

Lesson 12: I Will Be Encouraging

Objectives: Students will...

- 1) Learn the importance of encouragement
- 2) Do activities to help reinforce the idea that we need to encourage others even when it is hard
- 3) Recognize the importance of being encouraging and the benefits

Accommodations: How will I accommodate individual needs of students? See Lesson 1

Supplies:

Teacher Materials (provided in classroom)

- Bible(s)
- Markers/Pencil Crayons
- Pens/Pencils
- Attendance Chart (See Template)
- Stickers for Attendance
- Lesson Review Visual Aids – one for teacher to share at the beginning of each class from lesson 2
- Benefits of Encouragement Story – one per student if reading as a group
- Scissors – to share
- Encouraging Notes – one sheet per student

Optional: Cheer Packages

***Prepare in advance who you would give these packages too, a children's ward, senior's center, hospital, etc.** Then if desired, plan a time with parents to have students meet as a group and hand out packages to the people in the place you chose and arrange with the directors there to maybe have kids sing some church songs with their parents to encourage the people.

- Clean shoe box or similar box – one per student
- Candies or chocolates (individually wrapped or in small sealed bags) – one bag per student
- Small store bought boxes or bags of raisins, crackers, cookies – 1-3 packages per student
- Different Colored Construction Paper – enough for class to share to cover their boxes
- Stickers – encouraging stickers such as hearts– enough for each student to put some on box
- Scrap Colored Paper – enough for children to cut out heart shapes
- Glue sticks – to share
- Scissors – to share
- Tissue Paper or Easter Grass – enough for each child to fill the bottom of their box
- Paper cut to card size – for each student to draw something nice on it
- *IF giving packages to people in a hospital type setting you can also include small packages of Kleenex, hand lotion, notepad and pens, etc.



Grab Bag Words Game

- Grab Bag Words – one sheet for teacher to cut out before class
- Paper Bag – one for teacher to put Grab Bag Words into

Snack: Mints or Raisins

- Mints and/or Raisins a few for each student
- Napkin one per student
- Water/Cup one per student

Lesson:

1) Introduction to Lesson

5 minutes

As students enter, welcome them and help find a chair to sit at. Thank them for coming. Take attendance (using attendance chart supplied).

*Have Bibles for those who need them and Lesson Review Visual Aid Sheet to show students.

Show the lesson review visual aid sheet.

Can anyone remember what we have studied so far? Look at the picture, name what happened for the lesson we have already studied, and what we learned from that lesson.



Lesson 1: We should stay focused on Jesus. We do so by 1) getting rid of things that stop us from focusing 2) we work in all things with Jesus in mind, and 3) we think of Jesus throughout the day.

Lesson 2: We need to put God first by loving Him with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength.

Lesson 3: We need to seek God and we can do so like Jesus by taking some quiet time every day to pray.

Lesson 4: We are to love others as ourselves. Meaning we need to go out of our way to show love to others by our words, thoughts, prayers and actions.

Lesson 5: We can be brave like Esther and Mordecai who stood up and took responsibility to help others.

Lesson 6: We can be determined and persistent like the four friends who had enough faith to keep trying to bring their friend to Jesus.

Lesson 7: We can be daring by giving our all like the widow did when she gave all she had to live on to the Lord knowing He would care for her.

Lesson 8: We can be ready to serve and listen like Samuel who served God his entire life and was willing to act when called to serve.

Lesson 9: We can stand up for God like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego who would not worship a false image but stood up for God and won!

Lesson 10: We can be wise like Miriam who was willing to help and knew what to say to help baby Moses.

Lesson 11: We can be patient and confident in God like Elijah who waited three years for it to rain.

2) I Will Be Encouraging

5 minutes

This quarter we have been studying different Bible characteristics we should and can have by focusing on Jesus. We also looked at many people in the Bible young and old who displayed bravery and Godly characteristics in their life because of their strong faith in God.

Today we are going to look at the importance of being encouraging.

What does it mean to be encouraging? Let students answer.

It means to give someone support, to build them up, and make them feel loved.

We are going to read a story about the benefits of encouragement and a practical example of how you and I can be encouraging to others.

3) Benefits of Encouragement Story

10-15 minutes

Hand out one story sheet to each student.

Read the following story to the students. Or, if possible get students to take turns reading the different parts. Each student can read either Sophie, Mr. Stone, Mrs. Martin, Mom, or Narrator.

