

# Barnabas Encourages Christians in Antioch Acts 11:19-26


Your 5- and 6-year-olds are often asked to help out with easy concrete tasks like cleaning up toys or passing out snacks. Though these opportunities to help may seem small to adults, they're very meaningful to young children. Helping someone complete a task validates a child's abilities and boosts self-esteem as the child recognizes that he or she has made a significant contribution. Use this lesson to point kids in a new direction: helping others spiritually. Though spiritual help isn't always concrete, it's something kids this age can do—and the impact is eternal. Help kids see throughout this lesson that they can help others love Jesus.



**► Bible Point**  
Help others love Jesus.


**Key Verse**  
“But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you” (John 14:26).

**Weaving Faith Into Life**  
Children will encourage others in their faith.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
<p><b>1</b> Getting Started <i>about 10 min.</i></p>	<p><b>Welcoming Song</b> Sing or listen to praises for God.</p>	<p>CD player <b>Teacher Pack:</b> CD</p>	
<p><b>2</b> Key Verse Activity <i>about 10 min.</i></p>	<p><b>Super-Special Messages</b> Run a relay “race” to deliver encouraging messages.</p>	<p>Bible</p>	<p>Enlist the aid of an adult helper for this activity.</p>
<p><b>3</b> Bible Exploration <i>about 15 min.</i></p>	<p><b>Theo’s News</b> Find out what a smiling face has to do with the Bible today.</p>	<p>Surprise Box (any box will do), Theo puppet, picture of a smiling face glued to construction paper, CD player <b>Teacher Pack:</b> CD</p>	<p>Put the picture inside the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it’s easily accessible.</p>
	<p><b>Bible Time: Barnabas in the Bible</b> Listen to the Bible passage, and pretend to be Barnabas and the people in Antioch.</p>	<p>Bible, 2 envelopes, red construction paper, brown construction paper, scissors, glue sticks <b>Teacher Pack:</b> “Saul and Barnabas Encourage Christians” poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack)</p> 	<p>Cut out 1 small, red, paper heart and 1 small, brown, paper cross for every 2 children. Put the hearts in one envelope and the crosses in the other.</p>

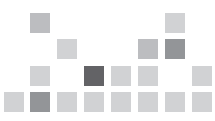
*Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.*



LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
<p><b>4</b> Weaving Faith Into Life <i>about 20 min.</i> (Choose 2 centers.)</p>	<p><b>Center 1: Smiles of Faith</b> Help Barnabas visit Antioch, and draw smiles on the faces of the people there.</p>	<p>My Bible Playground, glue, child-safe scissors, crayons or markers</p>	<p>Remove the Lesson 12 pages from each My Bible Playground student book.</p>
	<p><b>Center 2: Let-Me-Help Snack</b> Help each other make snacks.</p>	<p>graham crackers, softened cream cheese, raisins, paper plates, plastic knives, napkins, antibacterial gel (optional)</p>	
	<p><b>Center 3: Help Me Remember!</b> Play a matching game by helping each other remember things.</p>	<p><b>Teacher Pack:</b> "Matching Cards," separated</p>	
	<p><b>Center 4: Stick With Jesus</b> Create their own stickers.</p>	<p>1 adhesive-paper sheet per 2 kids, markers, glue, child-safe scissors, glitter</p>	<p>Use a marker to divide each sheet of adhesive paper into 8 rectangles. Then cut the sheets in half so each child will have a sheet of 4 rectangles.</p>
<p><b>5</b> Lasting Impressions <i>about 10 min.</i></p>	<p><b>Daily Challenges</b> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.</p>	<p>My Bible Playground</p>	
	<p><b>Help-Me-to-Help Prayer</b> Say an action prayer.</p>		
	<p><b>Weaving Faith at Home</b> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.</p>		

*Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.*





# Barnabas Encourages Christians in Antioch

Acts 11:19-26

BIBLE BACKGROUND  
FOR LEADERS



## Reason to Praise

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In the chapters leading up to today’s passage, God revealed to Peter that the message of Christ is not only for Jews but for non-Jews as well. Peter then took that message to the household of Cornelius, a Roman centurion, and God poured out the Holy Spirit on these non-Jews who then came to faith in Christ. The Jerusalem church had a hard time accepting that non-Jews could become believers in Christ, but after Peter explained everything that had happened, they praised God that he had granted even the Gentiles eternal life through Jesus (Acts 10:1–11:18).

