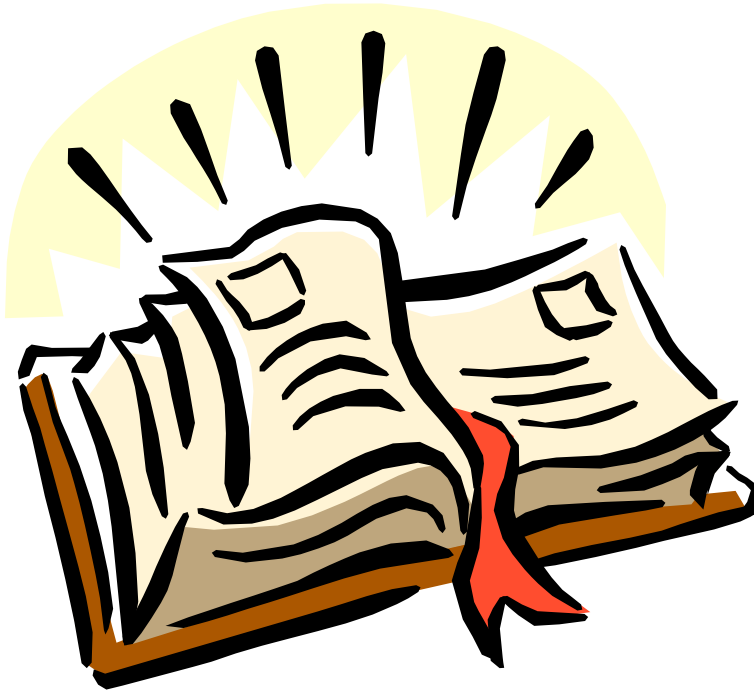


Bible Time for Kids!



CHILDREN'S DEVOTIONS FOR THE WEEK OF:



LESSON TITLE: Paul Writes to Philemon

**THEME: God wants us to love and forgive
our brothers and sisters in Christ.**

SCRIPTURE: The book of Philemon

Dear Parents...

Welcome to Bible Time for Kids! This is a series of daily devotions for children and their families. Our purpose is to supplement our Sunday morning curriculum and give you an opportunity to encourage your children to develop a daily devotional life. We hope you and your family will be blessed as you study God's Word together.

This week we learned about **Paul's letter to Philemon**. The theme was "**God wants us to love and forgive our brothers and sisters in Jesus.**" What would have happened if Jesus never died on the cross, and there were never things like love or forgiveness in this world? As Paul writes to Philemon from his prison cell he talks about how those who believe are all a part of God's family, and how we need to always forgive our brothers and sisters in Christ, as Jesus has forgiven us. We must always love and forgive everyone, whether they ask for it or not because that is the way Jesus would act and we want to be just like Jesus.

The section of scripture that we studied was **the book of Philemon**. The following five devotions are based on either the scripture and/or the theme for Sunday's lesson. As a starting point it would be good for you to review these verses with your children.

These devotions are designed to help you reinforce Sunday's lesson throughout the week with your children, provide some more ideas for the application of God's Word in your children's lives and provide a tool to help in family devotions.

Obviously children at various age levels will respond to the devotional in different ways. You may want to add your own ideas to these to make them more age appropriate.

May the Lord bless you as you study His Word together!

Day One

One Big Happy Family

Text: Ephesians 2:19-20 – “Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the family of God, having been built on the foundation...Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone.”

Also read Matthew 12:46-50

One day Billy and his family decided to go to a church picnic at the park. As Billy was sitting in the sand building a big sand castle, a little girl with blonde hair and blue eyes came up to him. She said, “Hi brother, can I play with you?” For a moment Billy was confused. He had brown hair and brown eyes, but a girl who looked totally different, who wasn't in his family called him “brother.” Billy forgot about it and said, “Sure you can play in the sand with me.”

After a little while, Billy decided to play on the swings. As he was swinging, an older boy who had different color skin and green eyes came up to him and said, “Hello little brother, can I give you a push to make you go higher?” Billy once again sat in amazement that another child he didn't know, or even look like was calling him “brother.” Why were these other kids calling Billy their brother?

