

# 1

## Family Ties

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; *Our Beliefs* nos. 23, 10, 11



## powertext

"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).

*"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.*

**J**ewish 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.

Sabbath

**Do** Do the activity on page 18.



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

# 1

## 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.

"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



## Wednesday

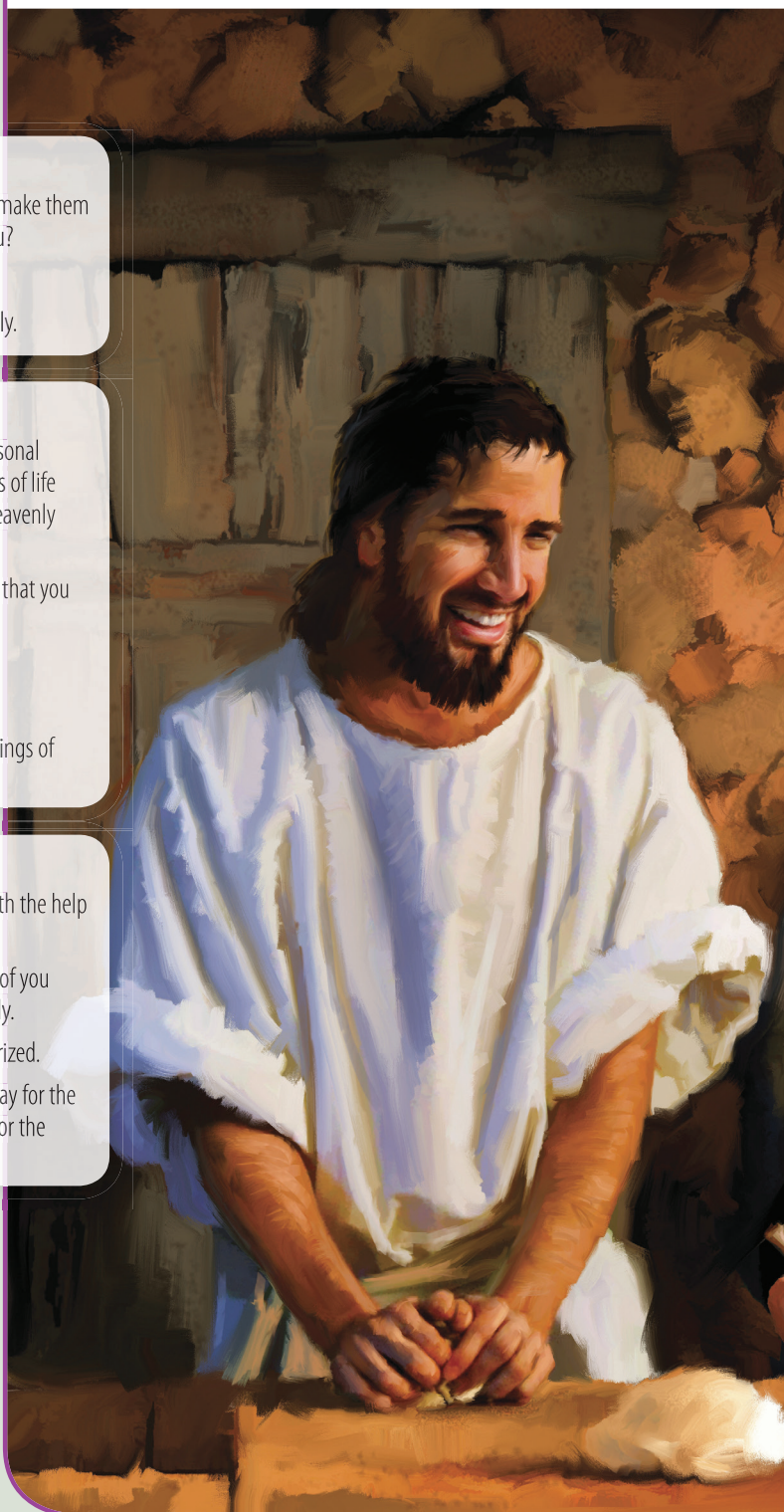
- READ** Read and underline John 11:50-52.
- THINK** How does “bring them together and make them one” apply to family? How does it apply to you?
- REVIEW** Review the power text.
- PRAY** Pray for your family and for God’s family.

