*vine*) that are connected to the vine (*branches*) grow beautiful sweet grapes.

*I wonder, “What wonderful things did the disciples do because they were connected to Jesus?”*

If you are cut off from me and from the other branches (*vine*), you won’t be able to do much. The branches (*vine*) that get cut off are swept up and tossed away. So stay with me, the true vine (*branches*). You will see that your faith will grow and you will be able to help others too. When we all stay connected, like a vine (*branches*) and branches (*vine*), we can bring glory to God.

Jesus’ friends listened carefully. Maybe they looked at the wine in their cups and thought about how they were like the branches (*vine*), growing on the vine (*branches*), and making sweet and delicious grapes. They knew they wanted to stay connected to Jesus.

*I wonder, “How do we stay connected to Jesus?”*











**OUR FATHER,**

*who art in heaven,*

**hallowed be thy name.**

*— Thy kingdom come, —*

**thy will be done**

*on earth as it is in heaven.*

**Give us this day**

**our daily bread,**

*— and forgive us our debts —*

**as we forgive our debtors.**

**And lead us not into temptation,**

*but deliver us from evil.*

*For thine is the kingdom,*

**and the power,**

*and the glory, forever.*

**Amen.**





## Light and Darkness

(based on 1 John 1:5–10)

After Jesus died and sent the Holy Spirit into the world, his disciples told many others about Jesus and God’s love. More and more people wanted to follow Jesus’ teachings. They were baptized and met with other believers in their town to worship God. Some of the followers of Jesus, who became known as Christians, and then others who learned from them, wrote letters to the believers, encouraging them in faith. One of these letter writers was known as John the Elder. He wrote three letters that are in our Bible. The first letter was like a sermon, teaching the believers about God and Jesus. This sermon letter was passed from town to town as people met for worship.

John the Elder used words that the believers would have been familiar with: God is light, and in God there is no darkness at all. Many might have nodded their heads remembering old words of a long ago prophet who said that the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Others may have remembered that they were told that Jesus said that he is the light of the world, and that he told his followers to let their light shine and reflect God’s love. Children may have smiled as they thought about how a candle would light up a dark room or an oil lamp would light the way along a path at night.

*I wonder, “What do you think of when you hear that God is light?”*

The sermon letter went on to remind the believers that following Jesus is like living in the light, reflecting the light and love of Jesus. However, the people were also reminded that everyone makes mistakes sometimes, turning away from following Jesus and God’s way of living. This is called *sin*. If someone says they don’t ever sin or make mistakes or hurt others or God, then they are fooling themselves and not telling the truth. Sin is like stumbling around in the dark and not using a light to see where to go.

*I wonder, “How can we tell God our mistakes?”*

John the Elder assured everyone who heard that sermon letter, and us today, that God loves us and, if we tell God those things we have done wrong—if we confess our sins—God is faithful and loving. God forgives us. We can see God’s path, God’s way of living, once again.



## Love One Another

(based on John 13:34–35; 1 John 4:7–11, 20–21)

On Sunday, the Lord's Day, Mahir and Leyla walked with their parents to the home of fellow Christians to pray, worship, and learn. They celebrated the Lord's Supper, remembering how Jesus loved them. This was where they worshiped God, not in a special building, but in one another's homes.

The leader told the story of Jesus and his last meal with his disciples. The people who gathered in the home heard the story about the night before Jesus was crucified. That night, Jesus washed the feet of his friends and then gathered his friends for a meal, giving them bread to eat and a cup to drink. Mahir, Leyla, and the others were reminded that Jesus told his followers, "I have a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. This is how everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

*I wonder, "What did the followers of Jesus do to show others that they were his followers?"*

Leyla and Mahir, and many of the others in the house, smiled. They liked hearing about Jesus and being a follower of his. The commandment to love one another was nice. It didn't seem too hard.

