



1

Community

We share God's love in our relationships.

POWER TEXT

"Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12).

KEY REFERENCES

- Matthew 12:46-50
- Mark 11:11
- John 1:12
- John 11:5
- *The Desire of Ages*, chap. 33, p. 321; chap. 58, pp. 524, 525
- *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 9, pp. 22-27; vol. 10, pp. 189-191
- student story on page 22 of this guide.

OUR BELIEFS

- No. 23, Marriage and the Family
- No. 10, The Experience of Salvation
- No. 11, Growing in Christ

OBJECTIVES**The students will:**

- **Know** that God wants them to always be in His big family.
- **Feel** assured of always belonging to God's family.
- **Respond** by celebrating the unity that family brings.

Family Ties



**God promises
believers that
our place in
His family
is sure.**

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Jesus often enjoyed staying with Lazarus, Mary, and Martha's family. Jesus wants us to know that we always have a place in His heavenly family.

This is a lesson about community.

Just as surely as we have accepted Jesus into our life, He has accepted us into His family. In His heavenly house we each have a room just for us.

Teacher Enrichment

Little is said in Scripture about the earthly family of Jesus. However, Jesus is identified with His family in Matthew 13:54-56, where the people ask: "Isn't this the carpenter's son? Isn't his mother's name Mary, and aren't his brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Judas? Aren't all his sisters with us?" Unfortunately, according to John 7:3-5, "even his own brothers did not believe in him."

But it is possible that two of his brothers became leaders in the church. About his first trip to Jerusalem after his conversion, Paul says in Galatians 1:19, "I saw none of the other apostles—only James, the Lord's brother." The book of Jude beginning, "Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James," possibly means that the writer was a brother of Jesus.

According to *The Desire of Ages*, Jesus did not always find comfort in His family. His brothers often saw Him full of grief, but instead of comforting Him, their spirit and words only wounded His heart. "So pained was Christ by the misapprehension in His own home that it was a relief to Him to go where it did not exist. There was one home that He loved to visit—the home of Lazarus, and Mary, and Martha; for in the atmosphere of faith and love His spirit had rest" (p. 326).


How "safe" did I feel in my family of origin? How safe do I feel with my place in God's family? What promises can I surround myself with today that will help me feel secure as a rightful heir to the royal family?

Welcome



Welcome students at the door and direct them to their seats. Ask them how their week has been. Encourage learners to study their Sabbath School lesson regularly, and use several minutes to debrief students on the previous week's lesson.

Ask: **What was the most interesting part of the Bible story? What activity did you find most helpful? Which activity was the most fun?** Invite students to share their experiences and/or the handiworks they created for Sabbath School during the week.

(The leader should be familiar with the previous lesson to be able to direct the discussion.) This is also a good time to have students recite the power text.

Have students begin the readiness activity of your choice. 

Program notes

LESSON SECTION	MINUTES	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS NEEDED
Welcome	Ongoing	Greet students at door. Ask about their week.	
1 Readiness	10-15	A. <i>Family Photo</i> B. <i>Is There a Place for Me?</i>	activity sheet (p. 135), pencils or markers
 Prayer and Praise	15-20	See page 17. Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.	songbooks, world map, pushpins, basket OR envelope with "Family" in decorative lettering OR covered with digital pictures of church family, letter to parents (p. 134)
2 Bible Lesson	15-20	Introducing the Bible Story Experiencing the Story Exploring the Bible	copies of family vignettes Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	10-15	<i>Family Council</i>	
4 Sharing the Lesson	10-15	<i>Family Invitation</i>	construction paper, markers, envelopes, art supplies
 Closing		A. Prayer and Closing Comments B. Reminder to Parents C. Coming Up Next Week	

LESSON 1

1

READINESS ACTIVITIES

Select the activity or activities that are most appropriate for your situation.

A

YOU NEED:

- activity sheet (p. 135)
- pencils OR markers

Family Photo

Part One: Ahead of time, photocopy the Family Photo activity sheet (p.135) for each student; set the handouts near the door for the students to work on when they arrive.

