

June 17, 2001  
Early Childhood  
Grow to Be More Like Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 5  
1TH04EC

**Memory Verse:**

1 Thessalonians 5:16: Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances.

**Aim Questions for 2's & 3's:**

1. Who was Paul writing his letter to in today's Bible Adventure? (*Thessalonians.*)
2. While the Thessalonians were waiting for Jesus to return, who were they learning to imitate? (*Jesus.*)
3. Who should we obey today to learn how to imitate Jesus? (*Parents and Bible teachers.*)

**Aim Questions for 4's, 5's & K:**


1. What is the name of the book of the Bible we learned from today? (*First Thessalonians.*)
2. What good news did Paul have for the Christians who were being hurt by people who didn't love Jesus? (*Jesus was coming back to take them to heaven.*)
3. What bad news did Paul have for the people who didn't love Jesus? (*They would be punished for their sins.*)
4. What did Paul tell the Thessalonians to do while they were waiting for Jesus to return? (*Grow to be more like Jesus.*)

**Key for symbols:**


- This box symbol represents ideas that can be used for two-year-olds through kindergarten. Please remember to slow down the pace for two-year-olds and keep the pace moving for five-year-olds.
- ② This symbol represents ideas that are best used for two- and three-year-olds.
- ④ This symbol represents ideas that are best used for four-year-olds through kindergarten.


**Hook:**

- Doing Something Unexpected:** Serve the snack at the very beginning of class time. As the children arrive, show them to a table and have another student or teacher serve their snack as the first thing they do that morning. Rotate the children through the snack area before moving to another area of activity. While at the snack table, talk about how surprised they were to get to eat first. Was it unexpected? What will Jesus do that will be unexpected? (He will return for His people, and we won't know when.)
- "Don't Be Lazy" Center:** Provide cleaning supplies (whisk broom, dustpan, dust cloth, vacuum, window washing materials, wet rags, etc.) for the home center so the children can scrub and clean the toys, floor, and windows. In today's Bible Adventure, Paul tells the Thessalonians to not be lazy while they wait for Jesus to return. They were to work faithfully at home doing their jobs every day.
- Bible Story Table:** Bring several colorful Bible story books to class and have a leader read one story at a time to the children at that table. Today's Bible Adventure will tell us that God wants us to respect those who teach us about the Bible.


 **Play Dough:** Make trumpets, clouds, crosses, happy faces, tents, and other things that remind you of the 1 Thessalonian lessons.


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 **Patiently Waiting Center:** Ask a participant from one of the short term mission teams to come into the classroom near the end of the class time. At the start of class, tell only a few children that someone special will be coming into the classroom that morning with something for them. Tell them you don't know when that person will be coming or what he will be bringing for the class. Have the children spread the news to classmates that someone is coming with something for them. Throughout the morning, remind the children they are still waiting for a special guest who is bringing something for everyone. Near the end of class, a missionary can come in and briefly tell them about his job on the mission's team. He can then present the class with colored pencils and paper. Have the children draw a picture to send with the missionary. Tell them that in the same way they waited for the special missionary visitor, we are all waiting for Jesus to return. We won't know when He'll choose to come. The visitor can remain and answer questions or talk while the children draw. The missionary can then take the pictures the children drew with him to encourage others who work with him. The children can keep the pencils to remind them that we need to continually encourage our missionary families by writing them letters and sending pictures from home. (You may want to break the pencil lead before sending the pencils with the children.)

 **First Thessalonians Review:** Post several (8-10) review pictures on the wall in one corner of the room. Provide two or three flashlights for the children to operate. Have them sit and face the pictures. The teacher will tell what is going on in one of the pictures. The children will turn on their flashlights and focus them on that picture. How fast can everyone find the right picture? After everyone has the correct picture lit, turn off the flashlights and repeat with another review picture. If the children are not having difficulty, have them keep the lights on and move from one picture to another as the teacher describes what is going on in each picture. "Remember that Jesus wants us to imitate Him while we are waiting for His return."

 **Picture Hunt: (1TH04ECGF5 and 1TH04ECGF6)** Hide GF5 and GF6 pictures of children doing good and bad actions around the room. Ask them to bring to you only the good pictures. Save these to talk about during the Bible Adventure. (Other pictures can be cleaned up during the "Work Center" Look activity.) If you want the children to color the pictures first while you talk about them, you could hide them around the room while they take a bathroom break or walk through the halls.

 **Family Video:** Make a home video of a child's clean room and another dirty room. Ask the children whether they think God would want them to be faithful in keeping their rooms clean. What did Paul tell the Thessalonians about being lazy and working hard.

 **Feeling Center:** Place a wooden cross under a cloth and let children take turns feeling it and figuring out what it is. Other items, like a small Bible and batting to represent clouds, could be under other cloths. Ask the children to whisper to you what they think it is, but keep it a secret until all the children have felt it. At that time, ask them how it relates to what we have learned in Thessalonians. (They were telling people about Jesus! Jesus is coming back in the clouds!)

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## **Book:**

### **Presentation Ideas -**

 Show the **1TH04ECGF1, 1TH04ECGF2, 1TH04ECGF3, 1TH04ECGF4**, and other review pictures designated in the Bible Adventure. Keep the pictures for review in future lessons.

 **"Heaven Is the Best Place" Finger Play:**

Heaven is the best place *(Point up.)*

A person could ever go.

Heaven is the best place-- *(Nod head "yes.")*

The Bible tells us so!

