

Bible Point ▶

Jesus wants us to help others.

Bible Verse

“Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed” (Ecclesiastes 4:9).

Growing Closer to Jesus

Children will discover that helping others makes work easier, learn that God is pleased with them when they help others, and talk about specific things they can do to help the people they know.

Teacher Enrichment

Bible Basis

Friends bring a man to Jesus to be healed.

**Mark
2:1-12**



At least two different types of roofs were placed on houses in Capernaum in Jesus' time. One was built by placing something akin to rafters across the top of the walls and then attaching crosspieces between them. Then tree branches were laid across the crosspieces and covered with dirt and mud. Once baked in the sun, this became a hardened, reliable roof. The other consisted of tiles laid across the rafters. Whichever roof was on this house, an opening could not have been made without everyone noticing that something was going on.

The persistence the four friends demonstrated in getting the paralytic before Jesus demonstrated their faith that Jesus could heal him. It's likely the paralytic's faith was similar to that of his friends and that his faith simply wasn't mentioned here—his friends probably wouldn't have done what they did without their paralyzed friend's consent. And it's possible that the paralyzed man was unable to speak clearly enough to express his own faith.

Prayer

- Read Matthew 20:29-34.
- What does this passage tell us about Jesus' willingness to help others in need of physical healing?
- Pray: Lord, show me how to help others. Guide me in helping the children I teach learn to help others, too, as they...





Before the Lesson

Collect items for the activities you plan to use, referring to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies listed in the chart.

Make photocopies of the “Growing Together” handout (at the end of this lesson) to send home with your children.

Pray for your students and for God’s direction in teaching the lesson.

This Lesson at a Glance

	What Children Will Do	Classroom Supplies	Learning Lab Supplies
Welcome	Welcome! —Receive a warm welcome from the teacher, and decorate name tags.	Name tags from Lesson 9, construction paper, tape, safety scissors, markers	
Attention Grabber	Help! —Run a race to discover that helping each other is fun.	Paper	
Bible Exploration & Application	Friends Help —Learn about four people who helped their friend see Jesus in the story from Mark 2:1-12.	Bible, newsprint or newspapers, tape, empty box	
	Helpful Wind —Help each other complete a difficult task, and listen to Ecclesiastes 4:9-10.	Bible	
	Searching Helpers —Work in pairs to locate objects in the classroom.	1 blindfold for each child	
	Helping-Hands Chain —Listen to Galatians 6:2, and talk about ways they can help others.	Bible, paper, markers	
Closing 	Growing Help —Listen to Hebrews 6:10, and make helping-hands flowers to learn that God remembers the help they give others.	Bible, drawings from the “Helping-Hands Chain” activity, markers	

Welcome

SUPPLIES: name tags from Lesson 9, construction paper, tape, safety scissors, markers

- Greet each child individually with an enthusiastic smile.
- Thank each child for coming to class today.
- As children arrive, ask them about last week’s “Growing Together” activities. Use questions such as “What was it like to pray *after* your meals last week?” and “What did your family thank God for last week?”
- Say: **Today we’re going to learn that** ► ***Jesus wants us to help others.***
- Pass out the name tags children made during Lesson 9, and help them write the word “help” on one of the fingers. Suggest to any non-writers that they draw a face instead showing an expression that represents the word “help.” Then help the children attach the name tags to their clothing. If some of the name tags were damaged, or if children weren’t in class that week, have them make new name tags using the instructions in Lesson 9.
- Tell the children that you’ll raise your hand to get their attention. They should respond by raising their hands and focusing on you. Rehearse this signal and encourage the children to respond quickly so you’ll have time for all the fun activities in this lesson.



BIBLE POINT



It’s important to say the Bible Point just as it’s written in each activity. Repeating the Bible Point over and over will help children remember it and apply it to their lives.

Attention Grabber

Help!

SUPPLIES: paper

Form two teams. If you have more than 14 children, form three teams. Have the teams line up for a relay race. Place a chair about 10 feet in front of each team. Give each team two sheets of paper.

Say: We’re going to have a walking relay. Each person will get a chance to be a walker and a helper. The helper will lay a sheet of paper on the floor. The walker will step on it. Then the helper will lay the second sheet of paper down, and the walker will step on it. The walker’s feet can’t touch the floor. The helper will keep moving the papers to lead the walker around the chair and back to the line. Choose a volunteer to help you demonstrate this for the class.