Ask discussion questions at the end. Below is the complete story for you to read or follow along.

Benefits of Encouragement Story

Narrator: “Mr. Stone, the Sunday school teacher, made an announcement to all of the first, second, and third graders. He said:

Mr. Stone: “Next Saturday, meet at the church at 10:00am. We will go to the Grand Ridge Nursing Home and sing for the senior residents there. Afterwards, we will go to the park for a picnic.”

Sophie: Said to herself, “Oh, no, I don’t want to go to the nursing home. I don’t want to see a bunch of old people in wheelchairs and stuff. Besides, it smells funny in there. I would rather be watching cartoons on Saturday morning.”

Narrator: When Saturday morning came, Sophie’s mother woke her up and said:

Mom: “Better get up, Sophie, so you won’t be late getting to the church.”

Sophie: “Oh, Mom, do I have to? I don’t want to spend my Saturday morning singing to old people. Besides, I want to watch cartoons.”

Mom: “You have to learn to do kind things and encourage other people. When you do you will feel even happier than had you just stayed home and watched TV. Watching cartoons might make you happy for a short time, but your visit will make someone else happy for a long time. It is the right thing to do.”

Narrator: So Sophie went with the others to the nursing home. When they went inside, they found an audience in wheelchairs ready for a concert. Mr. Stone led the children in singing some hymns. Sophie noticed how many of the ladies and men smiled and sang along with them.

Mr. Stone asked if anyone had a request. An elderly lady, whose name was Dori, asked them to sing “Amazing Grace”. It was her favorite. Sophie saw her tapping her fingers on her wheelchair as she sang. Sophie realized how happy their singing had made her.

After singing was over, Mr. Stone led the children to a room where a lady couldn’t get out of bed, Mrs. Martin. Sophie thought how lonely she must be, never getting to go anywhere. She walked over to her bed and said:

Sophie: “Hi, How are you today?”

Mrs. Martin: “Pretty good.”

Narrator: “She said with a smile. Then she asked Sophie:

Mrs. Martin: “What is your name?”

Sophie: “I’m Sophie.”

Mrs. Martin: “Do you have a dog at home, Sophie?”



Sophie: "Yes, I do. A dachshund named Jolly."

Mrs. Martin: "Oh, a weenie dog! They are so fun. You see, I used to train dogs. I owned a kennel, and people would bring their dogs to me to train them. If you check with the director, I am sure he would let you bring Jolly to see me. I will show you how to teach him some tricks. Would you like that?"

Sophie: "Yes, Mrs. Martin. That would be cool!"

Narrator: "Mr. Stone asked the children to sing a song for Mrs. Martin and then they left to go to the park. Sophie had a good feeling inside. She knew that she had done a kind thing by encouraging the people at the nursing home. She saw how happy it made them, and it made her happy too! She also knew that Mrs. Martin was glad that they had come to visit her, but Sophie hadn't expected her to do something nice for Sophie! Sophie and Jolly did go and see Mrs. Martin. Jolly learned two new tricks! And Sophie realized cartoons weren't as enjoyable as encouraging others.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why is it important for us to encourage people like those in nursing homes or hospitals?
2. Why do you think that Sophie was surprised that she enjoyed herself?
3. Has someone done something that encouraged you?
4. How do you feel when someone encourages you?
5. What are some ways we can encourage others this week?

4) Encouraging Notes and Discussion

15 minutes

Ensure each student has a Bible, hand out some if needed.

Have students turn to **1 Thessalonians 5:11**. Read or ask someone to read it out loud.

Say: **Paul is telling the church in Thessalonica that they need to do what two things?** Encourage and build each other up.

What does that mean? To say nice things, do nice things, support other people even if we don't hang out with them much or know them that well, make them feel better than before they saw us, cheer them up, help them to make good choices, etc.



We are told we need to encourage people and build them up. We are going to practice that right now!

- Hand out one encouraging note sheet to each student along with pencils or pencil crayons and scissors.
- Read the directions out loud. Encourage them to think of different people besides immediate family. Someone at church, someone at school, etc. Help them as needed to come up with ideas and to write
- 1) The name of the person and
- 2) their name at the end of each encouraging words they write.
- Have them cut out their notes and ensure they remember to hand them out to those people they have chosen after class.

Say: **When we are talking about being encouraging, how can we encourage others when they are talking about something exciting that has happened to them?** Let students answer.