We'll never, ever need to cry; *(Wipe eyes.)*

We'll never have to wave "good-bye." *(Wave good-bye.)*

Jesus will be there--that's who!

He will tell us, "I love you." *(Extend pinkie finger upward, cross arms in front over chest, point away from you.)*

Heaven is the best place;  
I'm going, you come, too!

(Beckon.)

### **Bible Adventure for 2's & 3's-**

(Show the review 1TH01ECGF6 picture.) Paul was thankful in his letter that the Thessalonians had turned from worshiping idols to worshiping the true and living God. He was glad that they were not getting discouraged when people tried to hurt them for their faith. He knew that whenever the Thessalonians got discouraged or sad, they would say to each other, "Jesus is coming back." Then they would smile and wait patiently for that happy day.

(Show the review 1TH02ECGF1 picture.) Paul wrote, "You are not people who live in darkness. When you heard the Word of God from us, you accepted it. You turned from the dark way of worshiping idols. You are now living in Christ's light. Now, while you are waiting for Jesus to return, you are growing to be more like Jesus. You are imitating Him and are growing in joy, in prayer, and in a thankful attitude."

(Show the review 1TH02ECGF4 picture.) Paul had heard that some of the Thessalonian Christians were being lazy while they were waiting for Jesus to return. That concerned Paul so he wrote telling them to use self-control with their bodies and with their words. They needed to learn to work faithfully, doing their jobs every day. (Point to Paul working at mending a tent.) Paul worked while he was patiently waiting for Jesus to return.

(Show the 1TH04ECGF3 picture.) Paul told the Thessalonians to listen to their teachers and to their parents as they taught from the Bible. They were to obey them and do what they said.

This is how Christians today grow in joy, in prayer, and in a thankful attitude. They listen to God's Word and obey what He says. They listen to their parents and obey what they say. God works in the hearts of Christians to help them grow to be more like Christ while they wait for His return. God helps us grow in joy, prayer, and thankfulness.

Prayer: Dear God, thank You for telling us about how You will come back for us. Help me grow to be more like Christ while I wait for You. In Jesus' name, amen.

### **Bible Adventure for 4's, 5's & K-**

(Show the review 1TH01ECGF6 picture.) Why was Paul thankful as he wrote his letter to the Thessalonian Christians? Paul was thankful that the Thessalonians had turned from worshiping idols to worshiping the true and living God. He was glad that they were not getting too discouraged when people tried to hurt them for their faith.

(Show the review 1TH03ECGF1 picture.) Paul wrote in his letter, "We who believe in Jesus have hope of a better life in heaven. Jesus is coming back to take us to live with Him forever. Jesus is our only hope."

What a great day that will be when Jesus comes back for us all! Whenever the Thessalonians got discouraged or sad, they would say to each other, "Jesus is coming back." Then they would smile and wait patiently for that happy day.

(Show the 1TH04ECGF1 picture.) Paul wrote to the Thessalonians, "The people who do not love Jesus do not have hope for a better life in heaven. The life they have now is the best they will ever have. These people are like they are asleep. They are in the dark about what will happen to them. They will miss the rapture and will not go with Jesus to heaven. They will not hear Jesus' command nor the trumpet. They don't even know that Jesus is coming back. They are not looking forward to seeing Him. They don't care what the Bible says, and they don't want to obey God. They still have their sins on them, and they will have to be punished for them." Paul called these disobedient people "people who live in the darkness."

(Show the review 1TH02ECGF1 picture.) Paul wrote, "You are not people who live in darkness. When you heard the Word of God from us, you accepted it. You turned from the dark way of worshiping idols. You are now living in Christ's light. You are ready for the rapture. Now, while you are waiting for Jesus to return, you are growing to be more like Jesus. You are imitating Him and are growing in joy, in prayer, and in a thankful attitude."

(Show the review 1TH02ECGF4 picture.) Paul wrote, "Don't sit around being lazy while you wait for Jesus. You will get in trouble if you do. Learn to use self-control with your bodies and with your words. Get up every day and go to work so that you can support your family. Work with your hands, like I did when I was with you." Paul worked hard mending tents to earn money for his food.

(Show the 1TH04ECGF2 picture.) Children need to learn to work faithfully at home, doing their jobs every day. It helps them not be lazy and get in a bad habit of waiting for other people to do their work for them, or not even caring if the work gets done.

(Show the 1TH04ECGF3 picture.) Paul said, "Honor and respect those whom the Lord has put over you to teach you—the pastor, your parents, and teachers." Listen to the pastor when he teaches God's Word. Listen to your Bible School teachers who teach you God's Word every Sunday.

(Show the 1TH04ECGF4 picture.) Listen to your parents as they teach you from the Bible and explain to you what God says. Obey them and do what they say. They work hard for you, and you should be thankful to them.

That is how Paul taught the Thessalonians to grow to be more like Jesus. They listened to Paul's words in his letter and obeyed what He said. God helps us grow to be more like Christ, too, just like the Thessalonians. God wants us to listen to Paul's words and obey them. God wants us to listen to our parents and obey what they say. Let's say the memory verse and remember what kind of attitudes God wants us to have while we wait for Him.

**Prayer:** Dear God, thank You for telling us about how You will come back for us. I want to be joyful and thankful while I am patiently waiting for You. In Jesus' name, amen.

