

Unit 28

Willing to Serve

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

2 Corinthians 5:17

When your family sits down to share God's Word, use this devotion on its own or go to <http://bibleinlife.com/video/> to watch "Willing to Serve" before doing the devotion together. This devotion works well in December.

The video shows kids sharing about the ways they serve others. We also see them serving others by preparing food and clothes for people in need.

- How do you serve others? What are some new ideas you could try?

The Bible stories this month talk about Paul, starting with his choice to follow Jesus (Acts 7:58; 8:1-4; 9:1-22). We then see how Paul is willing to be a missionary (Acts 9:6, 20-31; 13:1-4). Paul tells people that Jesus is the promised Son of David and the Savior of the world (Luke 2:1-20; Acts 13:22-23; Romans 8:3-5; Ephesians 2:6-8). In our final story, Paul preaches the truth in Lystra under difficult circumstances (Acts 14). All these stories show that our lives are changed when we willingly serve Jesus and trust Him to help us serve others.

Through our stories, we learn how God is with us when we serve others.

- You have opportunities to serve others every day. How can you choose to serve them?
- Memorize 2 Corinthians 5:17. As a family, talk about how becoming a new creation in Christ can help us to serve and love others better, rather than trying to serve through our own strength.
- Spend time at a meal talking about ways that you could serve others as a family. Write ideas on note cards and place the cards in a "serving stack." Place the stack in a place where your family can regularly choose a card and do the service activity written on it.

End with a short prayer. God, help us to serve You willingly. Give us opportunities to love and serve other people. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Unit 29

Ready to Serve

“Go into all the world and preach gospel to all creation.”

Mark 16:15

When your family sits down to share God’s Word, use this devotion on its own or go to <http://bibleinlife.com/video/> to watch “Ready to Serve” before doing the devotion together. This devotion works well in January.

In this video, we learn that telling other people the good news of Jesus is a way to serve God! The students in the video meet, pray, and write letters to missionaries. Telling other people about Jesus and encouraging people who tell others about Jesus are great ways to serve God.

- What are some ways *you* can serve God by sharing this Good News with others?

Our Bible stories this month show us how Paul is ready to serve God by sharing the good news of Jesus (Acts 17). God promises to be with Paul as Paul preaches to Gentiles as well as to Jews (Acts 18:1-23). We even see Paul preaching Christ to idol-worshippers at Ephesus (Acts 19). Paul then heads for Jerusalem, despite the attempts of others to talk him out of doing so (Acts 20:22-24; 21:1-15). Although he’s put in prison for two years because of sharing the gospel, Paul finds an opportunity to witness before Felix and Festus (Acts 24—25:12).

From Paul’s missionary work, we see many ways to spread the good news of Jesus.

- What are some ways you can share the gospel with someone this week? How might you encourage others to share this Good News?
- Memorize Mark 16:15. As a family, reflect on circumstances in which sharing the gospel might be challenging. Remember that God strengthened Paul to be a witness for the gospel, even when Paul was imprisoned and shipwrecked. Pray, asking God to give each family member strength to be a witness for Christ, even when it is not easy.
- Set aside a family prayer time each day this week. Each day, pray for a specific person who does not know Jesus. Ask God for opportunities to share the gospel with that person. Let family members take turns being the prayer leader.

End with a short prayer. God, help us to be ready to share the good news of Your Son, Jesus. Give us opportunities to share our faith in Jesus with people who need Your hope. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

Unit 30

Power to Serve

I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3:14

When your family sits down to share God's Word, use this devotion on its own or go to <http://bibleinlife.com/video/> to watch "Power to Serve" before doing the devotion together. This devotion works well in February.

Throughout the video, we see students serving others. At the beginning of the video, we hear children share their desires to help other people. The second half of the video shows the children finding specific ways to serve others.

- Why do you think planning is important when you serve God?

This month's Bible stories continue to follow Paul as he travels and tells people about Jesus. Our first story tells us that Paul witnesses to King Agrippa (Acts 25:13—26:32; Matthew 10:16-20). We then learn that Paul is encouraged by God's promises. Paul takes the initiative during a shipwreck and speaks up for God (Acts 27:1—28:16). Even when he is alone in prison, Paul writes to encourage Timothy to remember God's Word as he continues in the ministry (2 Timothy 3:10—4:5). Then, as the end of Paul's life draws near, he knows he has wholeheartedly followed Christ and encourages others to do the same (Philippians 1:19-27; 2 Timothy 4:6-8; Romans 12:1-2).

From Paul's travels, we learn that God gives us strength and power to serve others.

- In each of Paul's travels, he knew that God never leaves those who are telling others about His Son, Jesus. How does it make you feel that Jesus never leaves you? How can knowing that truth help you to be strong while serving others?
- Memorize Philippians 3:14. As a family, discuss circumstances in which serving God may be challenging. How can each person "press on toward the goal" this week?
- Take a service challenge. Challenge each family member to serve someone this week in one of the following ways: praying for them, encouraging them, helping them with something, sharing the good news of Jesus with them. As a family, concentrate on loving and serving God together.

End with a short prayer. God, help us have hearts to serve You and Your people. Show us ways we can love and encourage others through serving them. In Jesus' name. Amen.