When you get back to the line, the walker becomes the next person’s helper and the first helper goes to the end of the line.

Make sure children understand the instructions. On “go,” have the children begin the race. After the race, congratulate the winning team. Then say: **All of you deserve to be congratulated because you did such a great job of helping your teammates. Give yourselves a round of applause!**

Ask: • **What was it like to be the helper?** (Fun; busy; I liked helping us win.)

• **What was it like when your classmate was laying down paper for you to walk on?** (I wanted him to help faster; it was good; I felt like she was helping me do something I couldn’t do.)

• **What would’ve happened if no one had helped you run the race?** (The race would have been harder; we couldn’t have won.)



First- and second-graders like to win, and they like to be first; they may find it difficult to sacrifice some fun to help others. Remind children how they feel when they want someone to help them, and encourage them to help others.



Say: **Just as helping each other made the race easier, helping each other in real life makes things easier, too. Plus, helping each other makes us all feel good. And it makes Jesus happy because Jesus wants us to help others. We're going to learn all about that today.**

Bible Exploration & Application

Friends Help

SUPPLIES: Bible, newsprint or newspapers, tape, empty box



Make a “house” by turning two classroom tables on their sides. Put them next to each other so the table tops and legs form a rectangle. If possible, fold the legs on one side to form an entrance to the house. Tape newsprint or newspapers over the top to form a “roof.” If your classroom tables aren’t rectangular, place chairs in two rows and tape newsprint to them to form a house.

Put the *stuffed animal* in the empty box. Set the box with the *stuffed animal* near the entrance to the house.

Gather the children inside the house and tell this story:

Say: **Our story today comes from Mark 2:1-12.** Open your Bible and show children the passage. **This story is about helping people. Many times we use our hands to help people. So when I say “help” or “helped” during the story, clap your hands three times. Then fold your hands behind your back. Let’s practice. Here’s the word: “Help.”** Pause for children to quickly clap three times and then fold their hands behind their backs.

Good job! One day, Jesus went to a town called Capernaum. The people were so excited that they all helped (pause) tell everyone the news. They said, “Have you heard? Jesus the teacher has come home to Capernaum.”

People were packed in a house to listen to Jesus, just as we’re packed inside our pretend house here.

But there were four men who wanted to help (pause) their friend get inside the house to see Jesus. Only Jesus could help (pause) this man because this man was paralyzed—he couldn’t move his legs at all. The man had to lie on a mat and be carried everywhere he went. He couldn’t go anywhere by himself without help (pause).

The four friends tried to carry the man inside the door, but there were too many people—they couldn’t fit.

They looked at the house and wondered how they were going to help (pause) their friend get inside. Then they had a great idea. They decided to cut a hole in the roof and let their friend down through the hole. They all helped (pause) carry their friend up to the roof. Then they dug and chopped until there was a hole in the roof.

Ask: • **What do you think the people inside thought as the four men made a hole in the roof?** (I think they were surprised to hear noises coming from the roof; they wondered what all the noise was; I bet they thought the people were rude.)

• **What do you think Jesus thought?** (I think he was surprised; I think he was glad that someone was helping the man.)



Have the children sit inside the house. Sit in the doorway yourself.

Bible Insight

Jewish law taught that people were to atone for sins with offerings in the Temple. Judaism also taught that while only God could forgive sins, some of God’s representatives could speak on God’s behalf. However, Jesus was not a priest, the sick man in Mark 2:5 had not offered a sacrifice, Jesus did not give a reason for the man’s forgiveness, and we don’t read that the man had even repented. Jesus was clearly stepping on the toes of the Jewish leaders.

• **How do you think the paralyzed man felt?** (He felt good that people were helping him; happy; excited; nervous.)

Say: **When the hole was big enough, the four men picked up their friend and carefully lowered him down inside the house.** Choose two volunteers to rip a hole in your tent roof and carefully lower the *stuffed animal* through the roof. Then hold the box and the *stuffed animal* on your lap while you finish the story.