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### Look:

- Aim Questions:** Give the questions to several of the leaders in the story circle before the Bible Adventure begins. Call on a child to ask one of the leaders in a respectful way for his question. The child takes it to the teacher to be read. We are to learn to honor and respect our Bible teachers and parents.
- Memory Verse Review:** Say the verse in sections with the claps following each section. "Be joyful always" (Clap, clap, clap-clap-clap), "pray continually" (Clap, clap, clap-clap-clap), "give thanks in all circumstances" (Clap, clap, clap-clap-clap), "1 Thessalonians 5:16" (Clap, clap, clap-clap-clap).
- Snack Idea:** "We can grow up healthy and learn to serve Jesus better when we eat food that is good for us." Present the children with a selection of raw fruits and vegetables to eat.
- Snack and Discussion:** Serve the snack "Bugles" while talking about things we should be doing to become more like Jesus until we hear Jesus and the trumpet call. (First, we need to believe in Jesus and have Him in our heart and life. Then we need to listen to someone read the Bible, obey the Bible and our parents, work hard at whatever we are doing, don't be lazy, but be hopeful of Jesus' return for us.)
- Transition Idea:** Imitate the teacher while moving from one area of the room or building to another. The teacher can walk with hands on knees, tiptoe, flap elbows, gyrate, etc.
- "Be Like Jesus" Game:** Choose a large, open space for the children to freely move without running into anyone. Play music or beat a drum while the children run, skip, gallop, hop, jump, walk, or crawl, but when the music stops, each child must find a partner and stand back to back with him. Repeat the process, encouraging them to find a different partner. Choose other body parts to touch (hands, toes, heads, elbows, knees) when the music stops. "We're imitating our partners by touching the same body parts with theirs."
- Work Centers:** Paul worked hard mending tents while other men pounded nails or chiseled stones. God's words in the Bible tell us that we should work diligently and not be lazy until Jesus returns. We have several jobs to do here in the classroom today. Let's be workers until Jesus returns. Join a teacher at a table and find out what we have to do today. Some children can wash tables and toys, organize toys, wash windows, vacuum with a sweeper, or prepare snack time by placing snacks in individual lunch sacks.
- Work Center Variation--Freeze:** While children are busy working, ask them to freeze whenever they hear you blow a horn or whistle. Talk about what you see them doing. Repeat several times.
- "Being Ready for Jesus" Booklet: (1TH04ECGF7, 1TH04ECGF8, and last week's 1TH03ECGF5)** Copy the GF7 page onto white paper and cut it into two booklets. Let each child color the pictures in his booklet and glue brown construction paper pieces to the cross. Place a Jesus sticker on the happy children who are eager for Jesus to return. Fold the middle dotted line outward and the ones on either side inward. Place last week's GF5 memory verse sticker on the front page. Give each child two GF8 pictures of Jesus in a heart that can be glued on the children who are eager for Jesus to come back for

them. Talk about being in the dark without Jesus, believing in Jesus who died for our sins, and having joy while waiting for His return.

**Dark & Light Game: (1TH04ECGF5 and 1TH04ECGF6)** Color the pictures of children showing good and bad behaviors. Talk about what we should be doing while we grow in faith and love until Jesus returns. Cut pictures apart and place them picture side down in the center of the table. Take turns choosing a picture and placing it on the appropriate sheet of black or white construction paper. Be sure to explain to the older children that these good behaviors are not what makes a child good enough to live in heaven with Jesus. It is faith in Jesus that brings forgiveness for our sins. Whether or not we want to obey our parents and teachers is an indication of whether we want to imitate Jesus or be selfish like those who live in darkness.

**Activities from Former Lessons:** Repeat any games from the last few weeks' lessons that pertain to today's lesson.

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**What Should I Be Doing Until Jesus Comes Back?** A teacher will do several of the following actions and see which get the approval of the children! Include the following actions and any others you might think of, like sewing a tent, pounding a nail, knocking on a door, greeting someone and telling them the gospel, acting mad, angry, and sad, stomping your foot because you can't have it your way, slouching in a chair with ear phones on rather than cleaning your room, writing a thank-you letter, praying and thanking God for people and things in your life, taking a dinner to someone who can't get out of the house, listening to a tape of the pastor, acting disobediently, and pretending to clean up as you were asked to do.

**Happy--Sad Puppets:** Make paper plate puppets by drawing a happy face on the back side of one paper plate and a sad face on the other. Staple them together, leaving room for a child's hand to slide inside the plates through the opening in the bottom edge. Add yarn for hair if time allows. Use these in the "What Should I Be Doing Until Jesus Comes Back?" activity, letting children show you if you are imitating a good thing like those who live in the light or a bad thing as if living in the darkness without Jesus.

**Verse Review:** Arrange children lying on their backs on the floor in a circle with their heads in the middle so that they are looking up into the sky. As you touch a child's foot, he is to say the first word in the Bible verse. The next foot you touch will say the next word, and continue around the circle. Repeat many times as the you continue around the circle. What should we be doing until we see Jesus return in the clouds? Yes, be joyful, thankful, obedient, and listening to the Bible!

④ **Acting Like Jesus Until He Returns:** While reviewing ways we should act, write them on the board with a happy face beside each. Place all the children's names in a basket and, as a child draws out a name, read it and talk about one good thing you know about that child that is a good thing to be doing until Jesus returns. This would be a good discussion during snack.

