

# Encourage One Another

## LOWER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

**Theme:** Encouraging others

**Scripture:** Thessalonians 5:11

**Memory Verse:** Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing. - 1 Thessalonians 5:11

## The Children's Sermon

How many of you have ever heard someone say, "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never hurt me"? (Children raise hands accordingly). Now, how many of you believe that - believe that words can't hurt people? (Children raise hands accordingly again).

You know, that saying isn't entirely true. Words can hurt, can't they? Sometimes, when someone says something mean or unkind, it can make us feel really bad inside. But today, I want to talk about something really special - something called encouragement. Encouragement is when we use our words to make someone feel good, to help them believe in themselves, and to cheer them up when they're feeling down.

Encouragement is like a magical tool that we all have. It doesn't cost anything to use it, but it can make a big difference in someone's day. Imagine you're trying to learn how to ride a bike, and you keep falling off. But then, someone comes along and says, "You can do it! I believe in you!" Suddenly, you feel a little stronger, a little braver, and you want to try again. That's the power of encouragement.

But encouragement isn't just for when we're learning to ride bikes. It's for all kinds of situations. Maybe your friend is nervous about a test at school. You can encourage them by saying, "You've studied hard. You're going to do great!" Or maybe your brother is sad because he didn't make the soccer team. You can encourage him by saying, "I'm sorry you're sad. I know you're an amazing player, and there will be other chances."

Encouragement is also about noticing the good things in others and telling them. It's like being a treasure hunter, but instead of looking for gold or jewels, you're looking for the good in people. When you find it, you tell them! Maybe your friend is really good at drawing. You can encourage them by saying, "Your drawings are so cool! You're really talented."

Sometimes, we forget how powerful our words can be. We might say something without thinking, and it can hurt someone's feelings. But just like words can hurt, they can also heal and lift someone up. That's why it's so important to choose our words carefully and use them to encourage others.

Encouragement doesn't just make the other person feel good; it makes us feel good too. When you encourage someone, it's like giving a gift. And giving feels great, doesn't it? It's like when you make a card for your mom or dad, and you see them smile. That smile makes you happy too.

Now, I want you to think of someone who has encouraged you. Maybe it was a teacher, a friend, or a family member. How did their encouragement make you feel? (Allow time for children to think or share). It felt good, right? It probably made you feel loved, valued, and confident. We all need encouragement like that.

But here's a secret: everyone, even adults, needs encouragement. Your parents, your teachers, even your bus driver - they all need to hear encouraging words. So, I challenge you, this week, to be an encourager. Look for ways to use your words to make someone feel good. Maybe you can write a note, give a compliment, or just say something kind.

Remember, encouragement is a gift that keeps on giving. When you encourage someone, they're more likely to encourage someone else. It's like a chain reaction of kindness and positivity. And who knows? Your words of encouragement might be exactly what someone needs to hear to have a better day, to try something new, or to keep going when things are tough.

So, let's be encouragers. Let's use our words to build each other up, to cheer each other on, and to spread kindness wherever we go. Because in a world where you can be anything, be kind, be encouraging. And watch how your words can change the world around you, one encouraging word at a time.

## Bible Memory Verse

**Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing. - 1 Thessalonians 5:11**

You Will Need:

- Colored construction paper
- Markers or crayons
- Stickers or glitter glue

Get Ready:

- Cut the construction paper into heart shapes, one for each child plus a few extras.
- Set up a table with markers, crayons, and stickers/glitter glue spread out for easy access.

Do This:

1. Give each child a heart-shaped piece of construction paper and ask them to think of someone they would like to encourage or make feel special.
2. Have them use the markers, crayons, and stickers to decorate their heart with kind words, drawings, or both, focusing on encouraging the person they have chosen.
3. Once everyone is done, create a 'Wall of Encouragement' by taping the hearts to a wall or bulletin board where everyone can see. Encourage the children to share who their heart is for and why they chose to encourage that person.

## Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- Colorful construction paper
- Markers or crayons
- Stickers with encouraging words or happy images
- Scissors (for teacher use only)
- Glue sticks

Get Ready:

- Cut the construction paper into heart shapes, one for each child.
- Write "Thessalonians 5:11" on a large poster and draw or paste images of children helping and encouraging each other around it.