Then the worship leader read a letter from John the Elder. John wrote about Jesus' commandment to love one another. The letter said, "Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God. God sent Jesus into the world so that we might live through him. That's what love is all about: not that we loved God, but that God loved us first and sent Jesus to love us and

show us the way to God. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another."

That seemed nice too, Mahir and Leyla thought. They were feeling all warm and fuzzy inside.

The letter continued, "Those who say, 'I love God' and are not kind to their brothers and sisters are liars. If we don't love actual people whom we can see, we cannot love God whom we have not seen. The commandment we have is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also."

*I wonder, "How did people feel when they heard this?"*

Uh-oh! Leyla and Mahir looked at each other, and they weren't the only ones. All around the room people young and old shuffled, looked away, or glanced at one another awkwardly. Mahir remembered taking the warm bread dripping with honey and eating it all before Leyla could have any, and Leyla remembered teasing her little brother until he cried last week. Others were thinking of the times they weren't very kind. Maybe loving one another wasn't so easy.

Mahir leaned over to Leyla and took her hand. Leyla squeezed it and said, "I love you too." Then everyone looked around and smiled. All these people were their brothers and sisters in Jesus. They started hugging one another and speaking words of forgiveness and love.

*I wonder, "Who do we need to show love to?"*

















## Hear It and Do It!

(based on James 1:19-27; 2:1-7)

Many years ago, when the church was just beginning, a group of people met together to worship God and learn about following Jesus' way of love.

*I wonder, "Where did the people meet to worship and learn?"*

One day, a letter arrived from one of the church leaders named James. The letter had something important to say about what it means to be a follower of Jesus:

Dear friends,

Leader: Listen to what Jesus says.

**Response: Hear it and do it!**

Be quick to listen and slow to be angry.

Be kind and helpful. Look after everyone.

Leader: Listen to what Jesus says.

**Response: Hear it and do it!**

The people looked at one another, "We can do this!" they said.

Leader: Listen to what Jesus says.

**Response: Hear it and do it!**

The people worked together to find different ways of doing what Jesus said.

They helped others.

They welcomed everyone.

They shared their food.

They used kind words.

Every time they met together they reminded one another:

Leader: Listen to what Jesus says.

**Response: Hear it and do it!**

The people knew that, when they followed Jesus' teachings, they were doing what God wanted. Sometimes it was hard. Sometimes they made mistakes. But they kept reminding one another. And they kept trying.

Leader: Listen to what Jesus says.

**Response: Hear it and do it!**

And the church kept on growing.

*I wonder, "What can we do to 'hear it and do it'?"*







**You must not take revenge nor hold a grudge against any of your people; instead, you must love your neighbor as yourself; I am the LORD.**

**—Leviticus 19:18 (CEB)**

**And the second is like it: *You must love your neighbor as you love yourself.***


**—Matthew 22:39 (CEB)**

**You do well when you really fulfill the royal law found in scripture, *Love your neighbor as yourself.***

**—James 2:8 (CEB)**







Rise and shine and give  
God the glory, glory!  
*(Repeat two times)*  
Children of the Lord.

Noah and his sons will  
build all the arky, arky.  
*(Repeat two times)*  
Children of the Lord.

Promise to people that love  
brings the rainbow, rainbow.  
*(Repeat two times)*  
Children of the Lord.

Rise and shine and give  
God the glory, glory!  
*(Repeat two times)*  
Children of the Lord.





Praise God, praise God, all ye little children.  
God is love, God is love. (*Repeat both lines*)

Love God, love God, all ye little children.  
God is love, God is love. (*Repeat both lines*)

Thank God, thank God, all ye little children.  
God is love, God is love. (*Repeat both lines*)

Help God, help God, all ye little children.  
God is love, God is love. (*Repeat both lines*)







Lord, I want to be a Christian  
in my heart, . . .

Lord, I want to be more loving  
in my heart, . . .

Lord, I want to be like Jesus  
in my heart, . . .







Tell me the stories of Jesus I love to hear,  
things I would ask him to tell me if he were here;  
scenes by the wayside, tales of the sea;  
stories of Jesus, tell them to me.

