

Small Group Leader Guide

Virtual Small Group
February Week 2 (2-14-21)
K3

Today's Bible Story: Family Ties (Ruth and Boaz) • *Ruth*

Today's Bottom Line: Be kind to your family and friends.

Monthly Memory Verse: *You are God's chosen people. You are holy and dearly loved. So put on tender mercy and kindness as if they were your clothes. Don't be proud. Be gentle and patient.* Colossians 3:12 (NIV)

Monthly Life App: Kindness—Showing others they are valuable by how you treat them

Basic Truth: I should treat others the way I want to be treated.

What You Need:

- No supplies needed, but see below for details about what kids will need.

What You Do:

- As kids join the meeting and get settled, engage them in conversation about the past week.
- If you choose, consider using one of the ice breakers or games on the “Virtual Small Group General Info” page.
- If you've chosen to watch the Bible story video presentation as a group, get that started once you've given latecomers a chance to join the meeting, and once the group feels settled.
- After the Bible story video, transition into the activity below.

Activity:

What You Do:

- Instruct kids to find an object nearby that they can use as their “barley stalk.” (This can be anything from a wooden kitchen spoon to a stuffed animal to a random toy.)
- Ask them to each place their chosen object about five feet away. (Tell them to place it nearby, but somewhere they have to get up out of their seat to reach.)
- Then divide your kids into two teams. (You can do this by simply counting off 1, 2, 1, 2 and instructing kids to remember which number they are. It's not important for them to remember who else is on their team, but it is important that they remember what their number is.)
- Tell them you're going to read some true/false statements. As soon as you're finished reading the statement, they should get up and race to be the first to retrieve their “barley stalk” and come back within view of their camera.
- (Keep track of who returns first.)
- Let the kid who returned first answer whether the statement was true or false.
- If they're correct, they get a point for their team.
- Go through a few of the statements below, as long as time and interest allow.
- Encourage kids to be competitive, but not to be too disruptive to whatever is happening in their homes at that moment.
 - If you notice that the same one or two kids are winning every time, declare that you'll pick the third (or fourth) kid to answer the next true/false statement.

- At the end of the game, declare the team with the most points the winner!

True/False Statements:

- Ruth was Naomi's daughter-in-law. *(True)*
- Naomi told her daughters-in-law to leave her. *(True)*
- Ruth AND Orpah both stayed with Naomi. *(False)*
- Ruth followed and traveled with Naomi back to her homeland. *(True)*
- Ruth refused to pick food for them because she was tired. *(False)*
- Ruth went into Boaz's fields and picked grain. *(Truth)*
- Ruth was lazy and slept a lot. *(False)*
- Boaz was kind to Ruth. *(True)*
- Ruth was kind to Naomi. *(True)*
- Boaz never offered Ruth water and food. *(False)*
- Boaz was kind to Ruth because he heard of how kind Ruth was kind to Naomi. *(True)*
- Naomi wanted to live alone with Ruth forever. *(False)*
- Boaz didn't want to help Ruth and Naomi. *(False)*
- Boaz married Ruth. *(True)*
- Ruth and Boaz's great grandson was King David. *(True)*

What You Say:

"Wow! You guys were so good at that game, and SO fast! You guys listened so well to our Bible story today. Ruth was kind to her family member, Naomi. She could have just left her, but instead she stayed with her and cared for her. Boaz was kind to his family by letting Ruth pick grain in his fields and by marrying her so he could protect her. There are so many ways you can **[Bottom Line] be kind to your family and friends.**"

"Sometimes, it's EASIER to be kind to strangers and HARDER to be kind to those closest to you like your family and friends. Why? *(Let kids think about this and respond.)* When it comes to our family and friends, often we take them for granted. We feel like we don't have to be kind because they're always going to be our family. But we should show kindness to our family because we live with them, to show that they're valuable to us. What are some ways we can make sure we choose to **[Bottom Line] be kind to our family and friends this week?**"

Close your group in prayer:

"God, thank You for Your never-ending, great big love for us. We know that no matter how many times we mess up, You ALWAYS choose to love and show kindness to us. This week, someone in our family WILL bug or frustrate us and we WILL be tempted to do something to bug or frustrate them right back. Help us to show Your kindness instead, even when it's the last thing we want to do. We love You. In Jesus' name we pray, amen."

