

Abigail's Kindness

Bible Verse

Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share.

1 Timothy 6:18

Bible Story Reference

1 Samuel 25

Teacher's Devotional

Paul's words to Timothy in this lesson's Bible verse sound as though they might have been intended for teachers or parents

of preschoolers. Doing good and sharing generously are high on the list of actions that people want to see young children develop. Even an older child may need reminders to carry out a good deed or to share with someone else.

But Paul did not have children in mind when he penned this instruction. The preceding verse shows that he was thinking about adults—grown-ups, people who should have developed these qualities in their formative years, people who should have already known better.

Paul was not even thinking about adults in general. He had a very specific group in mind: "those who are rich in this present world" (1 Timothy 6:17). He was thinking about successful adults, well-to-do adults, influential adults. He was thinking about those who have achieved positions of status in the community. He was thinking of those of us who may have gotten so absorbed in the quest for success that we are prone to forget what is really important.

Nabal, the Old Testament character we read about in 1 Samuel 25, was certainly a fellow who had lost sight of these virtues. He was a bottom-line type of guy. However, he was focused on the wrong bottom line. While his hardheaded approach to business earned him money and perhaps even the respect of some, it also cost him his life. What a difference faith in God, some good deeds, some sharing and some kindness would have made!

If Nabal had been able to read Paul's words, would he have changed his ways? Would he then have enjoyed the benefits of generosity that Paul describes: the kind of treasure that is a firm foundation for true life (see 1 Timothy 6:19)? Having read Paul's words ourselves, will it make a difference to us?

Character Builder

Generous and kind attitudes help us build friendships.

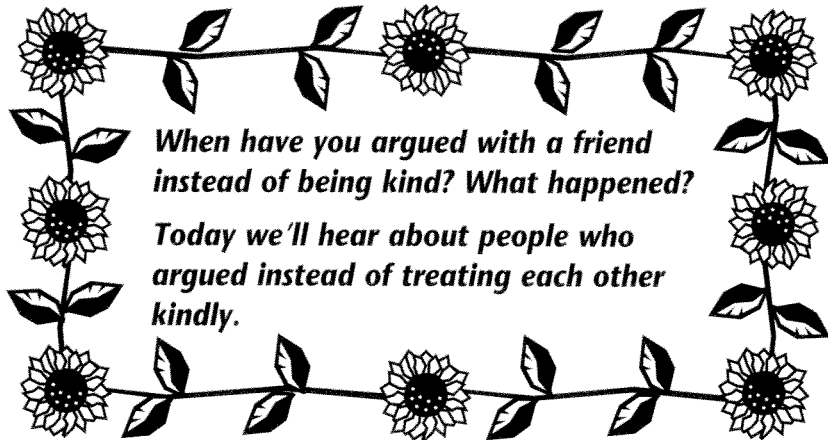
Bible Story Center

Materials

Kindness poster from *Poster Pack*;
¼ cup (2 oz.) play dough and a
plastic spoon for each student.

Tell the Story

Follow along with me as we use our dough to tell today's story.

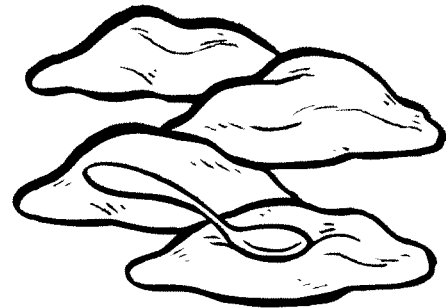


When have you argued with a friend instead of being kind? What happened?

Today we'll hear about people who argued instead of treating each other kindly.

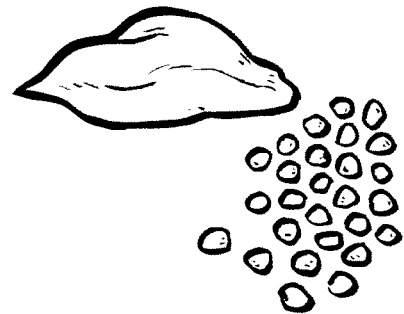
1. Divide your dough in half. From one half make some hills. Use a plastic spoon to shape hills.

Before David became the king of Israel, he and his men spent a lot of time living out in the hills. For one thing, they were trying to stay away from King Saul. King Saul wanted to KILL David because he knew David would one day become the king. But because David did not want to hurt Saul AND because he wanted to stay safe, he and his men stayed far from the palace and camped out in places where there were very few people.