First let me hear how the children stood 'round his knee,  
and I shall fancy his blessing resting on me;  
words full of kindness, deeds full of grace,  
all in the love light of Jesus' face.





I'm gonna sing when the Spirit says sing.  
*(Repeat two times)*  
and obey the Spirit of the Lord.

I'm gonna walk when the Spirit says walk.  
*(Repeat two times)*  
and obey the Spirit of the Lord.

I'm gonna leap when the Spirit says leap.  
*(Repeat two times)*  
and obey the Spirit of the Lord.

I'm gonna praise when the Spirit says praise.  
*(Repeat two times)*  
and obey the Spirit of the Lord.







With my hands open wide,  
I will give to you, give to you, give to you.

With my hands open wide,  
I will give to you all that you need.

With a happy heart,  
I will give to you, give to you, give to you.

With a happy heart,  
I will give to you all that you need.

With a loving heart,  
I will give to you, give to you, give to you.

With a loving heart,  
I will give to you all that you need.







If anybody asks you,  
who I am,  
who I am, who I am;  
If anybody asks you,  
who I am,  
tell them I'm a child  
of God.





I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy,  
down in my heart, (*Where?*) down in my heart,  
(*Where?*) down in my heart.

I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy,  
down in my heart, (*Where?*)  
down in my heart to stay.

I've got the peace that passes understanding,  
down in my heart, (*Where?*) down in my heart,  
(*Where?*) down in my heart. I've got the peace  
that passes understanding,  
down in my heart, (*Where?*)  
down in my heart to stay.

I've got the love of Jesus, love of Jesus,  
down in my heart, (*Where?*) down in my heart,  
(*Where?*) down in my heart. I've got the love  
of Jesus, love of Jesus,  
down in my heart, (*Where?*)  
down in my heart to stay.







Little children, sing your thanks to God. (clap, clap) *(Repeat)*  
Little children, sing your thanks to God,  
thanks to God, thanks to God. (clap, clap)

Little children, clap your thanks to God. (clap, clap) *(Repeat)*  
Little children, clap your thanks to God,  
thanks to God, thanks to God. (clap, clap)

Little children, dance your thanks to God. (clap, clap) *(Repeat)*  
Little children, dance your thanks to God,  
thanks to God, thanks to God. (clap, clap)

Little children, shout your thanks to God. (Thanks!) *(Repeat)*  
Little children, shout your thanks to God,  
thanks to God, thanks to God. (clap, clap)

Little children, praise the Lord your God. (clap, clap) *(Repeat)*  
Little children, praise the Lord your God,  
thanks to God, thanks to God. (clap, clap)







Love, love, love, love:  
Christians, this is your call.  
Love your neighbor as yourself  
for God loves us all.

Love, love, love, love:  
the gospel in a word is love.  
Love the Lord with all your heart,  
your strength, and your soul.

*—adapted words for verse 2*





Shalom, chaverim! Shalom, chaverim! Shalom, shalom!  
Lehitraot, lehitraot, shalom, shalom.

Glad tidings we bring of peace on earth;  
good will toward all;  
of peace on earth, of peace on earth,  
good tidings we bring.  
*(Repeat)*













God's love for us is truly amazing.

*(Repeat two times)*

How great is the love of God.

God's love goes higher than everything.

God's love goes deeper than everything.

God's love is wider than everything.

How great is the love of God!

El amor de Dios es maravilloso.

*(Repeat two times)*

¡Cuán grande es el amor de Dios!

Tan alto que no puedo ir arriba de él.

Tan bajo que no puedo ir debajo de él.

Tan ancho que no puedo ir afuera de él.

¡Cuán grande es el amor de Dios!





I have washed your feet,  
yes, I your teacher,  
have washed your feet,  
this I do in love.

I have washed your feet,  
now follow my example,  
do everything you do in love.

Do everything you do in love.









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