Bible Point
Families help each other.

Bible Verse
“Be kind to each other” (Ephesians 4:32a).

Growing Closer to Jesus
Children will
- hear how Ruth helped her family,
- share ways they can help their own families,
- help Pockets understand family relationships, and
- discover that families are important to God.

Teacher Enrichment

Bible Basis
- Ruth is faithful to Naomi.

After moving to Moab to escape famine, Naomi found herself in a bad situation when her husband and sons died. In that day, widows were often ignored or mistreated and were nearly always poor. When Naomi heard the famine in Israel was over, she must have decided that her chances for survival were better there.

Naomi's insistence that Orpah and Ruth remain in Moab was selfless. After all, she could have used their help. But she knew that it would be easier for them if they stayed in their homeland with their families, for Moabites were considered bitter enemies in Israel.

When Naomi first told her daughters-in-law to return to their families, Orpah refused. When Naomi insisted, however, Orpah agreed to turn back. Ruth, on the other hand, persisted, perhaps because she had put her faith in the God of Israel. Ruth demonstrated true love and friendship to Naomi at a time when Naomi desperately needed them.

Prayer
- Read Ruth 1:16.
- What can you tell about the relationship between Naomi and Ruth from this verse? What relationships do you have that demonstrate this level of commitment?
- Pray: Lord, thank you for your commitment to me. Help me to draw closer to you each day by…

Before the Lesson
- Collect the necessary items for the activities you plan to use. Refer to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies columns to determine what you'll need.
- Make photocopies of the “Today I Learned…” handout (at the end of this lesson) to send home with your children.
- Pray for the children in your class and for God's direction in teaching the lesson.
## Lesson 1

### This Lesson at a Glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Children Will Do</th>
<th>Classroom Supplies</th>
<th>Learning Lab Supplies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Welcome Time</strong></td>
<td>Welcome!—Receive name tags, and be greeted by the teacher.</td>
<td>“Family Name Tags” (p. 23), crayons, markers, tape or safety pins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Let’s Get Started</strong></td>
<td>Option 1: Family Bracelets—Make colorful bead bracelets to tell about their families.</td>
<td>Elastic thread, beads of various colors, scissors, muffin cups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Option 2: Family Tree—Make a family tree to help tell the Bible story.</td>
<td>“Story Faces” handout (p. 22), brown paper grocery sacks, yellow and green construction paper, tape, scissors, marker, crayons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Option 3: Journey Blocks—Lay a pretend road, and travel from Bethlehem to Moab.</td>
<td>Building blocks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pick Up Our Toys—Sing a song as they pick up toys and gather for Bible Story Time.</td>
<td>CD player</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bible Story Time</strong></td>
<td>Setting the Stage—Make and play with a simple toy to learn how families stay close.</td>
<td>Foam cups, toothpick, crayons, string, scissors, aluminum foil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bible Song and Prayer Time—Sing a song, bring out the Bible, and pray together.</td>
<td>Bible, construction paper, scissors, CD player, basket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hear and Tell the Bible Story—Use the family tree to tell how Ruth stayed with Naomi (from Ruth 1:1-18).</td>
<td>Bible, family tree from Option 2, scissors, green construction paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do the Bible Story—Play a fun game, and learn how families help each other.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Closing</strong></td>
<td>Helping Hands—Teach Pockets that families help each other.</td>
<td>Bandanna, feather duster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I Can Help—Tell one way to help their families, and sing a song.</td>
<td>Bible, CD player, Come-Back Cups from “Setting the Stage”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*See the end of this lesson for extra-time ideas and supplies.*
Welcome Time

Welcome!

**SUPPLIES:** “Family Name Tags” (p. 23), crayons, markers, tape or safety pins

- Bend down and make eye contact with children as they arrive.
- Greet each child individually with an enthusiastic smile.
- Thank each child for coming to class today.
- Say: **Today we’re going to learn that families help each other.**
- Give each child a photocopy of a name tag from the “Family Name Tags” handout. Help children write their names on their name tags and pin or tape them to their clothing. If time permits, let children color their name tags. You may want to cover the name tags in clear adhesive paper so that they will last throughout the quarter.
- Direct the children to the Let’s Get Started activities you’ve set up.