## 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

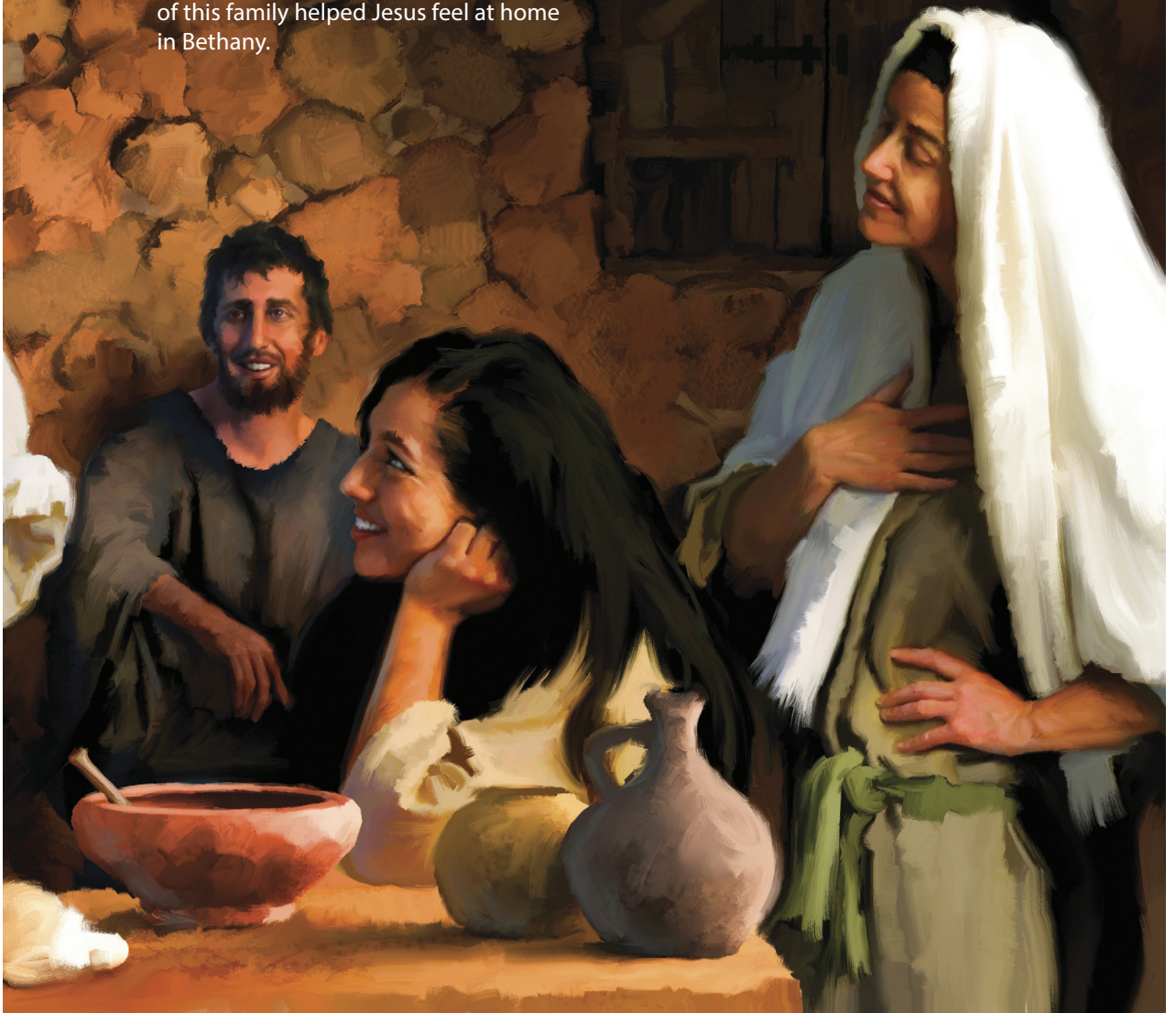
- READ** Read Psalm 100:3.
- WORSHIP** Do your special family worship with the help of your family members.
- DISCUSS** Talk with an adult about how each of you feels, knowing that you are part of God’s family.
- SAV** Say together the power text you memorized.
- PRAY** Ask each family member present to pray for the person on their right. Close by thanking God for the ability to be a part of His family.



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!



# THE FAMILY OF GOD

**Instructions:** Can you decipher the Bible verse below to see how we fit into God's plans? Start with the first letter and read every other letter to the end; then start with the second letter and read the remaining letters.

**Hint:** This is not a cryptogram.

WS EHA ERE EPHOIF, SHP  
IESOP PA LSE TTUHREE.