LESSON 9

Showing Kindness

Four Step Lesson Path

1 Bible Readiness
By playing a game that shows things worth remembering, children will connect to the Bible story about David's remembering to show kindness.
- Construction paper, marker, masking tape

2 Bible Study: 2 Samuel 4:4; 9:1-13
Children will study how David remembers his promise to show kindness to Mephibosheth.
- Bible Study: Bible Discoveries, pp. 2-3, Teaching Aids 2 and 11, Bibles, pencils
- Bible Review: Teaching Aid 11, prepared notes, envelopes
- Memory Verse Practice: Butcher paper, marker

3 Bible Activity Choices
Children will investigate ways to remember to show kindness.
- Life of David Reenactment: Bibles, Bible-time clothe, Teaching Aids 3, 4, 6, 10, and 11; optional: video recording device
- 3-D Board Game: “Rise to the Throne” (Teaching Aids 7—9 from Elementary Creative Teaching Aids), coin, game markers
- Kindness Cubes: Discovery Pack, Project I, tape, markers

4 Bible Response
Children will follow David's example of remembering to show kindness by creating a reminder to show kindness.
- Bible Discoveries, p. 4, colored markers, Friends, Lesson 9; optional: hole punch, yarn

Bible Basis: 2 Samuel 4:4; 9:1-13
Lesson Focus: Remember to show kindness to others.
Memory Verse: Whoever is kind to the needy honors God. Proverbs 14:31

Understanding the Bible
Many years had passed since David became the king of Judah and Israel. Mephibosheth was five at the time of his father's death, and he now had a young son (2 Sam. 9:12).

It was common in Bible-times for a new king to destroy any descendants of the previous king. This ensured that no relatives would try to reclaim the throne. Although Saul had made David's life miserable, David refused to retaliate against any descendants of the man who had once been ordained by God.

David remembered his promise to Jonathan to show kindness to his family (1 Sam. 20:14-15). The Hebrew word used for “kindness” here (hesed) may be translated “loving-kindness.” Used about 250 times in the Old Testament, hesed signified steadfast, loyal, unfailing love. Hesed is used repeatedly in the Old Testament to describe God's faithful love for His unfaithful people. The kindness promise between David and Jonathan emphasized love and loyalty.

Mephibosheth was originally called Merib-Baal (1 Chron. 8:34; 9:40). This type of compound name was common in the ancient Near East and incorporated the name of a deity. Merib-Baal may have meant “an opponent of Baal.” Mephibosheth means “from the mouth of the shameful thing” and may have been changed to that after Saul's death.
When Teaching the Bible to Elementary Students . . .

Second and third graders are used to being rewarded with material things, like money, treats, prizes, or even words of praise. They don’t usually expect to put out positive effort and not feel a positive, external result. This week’s lesson, to remember to show kindness, will challenge your students to look for internal motivation for doing good. Keep these ideas in mind as you teach.

• Focus on the joy and satisfaction that come from serving and helping willingly. Even if the kids don’t see an outward result or reward, they can still feel good about having done what pleases God.
• You could get your class involved in a short service project to help others without expecting anything in return.
• Designate a month when the children can be “Sweet Sneaks.” The kids can look for chances to secretly do kind things for others in your class or church.

Early Bird Options

The children who arrive early need something meaningful to do. These suggested activities will free you to greet kids as they arrive while engaging the kids who are already there.

Kindness Acrostic—Write the word kindness vertically down the side of the board leaving space between letters. Let early arrivers begin thinking about today’s lesson by writing a word or sentence that has to do with kindness that begins with each letter.

Kids around the World—Introduce your students to stories of children, around, the world, who need kindness. Print off bios of children from websites of different mission organizations or a mission group your congregation supports. Set out the stories and have your students brainstorm needs the various children might have.
LESSON FOCUS: Remember to show kindness to others.

Help the children begin to connect with this week's Bible story about remembering to show kindness with this active game. On separate sheets of construction paper, write Remember and Forget. Tape the papers on opposite walls of your classroom. Clear space between the signs so the kids have room to move.

There are lots of things that are important for us to remember. But sometimes we have so many things to remember that we sometimes forget! Let's play a game to find out what you usually remember and what you usually forget.

Instruct the kids to stand in the middle of the room between the two signs. Tell the kids that you will name something the kids might have to do. If it's something they usually remember, they go stand by the Remember sign. If it's something they usually forget, they go stand by the Forget sign. If it's something they never have to do, they stand in the center. Read the following statements, pausing after each to let the kids move.

Do your homework.
Feed your pet.
Keep a promise to your brother or sister.
Tell your parent where you'll be.
Brush your teeth.
Come home on time.
Take an offering to Sunday school.
Keep your promises.
Show kindness.

You may add more items to the list if you wish. Gather the kids back together and sit down. Then discuss the following questions.

What kinds of things do you usually remember to do? The children's answers will vary greatly, depending on their chores, priorities, and maturity. They may name things like brush their teeth, get dressed every morning, obey their parents, and so on.

What kinds of things do you often forget to do? Again, the kids will have a wide range of answers, which may include unpleasant chores, homework, picking up their room, and so on. Accept all the kids' honest answers without showing disapproval.