2. From the other half of your dough, roll tiny balls to make a flock of sheep.

But out in the hills there were robbers who would raid the flocks belonging to others. So while David and his men were living out in the hills, they often protected flocks of sheep and the shepherds who took care of the sheep. One year, David and his men protected the sheep and shepherds of a man whose name was Nabal.



Later that year, David and his men were still living out in the hills. And they were very HUNGRY! They needed food and water. So David sent some of his men to the place where Nabal was shearing his sheep. They greeted Nabal and politely reminded Nabal that while his shepherds and sheep were out in the hills, David and his men had protected them.

David's men then asked if Nabal might please give them whatever food and drink he could spare. Now MOST people would have gladly given David and his men whatever they asked for, because David was a hero in that country!

But no matter what ANYONE else might have done, NABAL wasn't about to share anything! The Bible says he was mean and selfish in the way he treated people. The name "Nabal" meant "fool," and this was one time he lived up to his name!

“Who IS this David?” Nabal asked, as if he had never HEARD of David! He went on to insult David. Then Nabal finished up by saying he saw no reason to share his food and water with some stranger! Nabal probably thought he had really shown David who was boss!

3. **Make a sword.** David’s men returned and told him everything Nabal had done and said. David then instructed his men to put on their swords. They were going to have to TAKE food and water from this selfish, foolish man who would not share.

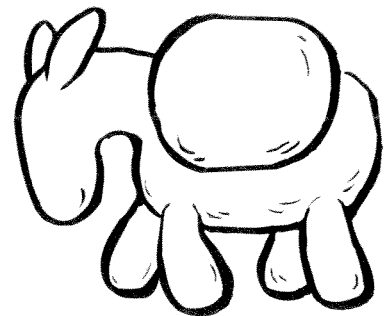
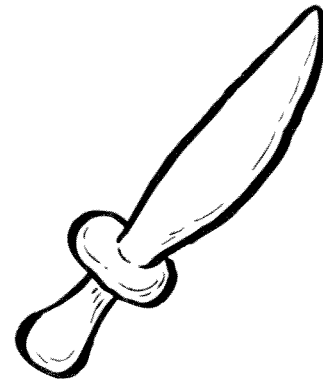
But in the meantime, one of Nabal’s workers ran home and told Nabal’s wife, Abigail, what had happened!

“See what you can do,” the worker told Abigail. “I think we’re going to have trouble with David, because our master is such a wicked man. No one can talk to him!”

4. **Make a donkey. Add bundles to its back.** Abigail was a wise woman and immediately made plans to stop the quarrel her husband had started with David. Abigail quickly had her servants pack many pounds of bread, figs, raisins, grain and good things to drink on donkeys. She told her servants to go on ahead of her.

Soon Abigail, herself, came riding up to David’s camp. She greeted David humbly and said, “Sir, let me take the blame for Nabal’s meanness. Ignore him—he is a fool, just as his name says. Please accept these gifts I bring and forgive Nabal’s actions.”

David was impressed with this wise and kind woman. He thanked God that she had come and stopped the trouble between him and Nabal. David told Abigail to go in peace; he would not hurt Nabal. Soon after this, however, Nabal died. When David heard that Nabal died, he remembered Abigail. He remembered her generosity and kindness. David sent his servants to ask Abigail to become his wife! And kind and generous Abigail married David, who later became king of Israel!



.....
Focus on the Fruit

What made Nabal a foolish man? (He didn’t listen to others. He was mean and would not share.) **Why did David ask him for help?** (David and his men had been kind and had protected Nabal’s sheep.) **How did Abigail show she was kind and wise?** (Brought food to David and his men. Apologized for her husband’s actions.) **Abigail’s kindness made a big difference by helping to keep peace between David and Nabal.**

Being generous and kind can make a difference in our lives, too. Show the Kindness poster. **Growing the fruit of kindness in our lives pleases God. It also helps us make and keep good friends!**