Small Group Leader Guide

Virtual Small Group

February Week 3 (2-21-21)

K3

Today's Bible Story: One More Time (Go the Extra Mile) • *Matthew 5:41*

Today's Bottom Line: Be kinder than you have to be.

Monthly Memory Verse: *You are God's chosen people. You are holy and dearly loved. So put on tender mercy and kindness as if they were your clothes. Don't be proud. Be gentle and patient.* Colossians 3:12 (NIV)

Monthly Life App: Kindness—Showing others they are valuable by how you treat them

Basic Truth: I should treat others the way I want to be treated.

What You Need:

- Printed OR electronic access to the “Kindness Bingo Card” Activity Page.

What You Do:

- As kids join the meeting and get settled, engage them in conversation about the past week.
- If you choose, consider using one of the ice breakers or games on the “Virtual Small Group General Info” page.
- If you've chosen to watch the Bible story video presentation as a group, get that started once you've given latecomers a chance to join the meeting, and once the group feels settled.
- After the Bible story video, transition into the activity below.

Activity:

What You Do:

- Using the “Kindness Bingo Card” Activity Page, call out one of the kindness acts.
- Instruct the kids that, if any of them did that action this week, they should stand up and then give each other a virtual high five.
- Go through the rest of the actions on the card, until every kid has had a chance to respond to at least one of the actions.
- Congratulate and encourage the kids on taking all the opportunities to be kind and to make sure their actions don't create more work or stress for the adults at home.
- Use the conversation guide below to lead kids to think about some ways they can “go the extra mile” this week.

What You Say:

“Every single day, we have SO many opportunities to show kindness to others. But what about going beyond that? What about going the extra mile? Jesus challenges us to not just do the minimum amount of kindness but to **[Bottom Line] be kinder than you have to be**. How can you **[Bottom Line] be kinder than you have to be** this week to the people around you? What if your brother asks you to play a game with him? (*You could say yes AND offer to let him pick any game he wants.*) What if a grownup asks you to put some towels away? (*Put those away AND any other laundry that needs to be put away or sorted.*) What if a teacher asks for someone to help with organizing some supplies? (*Offer to help AND offer to ask a friend to help so the job goes faster and better.*)

“There are so many ways to not just be kind, but to be kind in a way that really tells the other person how much you value them. So this week, challenge yourselves to go the extra mile and ***[Bottom Line]*** be kinder than you have to be.”

[Make it Personal] (Tell the kids about a time when someone was kinder to you than they had to be. Talk about how that extra measure of kindness made you feel and how it impacted the way you treated others around you.)

Close your group in prayer:

“Dear God, thank You for choosing to be kinder than You had to be by sending Your only Son, Jesus. This week, when we’re tempted to just get by and do a little, help us remember how much You love us and to go the extra mile and do MORE to show kindness to the people around us. We love You, God. In Jesus’ name we pray, amen.”

Small Group Leader Guide

Virtual Small Group

February Week 4 (2-28-21)

K3

Today's Bible Story: Hey Brother (Good Samaritan) • *Luke 10:25-37*

Today's Bottom Line: Be kind to people who are different from you.

Monthly Memory Verse: *You are God's chosen people. You are holy and dearly loved. So put on tender mercy and kindness as if they were your clothes. Don't be proud. Be gentle and patient.* Colossians 3:12 (NIV)

Monthly Life App: Kindness—Showing others they are valuable by how you treat them

Basic Truth: I should treat others the way I want to be treated.

What You Need:

- Printed "Story Sense Script" Activity Pages
- Pen

What You Do:

- As kids join the meeting and get settled, engage them in conversation about the past week.
- If you choose, consider using one of the ice breakers or games on the "Virtual Small Group General Info" page.
- If you've chosen to watch the Bible story video presentation as a group, get that started once you've given latecomers a chance to join the meeting, and once the group feels settled.
- After the Bible story video, transition into the activity below.