Let’s Get Started

Set up one or more of the following activities for children to do as they arrive. After you greet each child, invite him or her to choose an activity.

Circulate among children to guide the activities and direct children’s conversation toward today’s lesson. Ask questions such as “How do families help each other?” or “How can families show God their love?”

Option 1: Family Bracelets

**SUPPLIES:** elastic thread, beads of various colors, scissors, muffin cups

Before class, cut a 7-inch length of elastic thread for each child. Tie a knot at the end of each thread.

Set out various colors of beads, separated by color in muffin cups. As children arrive, invite them to make bracelets that tell about their family members. Let each child choose a bead to represent his or her father, mother, and brothers and sisters. Let children choose beads to represent themselves as well. Tell children they may also choose colors to represent family pets.

As children string their beads, encourage them to tell about family members. Ask questions such as “What’s one special thing your family does together?” and “Why do you think God made families?” Point out that God made families and that families help each other. Tell children they’ll hear a Bible story about a woman named Ruth and how people in her family helped each other.

When the beads are strung, help children tie the ends of their threads together to form bracelets. Let them wear their bracelets to show how glad they are that God made families.

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

Many children live in families impacted by divorce. Be sensitive to the fact that children in your class may come from single-parent and stepfamily situations. Encourage children by sharing how God loves their families and takes care of them, no matter the size or situation of their families.
Lesson 1

**Option 2: Family Tree**

**SUPPLIES:** “Story Faces” handout (p. 22), brown paper grocery sacks, yellow and green construction paper, tape, scissors, marker, crayons

Before class, cut four paper grocery sacks so you can flatten them out. Cut two of the sacks in thirds. Photocopy the “Story Faces” handout found at the end of this lesson. Cut out the pictures of the characters’ faces.

Let children construct a cooperative family tree on a bulletin board or wall. Form three groups: Trunk Twisters, Branch Builders, and Leaf Layers. Trunk Twisters twist the two whole sacks into a trunk and tape it to the bulletin board. Branch Builders twist and bend the pieces of sack into tree branches and tape them to the trunk. Leaf Layers cut green construction paper leaves and tape one of the seven Story Faces to each leaf. They may color the faces before taping them to leaves. Set aside the Boaz leaf for Lesson 3. Let everyone work together to tape the leaves on the tree. Have a child cut one yellow leaf and tape it to the treetop. Write the word **God** on the yellow leaf.

As children work together, make comments such as “Did you know that families are really important to God?” and “I like the way you’re helping each other with this tree.” Explain that **families help each other** and that today’s Bible story is about a family who stayed together and helped each other.

**Option 3: Journey Blocks**

**SUPPLIES:** building blocks

Set building blocks in one corner of the room. As children arrive, let them build a long, winding road with blocks. Then have them walk beside the blocks and follow the road to the end and back again. Ask children where their pretend road leads. Tell children that today they’ll hear a Bible story about a family who walked all the way from Bethlehem to the land of Moab—about 50 miles. And later, two of the family members traveled all the way back. Ask questions such as “Has your family ever moved? What was that like?” and “How do families help each other get ready to move or go on trips?” Point out that God made families and that **families help each other**. Have children build other roads to follow.

When everyone has arrived and you’re ready to move on to the Bible Story Time, encourage the children to finish what they’re doing and get ready to clean up.

**Pick Up Our Toys**

**SUPPLIES:** CD player

Lead children in singing “Pick Up Our Toys” (track 2) with the **CD** to the tune of “Skip to My Lou.” Encourage children to sing along as they help clean up the room.

You’ll be using this song each week to alert children to start picking up. At first they may need a little encouragement. But after a few weeks, picking up and singing along will become a familiar routine.