### Songs:

**First Thessalonians Theme Song** (*tune: "O-B-E-Y"*)

The theme for First Thess-a-lo-ni-ans  
Is commenda-tion a-and cau-au-tion.  
Commendation means "good job" for o-bey-ing God's Word,  
And caution to remember all you've heard.


**1 Thessalonians 5:16, Memory Verse Song** (*tune: "B-I-N-G-O"*)

Be joyful always;  
Pray continually;  
Give thanks in all cir-cum-stances.  
First Thessalonians five  
First Thessalonians five  
First Thessalonians five  
Verse sixteen. Five, sixteen!

**Grow in Faith** (*tune: "Jimmy Crack Corn"*)

Grow in faith, it brings more joy.

Grow in faith, it brings more prayer.  
Grow in faith, it brings more thanks.  
We're growing up in Christ.

 **Walking in the Light** (tune: "Bringing in the Sheaves")


Walking in the light, walking in the light. (March as you sing.)  
I will follow Jesus when I'm walking in the light.


Walking in the light, walking in the light. (March as you sing.)  
I'll obey what Jesus says! I'm walking in the light. (Hold hands to form a Bible book.)


Walking in the light, walking in the light.  
I will live with Jesus if I'm walking in the light. (Point to heaven.)




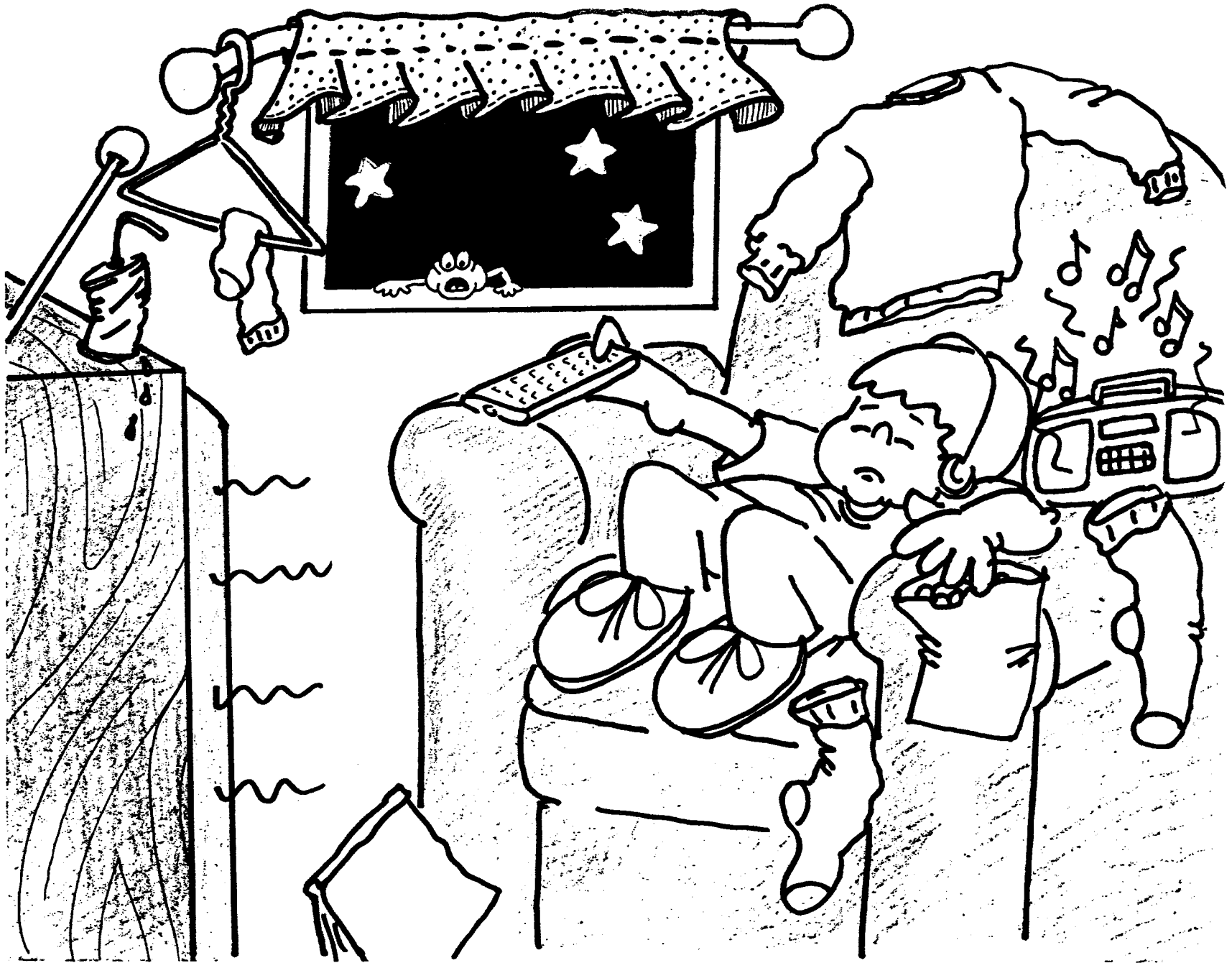
**Took:**

 **"Imitate Jesus" Blot Picture:** Materials needed: Manila papers folded in half (or manila folders), paint-filled eyedroppers or squeeze bottles, various colors of paint, enough newspaper to cover the work area. Fold a piece of manila paper in half or use a manila folder. Open the folder and lay it on a flat surface. Cover one half of the paper with an extra paper so that one side stays clean while the children are painting. Drop paint from a large eyedropper or small squeeze bottle onto one half of the paper. After the desired amount of colors are on half the paper, remove the protective paper and fold the two halves together. Press the paper to spread the paint inside. While pressing the paper, slowly say the memory verse. Carefully open the paper to see the painted design. The plain side of the paper should have "imitated" the painted side. Write the word "Jesus" on the original painted page and the name of the child on the copied page. The memory verse can be glued to the outside of the folder. "Jesus wants us to imitate Him while we wait for His return."