The answer is that as Christians we are in the family of God. When Jesus died on the cross, He provided everyone with an opportunity to receive Him into their hearts, and to come into the family of God. When we were born, we were born into sin. But because of what Jesus has done for us, we can be washed, forgiven, reborn and given a brand new life with God. We can be born into God's family where there is grace, forgiveness and love. When the children referred to Billy as brother, they were saying, we know Jesus too, and we are members of God's family. God has given us new life. Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” John 14:6. Because we know Jesus in our hearts, we are a part of God's family and we'll all be together in heaven one day.

- How can someone become a part of God's family?
- When you are born, what are you born into?
- What can we call those who know Jesus and have been forgiven?

Kid's Bible Dictionary



Reborn: Asking Jesus into your heart and allowing Him to forgive you of your sin and give you new life in Him.

Day Two

We Must Love One Another

Text: 1 Peter 4:8 – “And above all things have fervent love for one another, for love will cover a multitude of sins.”

Also read 1 John 4:7-11

What is the greatest command given by God in the Bible? It is the command to love God with all of our heart and to love one another. Love is the fruit of the Spirit and is something Jesus did all the time. What does God say love is? Let's look at a list of what the Bible says that love is (see 1 Corinthians 13). Love is:

- Kind
- Does not envy
- Does not show off
- Not boastful and proud
- Does not behave rudely
- Not selfish
- Thinks no evil
- Rejoices in truth
- Never fails
- Endures all things

As we follow Jesus, we must follow Jesus and his example. Jesus loved everyone. He loved family, friends, His disciples, enemies, and even those who did wrong and were evil. God's Word also says that if we know God, we know love and if we love we know God. How many times have you been given the opportunity to show the love of Jesus to others, and have not? Has there been a time when tiredness, a bad day, or some situation prevented you from showing love to another person like you should have? As Christians, we must always put love at the top of our list. We must love everyone no matter what the situation or problem we face. By showing love, we will not only be doing God's will, but we can also show others that God is living inside of us.

- What is the greatest command in the Bible?
- Can you think of an individual that needs to be shown love, especially God's love?
- What is love?

Kid's Bible Dictionary



Command: Something the Lord tells us and requires us to do

Forever Encourage

Text: 1 Thessalonians 5:11- "Therefore comfort each other and encourage one another, just as you are also doing."

Also read Acts 20:12; Jeremiah 29:11

It is the day of the big bike race and Susie is ready at the starting line to begin. As the starting time approaches, the announcer says, "Bikers take your mark...get set..." BANG! There's the signal and the race is underway. Susie is feeling good as she heads toward the front of the pack in a twenty-mile bike race. She says a prayer to the Lord for strength, takes steady breaths and has plenty of water nearby. She knows she will make it without any problems.

But as the race goes on and Susie approaches the end of the course, she is feeling really tired and hot and is ready to quit. Her legs ache, her throat burns, and her brain is telling her to just stop and be happy with how far she has come. She wants to pull over and stop so badly! But as she approaches the finish line, she begins to hear the roar of the crowd and her family yelling, "We love you! Keep going, Susie!" With that encouragement, she pushes hard and finishes the race.

How many times have there been situations that you needed an encouraging word or times when others needed to hear encouragement from you? The best encouragement for Christians comes from God's Word. Paul is a wonderful example of encouragement by listening to what God told him to write to those who needed guidance or support. A perfect example is when he writes to Philemon and encourages him, and others, to show love and forgiveness to their fellow brothers and sisters. Since we are part of God's family, we should always encourage each other and help one another whenever possible. Paul's encouragement was shown by writing letters. Jesus showed encouragement by His actions, and we can encourage others and be used by the Lord in many different ways.

- In what ways can you encourage brothers and sisters in Jesus?
- Who is the greatest encourager of all?

Kid's Bible Dictionary



Encourage: to strengthen with courage and hope; to give help
Edify: lift up; build up; support; strengthen

Forgiveness is the Key

Text: Matthew 6:14-15 – “For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will the Father forgive your trespasses.”