If you want to include the names of all the children in the class, sing the song without the **CD**, and repeat the naming section. If you choose to use the **CD**, vary the names you use each week.
We will pick up our toys.
We will pick up our toys.
We will pick up our toys,
And put them all away.

There’s [name] picking up toys.
There’s [name] picking up toys.
There’s [name] picking up toys,
Putting them all away.

(Repeat.)

Bible Story Time

Setting the Stage

SUPPLIES: foam cups, toothpick, crayons, string, scissors, aluminum foil

Tell the children you’ll clap your hands to get their attention. Explain that when you clap your hands, children are to stop what they’re doing, raise their hands, and focus on you. Encourage children to respond quickly so you’ll have time for all the fun activities you’ve planned.

Before class, use a toothpick to poke a hole through the bottom of a foam cup. Thread a 10-inch string down through the hole and tie a knot to keep the string from pulling completely through the cup. Prepare one cup for each child, and cut one 6-inch square of aluminum foil for each child.

Gather children in a circle. Set crayons and 6-inch squares of aluminum foil in the center. Hand each child a foam cup. Say: **We’re going to make Come-Back Cups.** Use crayons to decorate your cups. Then crumple a piece of aluminum foil around the end of the string.

When children are finished making their cups, say: **Hold your cup and swing the foil ball in the air: See if you can catch the ball in your cup.** Allow children to play with their Come-Back Cups. For extra fun, have them count the number of catches in a 15-second period. Then ask:

- **What happened each time you swung the ball?** (It went in the air; it came down; it came back to the cup.)

- **How did you catch the ball?** (I moved the cup; I aimed it.)

Say: **Just as you helped the foil ball return to your cup, families help each other stay together.** If family members go to school or jobs or the store, they come back. God made families, and he wants them to stay close and help each other. You can think of your cup as your family and the foil ball as you. The string is the love you feel for your family and that’s what keeps you coming back! Let’s swing our foil balls and catch them again. Allow children to play.

Let’s hear a Bible story about a family who stayed together and helped each other. The story will help us remember that families help each other. Have children set their Come-Back Cups against a wall. They will be using them later in the lesson.
Lesson 1

If the ink pad is dry, moisten it with three to five drops of water.

This Bible story is featured in My First Hands-On Bible™. Order several now for your ministry at group.com.

Bible Song and Prayer Time

SUPPLIES: Bible, construction paper, scissors, CD player, basket

Before class, make surprise cards for this activity by cutting construction paper into 2x6-inch slips. Prepare a surprise card for each child plus a few extras for visitors. Fold the cards in half, and then stamp the family stamp inside one of the surprise cards. Bookmark Ruth 1:1-18 in the Bible you’ll be using. Return the family stamp and ink pad to the Learning Lab.

Have the children sit in a circle. Say: Each week when we come to our circle for our Bible story, I’ll choose someone to be the Bible person. The Bible person will bring me the Bible marked with our Bible story for that week. Each of you will get a chance to be the Bible person. Before I choose today’s Bible person, let’s learn our Bible song. As we sing, I’ll pass out surprise cards. Don’t look inside your surprise card until the song is over.

Lead children in singing “Read God’s Book” (track 3) with the CD to the tune of “The Muffin Man.” As you sing, pass out the folded surprise cards.

After the song, say: You may look inside your surprise cards. The person who has the family stamped inside his or her card will be our Bible person for today.

Identify the Bible person. Ask the Bible person to bring you the Bible. Help the Bible person open the Bible to the marked place, and show children where your story comes from. Then have the Bible person sit down.

Say: [Name] was our special Bible person today. Each week we’ll have only one Bible person, but each one of you is a special part of our class! Today we’re all learning that families help each other.

Let’s say a special prayer now and ask God to teach us to help our families. My helper will pass around this basket. When the basket comes to you, put your surprise card in it and say, “God, please teach me to help my family.”

Let a child pass around the basket or box. When your helper has collected everyone’s surprise card, set the basket aside and pick up the Bible.