Activity:

What You Do:

- Ask kids for the types of words on the first page of "Story Sense Script."
- (To keep it from being chaotic, call on kids one at a time, as you go through the list. You could use the order of their faces on your screen to keep track.)
- Fill in their answers on the second page.
- When finished, read the final script to the group.

What You Say:

"This was a ridiculous story! But there are things about our Bible story that I wonder about, too. Maybe this story can help us.

"Why do you think that the priest and the temple helper walked past the hurt man who was just like them, without helping him? (*Invite answers.*)

"Why do you think the Samaritan stopped to help someone who was so different from himself? (*Invite answers.*)

"Like the Samaritan, you should **[Bottom Line]** be kind to people who are different than you. The point of Jesus' story was that your neighbor doesn't always look like you, talk like you, or dress like you. They might play different games or eat different food. They could be older or

younger than you are. But no matter how different they are, they are your neighbor, and God wants you to be kind to them.”

Close your group in prayer:

“Dear God, thank You for making so many different kinds of people! Thank You that we can make choices, have preferences, and learn new things. Please help us to see others the way you see them, so we can be kind to people who are different than us. We pray these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.”

Small Group Leader Guide

Virtual Small Group

February Week 2 (2-14-21)

Preteen

Today's Bible Story: Family Ties (Ruth and Boaz) • *Ruth*

Today's Key Question: When is it hard to be kind?

Today's Bottom Line: Be kind to your family and friends.

Monthly Memory Verse: *You are God's chosen people. You are holy and dearly loved. So put on tender mercy and kindness as if they were your clothes. Don't be proud. Be gentle and patient.* Colossians 3:12 (NIRV)

Monthly Life App: Kindness—Showing others they are valuable by how you treat them

Basic Truth: I should treat others the way I want to be treated.

What You Need:

- No supplies needed, but see below for details about what kids will need.

What You Do:

- As kids join the meeting and get settled, engage them in conversation about the past week.
- If you choose, consider using one of the ice breakers or games on the "Virtual Small Group General Info" page.
- If you've chosen to watch the Bible story video presentation as a group, get that started once you've given latecomers a chance to join the meeting, and once the group feels settled.
- After the Bible story video, transition into the activity below.

Activity:

What You Do:

- Instruct kids to find an object nearby that they can use as their "barley stalk." (This can be anything from a wooden kitchen spoon to a stuffed animal to a random toy.)
- Ask them to each place their chosen object about 15 feet away. (Tell them to place it somewhere they have to get up out of their seat and walk/run a few steps to reach.)
- Then divide your kids into two teams. (You can do this by simply counting off 1, 2, 1, 2 and instructing kids to remember which number they are. It's not important for them to remember who else is on their team, but it is important that they remember what their number is.)
- Tell them you're going to ask questions to review the Bible story. As soon as you're finished reading the question, they should get up and race to be the first to retrieve their "barley stalk" and come back within view of their camera.
- (Keep track of who returns first, second, and third. You may need to somehow indicate "Go," if you have competitive kids who might start the "race" before the question is fully read!)
- Let the kid who returned first attempt to answer the question.
- If they're correct, they get a point for their team.
- If they're not (or if they don't know the answer), the second kid who arrived back at their seat gets a chance (even if they're on the same team as the first kid).

- Go through the questions below, as long as time and interest allow.
- Encourage kids to be competitive, but not to be too disruptive to whatever is happening in their homes at that moment.
 - If you notice that the same one or two kids are winning every time, declare that you'll pick the third (or fourth) kid to answer the next question.
- At the end of the game, declare the team with the most points the winner!