## Reason to Scatter

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In today’s passage, we see that the early followers of Christ had been scattered from Jerusalem because of the persecution that began after Stephen was killed. The Jews had stoned him after he accused them of killing the Messiah, Jesus. But everywhere the scattered followers went, they told people about Jesus (Acts 7:1–8:4).

## Spreading the News

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The believers who were scattered to Antioch, at that time the third largest city in the Roman Empire, began sharing the message of Christ not only with the many Jews who lived there, but also with the non-Jews. When Jerusalem’s church heard that a great number of people had turned to the Lord, they were ready to accept these non-Jewish believers, and they sent Barnabas (whose name means “Son of Encouragement”) to see what was happening and to contribute to the spreading of the gospel message.

Barnabas invited Saul (whom we know as the Apostle Paul) to Antioch for a year to help teach because the church was expanding so quickly. Barnabas had befriended Saul and defended him before the apostles

in Jerusalem after Saul had met Christ on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1-30).

What happened in Antioch was significant because it was, apparently, the first time Jewish and non-Jewish Christians joined together in fellowship. People there were accustomed to rubbing shoulders with people of different backgrounds and of different ethnic groups. The church in Antioch set a wonderful example for churches to follow in centuries to come.

## The Jesus Connection

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As the text tells us, Jesus’ followers were first called Christians in Antioch. It’s significant that in Antioch this diverse group of followers took on a name that means “like Christ.” As they lived out Jesus’ example and encouraged others in the faith, people noticed. What a compliment it would be for others to consider us to be like Jesus!

Pray about how your life can reflect Jesus in a way that would help draw others to God. You can write your prayer here.

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## Welcoming Song Supplies

CD player

### Teacher Pack

CD: "Hurrah!" (track 19), "Jesus Loves Me Rock" (track 6)


# 1 GETTING STARTED

## Welcoming Song

**Tip** Consistently use the same signal to announce a transition to the next activity. You could flip the lights off and on, use a train whistle, have a puppet rustling inside a bag, or sing cleanup songs. Keep it simple, consistent, and fun.

### What You'll Do

As the children arrive, greet each child and welcome him or her with a smile. When it's time to begin, use your signal to bring the children together in a circle. Lead kids in singing "Hurrah!" (track 19 on the CD) to the tune of "When Johnny Comes Marching Home." Encourage kids to join you in singing and doing the motions.

 **Let's come and sing at church today. Hurrah! Hurrah!** (*pump fists into the air on "hurrah!"*)

**Let's come and pray at church today. Hurrah! Hurrah!** (*pump fists into the air on "hurrah!"*)

**The girls will cheer, the boys will shout;** (*have girls cheer and boys shout*)

**We'll learn what love is all about.**

**And we'll sing and pray** (*fold hands in prayer*)

**With our friends at church.**

(Repeat 2x.)

Say: **Today we'll learn about a man named Barnabas and how he helped other Christians feel happy and believe in Jesus. Let's sing a song about how we can ► HELP OTHERS LOVE JESUS.**

Lead kids in singing "Jesus Loves Me Rock" (track 6 on the CD) Encourage kids to join you in singing. The first time through, have girls sing the phrase and boys sing the echo. On the repeat, reverse the parts. Have kids move "freestyle" to the beat.

 **Jesus loves me;** (*echo*)

**This I know,** (*echo*)

**For the Bible** (*echo*)

**Tells me so.** (*echo*)

**Little children** (*echo*)

**To him belong.** (*echo*)

**They are weak, but** (*echo*)

**He's so strong!** (*echo*)

**Jaaayyy!** (*J*)

**Eeeeeee!** (*E*)



Ssssss! (S)  
Uuuuuu! (U)  
Ssssss! (S)

And what's that spell? (Jesus!)  
And who do you love? (Jesus!)  
And who loves you? (Jesus!)  
Who died for you? (Jesus!)  
And who's your guy? (Jesus!)  
The apple of your eye! (Jesus!)  
And who's your friend? (Jesus!)  
He'll love ya to the end!