Lead the children in this prayer: God, thank you for the Bible and all the stories in it. Teach us today that families help each other. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Choose children to be the surprise card collector, the Bible-replacer (to put the Bible away), and the cheerleader. Just be sure to keep track of who fills your roles each week so each child gets a chance to feel special.

You’ll probably be able to reuse most of the surprise cards in the upcoming weeks. Keep a list of who’s had the stamped surprise card to ensure that everyone gets a turn to be the Bible person.

This Bible story is featured in My First Hands-On Bible™. Order several now for your ministry at group.com.

Choose children to be the surprise card collector, the Bible-replacer (to put the Bible away), and the cheerleader. Just be sure to keep track of who fills your roles each week so each child gets a chance to feel special.

You’ll probably be able to reuse most of the surprise cards in the upcoming weeks. Keep a list of who’s had the stamped surprise card to ensure that everyone gets a turn to be the Bible person.
Hear and Tell the Bible Story

SUPPLIES: Bible, family tree from Option 2, scissors, green construction paper

Before this activity, cut a green construction paper leaf for each child. Be sure you’ve taped the leaves with the story faces to the family tree you made in Option 2. Set aside the leaf with the picture of Boaz to use in Lesson 3.

Gather children in front of the family tree for the Bible story. Hold up the Bible. Say: Our story today comes from the book of Ruth in the Bible. Hold up the Bible Big Book: Ruth. Our Bible Big Book shows us pictures of the story. Before we begin, let’s look at this family tree. The family tree will help us learn about the people in our story. Point to the yellow leaf on the treetop. Pause for children to do this. This leaf is for God. He’s on top of the tree because God is our heavenly Father. He made families, and all families come from God.

Point to the leaves with the pictures of Elimelech and Naomi. Say: This is Elimelech (Eh-LIM-eh-leck) and Naomi (Nay-OH-me). Let’s say those names together: Elimelech, Naomi. Elimelech and Naomi were husband and wife. They had two sons named Kilion and Mahlon. Point to their pictures. The sons each married. One married a girl named Orpah (OR-puh). Point to Orpah. Let’s say her name together: Orpah. The other married a girl named Ruth. Point to Ruth’s picture.

Look at all the people on the tree. And they were all in the same family! Now let’s hear the Bible story. You can help me, but first you need special leaves. Hand each child a green construction paper leaf. When I say the name of someone whose picture is on the family tree, raise your arms like tree branches and wave your leaves.

Open the Bible Big Book to page 1. Read the following story, pausing at each underlined name, and removing pictures as indicated.

Long ago in the land of Judah, people went hungry because there wasn’t enough food. Elimelech, his wife Naomi, and their two sons moved to the country of Moab, where there was plenty of food for everyone.

Then a sad thing happened. Elimelech died. Remove the picture of Elimelech from the tree. But Naomi still had her two sons. They grew up and married women named Orpah and Ruth. But then Naomi’s sons died, too. Remove the pictures of Kilion and Mahlon. Naomi and her daughters-in-law were left all alone. How sad!

Naomi decided to go back to her own country. So she packed her things and started off to Bethlehem. Ruth and Orpah said, “We’ll go with you.” Naomi shook her head. “Your mothers live here and I have no way to care for you. Stay here with your families in Moab.” So Orpah decided to stay. Remove Orpah’s picture from the tree.

But Ruth loved Naomi and couldn’t say goodbye. “Where you go, I will go. I want to live with your family and serve your God,” she insisted. So Ruth and Naomi started off on the long trip to Bethlehem together.

Close the Bible Big Book.

Ask: • Why did Elimelech help his family by moving them to Moab? (To find more food; there wasn’t enough to eat.)
   • How did the family in the story stay together? (They moved together; they decided to go back to Bethlehem together; they helped each other.)
• Some members of the family died, and Orpah decided not to stay with Naomi. Why do you think Ruth stayed with Naomi? (Ruth loved Naomi; they were in the same family.)