Review Questions:

- Whom did Ruth stay with? (*Naomi*)
- Who was from Moab? (*Ruth*)
- Who was from Judah? (*Since Boaz or Naomi are correct answers, this is an opportunity for two teams to be awarded points*)
- When Ruth said, "Your people will be my people, Your God my God," to whom was she talking? (*Naomi*)
- Who owned land in the story? (*Boaz*)
- Who showed kindness to Ruth by giving her food? (*Boaz*)
- Who showed kindness to Naomi by providing her food? (*Since Boaz or Ruth are correct answers this is an opportunity for two teams to be awarded points*)

What You Say:

Ask a few of the following questions to engage kids in conversation about the story and how it applies to their lives.

- Do you think it was hard for Ruth to show kindness to Naomi? Do you think it was hard for Ruth to stick with Naomi and leave Moab? Why or why not?
- How do you think Naomi felt when Ruth left her home to follow her and help take care of her?
- What resulted from Boaz and Ruth's kindness?
- Why is it sometimes a lot harder to be kind to the people we see all the time and easier to be kind to strangers or people we don't know very well?
- What are things we can do to help us to remember to show kindness to our family and friends?
- What can we do when we're in a bad mood and everything is just annoying? How can we successfully be kind in that situation?

Close your group in prayer:

"God, thank You for Your never-ending, great big love for us. We know that no matter how many times we mess up, You ALWAYS choose to love and show kindness to us. This week, someone in our family WILL bug or frustrate us and we WILL be tempted to do something to bug or frustrate them right back. Help us to show Your kindness instead, even when it's the last thing we want to do. We love You. In Jesus' name we pray, amen."

Small Group Leader Guide

Virtual Small Group
February Week 3 (2-21-21)
Preteen

Today's Bible Story: One More Time (Go the Extra Mile) • *Matthew 5:41*

Today's Key Question: Have you ever received unexpected kindness?

Today's Bottom Line: Be kinder than you have to be.

Monthly Memory Verse: *You are God's chosen people. You are holy and dearly loved. So put on tender mercy and kindness as if they were your clothes. Don't be proud. Be gentle and patient.* Colossians 3:12 (NIRV)

Monthly Life App: Kindness—Showing others they are valuable by how you treat them

Basic Truth: I should treat others the way I want to be treated.

What You Need:

- Ask families to make sure kids have paper and markers, scissors, and any other craft supplies they have on hand.

What You Do:

- As kids join the meeting and get settled, engage them in conversation about the past week.
- If you choose, consider using one of the ice breakers or games on the "Virtual Small Group General Info" page.
- If you've chosen to watch the Bible story video presentation as a group, get that started once you've given latecomers a chance to join the meeting, and once the group feels settled.
- After the Bible story video, transition into the activity below.

Activity:

What You Do:

- Guide kids to imagine they are part of the crowd sitting on the mountainside listening to Jesus speak. Jesus says, "If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles."
- Ask:
 - What did that mean to the people listening to Jesus on the mountainside? (*If necessary, remind kids the people on the mountainside had to obey the laws of Rome, including the law that any Roman soldier could force a Jewish person to carry his pack for one mile.*)
 - How would you feel if you had to carry a Roman soldier's heavy pack?
 - After walking a mile with a heavy pack, I would be ready to be done; I would want to set the pack down and walk away. However, imagine saying to a Roman soldier, "How about I carry this another mile for you?" Why would that be an example of unexpected kindness?
- Tell kids that one way to show people unexpected kindness and show them they are valuable is to send a card or note of encouragement, or to do something special for them.
- Ask kids to think of someone they could make a card for, write a note to, or make a "coupon" redeemable for a hug, chore, favorite snack, breakfast in bed, etc.
- Prompt kids to use whatever supplies they have at home.

- As they work on their project, encourage them to share their ideas with the group and prompt them to think about how the person on the receiving end will feel when they receive the card/note/coupon.
- ***[Make it Personal] (Be sure to share an example when you received unexpected kindness. Maybe someone gave you a gift and it wasn't even your birthday. Or someone raked your leaves and you don't even know who it was.)***

What You Say:

Ask:

- When have you received unexpected kindness?
- Why is it unexpected when someone is kinder than they have to be?