Jesus looked at the paralyzed man. Then he looked up and saw the four friends. Jesus saw that all of them believed that he could help (pause) **and could heal the paralyzed man. Jesus said to the man, “Your sins are forgiven.”**

Some teachers were angry when Jesus said that. They didn’t understand that Jesus is God. They thought that Jesus was pretending to be God.

Jesus knew what they were thinking, so he asked, “Is it easier to forgive sins or to make a paralyzed person walk?” Then Jesus said to the paralyzed man, “Get up, take your mat, and go home.”

Immediately the paralyzed man’s legs grew strong. He stood up, picked up his mat, and walked out the door. Everyone was amazed at how Jesus had helped (pause) the paralyzed man. They praised God and said, “We have never seen anything like this.”

The four men knew that their friend needed help (pause), and they did everything they could to make sure he got help (pause).

You all did a great job of listening to our story! ► Jesus wants us to help others, and that can be fun. Right now, you can help me by putting the tables where they belong and putting the newsprint away.

Put the *stuffed animal* away with the other Learning Lab items.



HANDS-ON BIBLE

Say: **God can use each of us in big and little ways. The four friends of the paralyzed man helped their friend in a little way by bringing him to Jesus, and then Jesus helped the man in a big way—he healed him! God can use you to help your friends in big and little ways, too. Let’s think about some ways God can use you.**

Have the children open their *Hands-On Bibles* to **Hebrews 1** and find the “Can God Use You?” activity. Read through the activity together, and then have children form pairs. Ask pairs to think about talents and abilities God has given them, and then think of a way they could use their special talent or ability to help the other. For example, if Riley said that God has given her a special talent to sing, she could sing a song for her friend to cheer up that friend when he’s sick. Have pairs take turns acting out how they can help each other using a special talent or skill God has given them.

Ask: • **What are some other special talents or skills God has given you?** (I am good at math; I like to run; it’s easy for me to keep my room straight.)

• **Why should we use our talents or abilities to help others?** (Because Jesus says to; because we can; because it’s fun to help our friends.)




BIBLE POINT

Say: **God has given each of us special talents and abilities so we can use them to help others. ► *Jesus wants us to help others*, because when we do, we make other people happy and we honor God. Thank you all for letting God use you in big and little ways to help others!**

Helpful Wind

SUPPLIES: Bible



Crumple all of the *tissue squares* into little balls. Use the *tissue squares* from the “Kind Samaritan” activity in Lesson 10, too. Put all the crumpled balls into one pile on a table or on the floor.

Gather the children around the pile. Say: **In this game, one person will use the *comet ball* to scatter these crumples around so they’re not touching each other. You’ll hold the ball end and use the streamers like a broom to scatter the pieces around. You can’t touch the crumples with your fingers or with the ball. You’ll have 30 seconds to scatter the crumples. Who’d like to go first?**

Choose a volunteer to go first. After 30 seconds, call time by shaking the *tambourine*. Let several children try. If you have time, let each child try.

Then say: **That was hard. The streamers don’t sweep very well. Now let’s work together to help each other scatter the crumples.**

Have the children sit in a circle around the crumples. Pile the crumples in the center of the circle. On “go” have all the children blow on the crumples to scatter them.

Ask: • **Why was it easier to scatter the crumples the second time?** (Because we were all blowing instead of using the streamers; because we helped each other; because we were working together.)

Say: **When we help each other, it makes work easier to do. The Bible says that it’s good to work together and help each other.** Read aloud today’s Bible verse, **Ecclesiastes 4:4**, and continue through verse 10 from an easy-to-understand version of the Bible such as the *Hands-On Bible* in the New Living Translation.

BIBLE VERSE

► **“Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble.”**

Ask: • **Why is it better to work together than alone?** (The work goes faster when you work together; work is easier when you have help; it’s more fun.)

• **How can one person help the other, according to these Bible verses?** (If one falls down, the other one can put out his hand and pick him up; one person can help the other so he can get up again.)

Say: **Let’s work together now to gather the paper crumples and put them in the trash.** Return the *tambourine* and *comet ball* to the Learning Lab. Then ask:

• **What kinds of things do you like to be helped with?** (My homework; doing the dishes; doing craft projects.)

• **How can you help others get their work done?** (I can help my mom when she’s tired; I can help with little things so my parents can do big things; I can help my dad in the yard.)