Do this:

1. **\*\*Introduction to Encouragement\*\***: Start by explaining Thessalonians 5:11 in simple terms: "The Bible tells us to encourage each other and build each other up. That means saying kind things and helping our friends feel happy and strong!" Show the poster and talk about the pictures, asking how each image shows encouragement.
2. **\*\*Crafting Encouragement Hearts\*\***: Give each child a heart-shaped piece of construction paper and access to markers, crayons, and stickers. Ask them to think of someone they want to encourage, such as a friend, family member, or another student. Then, they will decorate their heart with drawings, stickers, and words of encouragement for that person. Guide them with examples like, "You are awesome," "God loves you," or "You can do it!"
3. **\*\*Sharing and Pairing\*\***: Once everyone has finished their encouragement hearts, create a circle. Each child, one at a time, will stand up, say for whom they made their heart, and share one thing they wrote or drew on it. After sharing, they will place their heart in the center of the circle. When all the hearts are in the center, mix them up and then let each child pick a different heart (not their own) to give them a surprise encouragement message.

Finish with a group prayer, asking God to help them be encouraging to others just like in Thessalonians 5:11. Encourage them to give the heart they picked to the person it was originally made for, spreading encouragement and kindness.

## Snack Activity: Encouragement Cookies

You'll Need:

- Pre-made sugar cookie dough
- Frosting (various colors)

- Sprinkles
- Parchment paper
- Cookie cutters (heart and star shapes)
- Writing icing tubes

Get Ready: Preheat the oven according to the cookie dough package instructions. Roll out your cookie dough on a flat surface covered with parchment paper to about 1/4 inch thickness.

Do this:

1. Use the heart and star cookie cutters to cut out shapes from the dough. These shapes remind us that love and shining bright with kindness are ways we can encourage others, just like in Thessalonians 5:11.
2. Place your cookies on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper and bake according to the package instructions. Let them cool after baking.
3. Once cooled, use the frosting to decorate the cookies. You can write encouraging words or simply make fun designs. Use the writing icing tubes for more detailed work like writing 'Be Kind', 'You Rock', or 'God Loves You'.
4. Share these Encouragement Cookies with friends, family, or neighbors as a sweet way to lift their spirits and show them love, just as we're taught in Thessalonians 5:11.

## Game Activity: Encouragement Hopscotch

You'll Need:

- Sidewalk chalk
- A small stone or beanbag
- A list of encouraging phrases based on Thessalonians 5:11

Get Ready: Use the sidewalk chalk to draw a hopscotch grid on the pavement. Number each square from 1 to 10. Next to each number, write an encouraging phrase or word inspired by Thessalonians 5:11, like 'Good Job!', 'You're Amazing!', 'Keep Going!', etc.

Do this:

1. Have the children line up behind the start of the hopscotch grid. Explain that as they hop through the grid, they need to read the encouraging phrases out loud. This will help them remember to always build each other up, just like in Thessalonians 5:11.
2. Each child takes a turn tossing their stone or beanbag onto the grid to choose their starting square. They must skip this square as they hop through. When they reach the end, they turn around and hop back, picking up their stone or beanbag on the way.
3. After each child's turn, everyone claps and uses one of the phrases from the grid to encourage them. This reinforces the theme of encouraging others and makes the game more fun. Rotate turns until all children have had multiple opportunities to hop and encourage.

## Craft Activity: Encouragement Flowers

You'll Need:

- Colorful construction paper
- Markers or crayons
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- Popsicle sticks
- Green paint or green markers

Get Ready: Before the class, cut out flower shapes from the colorful construction paper. Prepare a sample Encouragement Flower to show the children what they will be making.

Do this:

1. Start by sharing Thessalonians 5:11 with the class, explaining that we are like gardeners who help each other grow by giving encouragement. Just like flowers need sunlight and water, our friends need encouragement to grow strong.
2. Have each child choose a flower shape and write an encouraging message on it with markers or crayons. They can write something nice about a friend, a family member, or even a classmate.
3. While they work on their messages, have them paint or color the popsicle sticks green to make the flower stems. Once the paint dries, help them glue the flower on top of the stick.
4. Encourage the children to share their Encouragement Flower with the person they wrote the message for, explaining how their kind words can help that person 'grow' just like a flower.

## Prayer Activity: Encouragement Garden

You'll Need:

- Small flower pots or paper cups
- Soil
- Flower seeds
- Markers or paint

Get Ready: Gather all the materials on a table where each child can easily reach them. Print out Thessalonians 5:11 on paper to have it visible for all the children.



Do this:

1. Start by reading Thessalonians 5:11 together: 'Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.' Discuss what it means to encourage others and how it feels to be encouraged.
2. Give each child a small flower pot or paper cup. Let them decorate their pots with markers or paint, encouraging them to write encouraging words or draw something that makes them feel uplifted.
3. Once the pots are decorated, help each child fill their pot with soil and plant some flower seeds. As they plant the seeds, talk about how our encouraging words can help others 'grow' stronger and happier, just like the seeds will grow into beautiful flowers with proper care and love.
4. End with a short prayer, asking God to help us be encouragers to those around us, using our words and actions to build others up.