



strengthening
our home
and family

Deseret Book®

Family Home Evening Materials

Theme: The Good Samaritan

Packet #040507

5 tips for successful Family Home Evenings

- 1. Pray.** Pray about the needs of your family as you consider topics for home evenings, and pray as you prepare.
- 2. Prioritize.** Make Family Home Evening a priority; learn to say no to other activities.
- 3. Involvement.** Involve everyone in the family; help little children take part.
- 4. Commitment.** Be committed and be consistent. Set a designated time and stick to it. Holding Family Home Evening on a weekly basis takes dedication and planning on the part of all family members.
- 5. Relax** and enjoy it. The most important thing your children will remember is the spirit they feel in your family home evenings and activities. Be sure the atmosphere is one of love, understanding, and enjoyment.

The Good Samaritan

Thought:

The Jericho Road may not be clearly marked. Neither may the injured cry out, that we may hear. But when we walk in the steps of that good Samaritan, we walk the pathway that leads to perfection.

(Thomas S. Monson, "Your Jericho Road," *Ensign*, Feb 1989, 2)

Song:

"Love One Another," *Children's Songbook*, p. 136.

Scripture:

Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

(1 John 4:11)

Lesson:

Ask each family member to write down on a piece of paper as many of their neighbors as they can. Have each one share their list and ask them why they stopped their list where they did. Talk about how far away a person can live and still be a neighbor.

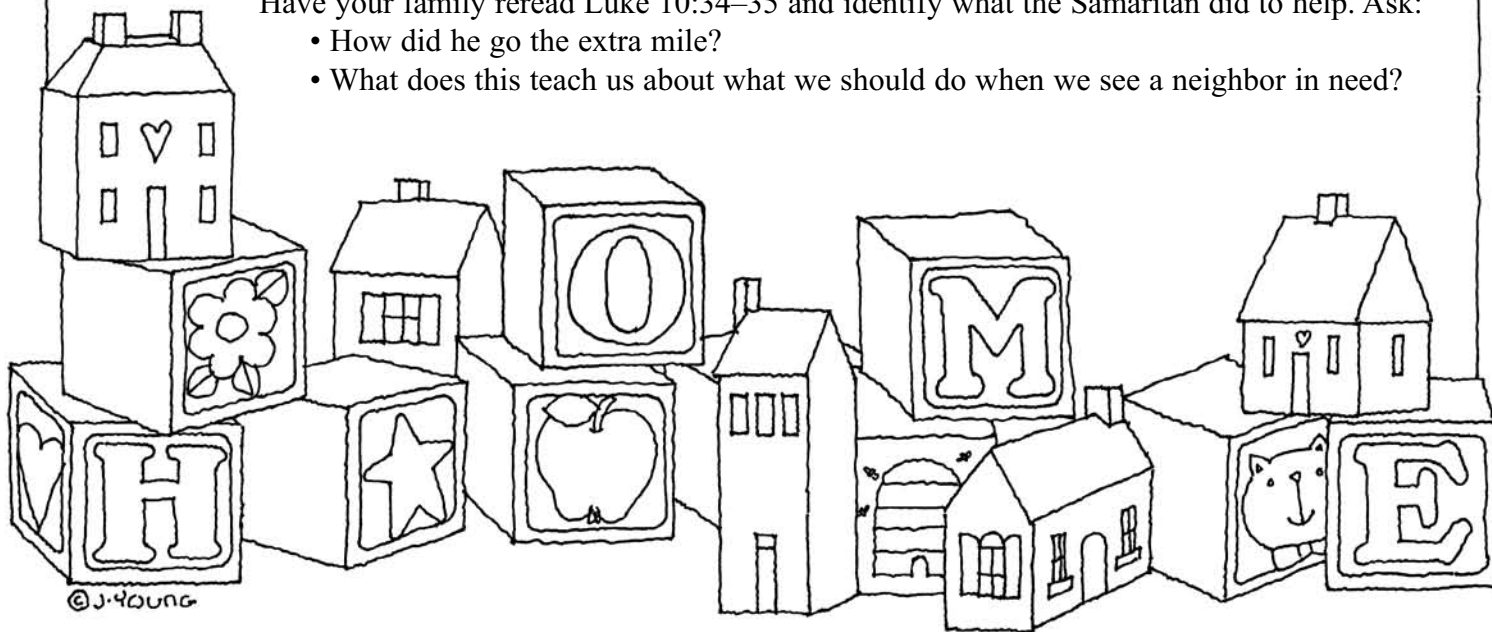
Tell your family that Jesus talked about this same question. Have your family read Luke 10:25 together and identify the question the lawyer asked. Have a family member read aloud Luke 10:26–28 and find the response to the question. Read verse 29 to your family and ask someone why the lawyer wanted to know who his neighbor was. (He didn't want to love everybody.)