Allow time for the students to draw their families according to the directions on the activity sheet. Give them a two-minute warning before time is up so they can draw outlines and write names for the remaining family members they haven't drawn yet.

Part Two: When the time is up divide the students into "family" groups. Explain that each group is a family and should choose a head of the family. Families will stay together for the rest of Sabbath School. If some complain they are not with their friends, remind them that in real life we don't get to choose our families.

Debriefing

Ask: **Why are our families so special to us?** (Accept their responses.) Say: **Reflect for a minute on the people you drew on your Family Photo sheet. Circle the person you feel closest to in your family.** (Pause while they do it.) **Now take turns, starting with the person to the left of your family head. Tell your group whom you chose as your closest family member and why.**

Allow time for most of the students to speak. Then get their attention and ask: **Suppose that something happened and the person you circled was to drop out of your family. Maybe because of death. How would you feel?** Give the students a minute to share their feelings with the person sitting next to them. Ask for volunteers to share their feelings with the larger group. (Many will be saddened by the thought of losing the loved one.)

At this point allow students who know the power text by memory to say it either individually or with a small group:

"Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12).

Have the entire class repeat the power text together. Allow visitors and students who don't know it yet to read along. Affirm them for their effort. However, do not single

out students by forcing everyone to say it, nor reprimand those who don't know it. Sabbath School is a place where students need to feel comfortable and accepted as they grow in God's grace.

Say: **This text assures me that I am in God's family. He has circled my picture. He loves me immensely and He feels the same way about you. But guess what! He will never drop you out of His family. Only you can take yourself out.**

 **God promises believers that our place in His family is sure.**

Accommodations for students with special needs:

Allow students with special needs who need help with this activity to work with a partner who can assist them.



Prayer and Praise

B

Is There a Place for Me?

The object of this activity is for students to mill around and quickly form groups according to the number you call out. The ones that are unable to become a part of one of the groups are eliminated. Alternate odd and even numbers.

For example, with a group of 15, begin by having them form groups of seven (eliminate one). Then have them form groups of five (none are eliminated). Next, have them form groups of four (eliminate three)—then groups of six, groups of five, groups of seven, groups of four, groups of five, groups of three, groups of four, etc.

Debriefing

Have students reassemble in their family groups (assigned in Readiness A) and each tell how they felt when they were included in a group or excluded from it. Then ask: **How did this activity help you think of your families?** (It's good to belong to one. Some people don't have any. It's hard to be rejected by your family.) If you have not done Readiness A, review now with the students the power text as outlined on the previous page. Say:

John is telling us that if we believe in Jesus, we belong to His family—now. This new family that God has created is just as important for us as the family He gave us here on earth. And guess what:

 **God promises believers that our place in His family is sure.**

Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). If they have given you permission, share one or two special items from students' Bible study during the week. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.

Suggested Songs

Choose songs about family relationships and about grace.

"I Have Decided to Follow Jesus" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 146)

Add a verse: "I am so happy I'm in God's fam'ly."

"Ha-la-la-la-la" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 120)

Add a verse: Celebrate together; we're all God's fam'ly.

Celebrate the fam'ly that we are.

Celebrate together; we're all God's fam'ly.

Celebrate that we are God's fam-i-ly!

Mission

At the beginning of the quarter, send a letter to the parents, informing them that an offering is taken up each week in Sabbath School (see letter to parents on p. 134).

Say: **Now it is time for an update on our world family. Maybe we will discover something about what God has been doing with the offering that we brought in past years—before we were even old enough to understand about our world family.**

Use *Adventist Mission for Youth and Adults* (go to www.juniorpowerpoints.org and click on MISSION) or another mission report available to you. For the mission story, have a map of the world where the students can identify the location of the mission story and compare it to where they are. You could use pushpins to mark where the mission stories take place throughout the quarter.

Offering

Say: **In the family of God we support our world family by bringing an offering from our own allowance. Thank you for remembering the world family today."**

YOU NEED:

- basket OR envelope with "Family" in decorative lettering OR covered with digital pictures of church family

Prayer

Have the students stay in family groups. Suggest that they pray going around the group, each praying for the person to their left and for that person's family. Offer prayer for the students' joys and sorrows, for birthday and other special event celebrants, as well as for the visitors.

* Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

LESSON 1

2

BIBLE LESSON

Introducing the Bible Story

Say: **Today we are focusing on the idea of family. The family of Lazarus was the family Jesus most liked to spend time with.**

Experiencing the Story

Beforehand, photocopy the family vignettes and cut apart the four sets of directions. Make as many copies as you need so that each family group can have one set of directions (or divide students into four groups).

Each group reads and follows the directions given to them, acting out what they think might have happened in the families described. Allow several minutes for each group to read the passage and plan how to act it out.

(Small church, just read all four stories one after the other and have students retell the story, manipulating puppets or a stack of wooden blocks that represent the characters. They move the blocks or turn them, while someone says what the character would have said.)

Debriefing

After the groups have completed their skits, say: **Think for a moment about these four family scenes.**

Ask: **What do you think young people most need in a family?** (faith, love, loyalty, patience, etc.) Say: **Give examples of how the Bethany family filled Jesus' need.** (They believed in Jesus; Mary listened to Him; Martha loved to fix food for Him; Jesus went there to relax.)

Ask: **What can Jesus offer a person who doesn't feel loved in their family?** (Accept responses, if any.) Say: **Jesus knows how that feels; His own family were often critical of Him.** Read students the first quotation from *The Desire of Ages* in the Teacher Enrichment section.

Say together John 1:12. **If you feel as if your family is not there for you, you have a heavenly family that is.**

 **God promises believers that our place in His family is sure.**

YOU NEED:

- copies of family vignettes

Family Vignettes

Directions to the teacher: Make as many copies as you need to give one set of directions to each group.

Matthew 7:3-5. (Notice that in these verses Jesus' brothers are telling Him what to do; even in childhood His brothers did not understand His mission and tried to tell Him what to do, Ellen White tells us. Show Jesus as a child with His brothers picking on Him and bossing Him around.)

Matthew 12:46-50. (Show someone telling Jesus that His family is outside; emphasize that all those who believe are His family too.)

Luke 10:38-41. (Ellen White tells us in *The Desire of Ages*, page 557, that it was Jesus' custom to seek rest at Lazarus's house when He was passing through Bethany. Show Jesus feeling welcome and relaxed in Martha's home; Mary sits and asks Him questions; show humor in Jesus' voice when He says, "Martha, Martha!" You can stop at this point.)

John 11:1-3. (Bring out the feelings of the sisters as they care for Lazarus and write a letter to Jesus; show the love and understanding Jesus enjoys with this family.)

3

APPLYING THE LESSON

YOU NEED:

- Bibles

Exploring the Bible

Say: **Wrapped up in Jesus is a message of love for families. We need to take a closer look at what that message is.**

1. Look at what the angels said at His birth. Read Luke 2:14. Ask: **What did they say was in it for us?** (peace and favor) Say: **Peace and favor are for families, not just for governments. Peace means that God is not at war with us and we need not be at war with one another in the family. And favor means that God has a preference for you. You are His favorite. So you can afford to show favor to family members. This is God's love in action for families.**

2. The second point we need to make is about God's family. Little children know that they are special to God. They know they belong to Him. But at your age you are soon going to wonder:

- A. Is God's love for real? and
- B. Is God's love forever?

A. Is it real?

Say John 3:16 together. Ask: **How real was Jesus' death on the cross?** (It is recorded in history. Eye witnesses recorded the event.) **God's family is as real as Jesus' death on the cross.**

Let's say together John 1:12 together:

"Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12).

Say: **Receiving Jesus means that we admit that we need a Savior and invite Jesus to live in us.** Ask: **Then what happens when you receive Jesus, according to this text?** ("He gave the right to become children of God.") **This is real. It starts right away.**

B. Is it forever?

Say: **If we accept peace with Jesus and agree to what it means, we are His children. Forever. We might wander away or let Him down, but He is always ready to make peace and accept us back. Is this forever? It can be.** Let's read Jude 24, 25.

🔊 God promises believers that our place in His family is sure.