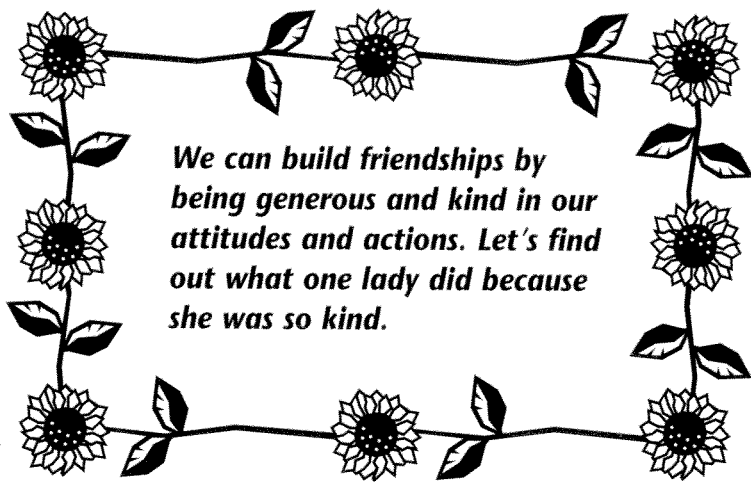
Fruitful Lives Object Talk

Bible Verse

Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. 1 Timothy 6:18

Materials

Bible with bookmark at 1 Timothy 6:18, kerosene lantern or a flashlight.



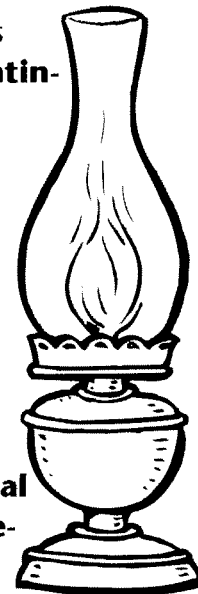
We can build friendships by being generous and kind in our attitudes and actions. Let's find out what one lady did because she was so kind.

Lead the Activity

1. Show lantern or flashlight. **When do people use lights like these? How might a light like this help when you are afraid in the dark?** Students respond. **In England during the 1800s, a woman named Florence Nightingale became known as "the Lady with the Lamp."**

2. **When Florence Nightingale lived, hospitals were nothing like they are now. There were very few doctors and nurses, and people didn't understand that germs make people sick. Hospitals weren't kept very clean. Many people who went to hospitals became sicker instead of getting better.**

When Florence became a nurse, she believed God wanted her to change things! She used her own money to buy clean clothes for patients. She hired people to wash sheets and blankets. Florence often worked until late at night, carrying a lamp through the hospital as she checked on her patients. She was never too tired to help someone.



As Florence worked, she also talked to people about Jesus. Florence—"the Lady with the Lamp"—helped people learn about Jesus' love and saved the lives of many sick or injured people because of her kindness and generosity.

Conclude

Read 1 Timothy 6:18 aloud. **How was Florence Nightingale kind and willing to share? How can you be kind and share?** Students tell ideas. **Let's ask God to help us build friendships by being generous and kind this week.** Lead students in prayer.

.....

Discussion Questions

- 1. What are some generous or kind actions kids your age can do? How might these actions help to build friendships?**
- 2. Read 1 Timothy 6:18. How can we "be rich in good deeds"?** (Do good things often.)
- 3. How would obeying 1 Timothy 6:18 help the kids in your school?**

Lesson 15

Active Game Center: Bounce It!

Materials

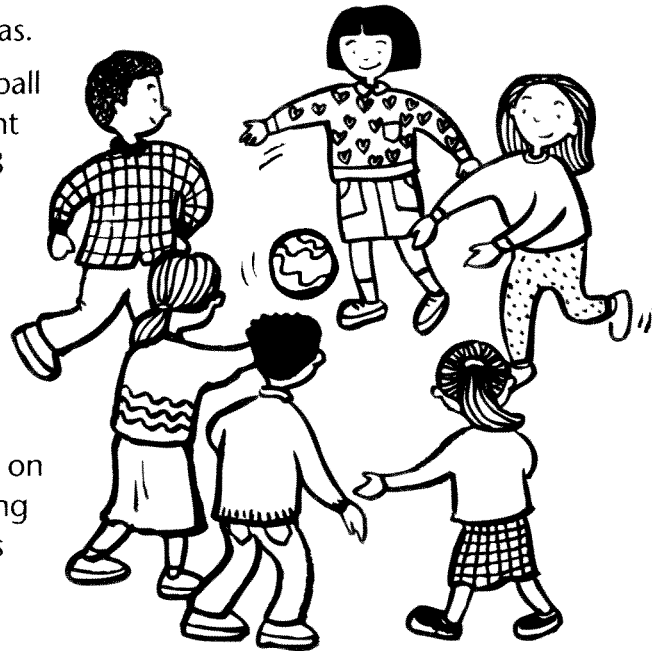
Bible, large rubber ball or tennis ball.

Lead the Game

1. Students stand in a circle and practice bouncing the ball to each other.
2. Ask a volunteer to read 1 Timothy 6:18 aloud. **What does this verse command us to do?** (Do good deeds. Be generous. Be willing to share.) **What are some ways to follow these commands?** Volunteers tell ideas.
3. At your signal, students begin bouncing the ball to each other. When you signal stop, the student with the ball tells a way to obey 1 Timothy 6:18 or says the verse aloud. Continue play as time allows.

