

# City SG—July 24th, 2022

**Today's Bible Story:** Gentle on My Mind (Jesus and the Little Children) • *Mark 10:13-16*

**Today's Bottom Line:** God can give you the strength to be gentle.

**Monthly Memory Verse:** *God began a good work in you. And I am sure that he will carry it on until it is completed. That will be on the day Christ Jesus returns.* Philippians 1:6 (NIRV)

## 1. Sticks

**What You Need:** “Point Chart”, “Review Questions”, Pick-Up Sticks (50 per group)

### What You Do:

- **Say**, “In our story today, Jesus was gentle with the children, and that’s something that we can do, too—be gentle. The fact is, it takes strength to be gentle, to hold back and not say the thing you want to say when you’re mad or not shove someone when you get bumped in the line at school. It’s not always easy to be gentle, but **[Bottom Line] God can give you the strength to be gentle** if you just ask! So, we’re going to play a game to see how gentle you all can be!”
- Divide the group into two teams.
- Explain that the object of the game is for each team to collect as many points as possible in a game of Pick-Up Sticks.
  - In order to get a turn to play, teams must successfully answer a review question.
  - Read the “Point Chart” out loud to let the kids know how the points are tallied.
- Place the “Point Chart” where each team can easily refer to it.
- Hold all of the sticks in one hand, just above the floor or table.
- Drop the sticks quickly so they scatter.
- Take turns asking each team a question from the “Review Questions” Activity Page.
- If a team answers correctly, instruct a kid in the group to pick up one stick.
- The goal of Pick-Up Sticks is to pick up one stick at a time without moving any other sticks.
  - If none of the other sticks move in the process of picking up a stick, the team gets to keep that stick and the next team gets to answer a review question and play.
  - If one or more of the sticks move while picking up a stick, gather the remaining sticks and release them in the same way as before.
- Continue playing until every kid has had a chance to pick up a stick.
  - If you run out of questions, simply let the remaining kids take turns picking up a stick, alternating teams each time.
- Assign points based on the color of the stick.
- The team with the most points is the winner.
- If time allows, play another round just for fun!

### What You Say:

“What kind of strength did you have to use to pick up the sticks while making sure none of the other sticks moved? (*Invite responses.*) That’s right! You had to be careful and gentle. Gentleness is not just a physical action but also an attitude.

“What do you think are some emotions or actions that are the opposite of gentleness? (*Invite responses.*) Those are great examples! The next time you feel frustrated or angry or feel like bragging or saying something unkind, stop, take a deep breath, and ask God to help you show gentleness instead.”

## 2. Harsh vs. Gentle

**What You Need:** Bucket (1 per Group) and ping-pong balls (1 large Ziplock Bag per Group)

### What You Do:

- Instruct the kids to stand in a circle.
- Place the large empty bucket in the center of the circle.
- Give each kid a ping-pong ball.
- Instruct the kids to land the ping-pong ball in the bucket by tossing it as hard as they can.
- Challenge the kids to land the ball in the bucket by gently throwing/lobbing it in the bucket.
- If you have time, play a few rounds, letting kids observe what happens to the ping-pong ball with the different forces of their toss.

### What You Say:

“I asked you to toss the ping-pong ball in the bucket as hard as you could. What happened? (*Invite responses.*) That’s right! The majority of them popped back out! In the same way, when we are harsh or careless with our words or actions, we can really hurt other people. I asked you to land the second ball in the bucket without it popping right back out of the bucket. What did you have to do differently? (*Invite responses.*) That’s right! You had to slow down and be gentle. It’s not always easy to be gentle, especially in situations that make you feel frustrated or angry. But thankfully, **[Bottom Line] God can give you the strength to be gentle.**”

**[Make It Personal] (Tell kids about a time something happened and you wanted to respond in anger, but you chose to be gentle instead. OR you can tell them how you didn’t respond with gentleness and how that affected your relationship with the other person.)** Just like we had to be gentle with the second ball, we also have to be gentle with people and their hearts. We can hurt someone if we don’t respond or treat them with gentleness. So let’s all remember to ask God to give us strength to be gentle.”

## 3. Practice Patience

**Non-Reader Option Highlighted Below**

**What You Need:** “Memory Verse Cards” numbered (2 sets, different colors per Group), round tablecloths (2 per Group). Bible

### What You Do:

- Look up Philippians 1:6 and read it out loud to the group several times.
- Divide the group into two teams.
- Give each team a round plastic tablecloth.
- Instruct the teams to spread out evenly around their tablecloth and hold the edges.
- Direct the kids to gently tug on the tablecloth (without ripping it), holding it low between their knees and the ground.

- On the count of three, instruct the kids to raise the tablecloth in unison. It should fill with air and rise like a giant mushroom.
- Direct the kids to work together to repeat the motion to create waves.
- Once the group feels comfortable making waves, ask them to stop.
- Place a set of “Memory Verse Cards” in the center of each team’s tablecloth.
- Instruct the teams to create gentle waves, trying to keep the cards in the center.
- After some time making gentle waves, instruct the kids to create big waves—without letting go of the tablecloth at any time—so the cards land on the floor.
- Once a team successfully lands all of their cards on the floor, instruct them to let go of the tablecloth, collect their cards, and assemble the verse.
  - o Verse Cards will be numbered to help non-readers assemble the verse in order.
- The first team to assemble the verse in the correct order is the winner.

#### **What You Say:**

“How easy or difficult was it to control the tablecloth as a team? (*Invite responses.*) The more you practiced together, the more you were able to control it. Being gentle requires practice. It wasn’t easy to create waves, at first, but you did a great job!

“This is often how it is in life. It’s not always easy to show gentleness with others, but it’s important to do so to not hurt their feelings and hearts. Paul was reminding us to keep trusting God to do the good work He started in you because **[Bottom Line] God can give you the strength to be gentle.**”

#### **4. Pray and Dismiss**

**What You Need:** Index cards, pens

#### **What You Do:**

- Give each kid a pencil and index card.
- Encourage the kids to write down or draw ways they want to learn to be gentle.
- Close your group time in prayer.

#### **What You Say:**

“Dear God, thank You for loving us. Thank You for being so gentle with us. It’s so good to know that ALL of us are important to You! Help us follow Jesus’ example of gentleness so we can show gentleness to others in the ways we wrote on our cards. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.”