What about when they express a concern over a problem they are having? (You might want to have an example of each if students need help.) Let students answer.

When you are talking with others, who do you prefer to talk to? People who are encouraging you to do good and make you feel better? Or people who make you feel sad, and want you to do bad things? Let students answer.

We all want to be encouraged. Encouragement helps us feel better. Sometimes though, we laugh at the things others say that are discouraging about other people. We definitely don't laugh or like it when they talk about us. Then it isn't funny, it hurts. But sometimes we think it is acceptable when we do it to others.

We have all been hurt by unkind words. Discouragement hurts. We need to remember that even if it is not directed towards us, discouragement is something we have to avoid. Our words are very important. We should use them only to encourage or help others.

As Christians we should encourage our fellow Christians. We should also encourage our friends and family who aren't Christians. We should especially encourage the kids at school and church who aren't popular or who aren't liked by other kids. Everyone needs encouragement.

Ask: How do you think someone would feel receiving something like this? Let students answer.

Would you like to receive something like this?

How do you feel having made this for someone?

Encouraging others not only supports and makes their day brighter, but it pleases God, and makes us feel good as well – it is a win, win, win!

Let's always remember to encourage others daily, everywhere we go and to make an effort to come up with ways to encourage others!

5) Optional: Bible Characteristics Grab Bag

10 minutes

Before class: Print one "Grab Bag Words" Sheet and cut out words. Gather paper bag to put the words in.

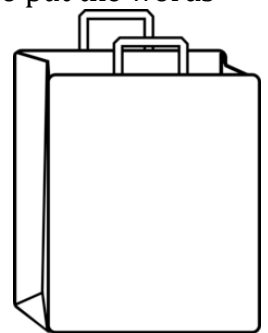
During class: Say, We are going to play a game and see how many words we can find that are encouraging or that demonstrate good qualities. I will put you into two teams. (Make sure older students are paired with younger students.) Each team will take a turn picking out one piece of paper from the bag without looking. The paper will either have a good characteristic or a bad one. Your team will say the word out loud and decide if it is a good characteristic. If it is, you will get to keep the paper and it will be worth a point. If you get a word that is a bad characteristic, your team will have to give the paper to me and you will get no points. The team with the most good characteristics at the end wins!

Once all the pieces have been removed, discuss the following while students look through their piles of words.

What does it mean to be encouraging? Let students answer.

To be encouraging means...

- To be considerate and supportive
- To make an other's day brighter than before
- To do something nice for others



Grab Bag Words – cut out each word below and stick in a paper bag

Good Characteristics	Bad Characteristics
Honest	Dishonest
Faithful	Hurtful
Patient	Mean
Loyal	Rude
Dependable	Selfish
Honorable	Unreliable
Reliable	Irresponsible
Responsible	
Accountable	
Kind	
Encouraging	
Serving	
Thoughtful	
Helpful	
Trustworthy	
Giving	

- To lift someone's spirits
- To think of ways to do nice things
- To smile and be helpful, etc.

What does it mean to be honest? Faithful? Giving? etc?

How do being these things encourage others?

How can you be encouraging this week?

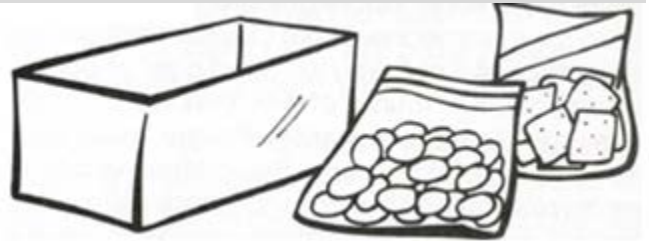
When someone does something to encourage you, make sure you say thank you and take notice of it.

6) Optional: Cheer Packages

15-20 minutes

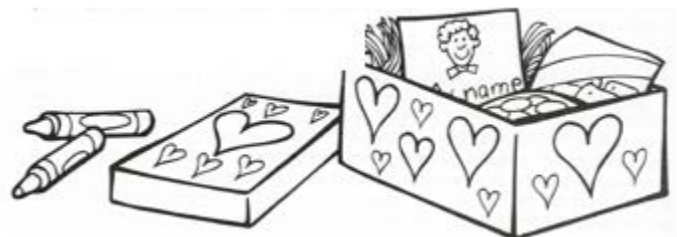
Before class: Gather all the supplies listed from supply section. Ensure food items are in sealed packages to give away. If desired, you can ask parents to bring sealed candy packages or small boxes to help.