(Repeat from the beginning.)

"Jesus Loves Me Rock" by Dean-o. © 2003 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

Say: **Jesus loves you and me. We can ► HELP OTHERS LOVE JESUS.**

## 2 KEY VERSE ACTIVITY

# Super-Special Messages

### What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have everyone sit in a circle. Open your Bible to John 14:26, and show children the words.

Say: **Our Key Verse from the Bible, John 14:26, says, "But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you" (John 14:26). That means that the Holy Spirit will teach you. Let's say our Key Verse together.** Lead children in repeating the simplified Key Verse after you: **The Holy Spirit will teach you (John 14:26).**

Ask:

- **What's easy or difficult about learning something new?**

Say: **The Holy Spirit can teach us by giving us special messages to share with others. In the Bible, we'll hear about how the Holy Spirit gave a man named Barnabas special messages to share. Let's play a game where we share special messages.**



Super-Special  
Messages  
Supplies

Bible

Super-Special  
Messages  
Easy Prep

Enlist the aid of an adult helper for this activity.



Have half of the kids line up on one side of the room and the other half line up on the other side. Stand on one side with one group of kids, and have your adult helper stand on the other side with the other group.

Say: **We're going to run a "Super-Special Message Delivery Race"! I'll begin by whispering a special message in the ear of the first person in line on my side.**

The special messages should be simple, encouraging statements such as "Jesus loves you," "You are special to God," "The Holy Spirit is always with you," or "Believe in Jesus."

Have the child who was whispered to race across the room to the first person in line on the other side and say the message to that child.

Have the adult helper on that side of the room whisper a special message into the ear of the first person in line, who will then run to your side to deliver the message to the second person.

Have kids continue running back and forth, racing to deliver their super-special secret messages. Give this message to the last runner: **The Holy Spirit will teach you (John 14:26).**

### Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- Why is it important to tell our friends about Jesus?
- What are some ways we can tell our friends about Jesus?

Say: **Good job delivering messages! The Holy Spirit has messages for you that will ► HELP OTHERS LOVE JESUS. The Holy Spirit will give you special messages to share with people. The Holy Spirit will give you ideas of nice things to say, kind things to do, or special things to pray for other people. This is a way that the Holy Spirit will teach you. Let's say that special message again one more time.** Lead children in saying the simplified Key Verse with you: **The Holy Spirit will teach you (John 14:26).**

## 3 BIBLE EXPLORATION

### Theo's News

#### What You'll Do ■■■■

Say: **Friends, it's time for Theo's News!**

Have the children sit in a circle, and begin "Here, Theo" (track 4 on the CD). When the

#### Theo's News Supplies

Surprise Box (any box will do)  
Theo puppet  
picture of a smiling face glued to construction paper  
CD player  
**Teacher Pack**  
CD: "Here, Theo" (track 4)

#### Theo's News Easy Prep

Put the picture inside the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.



CD segment ends, bring out the Surprise Box, and put Theophilus the FaithRetriever puppet on your hand. Then follow along with the script.

**Theo:** Hi, everybody!

**Teacher:** Hello, Theo! Tell us what interesting news you've dug up about the Bible today.

**Theo:** I hid it in the Surprise Box.

**Teacher:** Let's look inside to see what Theo dug up for us today.

*(Invite a child to open the Surprise Box, and have the kids pass the smiling face around the circle so the rest of the group can see it up close. Give the children time to guess what they might learn about in the Bible today.)*

**Teacher:** Theo, why did you hide this smiling face in our Surprise Box?

**Theo:** Well I was going to put a frowning face in, but a smiling face is so much better. Don't you agree, kids?

*(Pause for kids to respond.)*

**Teacher:** Okay, but you still haven't told us why you put the smiling face into the Surprise Box.

**Theo:** To make you smile, of course...

**Teacher:** Friends, when was a time you felt very happy?

*(Pause for kids to answer your question.)*

**Theo:** I'm happy right now!

**Teacher:** That's good. Today we're going to learn from the Bible about a man named Barnabas and how a group of people became very, very happy. We'll find out how we can ► **HELP OTHERS LOVE JESUS**, too!