Also read Matthew 18:15-16; 21-35; Acts 7:60

Can you think back to the time when you didn't know Jesus? Maybe you have believed in Jesus for a long time and it is hard to remember a time when you didn't know Jesus. The Bible tells us that before we came to Jesus that we were sinners, dead in sin with no hope. Then when we asked Jesus to come into our heart, we received the love, hope, and salvation that only the Lord can provide. We also received one of the greatest gifts of all, the gift of forgiveness. Do you remember what it felt like before being forgiven of all of your sins? There was the burden and weight of having to worry about all the things you did wrong; not being able to say, “Lord forgive me” and leave it in His hands? Today I hope you can say, “Lord, I messed up. Please forgive me.” Everyone would like to be forgiven, but we can only find true forgiveness for our sins in Jesus. Then did you find that as you were forgiven, it was easier for you to forgive others?

In the Book of Acts, Luke tells us about a man by the name of Stephen. Stephen was a man who knew Jesus and did His will until his death. After talking about Jesus to others, the Jewish leaders wanted to kill him because of his love for the Lord. Stephen was marched out of Jerusalem and stoned to death. As Stephen was lying on rocks waiting to die, there could have been many different things that he could have said. But, the final thing he did was to ask the Lord to please forgive these men that harmed him for they didn't know what they were doing.

As you walk with the Lord Jesus, do you forgive others? When someone says, “I'm sorry” do you forgive them and forget about what sin they might have done to you? Do you let it go or do you act like you forgive them, but keep telling them about the wrong things they did over and over? As Jesus forgives all His children, we too must forgive others who do wrong things to us. Jesus has forgiven us and we must follow His example.

- Are you like Jesus and Stephen who forgave no matter what?
- How can a person receive forgiveness from the Lord?

Kid's Bible Dictionary



Forgiveness: Letting go of something wrong that someone else did to you.
Stoned: Being hit with rocks until a person dies.

Day Five

Love, Encourage and Forgive

Text: 1 John 2:10- "He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him."

Also read Luke 15:11-32

It is awesome to be a part of God's family, and to have brothers and sisters in Christ all over the world. It's great to know that they too have found the love of God and have been forgiven. But as we have learned what love, encouragement and forgiveness are, do we show those things to our brothers and sisters? As the verse in 1 John explains, only he who does those things is truly following the Lord. When we follow Jesus we must not feel sorry for ourselves when someone sins against us, but automatically turn and say, "Please forgive them Lord and allow me to help them in their time of trouble, and love them."

The story of the Prodigal Son in the Bible shows us the example of all three things being lived out. As a father gives an inheritance to his two sons, one son remains with him at his farm and continues to work and do everything the father asks of him. The second son, takes his money, leaves, and spends it on wasteful things. When he had spent every bit of the money he was given, he became hungry, poor, and without hope, so he crawled back to his father in shame and disappointment. When he reached home, he was greeted by his father with love, forgiveness, and encouragement and was praised for coming back home. The first son can't believe it. Why on earth would his father be so happy to have the son that was irresponsible, that goofed up, and had done so much wrong return home? Why was there so much praise when he returned?

We who know Jesus understand that like the second son we too were born in sin, were irresponsible, and could do no good. And yet the Lord loved, encouraged, and forgave us. We too must follow that example. We must love, encourage, and forgive as Jesus would. By following God's command to do these things, we will not only be doing the will of God, but we will also show God's love to others. Is there a brother or sister that you might not get along with, that you need to go and ask for their forgiveness? Remember, no matter what a brother or sister might do, we are all a part of the family of God, and we must forever love, encourage and forgive just as Jesus has done for us.

Kid's Prayer Time



The desire of the Lord is for us to love, encourage, and forgive our brothers and sisters in Christ. As Jesus has taken all sin away through the cross, we too must do these things and following His example, and obey God in what He commands us to do.

Memory Verse...

First and Second Grade (paraphrased)

“Yes, brother, let me
have joy from you;
refresh my heart
in the Lord.”

Third Grade and Above

“Yes, brother, let me
have joy from you in the
Lord; refresh my heart
in the Lord.”

Philemon verse 20