What kinds of things do you think are important to remember? Though the kids will probably begin by naming responsibilities that affect others or have consequences, like feeding the dog or brushing their teeth, lead them to think about actions like helping others, caring, sharing, and showing kindness.

Tie to the Bible
In our Bible story today we will see that King David knew what was important to remember. Even though he was now a powerful king, he did what he needed to do to keep promises he made before he became king. Let's see what they were.
**Bible Study:**

**2 Samuel 4:4; 9:1-13**

**Materials:**
- Bible Study
  - Bible Discoveries, pp. 2-3
  - Teaching Aids 2 and 11
  - Bibles
  - Pencils
- Bible Review Activity
  - Teaching Aid 11
  - Prepared notes
  - Envelopes
- Memory Verse Practice
  - Butcher paper
  - Marker

Children will study how David remembers his promise to show kindness to Mephibosheth.

Let a volunteer tell what happened in last week’s Bible story. (David became king and gave God credit for it.) Explain that in this week’s Bible story, David has been king for many years. Because only part of Israel accepted him as king for the first seven years, it took time for him to have a peaceful kingdom over all of Israel. Add Teaching Aid 11 to your visual timeline, leaving a little space between Teaching Aids 10 and 11.

Have the children find 2 Samuel on Teaching Aid 2 and then find 2 Samuel 9 in their Bibles. Distribute Bible Discoveries for Lesson 9 and have kids open their leaflets to pages 2-3.Teach the kids how to pronounce the name Mephibosheth [muh-FIB-uh-sheth]. Then let volunteers take turns reading a paragraph each of the Bible story. Let another volunteer read the memory verse.

When finished reading the story, direct the kids to the two empty speech balloons on page 3. Ask the kids to talk about what David and Mephibosheth might be saying to each other that reflects the Bible story. Let the kids write one sentence in each speech balloon. For David they might write a sentence like, “I’ll give you back all your family’s land” or “I’ll keep my promise to be kind.” For Mephibosheth they might write a sentence like, “Thank you for being kind to me” or “You are a kind king.”

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**David Remembers a Promise**

David had been king for several years. He was a good king. He kept busy working to bring peace to his country. One day, David was thinking about Jonathan. Jonathan had been his best friend and the son of Saul, the former king. Saul and Jonathan and most of their family had been killed in battle. I made a promise to Jonathan long ago, David reminded himself. I promised that I would always show kindness to his family. But I wonder who’s left.

David decided to find out. He sent for the man who had been Saul’s chief servant. His name was Ziba.

David said, “Ziba, I have a promise to keep. And I hope you can help me. Is there anyone left in Saul’s family who can show kindness...?”

Read 2 Samuel 9:1.

Ziba was surprised. Some kings would have everyone in the former king’s family killed. This went any of the family from trying to take back the throne. Yes, King David,” said Ziba. “Jonathan had a son named Mephibosheth [muh-FIB-uh-sheth]. At the time when Saul and Jonathan died, this son was five years old. When the boy’s nurse heard the bad news, she picked up the boy and ran in fear for their lives. But she tripped and fell. Mephibosheth’s legs were badly hurt. Now he cannot walk without the help of a crutch.”

“Where is he?” asked David.

“He lives with a family in a small town far from here,” answered Ziba. “He has no land or home of his own.”


When Mephibosheth arrived, he bowed low before King David to show respect. He didn’t know what would happen.

David said, “Don’t be afraid, Mephibosheth. I was close friends with your father, Jonathan. I made him a promise that I will keep. I want to show you kindness. So I will give you back all of the land that belonged to your grandfather, Saul. Ziba will be in charge of farming it, and you will receive all the money from the crops.”

“I don’t deserve this,” said Mephibosheth.

David continued, “I also want you to come and live here in Jerusalem. You may eat at my table and be like one of my sons.”

“Thank you, King David,” said Mephibosheth. “You have shown me so much kindness. You are a good king.”

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Whoever is kind to the needy honors God.
Revel 1:14

Bible Basis: 2 Samuel 4:4; 9:1-13
LESSON FOCUS: Remember to show kindness to others.

Bible Review Questions

- **What did David remember one day?** His promise to Jonathan to show kindness to Jonathan's family.
- **Why would it be unusual for a king to keep this kind of promise?** Kings usually killed the families of former or rival kings to prevent them from taking the throne.
- **Why might Mephibosheth have been worried when David sent for him?** He might have thought David wanted to kill him so there would be no members of King Saul's family left.
- **What did David do to show kindness to Mephibosheth?** David gave him back all of his family's land that had been taken from him; Mephibosheth would receive all the money from the farming on his land; David asked Mephibosheth to come live at the palace and eat with him at his table.
- **What did David know was important to remember?** To keep his promises and to show kindness.
- **Our memory verse says to be kind to the needy. How was Mephibosheth needy?** He had nothing of his own to live on because his family's land had been taken when Saul died. Because people in Bible times who couldn't walk also couldn't work, he probably didn't have any way to support himself. He might have been scared that someday someone would try to kill him because he was Saul's grandson.
- **According to the memory verse, why should we remember to show kindness?** Because it honors God.