"I love all of your ideas! In order to show someone they're valuable, you first have to think about that person specifically. What are their needs? What do they like? What chores do they hate doing? Don't let your unexpected kindness stop after you give your card or coupon to the recipient. Remember how you tried to think about what would make them *specifically* feel valuable, and apply that to everyone this week!"

Take a few moments of silence, letting kids pray over the cards/notes/coupons they made. Ask them to pray for more kindness opportunities this week.

Small Group Leader Guide

Virtual Small Group

February Week 4 (2-28-21)

Preteen

Today's Bible Story: Hey Brother (Good Samaritan) • *Luke 10:25-37*

Today's Key Question: How can you be kind to people who are different from you?

Today's Bottom Line: Be kind to people who are different from you.

Basic Truth: I should treat others the way I want to be treated.

Monthly Memory Verse: *You are God's chosen people. You are holy and dearly loved. So put on tender mercy and kindness as if they were your clothes. Don't be proud. Be gentle and patient.* Colossians 3:12 (NIRV)

Monthly Life App: Kindness—Showing others they are valuable by how you treat them

Basic Truth: I should treat others the way I want to be treated.

What You Need:

- No supplies needed

What You Do:

- As kids join the meeting and get settled, engage them in conversation about the past week.
- If you choose, consider using one of the ice breakers or games on the "Virtual Small Group General Info" page.
- If you've chosen to watch the Bible story video presentation as a group, get that started once you've given latecomers a chance to join the meeting, and once the group feels settled.
- After the Bible story video, transition into the activity below.

Activity:

What You Do:

- Ask for a volunteer.
- Tell the group that the volunteer is going to change one thing about either their appearance or their surroundings, and they rest of them have to figure out what is different.
- Encourage the volunteer to strike several "modeling" poses so the group can get a good look at them.
- Allow the volunteer to turn off their camera and change one thing about their appearance or the room they're in.
 - For example, tuck or un-tuck their shirt, remove glasses, quickly change a shirt, etc.
 - Or move a picture frame behind them, scoot their chair and camera slightly one direction or another, turn off/on a light, etc.
- When the change has been made, the volunteer should turn their camera back on. (Instruct the volunteer to take just 30 seconds or so to make their change. You can give them a countdown when they have about 10 seconds left.)
- Let the group guess what is different. The kid who guesses correctly gets to be the next volunteer.
- After each kid has had a turn, ask the group how the game relates to today's story. (*The story was about being kind to someone who's different from you.*)

- Prompt the group to talk about and share some ways each of them is different from each other.

What You Say:

- Use the following questions to talk about today's story and lead kids to figure out how it applies to them:
 - What are ways people are different from each other? (*looks, culture, how they talk, what they eat, what they like or dislike, etc.*)
 - The Samaritan could have ignored the injured man and walked right on by, but he didn't. How do you feel when someone ignores you or simply doesn't listen to what you have to say?
 - How do you feel when someone shows interest in what you are doing or what you have to say?
 - Do you think it was hard for the Samaritan to show kindness to the injured man? Why or why not?
 - What can make it hard for kids to show kindness to people who are different from them?
 - We're all different from each other in some way and there will be times at school or during sports, or just living life that you will meet someone who doesn't look like you, act like you, or talk like you. How can you show kindness to someone who seems very different from you? (*Ask questions, try to get to know people who are different, listen, etc.*)
 - Why might a kid your age be treated unkindly? When have you seen someone treated unkindly?
 - You see someone being treated unkindly, maybe it is the annoying kid at school. What does it look like to respond with kindness? Is it kind to walk away when you see someone being treated unkindly? Why or why not?

Close your group in a group prayer today:

"God, You are (*encourage kids to fill in the sentence with a word describing God*) We know we will have many opportunities to show kindness this week. Help us to remember to show kindness to everyone by (*encourage kids to fill in the sentence with a way to show kindness*) Thank You, God, for making us in Your image and yet making each of us different, with different cultures, languages, likes, and dislikes. You are so creative. Help us to think of creative ways to show others they are valuable to You and to us. Amen!"