**Theo:** Have fun, boys and girls!

**Teacher:** Say goodbye to Theo.

Encourage the children to wave or say goodbye to Theo. Then put Theo away in a safe place for next week's use.

## Bible Time: Barnabas in the Bible

### What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Open your Bible to Acts 11, and show the children the words. Tell kids that the Bible is God's special book.

Say: **The Bible tells us about some people in a town called Antioch. Some of them believed in Jesus, but they wanted to learn more about him.**

Invite a child from the group to be Barnabas, and have him or her stand by the door.

Have the child playing Barnabas knock loudly on the door, and then run over to the rest of the kids.

Say: **Hi, Barnabas!** Have kids wave to "Barnabas."

**The people of Antioch were so happy when Barnabas arrived!**



### Bible Time: Barnabas in the Bible Supplies

- Bible
- 2 envelopes
- red construction paper
- brown construction paper
- scissors
- glue sticks

### Teacher Pack

- "Saul and Barnabas Encourage Christians" poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack)

### Bible Time: Barnabas in the Bible Easy Prep

Cut out 1 small, red, paper heart and 1 small, brown, paper cross for every 2 children. Put the hearts in one envelope and the crosses in the other.



Have the kids clap and cheer to welcome Barnabas. Lead them in cheering, “**Wel-come, Barnabas! Wel-come, Barnabas! Wel-come, Barnabas!**”

Say: **Barnabas was a good man. He had great faith in Jesus, and he trusted the Holy Spirit to teach him.**

Help kids form two equal groups, and have the two groups stand a few feet apart from each other.

Say: **Barnabas encouraged the Christians in Antioch—he helped them feel happy and learn about Jesus.**

Give the child playing Barnabas the envelope full of paper hearts. Have Barnabas pass out the hearts to one of the groups of children.

Say: **Barnabas helped the Christians in Antioch love Jesus with their whole hearts.**

Ask:

- **What are some ways we can help others love Jesus with their whole hearts the way Barnabas did?**

Show children the “Saul and Barnabas Encourage Christians” poster. Encourage the group of kids with the hearts to come to the poster and each glue a heart to the poster to remind them that Jesus wants us to love him with our whole heart.

Say: **Jesus wants us to love him with our whole heart and ► HELP OTHERS LOVE JESUS!**

Point to the other group of kids.

Say: **There were also people in Antioch who didn’t know about Jesus and didn’t have a friendship with him.**

Give Barnabas the envelope filled with paper crosses. Have Barnabas give one of the crosses to each child in the second group. Have these kids come to the poster and each glue a cross to the poster to remind them that we can ► **HELP OTHERS LOVE JESUS**, just like Barnabas did!

Say: **Barnabas told everyone about Jesus. He told them that Jesus loved them and wanted to be their friend. He helped them believe in Jesus. Barnabas made the people in Antioch feel very happy.**

Have groups smile, cheer, and clap to celebrate as they say: **Let’s ► HELP OTHERS LOVE JESUS!**



## Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- What can you do to help others feel happy the way Barnabas did?
- What can you do to help others love Jesus the way Barnabas did?

Say: **Today we're going to learn about many ways that we can be like Barnabas and**  
**▶ HELP OTHERS LOVE JESUS.**

# 4 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Choose at least two of the learning centers to help reinforce today's Bible lesson. Gather the needed materials, and put the supplies in an out-of-sight area until you're ready for them. Allow the children to choose which center they'd like to explore first. Then circulate among the children as they create and explore. Encourage them to make connections between their activities and the Bible by asking them the questions included with each center's description.