Family Council

The object of this activity is to give families a chance to solve a problem together and to be aware how fortunate they are to have family.

Say: **Huddle together in your family groups** (developed during Readiness A) **and solve this problem. (Your group leader is your family head, and the person to their right will be the reporter.) Your house is fairly small. Already two people share a bedroom. A homeless person has requested to come live with you. What answer will you give? Whose room will he or she share? You have three minutes to come to an agreement.**

Walk around the groups, getting them started and listening to their discussions without getting involved. After about four minutes, give a one-minute warning and ask the families to take a vote. Then call everyone to order.

Debriefing

Ask: **How many families decided to take in the homeless person? How easy is it to make room for someone else in your family?** (Usually, no.) Read Ephesians 2:19. **According to this text, you and I were the homeless person. We were locked out of the garden along with Adam and Eve. We had no forever home. But God, without hesitation, wants us in His family.**

🔊 God promises believers that our place in His family is sure.

LESSON 1

4

SHARING THE LESSON

YOU NEED:

- construction paper
- markers
- envelopes
- art supplies

Family Invitation

Allow students to report if they had a chance to share the power text, John 1:12, and this week's story to encourage someone with the great message that we belong to God's family.

The students get to choose a way to celebrate being part of God's heavenly family. They may work separately or together to do one of the following:

1. Make a greeting card that says "Rejoice with me"; inside the card, tell in your own words why you are excited about being part of God's family of believers.
2. Make a poster that says "We are children of God" and invite your friends and church family to write their names on the poster. Tape it to the door.
3. Write a song based on John 1:12.

Accommodation for students with special needs

Allow students who experience difficulty with writing and spelling to work with a partner who can assist them.

Closing

Prayer and closing comments:

Form a circle and sing "Side by Side" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 123). Encourage students to share the good news of God's family.

Reminder to parents:

Say: **Check out the student Bible study guide to find Parents' Pages for your use in family worship, or however you wish to use them to spiritually guide your children. You may listen to the podcast of the lesson online at www.juniorpowerpoints.org/podcast.php?channel=1.**

Coming up next week:

Say: **Jesus brings us joy and freedom. He wants us to share this "good news" with others.**

Notes

LESSON 1

Student lesson

Family Ties

“You were adopted,” Linda whispered to her younger sister, Kathy, even though she remembered clearly the day her sister was born.

“What?” Kathy gasped.

“Yeah. Mom and Dad adopted you just like they adopted Ronnie.”

“No way!”

“You don’t have large eyes or curly hair like the rest of us. See, you look like Ronnie,” Linda lied. Weeks later, after Kathy angrily demanded to know whether or not her parents had lied to her, the whole mean mess was straightened out.

If you have ever doubted that you belong in your family, you may be surprised to learn that Jesus knows how that feels. In this lesson Jesus and the apostle John help set the story straight about family—forever.

Jewish children of Jesus’ time learned to obey all the rigid rules taught by the Pharisees. But Jesus was never as concerned about those rules as He was about serving God. As a result, Jesus’ brothers were not happy with their younger brother.

“Why aren’t you reading the teachings of the rabbis?” Jude may have asked when Jesus sat memorizing the Old Testament. “You would impress the rabbi if you could argue from the writings of the scholars. Getting the attention of the rabbi is a must if you

want to get accepted at the Temple.” But Jesus knew that the words of life were not in Jewish tradition but in the Bible. His brothers meant well, but their constant criticism did not succeed in diverting a young boy from His special mission for God.

Jesus learned early on from His mother that the true education needed for life was found in the Word of God. He did not view the study of Scriptures as merely a chore to be done. Rather Jesus tried to find how the Bible applied to His everyday life experiences. He lived to honor God and to bless others. “And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man” (Luke 2:52).

In Jesus’ neighborhood children were surrounded with hardship, temptation, and evil influences. Yet Jesus relied on His heavenly Father, who helped Him resist evil. His pleasant nature reflected in how He treated others. Jesus’ family and neighbors were often cheered by His kind words and positive attitude.