Determine who will receive the finished cheer packages in advance – a senior center, hospital, or children's ward, for example.



During class: Tell students that, **"Today we are going to encourage some people who really need encouraging. (Insert who you have chosen). We are going to decorate these boxes and then add some treats and helpful things to hand out to them as a way to encourage them. We will also draw a picture of ourselves and write our name and the words: "I am praying for you!" on the pieces of paper we have and place it in your box so the person knows exactly who gave it!**

- **First let's decorate our boxes with the colored construction paper, using the scissors, glue and tape, cover the whole box in nice colors.**
- **After that, add some stickers and cut out hearts to glue onto the box.** When done say:
- **Now we need to fill the box. Let's draw a nice picture of ourselves with our name first.**
- **Now let's fill the bottom of the box with fluffy paper or Easter grass.**
- **Next we will add the treats and our picture on the top.** Help students by handing out the different items for them to put in their box.
- **When done, put the lid on the box** (making sure that it is decorated as well.)



Then either deliver the boxes yourself this week or set a time when the students will meet and all of you can deliver the packages together so the students see the results of their kindness. Be sure to check with the place you plan to deliver them first.

Ask: How do you think someone would feel receiving something like this? Let students answer.

Would you like to receive something like this?

How do you feel having made this for someone?

Encouraging others not only supports and makes their day brighter, but it pleases God, and makes us feel good as well – it is a win, win, win!

Let's always remember to encourage others daily, everywhere we go and to make an effort to come up with ways to encourage others!

7) I Will Follow Songs

5-10 minutes

Choose songs from the I Will Follow Song Sheet and/or sing song below:

Encouraging Song

(Tune: Frere Jacques)

Are you being kind to others?
Don't delay, start today!
Helping out and sharing,
Showing love and caring,
Every way, every day.

8) Optional: Memory Verse

2-5 minutes

For this quarter, each week have the students go to **John 14:6** in their Bibles and read the verse allowed as a class 2 times. Other options include:

- You saying a word and having them repeat it as you go through the verse
- Have students repeat a small phrase ex: *"I am the way"* a few times before working on the next phrase.
- Have students repeat after each other
- Ask students to think of hand gestures. Ex: Point ahead when you say "the way", point to their Bibles when they say "truth", etc. and then go through verses as a class with gestures.

John 14:6

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

9) Optional - Snack: Mints and/or Raisins

5 minutes

Hand out a few pieces to each student, ensuring you check for allergies first. Say, **this snack is to remind us that we should be encouraging. When we are encouraging, we are offering encourage "mint"! Get it? ☺** (Show students mint at the same time) **We can have some mints to remind us to show encouragement to others. What are raisins? Dried out grapes. Are grapes sweet? Yes. Are raisins sweet? Yes. So even though the raisins don't look as nice as grapes, they still have the sweetness inside of them. Sometimes people we meet or deal with don't act or look very nice, they may be grumpy, scary looking, etc. But on the inside they can be sweet if we offer them some encouragement! Let's talk about why we should encourage and how we can encourage as we eat our snacks today.**

Provide a napkin for children to clean their hands if needed. Review with students by asking them questions from the lesson again and discuss any questions they have while snacking. What did they like best about today's Bible lesson? What questions do they have about today's lesson?

10) Close in prayer

*If desired, ask the children if they have any prayer requests and write them down to help you remember. Then ask all children to bow their heads and fold their hands to pray.

*If you did the Cheer packages and/or Encouragement notes, make sure you pray for the people, in general, who will receive them, that they will be encouraged and that the students will be cheerful in sharing.

God, You are powerful and wonderful. Thank You Lord for all You provide us. Thank You for Your Son who died so we can live for eternity with You in Heaven. Thank You for those in our lives who are ready to serve You and stand up for You. Thank you for the encouragement we receive from others and in turn help us to be encouraging as well. Let us put You first by being encouraging to all people we meet. Even though it takes time and effort, help us find joy and peace in serving You through encouraging others.

Give us wisdom Lord, so we can serve and love others and You, even now at our young age. Help us be brave and stand strong. To take joy in working hard for You. Pray for those who could not be here today, and pray for those here who have special issues in their life. Be with them, guide, comfort, and bless them. Help us to stay focused on Jesus and be brave in making the right choices this week. In Jesus' name, amen.