## CENTER 1: Smiles of Faith

### What You'll Do

Say: **Barnabas helped the people in Antioch believe in Jesus.** Prompt the kids to repeat the Bible Point: **▶ HELP OTHERS LOVE JESUS.**

Distribute the Lesson 12 My Bible Playground student pages, and have kids write their names on their papers.

Say: **God used Barnabas to help other people love Jesus. Let's cut out the picture of Barnabas, and then add him to the crowd of people.**

Have kids use child-safe scissors to cut out the picture of Barnabas at the bottom of the page. Then have them glue Barnabas to the empty spot in the picture.

Say: **Barnabas helped the people in Antioch love Jesus. That made them very happy!**

Have kids draw smiles on the faces of all the people in the picture. Then invite them to color the picture.



### Center 1: Smiles of Faith Supplies

My Bible Playground  
 glue  
 child-safe scissors  
 crayons or markers

### Center 1: Smiles of Faith Easy Prep

Remove the Lesson 12 pages from each My Bible Playground student book.



### Center 2: Let-Me-Help Snack Supplies

graham crackers  
softened cream cheese  
raisins  
paper plates  
plastic knives  
napkins  
antibacterial gel  
(optional)

**! ALLERGY  
■ ALERT**

### Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- What makes people happy when they learn about Jesus?
- What can you do to help other people be happy to learn about Jesus?

Say: **Barnabas helped other people believe in Jesus and it made them happy. We can also ► HELP OTHERS LOVE JESUS by being friendly, nice, and loving. We can tell other people about the Bible and invite them to church. We can help people be friends with Jesus.**

### ■ CENTER 2:

## Let-Me-Help Snack

### What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have children clean their hands and form pairs. Set out the supplies.

Say: **Barnabas helped other people believe in Jesus. Right now you're going to be like Barnabas and help each other. You're going to help your partner make a snack that tells about Jesus.**

Demonstrate how to make a snack by spreading cream cheese on a large graham cracker and then making a cross on the graham cracker using raisins.

Say: **It's important to learn how to help each other, so your job is to take turns helping each other make your snack.**

Have kids help their partners spread cream cheese on their graham crackers or help them make raisin crosses.

Ask:

- What did you do to help your partner?

Say: **Congratulations on doing such a great job helping each other!** Lead kids in a prayer of thanks to God, and let them eat their snacks.

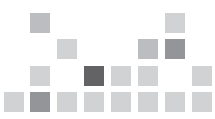
### Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- What was special about the way your partner helped you make your snack?
- Barnabas helped the people in Antioch believe in Jesus. What can you do to help other people believe in Jesus?

Say: **There are lots of ways we can ► HELP OTHERS LOVE JESUS. We can be**



friendly and nice. We can give hugs and share toys. We can tell each other about Jesus' love. We can pray for each other. Let's try to be like Barnabas this week and help each other believe in Jesus!



**CENTER 3:**

## Help Me Remember!

### What You'll Do

Say: **We're going to play a game, but you'll need to be patient and wait your turn.**

Mix up the "Matching Cards," and spread them out facedown on the floor.

Say: **There are pictures on these cards that match! Your job is to try to find the pairs by helping each other match the different pictures.**

Have children go to the "game board" one at a time and select two cards to turn over. If they do not select a matching pair, they will simply show everyone the two cards they turned over, and then put them back in the same place on the floor, facedown. The next child will then take a turn as the rest of the group helps each player remember where the different pictures are.

If a match is found, take the paired cards off the game board and set them to the side face up. Let another child take the next turn. Continue in this manner until all four pairs are selected.

If you're able, shuffle the cards and repeat the game again; kids will enjoy the sense of accomplishment they feel as they get better and better at working together to remember where the cards are placed.

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What did you do to help each other?**
- **What are some other ways to help love others?**

Say: **God used Barnabas to help the people in Antioch believe in Jesus. And God can use you to help your friends and family members believe in Jesus and become better friends with him! We can ► HELP OTHERS LOVE JESUS!**

**Center 3: Help Me Remember! Supplies**

**Teacher Pack**  
"Matching Cards," separated





#### Center 4: Stick With Jesus Supplies

1 adhesive-paper sheet per 2 kids  
markers  
glue  
child-safe scissors  
glitter

#### Center 4: Stick With Jesus Easy Prep

Use a marker to divide each sheet of adhesive paper into 8 rectangles. Then cut the sheets in half so each child will have a sheet of 4 rectangles.