Say: ► ***Jesus wants us to help others.*** We can do that by cooperating to get things done. It was lots easier to scatter the paper crumples when we worked together. It was fun, too. When we help each other, the work is easier and it's more fun.



Searching Helpers

SUPPLIES: one blindfold for each child



Gather the class in the middle of the room and blindfold each child. Say: **I'm going to hide some musical instruments in the room and you can try to find them. If you find an instrument, sit quietly on the floor next to it. No peeking!**

Quietly place the *inflatable bongo sticks*, *tambourine*, *bell*, *clicker*, *bead ball*, and *mini-maraca* in different places in the room, such as on a table or on the floor in a corner. Do not place them behind any other objects; make sure that they are visible.

Once all the objects are in place, tell the children that they may begin searching for them. Because the children are blindfolded, it may be very difficult for them to locate the objects. Encourage them to try for three to four minutes.

Then ask the class to remove their blindfolds and return to the center of the room.

Ask: • **How did it feel to try to find something when you couldn't see?** (It was hard because of the blindfold; it was easy because I stepped on it; I was scared because I don't like the dark.)

• **What would help you find the instruments if you were blindfolded?**

(Taking off my blindfold; having someone who could help me; seeing where the instruments are before I put on the blindfold.)

Say: **Those are all good ideas. Today we're learning that ► *Jesus wants us to help others.* Let's try working in pairs and see if that helps.**

Have the children work in pairs. One partner should be blindfolded and the other able to see. Encourage the partners to work together to locate the instruments. When they find one, let them make some noise with it!

After all of the groups have finished, collect the blindfolds and put them away. Return the *inflatable bongo sticks*, *tambourine*, *bell*, *clicker*, *bead ball*, and *mini-maraca* to the Learning Lab box to reduce distraction.

Ask: • **How did it feel this time around to have a helper?** (It was easier because she could see; it was good because it went faster; it was still hard because I couldn't see.)

• **In what ways did your partner help you?** (She led me to the instrument; he held my hand while I walked; she told me where to go.)

Say: **When you worked together with your partner, you were able to do more and you had more fun doing it. Those are good reasons ► *Jesus wants us to help each other.* We can help others anytime we are willing to reach out a hand and help. And when we do, we'll have fun, too! Let's try another activity to help others.**



Pay attention to classroom safety as children move around the room blindfolded. Move all sharp objects and large furniture out of the way to give ample room to roam. If there is a sharp corner or obstacle that children might be likely to bump into, have a teacher stand in front of it and gently guide children away from the danger.



Some children might be afraid of the dark. If they are apprehensive about being blindfolded, offer an alternative of closing their eyes during the activity.



Helping-Hands Chain

SUPPLIES: Bible, paper, markers

Form pairs and give each pair a marker and two sheets of paper. Have kids write their names on their papers, and then have partners take turns tracing each other's hands on the papers near the top of the page. Then raise your hand to get children's attention, and wait for children to respond.

Ask: • **Who can you help?** (My mom; my dad; my grandparents; my teacher; my brother; my sister; my friends.)

• **What can you do to help others?** (I can help with the housework; I can help with homework; I can take care of my sister; I can help my teacher straighten the room.)

Say: **Choose one of these helping things to do this week, and tell your partner about what you'll do.**

Give children a minute to share their ideas. Then have the children put their papers end to end to form a chain of helping hands.

Say: **Thank you for helping each other make this chain of helping hands in our room. Thank you for the plans you made to help others this week. The Bible talks about helping in Galatians 6:2. Read Galatians 6:2 aloud. This Bible verse tells us we should share our burdens. That means that we can help each other with our problems so we don't feel so sad about them and so we can obey God.**

Ask: • **Why does God want us to help each other?** (So we can help each other not feel sad; because it makes God happy when we obey.)

• **What's another way we make God happy when we help others?** (God likes it when we help others because then we make other people happy, too; sometimes people are sad and we can cheer them up when we help them.)

Say: **We can share our sadness with a friend, and that friend can help us feel better. ► Jesus wants us to help others, and you're already doing a great job!**

Save the helping-hand papers for the closing activity.



Closing

Growing Help

SUPPLIES: Bible, drawings from the "Helping-Hands Chain" activity, markers

Ask: • **What are some important things you learned today?** (To help people; that Jesus wants us to help others.)