Say: Even though it meant leaving her homeland, Ruth stayed with Naomi. Naomi loved Ruth like her own daughter. Ruth loved Naomi like a real mother, even though Naomi was her mother-in-law. And Naomi helped Ruth learn about God.

Ask: • How did Ruth help Naomi? (By staying with her; by going back to Bethlehem with her; by loving Naomi.)

Say: Ruth knew that a wonderful mother-in-law like Naomi was a gift from God. Ruth also knew that families help each other, so she wanted to help her mother-in-law. Let’s play a game to show how families can help each other—and have fun!

Return the Bible Big Book to the Learning Lab. Save the story-picture leaves to use with later lessons.

Do the Bible Story

SUPPLIES: none

Set the family stamp and ink pad on a chair to one side of the room. Say: Today we’re learning how families stay together and how families help each other. Let’s play a game and pretend our family is going to Moab. I’ll choose a family leader. He or she can tag others to join the family. If you’re tagged, go to the chair and stamp your hand. Then help tag others.

Play until all children have been tagged and have had their hands stamped. Return the family stamp and ink pad to the Learning Lab. If time permits, play the game again without the stamp.

When the game is finished, say: That was fun! You stayed together and helped each other until everyone was tagged. Just as Ruth and Naomi stayed together and helped each other, our families can, too.

Ask: • Can you think of a time when families help each other? (When someone is sick; when there are chores to do; when they’re making dinner.)

Say: That’s right. Families love each other, so families help each other. God loves us so much that he wants us to be part of his family. When we ask Jesus to be our forever friend and to forgive us for all the wrong things we do, we become a part of God’s family. Let’s thank God for loving us so much right now!

Pray: Dear God, thank you that you love us and have invited us to be in your family. Thank you for giving us Jesus as our forever friend who we can talk to anytime. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Say: I wonder if our friend Pockets knows how to help her family.
Helping Hands

SUPPLIES: bandanna, feather duster

Before class, tie a bandanna around Pockets’ neck or head, and have a feather duster or cleaning brush sticking out of her pocket. Have children sit in a circle. Take out Pockets the Kangaroo, and go through the following script. When you finish the script, put Pockets out of sight.

Pockets: (Wiping her forehead) Whew, am I tired!
Teacher: Hi, Pockets! What have you been doing?
Pockets: I’ve just been cleaning my room, and it was hard work. Mom asked me to help around the house ’cause we’re having company.
Teacher: Why, Pockets! That was very nice of you. You must feel good about helping.
Pockets: Not really! I thought I would get a dollar for helping, but I didn’t get anything!
Teacher: You don’t have to get money to help, do you?
Pockets: Yes! Yesterday Dad gave me a dollar for helping wash the car, so I figured I’d get a dollar for cleaning my room, too. That’s the only reason I did it!
Teacher: Now, Pockets, I’m sure that’s not the only reason you helped. Families help each other because families love each other. Children, let’s tell Pockets about our Bible story and how Ruth helped her family. (Encourage children to tell Pockets that Ruth didn’t have to help—she helped because she loved Naomi.)
Pockets: I helped my family ’cause I wanted a dollar.
Teacher: And why else?
Pockets: Well, I love my family…and I do like to help them…and that’s more important than a dollar, right?
Teacher: Right. You’re part of a family, and families help each other. Let’s tell Pockets ways we can help in our families. (Let children share ways they can help in their own homes.)
Pockets: Thanks for helping me understand. I think I’ll go home and see if my family needs any more help. ’Bye, everyone!

(Encourage children to say goodbye to Pockets.)
I Can Help

**SUPPLIES:** Bible, CD player, Come-Back Cups from “Setting the Stage”

Show children where today’s Bible verse is found. Say: Our Bible verse is from Ephesians 4:32, and it says, “Be kind to each other.” One way we can help our families is by being kind. Let’s sing a song to help us remember this verse.

Lead children in singing “Be Kind and Loving” (track 4) to the tune of “Ten Little Indians” with the CD.