 **Dark & Light Memory Verse Review:** Before class time, draw some sad faces with a white crayon on a piece of white construction paper. Provide paint shirts for children (available in the Children's Office) and cover the table with a plastic cloth. Give children a paintbrush and watercolor paint (also available). Have several dishes of water to clean the brushes. Ask the children to paint the paper with a very dark color, and the sad faces will be revealed. Draw or paint a lot of happy faces on another paper using bright colors. Glue the memory verse on this page. Sing the memory verse song together while painting.

 **Folded Suitcase Craft: (Last week's 1TH03ECGF6 or 1TH03ECGF7)** Before class, fold a blue construction paper sheet in half and round all four corners with scissors before giving one to each child. This will become a "suitcase" to remind us of Paul's second missionary journey. Give each child a 2" x 4" piece of yellow construction paper to make a tag for the suitcase. Let the children punch a hole in one end of the tag and two holes through the open (unfolded) edges of the suitcase. Tie a piece of yarn through the suitcase to make a handle. Tie the tag onto the handle with another small piece of yarn. Tape the sides of the suitcase so that the children can put pictures in the suitcase of things that would help them get ready for a trip. Give each child a heart from last week's GF6 or GF7 page to tuck inside the suitcase of glue on the outside. We don't need a suitcase to be ready to go to heaven with Jesus. We only need a ready heart.

 **Preschool Page for Parents: (1TH04ECPPP)** Send a page home with each child, encouraging parents to reinforce the Bible truths at home. Spend a few minutes before the children go home creatively reviewing the song and memory verse.

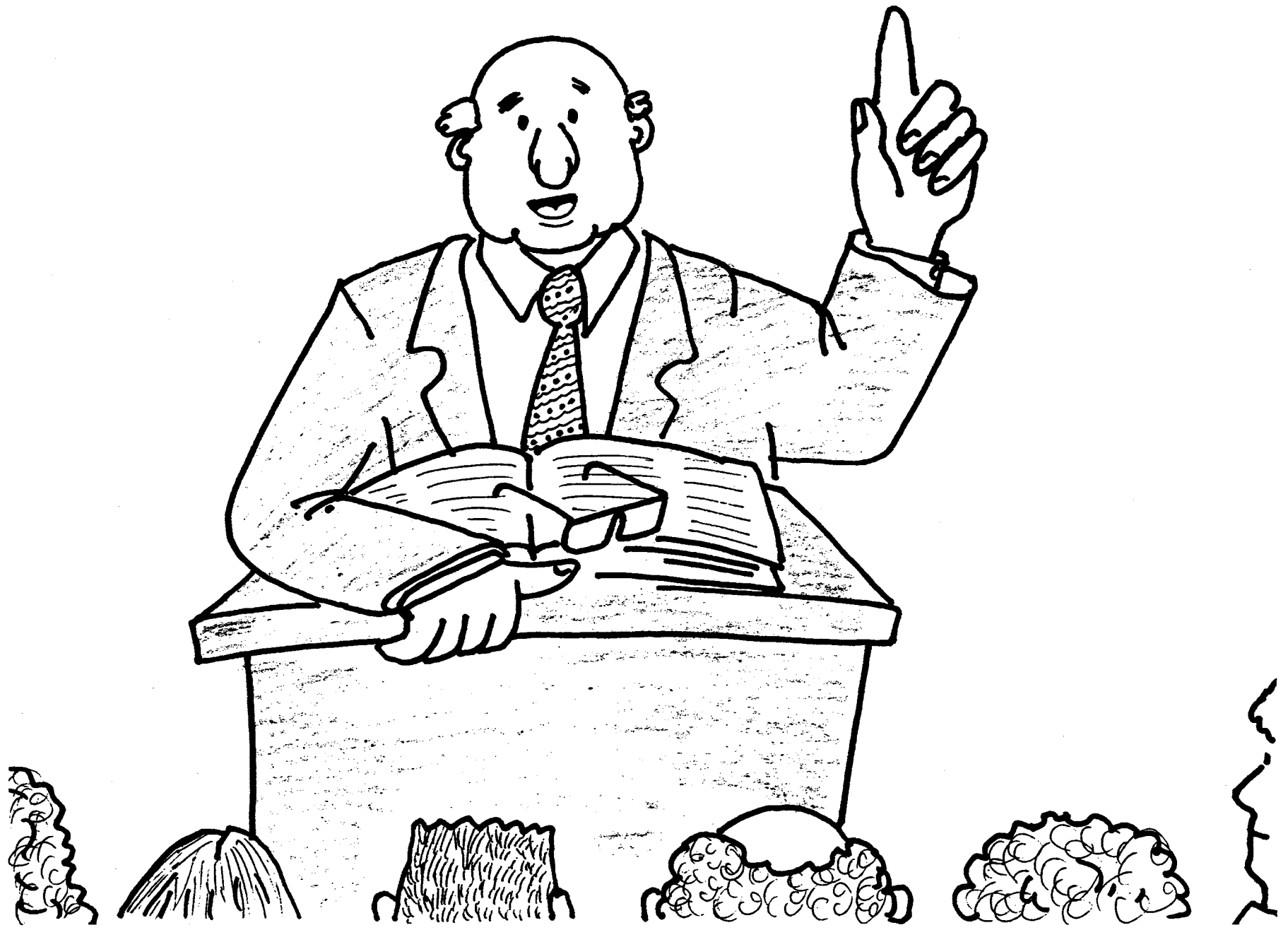


Christians should imitate Jesus, not live like people of darkness.



**Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances.**

**1 Thessalonians 5:16**

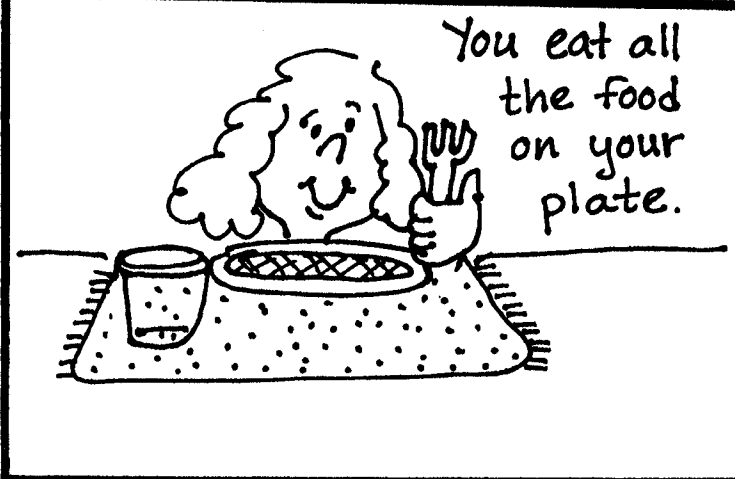
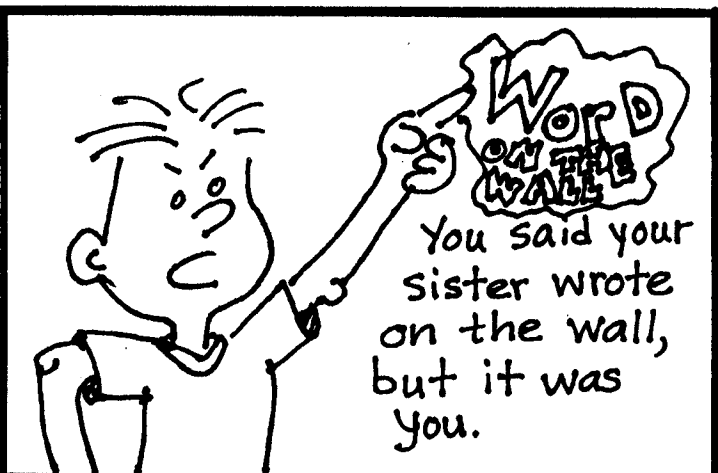


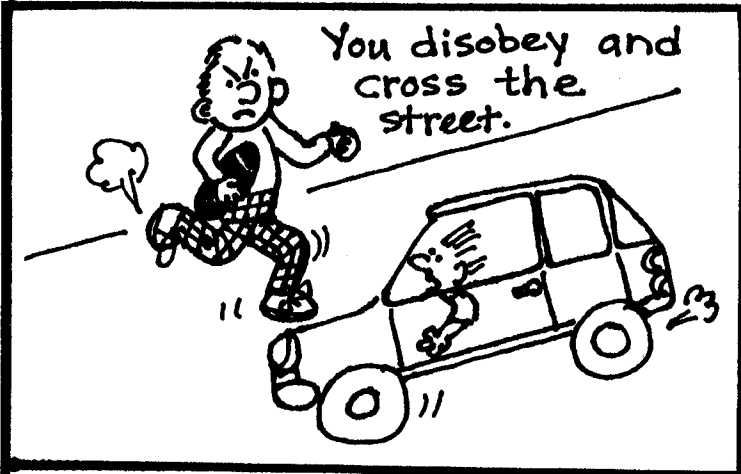
Paul tells us to respect our pastors who teach God's Word.

**Faithfulness  
finishes.**



**The fruit of the Spirit is faithfulness. Galatians 5:22**





You disobey and cross the street.



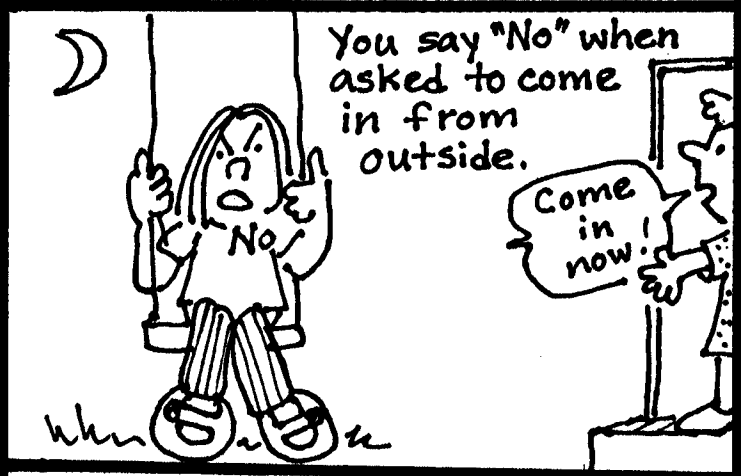
You ask your dad to read you a Bible story.