Options

1. Play music from *God's Kids Grow* cassette/CD as students bounce the ball.
2. Use two balls. Write "2" on one ball and "3" on the other (numbers may be formed with masking tape if needed). When you signal stop, students holding balls name that many ways to obey 1 Timothy 6:18.
3. Play a few rounds in which student holding the ball names a Bible character, a fruit of the Spirit or a book of the Bible.
4. As students bounce ball, they say the words of 1 Timothy 6:18, continuing until the entire verse has been quoted.



.....

Discussion Questions

1. **What are some ways to be generous at school? With friends? With people you don't know?** (Share scissors or pencils. Share toys when you are playing together. Give offering.)
2. **Why are kind attitudes the best ones for building friendships?**
3. **What actions does the Bible tell us to do?** (Love others. Honor your parents. Tell others about God's love.)

Lesson 15

Art Center: Share-a-Stamp

Materials

Sturdy cardboard, scissors, several stamp pads, Fun Foam and/or yarn, glue sticks, paper.

Prepare the Activity

Cut the cardboard into rectangles no larger than the surfaces of the stamp pads, cutting at least one rectangle for each student. Make a sample of the type(s) of stamp(s) your students will make.

Lead the Activity

1. Show students your sample stamp. Give each student a cardboard rectangle. Students bend up about ½ inch (1.25 cm) of cardboard on each end, creating handles for stamp (see sketch a).

2. Students create stamps following one of these methods:

(a) Students cut shapes or designs from Fun Foam, and then glue Fun Foam shapes to cardboard rectangles (see sketch b);

(b) Students draw simple designs on cardboard rectangle with glue sticks. Students place yarn lengths on glue, cutting off any excess yarn (see sketch c). (Note: Use glue sticks, so glue will dry quickly.)

3. Students firmly press stamps onto stamp pads and then onto sheets of paper, creating their own designs and sharing stamps with each other. Ask Discussion Questions below as students create stamp designs.

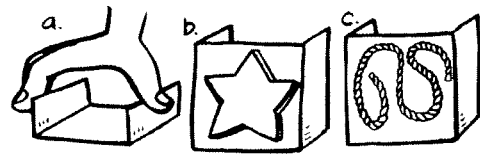
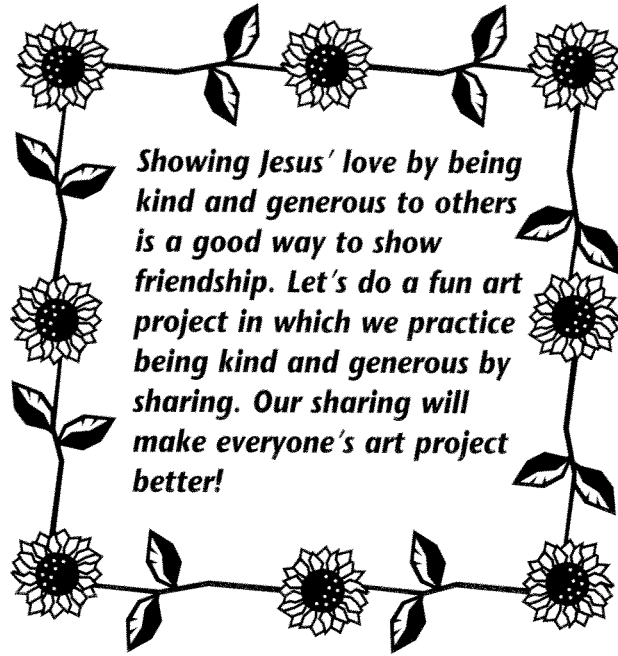
Options

1. Students make alphabet stamps and then use stamps to spell key words of 1 Timothy 6:18.
2. Provide plastic bags in which students can take stamps home.
3. Students share their finished stamp designs by giving them to friends.

.....

Discussion Questions

1. **What does it mean to have a generous attitude?** (Being willing to share or give more than what is usual or expected.)
2. **What are some things we can share to show that we have a generous or kind attitude?** (Food with people who are happy. Time to help someone who is hurt.)
3. **How does sharing help build friendships?** (People like to be around others who are generous and kind. People are often more willing to share when you have been generous with them.)