Later, as an adult, Jesus carried the same lovely disposition in His relationships with others. During His public ministry Jesus often faced the opposition, jealousy, and unbelief of the Jewish leaders. On such occasions He found refuge and warm welcome in the home of His friends.

Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, two

adult sisters and their brother living in Bethany, two miles from Jerusalem, opened their warm, loving home to Jesus. Here the Master found the rest and peace that He may have missed in His own family. Maybe in Lazarus, Jesus found an understanding, older brother. When Jesus was traveling to or from Jerusalem, He stayed with these friends.

Like every human being, the Savior longed for companionship and human sympathy. He found a true home in the family of these three siblings. Jesus was at peace in the company of these dear friends. He knew that He could speak to them openly about God’s Kingdom without being misunderstood.

Jesus loved every person that He met. Yet what made His friendship with these siblings special was the willingness of Lazarus and his sisters to accept Jesus’ love and allow Him to change their lives. The generous welcome and hospitality of this family helped Jesus feel at home in Bethany.

Jesus understands the human need and desire to belong to a family. He came into our world to redeem us and restore us back into His family. His love for us is greater than a father’s love for his children. To all who receive Jesus, God gives the right to become children of God. Their place in His family is sure!

KEY REFERENCES

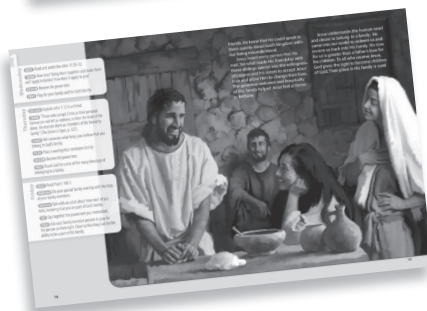
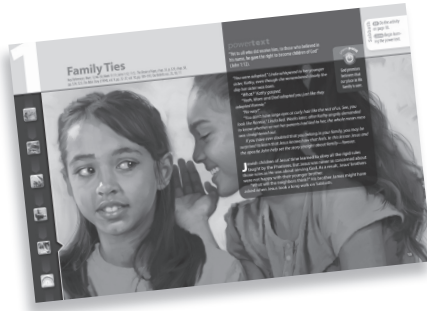
- Matthew 12:46-50
- Mark 11:11
- John 1:12; 11:5
- *The Desire of Ages*, chap. 33, p. 321; chap. 58, pp. 524, 525
- *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 9, pp. 22-27; vol. 10, pp. 189-191
- Our Beliefs nos. 23, 10, 11

POWER TEXT

“Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God” (John 1:12).

POWER POINT

God promises believers that our place in His family is sure.



Sabbath

DO Do the activity on page 18.

Sunday

READ Read Matthew 12:46-48 and this week's story, "Family Ties."

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to give you the certainty that you are His child.

Monday

READ Read Matthew 12:49, 50.

WRITE How does it make you feel to know that Jesus thinks of you as His brother or sister? In your Bible study journal, write your response to Jesus' love.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Thank God for allowing you to feel His love.

Tuesday

READ Read John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:22; and Ephesians 2:19.

THINK What do these verses mean to you?

DISCUSS Ask an adult to explain to you Ephesians 2:19. What makes me a member of God's family?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Claim God's promises found in your Bible reading for today and thank Him for His greatest gift to you.

Wednesday

READ Read and underline John 11:50-52.

THINK How does "bring them together and make them one" apply to family? How does it apply to you?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Pray for your family and for God's family.

Thursday

EXPLAIN Explain John 1:12 to a friend.

THINK "Those who accept Christ as their personal Savior are not left as orphans, to bear the trials of life alone. He receives them as members of the heavenly family" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 327).

SHARE Tell someone what helps you believe that you belong to God's family.

PLAN Plan a worship that celebrates family.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Thank God for some of the many blessings of belonging to a family.

Friday

READ Read Psalm 100:3.

WORSHIP Do your special family worship with the help of your family members.

DISCUSS Talk with an adult about how each of you feels, knowing that you are part of God's family.

SAY Say together the power text you memorized.

PRAY Ask each family member present to pray for the person on their right. Close by thanking God for the ability to be a part of His family.