



Honoring God

(based on 2 Timothy 1:1–14)

Once there was a woman who loved God and was a follower of Jesus. Her name was Eunice. When Eunice had a baby boy, she called him Timothy. Eunice and her mother, Lois, looked after Timothy as he grew. They told him all about Jesus and God's love.

When Timothy grew to be a young man, he met Paul and Silas. The two men had come from a very important meeting in Jerusalem. The church leaders had met to talk about who could join the church. Paul and Silas had been told to go out and tell people that everyone was welcome.

Eventually Paul and Silas came to Lystra (LIHS-truh), where Timothy and his family lived. The followers of Jesus told Paul what a fine young man Timothy was. Paul could see for himself that Timothy had grown up learning all about Jesus and God's grace. Paul was very impressed and asked the young man to go with them as they traveled from church to church. Therefore, with the blessing of his mother and grandmother, Timothy left on a big adventure to travel with Paul and Silas.

It took some time, but eventually the three men visited all the churches and told everyone what had been decided in Jerusalem—that all were welcome to be followers of Jesus.

Paul then asked Timothy to go with him on his journeys to tell others about Jesus. As they traveled, Paul helped and encouraged Timothy. Timothy was a helper and a friend to Paul, even when Paul was put in jail. Timothy helped Paul write letters to churches so they could learn about God too.

Eventually Timothy stopped traveling and became a leader of a church. Sometimes it was hard for him. He missed Paul. He was still a young man, and some of the older people did not listen to him. Paul prayed for Timothy every day. He also wrote letters of help and encouragement to his young friend. He reminded Timothy of the things his mother and grandmother had taught him. He urged Timothy to be bold and loving in everything he did.

Paul's letters encouraged Timothy and helped him to keep on teaching people about Jesus. Timothy was glad for the love and encouragement of his mother and grandmother when he was growing up. He was also glad for the help and encouragement of his good friend Paul.



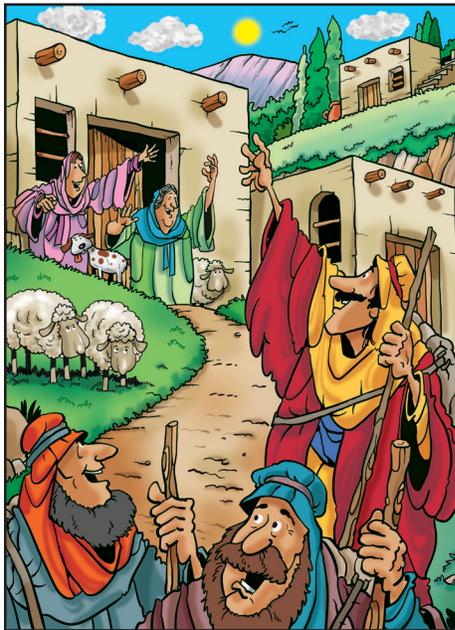
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Use one or more activities from each section to explore grace and gratitude with your children this week.

Recognizing God's Grace

- Read and enjoy the story with your children—imagine and wonder.
- Timothy's mother and grandmother encouraged him. Paul and Timothy helped each other. Have everyone draw pictures of people who are kind and helpful to them. Display the pictures in a prominent place as reminders of the special people in your lives.
- Invite each person to think of what or who helps her or him stay healthy and strong. Invite people to name their thoughts. Thank God for things such as health, food, doctors, dentists, family, teachers, pastors, and friends.



Responding to God's Grace

- Invite everyone to make a pyramid, using objects that stack like blocks, cups, or, if physically able, people. Together, work on the pyramid, talk about what it takes to make a good pyramid: a strong base and good balance at the bottom and at the top. Thank God for people and communities who support one another.
- Help your children identify three grown-ups, other than parents or caregivers, who they know and can trust. Encourage your children to learn the people's full names, phone numbers, and directions for contacting them if they need adult help or advice about life and faith.
- Invite each person to draw a circle and write their name or draw a self-portrait in it. Draw other circles around the big circle, writing names or drawing pictures of people who help. Connect all the circles with lines to show how many people care for each person.

Celebrating in Gratitude

- Cut 2" by 5" strips of construction paper. Put the paper strips, a pen, and a stapler in a basket. Invite people to take a strip and write or draw on it the name or picture of a person, group, community, or organization that lifts their faith and makes them hopeful. Make a paper chain with the strips by stapling the first strip together, inserting the next strip and stapling, and continuing the process. Hang the paper chain in celebration across a door or from ceiling to floor.
- Pray this prayer each day this week:

For people who guide and support, we thank you, God. Amen.