You hit your friend because you are mad.



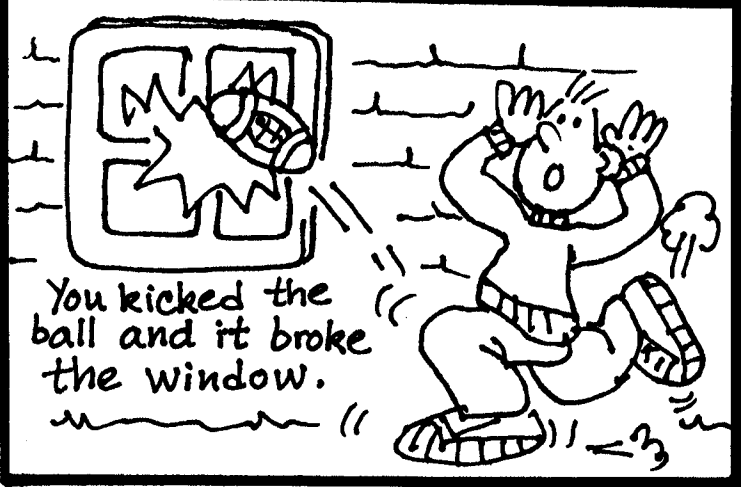
You say "No" when asked to take out the garbage.



You say "No" when asked to come in from outside.



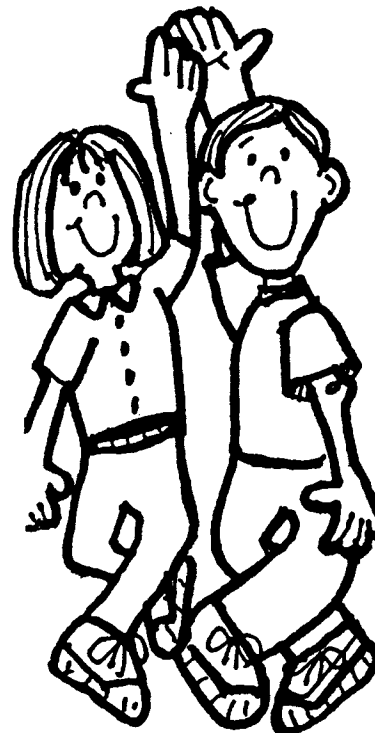
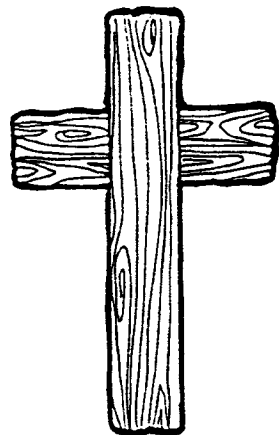
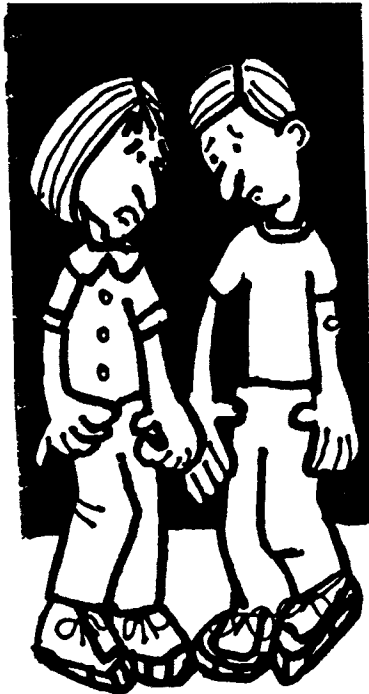
You take the dishes off the table when asked.



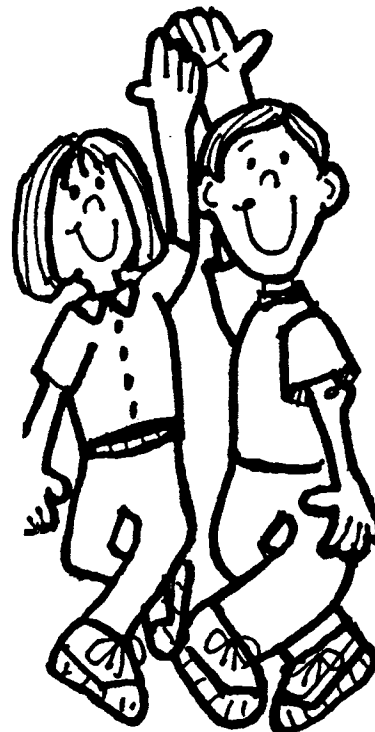
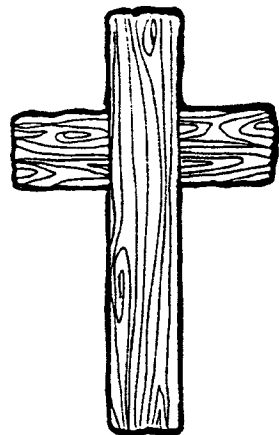
You kicked the ball and it broke the window.