Bible Review Activity

Before class, write the following clues on slips of paper and put them in envelopes hidden around the room. Then in class, have students search together for the envelopes, open the envelopes, and sort the clues. Using Teaching Aid 11 in your visual timeline, have students put the David clues under the picture of David, the Mephibosheth clues under his picture, and the Ziba clues in a third pile.

- I remembered a promise. (David.)
- I could not walk without help. (Mephibosheth.)
- I was Saul's chief servant. (Ziba)
- I took time to show kindness. (David.)
- I needed someone to be kind to me. (Mephibosheth.)
- I brought Mephibosheth to David. (Ziba)
- Now I am taken care of. (Mephibosheth.)
- I honored God by showing kindness. (David.)

Memory Verse Practice

On butcher paper, randomly draw 10 large boxes. In eight of the boxes, write the Bible book and the chapter/verse. Do not write the words in order.

Have the kids practice the memory verse by walking on the butcher paper from box to box in the right order, saying the verse aloud. The kids walk through the verse one at a time but may begin shortly after one another, so that a few children will be walking to different words at the same time.

**Memory Verse**

Whoever is kind to the needy honors God.

Proverbs 14:31
Children will investigate ways to remember to show kindness.

Use these activities to give the children an opportunity to investigate ways to remember to show kindness, as taught in the Bible story from 2 Samuel 9. You may want to work on Kindness Cubes as a whole class activity before moving on to the other activities.

**Life of David Reenactment**
- Bible
- Bible-time clothes
- Teaching Aids 3, 4, 6, 10, and 11
  - Optional: video recording device

Let the children review the life of David by acting it out. To refresh their memories, let the kids look at Teaching Aids 3, 4, 6, 10, and 11, or unused Bible Discovery pages. Use Bible-time clothes if available. Here is a brief summary of the seven lessons about David:
  - Lesson 3—David fights Goliath
  - Lesson 4—Saul is jealous of David’s success
  - Lesson 5—Jonathan helps David
  - Lesson 6—David doesn’t kill Saul when he has the chance
  - Lesson 7—David turns to God during very hard times
  - Lesson 8—David becomes king
  - Lesson 9—David remembers his promise to help Jonathan’s family.

**3-D Board Game**
- “Rise to the Throne” (Teaching Aids 7—9)
- Coin
- Game markers

If you did not use this game in Lesson 7, you will need to assemble it before class.

This 3-D board game reviews the life of David, from Lessons 3-9, and his example of always trusting God. Provide game markers (such as buttons or small squares of paper) and a coin. The children may read the directions under “To Play” on the bottom of Teaching Aid 9 and then play the game.

**Kindness Cubes**
- Discovery Pack, Project I
- Tape
- Markers

To get the children started on showing kindness, as taught in the Bible story of David and Mephibosheth, have the kids make Kindness Cubes. Before beginning the craft, create a list of people, that students know, who have needs. Be sure to adapt the names of people as appropriate.

Give out Project I from Discovery Pack, page 21. Have students write the names of people, from the list, onto the lines of their projects. Directions for assembling the cubes are on page 22.

After the cubes are assembled, children should follow the directions at the bottom of page 21 to talk together about how they can show kindness to the people named on their cubes.
Extra–Time Activity

How we show kindness to others is up to us. However, God always recognizes our kind actions. Let the kids examine the kind actions shown on Bible Discoveries, page 1 and match verses that fit. There are no wrong matches.

Materials:
- Bible Discoveries, p. 4
- Colored markers
- Friends, Lesson 9
- Optional: hole punch, yarn

After the children have cleaned up their activities and gathered back together, lead them in this planning activity to help them apply the Bible story from 2 Samuel 9.

God is pleased when we remember to show kindness to others. David remembered his promise from many years before. He went to the effort to show kindness.

We’ve been talking about the importance of showing kindness and the many ways to show kindness. The problem is sometimes in the remembering. We also can make an effort to remember to show kindness, because that honors and pleases God.

Have the children turn to page 4 in Bible Discoveries. Read the directions at the top of the page. Take a moment to talk about a few traditional reminders that we sometimes think of, pictured or mentioned on the page—jotting a note on a hand, tying a string on a finger, or the myth that “elephants never forget.”

What are some other ways to remind yourself to show kindness? Put a reminder on the refrigerator or note board at home; put a note on my bedroom door or mirror or on a school notebook; make a poster from the memory verse, Proverbs 14:31, or Lesson Focus, “Remember to show kindness to others”; put my Bible Discoveries Kindness Reminder page in a place where I’ll see it each day; etc. Encourage the kids to brainstorm a variety of ideas. Accept all reasonable suggestions.

Have each child choose a way to remember to be kind and write it on the hand on page 4 of Bible Discoveries. As an option, you could let the kids punch a hole on either side of one finger on the page; then they tie a short piece of yarn around the finger.

Prayer Time

God is honored and pleased when we show kindness to others. Let’s ask for His help as we try to be kind. Have the children gather in small groups of three or four. Let them go around the group and pray for the person on their left to be able to remember to show kindness to others.