Set out markers. Have the children draw stems and leaves under the hands they drew in the "Helping-Hands Chain" activity.

Say: ► **Jesus wants us to help others. Say that with me: "Jesus wants us to help others." When we do, we grow into the people that God wants us to be. And God won't forget the things we do. God is pleased with you when you help others. Listen to what Hebrews 6:10 says. Read Hebrews 6:10 aloud from your Hands-On Bible or from another easy-to-understand version of the Bible. We help others when we show how much we care for them.**

Ask: • **How do we show other people we care for them?** (We talk nicely to them; we pray with them; we smile at them; we help them.)

• **How does helping others show God that you love him?** (It shows him we want to obey; it shows we're following him; it shows we read the Bible.)



Say: **One great way we help others and show God how much we love him is to share with others what God has done for us. God showed how much he loved us when he sent us Jesus to die for our sins so that we could be forgiven. Take these helping-hands flowers home to remind you to help others. And when you help people this week, tell them how God sent Jesus to be your forever friend. With Jesus, you have a friend who will always help you!**

Let's pray and ask God to help us as we try to help others.

Have children place their hands on the drawn hands on their papers. Pray: **God, thank you for showing us you love us by sending us our forever friend, Jesus. Jesus helps us so we can help others. We know how important it is to you that we help each other all we can. Remind us to do that and give us help when we need it. In Jesus' name, amen.**



Growing closer to Jesus extends beyond the classroom.

Photocopy the "Growing Together" handout (at the end of this lesson) for this week, and send it home with your children. Encourage children and parents to use the handout to plan meaningful activities on this week's topic. Follow up the "Growing Together" activities next week by asking children what their families did together.

Growing Together

Jesus' Ministry 12:
Jesus wants us to help others.

Bible Story
Friends bring a man to Jesus to be healed. (Mark 2:1-12)

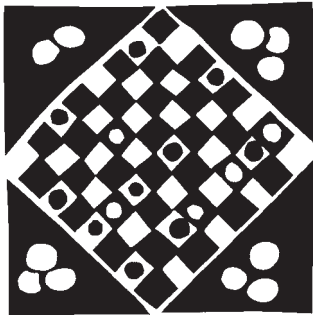
Key Verse
"Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed" (Ecclesiastes 4:9).

In Touch

Today your child learned that helping others pleases God. The children learned how friends helped a paralyzed man get close to Jesus. They talked about ways to help others and learned that helping others makes everyone feel good. Use these ideas to help others and have fun with your family.

Game Night

Help each other have fun during Family Game Night. Let each family member choose a favorite board game or active game. Talk about ways to help each other have fun. Make a list of your favorite ideas for having fun. Choose one activity each week for the next month and have fun together.

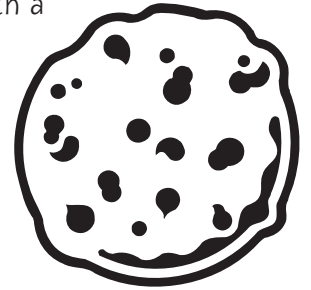


Help at Home

Celebrate helping each other around the house. Hand out dust rags to every family member and have fun dusting the house together. Hand out window cleaner and old newspapers and wash the windows together. Have everyone chip in to make dinner and clean up afterward. Play praise music and sing along as you work. Then talk about how it feels when the family helps each other.

Baking Fun

Work together to help each other bake these cookies. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Blend 1 cup of softened margarine with 1 cup of sugar. Beat in $2\frac{1}{4}$ cups of flour until a stiff dough forms. Divide the dough into several bowls and add a different color of food coloring to each bowl. Roll out the dough to $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thickness. Trace around each other's hands with a butter knife. Carefully cut out the hands and put them on an ungreased baking sheet. Use a fork to prick several holes in the cookies. Bake for 8 to 10 minutes. Pour each other glasses of milk and enjoy the cookies together.



Church Help

Contact your church and ask about something you can do to help there. Maybe your family could straighten hymnals and pick up extra bulletins after a church service. Maybe you could deliver sermon tapes with homemade cookies to homebound church members. Or perhaps you could wash toys in the nursery or pack care packages for missionaries.