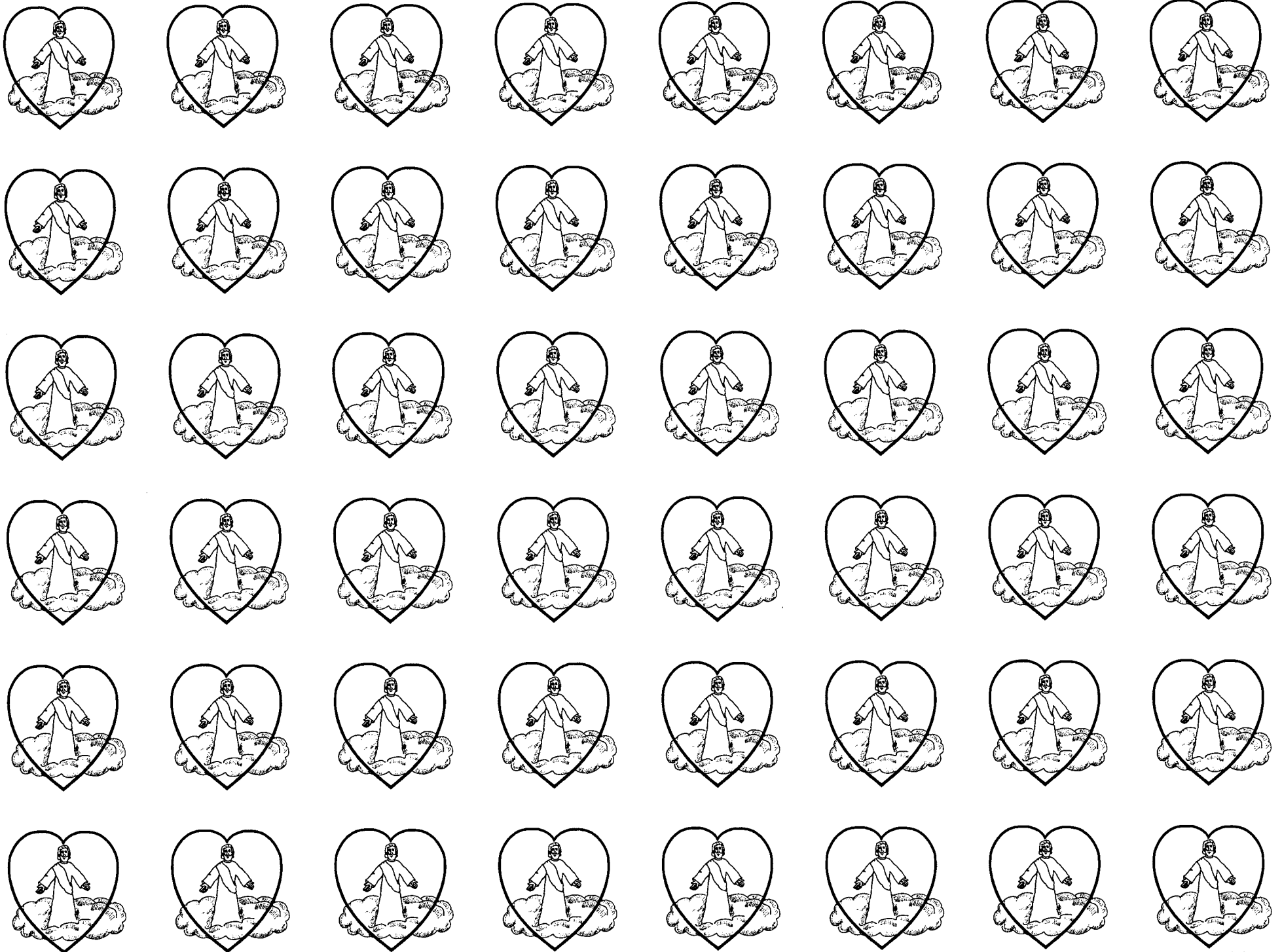
You hit your sister.



**Jesus will  
come back for us**



**Jesus will  
come back for us.**





## This is what I learned today!

Today we learned that while we wait for Jesus to return, we are to grow in joy, prayer, and thankfulness. Paul told the Thessalonians that they no longer were living in the dark because they had heard the Word of God and had accepted it. They no longer were worshiping idols. They were now living in Christ's light. While they were waiting for Jesus to return, they were to learn to be more like Jesus. They were to imitate Him by growing in joy, in prayer, and with a thankful attitude. Paul told the Thessalonians to not be lazy while they waited for the return of Jesus but to work faithfully at their jobs. Just like us, they were to listen to their Bible teachers and their parents. That is how God will help us grow to be like Christ. God will help us grow in joy, prayer, and thankfulness.

## Today's Memory Verse

**Be joyful always; pray continually;  
give thanks in all circumstances.  
1 Thessalonians 5:16**

## Be Children of the Light



Darken the room or get in a dark closet with your preschool children. Paul called people who worshiped idols and didn't believe in Jesus "people of darkness" (1 Thess. 5:4-5). Shine a flashlight on the back side of this take-home page and talk about how Paul told the Thessalonians to respect those who teach the Bible--pastors, Sunday School teachers, and parents. They help us learn how to be "children of light" through faith in Jesus. Shine the flashlight on the memory verse (either in a Bible or on this page) and say or sing the verse together. Learn the new song at the bottom of this page.

### Walking in the Light (tune: "Bringing in the Sheaves")

Walking in the light; walking in the light.  
When I walk with Jesus, I am walking in the light.

Walking in the light; walking in the light.  
I will follow Jesus when I'm walking in the light.

\* For tunes to songs, ask about the preschool tape.



Listen to your pastor and parents who teach you the Bible.