Lesson 15

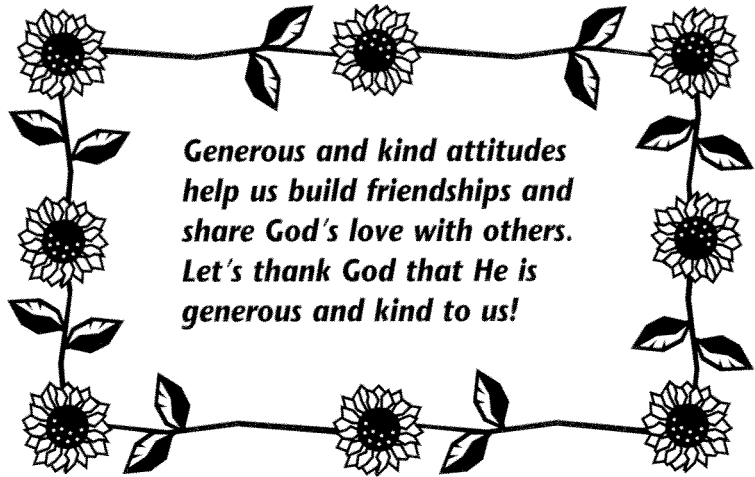
Worship Center

Bible Verse

Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. 1 Timothy 6:18

Materials

Bible, *God's Kids Grow* cassette/CD or music video and player, "Be So Kind" word chart (p. 455 in this book), paper, marker, large sheet of paper, masking tape.



Prepare the Activity

Scramble the letters of the words "good," "deeds," "share" (if you have older children also scramble "generous"); print each scrambled word on a separate sheet of paper. Print the words of 1 Timothy 6:18 on the large sheet of paper, leaving blanks for each of the scrambled words.

Sing to God

Play "Be So Kind," encouraging students to sing along with the music. **What are some of the ways this song suggests that we can be kind and generous?** (Give others more than they are looking for. Share what you have. Put others first.)

Hear and Say God's Word

Display paper on which you have printed 1 Timothy 6:18. Show a paper on which you have printed the scrambled letters of one of the words of the verse. Students identify the scrambled word. Print word in correct place on verse paper. Recite verse together; then hold up another scrambled word. Repeat until all words have been unscrambled. **We usually think that a rich person is one who has a lot of money. What does 1 Timothy 6:18 tell us to be rich with?** (Good deeds.) **What would a person who is rich with good deeds act like?** (Help others. Treat others fairly.)

Pray to God

Tell students one way God has been kind and generous to you. Invite students to complete this sentence in prayer: **Thank You, God, for being kind and generous by . . .** End prayer time by asking for God's help to show His love by being kind and generous.

Option

If students give an offering during this worship time, explain that giving money to God is one way to obey 1 Timothy 6:18. Tell an example of how your church has been generous in giving to others.

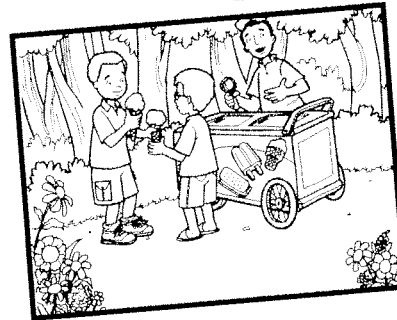
Lesson 15

Bible Verse Coloring Center



Materials

Crayons or markers, a copy of page 195 or page 196 from *Bible Verse Coloring Pages #2* for each student.



Lead the Activity

Read 1 Timothy 6:18. **What good thing is someone in this picture doing? What are some good things you can do at school this week? What good things can you do at home?** Students color picture.

Option

Also provide a copy of "Draw a picture of a time someone was kind to you or to a friend" page (p. 229 from *Bible Verse Coloring Pages #2*). Students draw and color pictures.

Service Project Center

Materials

Materials needed for "Story Time" (p. 86 from *The Big Book of Service Projects*).

Lead the Activity

Students complete "Story Time" activity as directed in *The Big Book of Service Projects*. **Working on this service project is a way for us to be generous and kind. To whom can you be generous and kind this week? What are some ways you can be generous and kind to each of these people?**



Discipleship Activity Center

Materials

Discussion Cards for Galatians 5:22,23 (pp. 147-152 from *The Big Book of Christian Growth*), materials needed for "Foiled Juggling" or "Card Toss" (p. 17 or p. 57 from *The Big Book of Christian Growth*).



Lead the Activity

Today we're going to play a game to talk about ways obeying Galatians 5:22,23 can help us show kindness. Students complete activity as directed in *The Big Book of Christian Growth*.