Lead children in singing “Be Kind and Loving” (track 4) to the tune of “Ten Little Indians” with the CD.

Be kind and loving to each other.
Be kind and loving to each other.
Be kind and loving to each other.
Ephesians 4:32.
(Repeat 2x.)

Form pairs or trios. Hand children their Come-Back Cups. Say: We’ve been learning that families help each other. Let’s use our cups to help us look for ways to help our families this week. When I turn on the music, toss your foil ball in the air and catch it in your cup. When you catch it, tell your group one way you can help your family with kind actions this week, such as setting the table or picking up your toys. When I turn off the music, we’ll stop our game.

Play “Be Kind and Loving” (track 4) on the CD while children play and share.

Then say: Let’s join hands in our groups and pray together. Pray: Dear God, thank you for our families. Help us remember that families help each other.

Live it!

Growing closer to Jesus extends beyond the classroom.

Photocopy the “Today I Learned…” handout (at the end of this lesson) for this week, and send it home with your children. Encourage parents to use the handout to plan meaningful family activities to reinforce this week’s topic.
For Extra Time

If you have a long class time or want to add additional elements to your lesson, try one of the following activities.

Lively Learning: Work Together

Form family groups of three. Have children in each group stand side by side, locking arms. Give each “family” a pencil. Using only their feet, have groups roll their pencils to the other side of the room and back.

After all families have completed the game, talk about how they had to work together and help each other to move the pencil. Remind children that families help each other.

Make to Take: Building God’s Family

Give children inflated balloons. Ask them to form pairs and rub balloons on each other’s hair to create static electricity. Quickly have them stick balloons to the same wall, forming a group representing God’s family. Remind children that just as the balloons stick to the wall, families help each other and stick together.

Treat to Eat: Walking Snack

When making the long walk to Bethlehem, Ruth and Naomi probably ate foods such as bread, hard cheese, and dried fruit.

Have children clean their hands with baby wipes or at a nearby sink. Give each child a paper towel, two or three cheese cubes, a cracker, and an apple slice to fold in the paper towel. If it’s a nice day, take a walk outside, eating the snacks as you go. As children walk and eat, ask what they think Ruth and Naomi talked about on the trip to Bethlehem. Remind children that Ruth went with Naomi because families help each other.

Story Picture: Ruth Goes With Naomi

Hand each child a photocopy of the “Today I Learned...” handout. Set out scissors, glue sticks, and small scraps of colorful cloth. Have children glue scraps of cloth to the clothing on the picture of Ruth and Naomi. As they work, talk about ways Ruth and Naomi helped each other in the Bible story. Remind them that families help each other.

WARNING: BALLOONS—Children under 8 years old can choke on uninflated balloons. Adult supervision required. Discard broken balloons at once. Balloons may contain latex.

WARNING: ALERGIES—See page 9.
Story Faces

Photocopy this page. Cut out the story faces.

Ruth
Naomi
Boaz
Orpah
Elimelech
Mahlon
Kilion

Permission to photocopy this page from Group’s Hands-On Bible Curriculum® Pre-K & K granted for local church use.
Copyright © Group Publishing, Inc., 1515 Cascade Avenue, Loveland, CO 80538. group.com
Family Name Tags

Photocopy this page. Cut out the name tags.
Today your child learned that families help each other. Children learned that Ruth helped her mother-in-law, Naomi. They talked about ways they can help their own families.

Verse to Learn
“Be kind to each other” (Ephesians 4:32a).

Ask Me…
- Why did Ruth choose to go with Naomi?
- How can you help our family?
- How can our family show we love God?

Family Fun
- Make a family-memory scrapbook from old photographs and pictures drawn by the children to recount favorite trips, adventures, or special events shared by the family.
- Enjoy a family “stick together” snack, using honey or marshmallow creme between graham crackers. As you make your snacks, talk about ways you’ve stuck together as a family.

Ruth Goes With Naomi (Ruth 1:1-18)