Have your family take turns reading a verse from Luke 10:30–37. After reading the parable of the Good Samaritan, ask:

- What two people passed by and didn't help? (A priest and a Levite; verses 31–32.)
- Why do you think these religious leaders did not offer to help?
- Who stopped to help? (A Samaritan; verse 33.)
- How did the Jews and the Samaritans feel about each other? (See Bible Dictionary, "Samaritans," 768.)
- How did the Samaritan act in a Christlike manner?
- Which one would you rather have as a neighbor?
- What can you do to be a better neighbor?

Have your family reread Luke 10:34–35 and identify what the Samaritan did to help. Ask:

- How did he go the extra mile?
- What does this teach us about what we should do when we see a neighbor in need?



Share your feelings with your family about being a “neighbor” and challenge them to look for opportunities to be a good “neighbor.” You may want to follow up tomorrow with your family and ask them what experiences they had..

(Dennis H. Leavitt and Richard O. Christensen, *Scripture Study for Latter-day Saint Families: The New Testament*, [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2006], p. 95.)

Story:

The Lord’s Gift of Love

Daniel A. Tolman

I’m not sure why, but I grew up feeling quite judgmental and critical of other people. I would see a panhandler on the street and would wonder why he didn’t get a job. If an unkempt man or woman got onto the transit bus, I would mentally criticize them for not taking better care of themselves. When I saw someone on the TV news who had suffered a tragic loss of home or property and was broken up about it, I would mentally ask them why they placed so much value on temporal things.

When I was dealing with friends and family I was thoughtful and caring (at least that was my personal view of myself). But when I looked at people I didn’t know, I would judge them, whether positively or negatively, and my judgment would often be harsh and unloving. To make matters worse, all of this judgment and lack of love was subconscious; I wasn’t even aware that I was doing it.

I knew the Lord’s commandment that I must love my neighbor as myself. I knew that loving my neighbor (even panhandling, unkempt “Samaritans”) was the second greatest commandment. And certainly I treated everyone with respect. But somehow that knowledge hadn’t reached the feeling level of my heart.

As I grew and progressed in the gospel, I went through a series of stages, as I suppose everyone does. First I knew that I needed to overcome a number of weaknesses if I wanted to please God. Then, having done well in that effort over time and continuing in faithfulness, I felt I was safely on track. But finally, I had a feeling of “divine discontent” (as Elder Neal A. Maxwell puts it), and with the help of the Lord I was able to identify other areas of my life where I fell short. One serious flaw the Lord showed me was my lack of a loving and compassionate heart.

I began to pray for the gift of charity. Over time I felt my feelings soften some, but I knew I still had a long way to go.

“What more can I do?” I asked. It wasn’t my behavior that I was trying to change; it was my heart. One day I saw a young man get on the bus with a companion and sit only a few seats away from me. He had several earrings in each ear. He had long, straggly, blond hair; it looked like it hadn’t been washed for weeks. His jeans were torn and his sandled feet were dirty. He carried the smell of alcohol about him. He and his companion were talking loudly enough that I could hear their coarse, vulgar language. As I began to slip into my old mode of being judgmental, I stopped myself and begged the Lord for forgiveness. “How could I judge one of thy children like that?” I asked. “Judging is wrong. I don’t even know the man.”

While I was praying in my heart, the Spirit whispered, “Ask your Father in Heaven if you can see this young man as he sees him.” I was surprised at the thought, but I followed the prompting. I was almost immediately filled with a deep feeling of sadness at the course in life the young man had taken. And then, right on the heels of that first feeling, I felt a love for this man I had never met. Instead of wanting to judge him, I wanted to bless him.

Not long after that, I saw an older woman who looked like she had had a hard life. She wasn't the kind of person I would normally want to have anything to do with. "Ask your Father in Heaven if he will help you love this woman," the Spirit whispered, not in words but in a clear feeling. I silently offered a prayer asking for the gift of love for that specific woman. The feeling came instantly, filling my heart. I knew that this woman, despite any mistakes she had made in life, had true value to our Father, and that she must have value to me also. What's more, I didn't simply know it intellectually. I felt in my heart that feeling of the value of this, my sister, to our Heavenly Father and to me.