### CENTER 4:

## Stick With Jesus

### What You'll Do

Give children each a half-sheet of adhesive paper, and have them write their names on the back.

Say: **I'm going to say something, and then I want you to draw a picture of it in one of the rectangles on your paper. Ready?**

**Smiley face. I'd like you to draw a smiley face.** Give kids time to draw their smiley faces, and then direct them to draw the following three things on three more rectangles. Allow time for them to finish each one: a heart, a Bible, a church.

When kids are done drawing, give them glitter and glue. Encourage kids to use the supplies to decorate the pictures they just created.

Say: **We learned today that we can ► HELP OTHERS LOVE JESUS. We just drew four different ways that we can help people love Jesus.**

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Point out one of the kids' smiley faces.

Ask:

- **What does this smiley face show us?**
- **What are some ways we can smile and be happy in knowing Jesus loves us?**

Hold up a heart drawing.

Ask:

- **What ideas does this heart give us for how to help others love Jesus?**

Hold up a drawing of a Bible.

Ask:

- **What can the Bible tell us about how to help people love Jesus?**

Hold up a drawing of a church.

Ask:

- **What does a church tell us about how to help others love Jesus?**

Say: **There are so many ways we can help people believe in and love Jesus! The four drawings you made are on special paper—you just created stickers! You can**

help people love Jesus by sharing your stickers! You can give them to a friend or family member, you can wear one on your shirt, or you can stick them in places where others will see them and learn about Jesus.

Help kids use child-safe scissors to cut the stickers apart.

## 5 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

### Daily Challenges

#### What You'll Do ■■■■■■

After the children have cleaned up the centers, bring everyone back to the circle area on the floor. Review the lesson activities and the Bible Point, and then encourage the children to share what they remember about what they learned from the Bible today.

Also use this time to challenge kids in their faith. Encourage them to choose a Daily Challenge for applying today's lesson to their lives this week. Use this challenge for encouraging your children's growing relationships with Jesus.

#### Talk With Kids ■■■■

Say: Today we learned that we can ► **HELP OTHERS LOVE JESUS**. Choose one of these Daily Challenges to help others love Jesus this week.

Give kids these three challenges to choose from:

1. **Pray for a friend at school who doesn't know Jesus.**
2. **Give someone in your family a hug, and tell that person that Jesus wants us to love him.**
3. **Draw a picture of yourself telling others about Jesus, and then hang it in your room to remind you that we can help others love Jesus!**

Say: **If you want to pray for a friend, circle choice number 1. If you want to hug a family member, circle choice number 2. If you want to draw a picture, circle choice number 3.** Check that each child circled a choice. Make sure you tell kids the challenge you choose. Your commitment will inspire children and will give them an opportunity to see God at work in your life as well as in theirs!

### Help-Me-to-Help Prayer

#### What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have the group stand in a circle. Encourage kids to ask God to show them a way to help another person learn about Jesus. Then lead the group in this eyes-open prayer by having them repeat each line and action after you.



Daily Challenges  
Supplies

My Bible Playground



Pray: **Dear God,**  
**I believe in you.** (*point your index finger up to sky*)  
**I love you with all my heart.** (*put both hands over heart*)  
**We want to help each other** (*hold hands with the people next to you*)  
**believe in you.** (*point finger to the sky*)  
**Help us help others.** (*fold hands in prayer*)  
**In Jesus' name, amen.**

## Weaving Faith at Home

Have children take home their My Bible Playground pages whether they worked on them or not. Have children tell their parents the challenge they committed to in the “Daily Challenges” activity. Encourage parents to help their kids fulfill this commitment during the week. By working together and focusing on the same goals, you and parents can help children weave faith into their lives!

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at [group.com/digital](http://group.com/digital).