I have seldom since fallen back into the spirit of judgment. I don't like the way that spirit feels, and when my mind starts to take me there, I utter a prayer in my heart that the Lord will grant me the wonderful gift of his love. As I seek it, seeking also to be worthy and to honestly be open to the blessing, it comes and softens my life.

(Jay Parry, *Everyday Miracles*, [Salt Lake City: Eagle Gate, 2001], p. 148.)

Activity:

Have each member of the family write on a piece of paper some act of kindness he may perform for someone else and sign his name. Have each person put their paper in a box and say, "I have a kindness." Set a timer and pass the box around the family, when the timer sounds the person holding the box takes a paper from the box. He will then receive the kindness written on the paper. Keep passing until everyone has received a paper.

Refreshment

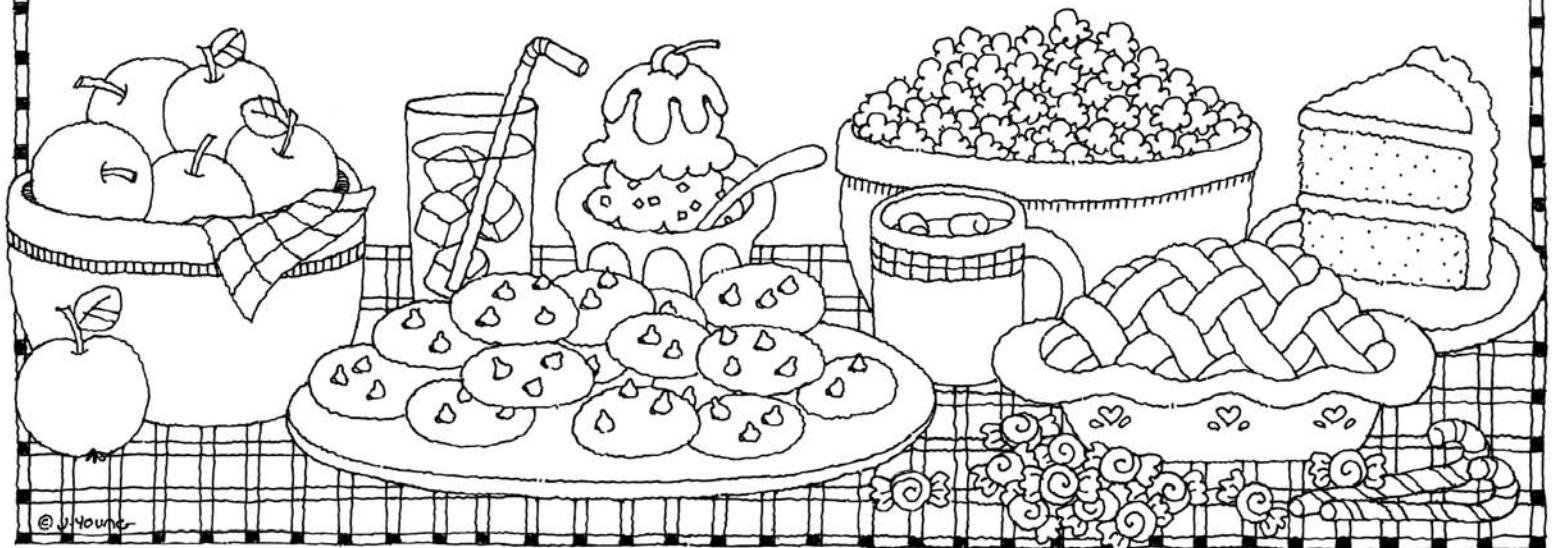
Peach Berry Smoothies

16 ounces strawberry yogurt
1 cup fresh peaches, sliced
1 cup fresh strawberries, sliced*
1 cup crushed ice

Combine yogurt, peaches, strawberries, and ice in blender. Cover and blend 30 to 60 seconds, or until smooth. Serve immediately. Makes 4 one-cup servings.

* Frozen strawberries may be substituted. Thaw and drain before using.

(*Lion House Entertaining*, [Salt Lake City: Eagle Gate, 2001], p. 39.)



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