

CADETS/GEMS THEME 2019



DEVOTIONAL RESOURCE BOOKLET

Cadet/GEMS Theme: Feed the Fire

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Object Lesson One: Apathy to Action

Bible Verses

Revelation 3:15-16

I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm – neither hot nor cold – I am about to spit you out of my mouth.

Verses to Memorize

Revelation 3:15-16

Life Lesson

People who feed the fire move from apathy (looking like a rag doll) to action (looking like a raging fire) – being fully obedient to Jesus Christ!

Object Lesson

You will need a rag doll or stuffed animal for each girl. If that isn't possible because of the size of your club, ask one girl to stand up front with a rag doll/stuffed animal, and have the other girls cue her when to hold the rag doll/stuffed animal in the air.

In preparation: Write out Revelation 3:15-16 on a whiteboard, chalkboard, or poster board, or display it via PowerPoint (download from gmsgc.org).

Distribute a rag doll or stuffed animal to each girl or ask a volunteer to come forward and give her a rag doll or stuffed animal. Say . . . One of the key truths that we'll focus on together this season is the importance of moving from apathy to action. Apathy looks a lot like the rag doll/stuffed animal you're holding. It is a lack of concern; it is indifference and laziness toward the things of God. But, action looks a lot like a raging fire. It's on the move, loving, working, and serving. It's a fire that's fueled out of a deep love for God.

To help demonstrate the difference between apathy and action, I'm going to read different scenarios that may be familiar to you. If I read a scenario that displays apathy, hold your rag doll/stuffed animal in the air. If I read a scenario that displays action, wave your arms in the air like a raging fire.

Scenario 1

Your mom places a plate of cookies on the table that contains one cookie for each family member. You grab the biggest cookie. Is this an apathy or action response?

Apathy. *Hold rag doll/stuffed animal in the air.*

Scenario 2

You go to bed ten minutes early so you can read your Bible before you go to sleep. Is this an apathy or action response?

Action. *Wave your arms in the air.*

Scenario 3

The hallway is packed with kids trying to get to the cafeteria first. You slow down and let the others go before you. Is this an apathy or action response?

Action. *Wave your arms in the air.*

Scenario 4

When your grandma asks you to repeat something you've already said three times, you walk to her chair, smile, and clearly repeat it a fourth time so she can hear you. Is this an apathy or action response?

Action. *Wave your arms in the air.*

Scenario 5

Your brother keeps asking you questions and interrupting you while you're trying to study for a test. You get angry and tell him to get lost. Is this an apathy or action response?

Apathy. *Hold rag doll/stuffed animal in the air.*

Scenario 6

Your teacher notices that someone has been in her desk. She asks if you know who did it. You know it was one of your friends, but you lie to protect her and say you have no clue. Is this an apathy or action response?

Apathy. *Hold rag doll/stuffed animal in the air.*

Scenario 7

Your neighbor comments that you always seem to be smiling, and asks if there's a secret to your happiness. You open up and talk to her about your relationship with Jesus. Is this an apathy or action response?

Action. *Wave your arms in the air.*

Say . . . Girls, you did a great job deciding if these scenarios were fueled by action or apathy. Either collect the rag dolls/stuffed animals or ask the girls to sit quietly with them while they listen to this important message.

Message

Say... God tells us in His book, the Bible, that He knows our deeds. That means He knows each of our actions – the times we grab the biggest cookie on the plate, and the times we share what we have and are fully content to eat crumbs. He knows the times we gossip, and the times we build others up; the times we keep silent about our love for Jesus, and the times we open up and tell others how much we love Him.

No deed is a secret to God. He sees each action and does a temperature test on each deed. The cold and hot deeds of love and service delight Him. Our apathetic deeds make Him sick.

GEMS Counselor, have the girls read Revelation 3:15-16 aloud with you from the whiteboard/chalkboard/poster board/PowerPoint. **Parents**, have your family read these verses aloud with you from their Bibles.

God tells us in His Book, the Bible, I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm – neither hot nor cold – I am about to spit you out of my mouth (Revelation 3:15-16).

It's not enough to know the difference between apathy and action. We need to do something about it; we need to take action by loving God and serving others!

What's the temperature of your life? Are your deeds apathetic like lukewarm water that is gross, undrinkable, and useless? Or are your deeds action-filled like hot, spa-like waters or cold, pure drinking water?

Girls of passion feed the fire by moving from apathy to action. They obey and love God in all they do.

Let's Pray

Father God, thank You for Your Book, the Bible, and how it teaches us how to live. Help us to reject apathetic choices and live passionately for You. May our lives clearly show others Your love through actions of mercy and service. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Family Connection Time:

Gather your family in a comfy room for a family get-together or discussion time. If this is a new experience for your family, introduce it with enthusiasm. At first, it may receive some negative feedback, but with love and regularity, it will develop into an engaging, growth-producing family habit.

Your GEMS daughter experienced this entire object lesson at club. As a family, read the message portion of the object lesson together. If your children are of reading age, have them take turns reading the paragraphs.

Questions for Family Time Discussion

1. Reread Revelation 3:15-16. Give an example of an apathetic life choice and an action choice that's fueled by love for God.
2. Ask each person in your family to share what their favorite hot drink and cold drink is. Name drinks or foods that taste disgusting when they're lukewarm.
3. Ask each person in your family to share what their "deed" or "action" temperature is.

Parent note: Talk through specific ways your family can turn around lukewarm deeds into hot and cold deeds.

If your family does not own a Bible, please contact the Club Coordinator of your daughter(s)' GEMS Club. She will help you get a Bible you can understand. Begin to read it every day as a family. Pick a time that works best for your family, some good options include before school, at evening mealtime, or before bed.

Family Prayer

Dear heavenly Father, thank You for this time to learn from Your Book, the Bible, as a family. Please use this GEMS season to help us identify lukewarm waters in our lives and turn those around to hot and cold deeds that demonstrate our growing love for You. Move us from apathy to action. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Object Lesson Two: Feed the Fire

Bible Verse

Romans 12:11

Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.

Verse to Memorize

Romans 12:11

Life Lesson

People who feed the fire are zealous in serving the Lord – giving their very best to the things He asks them to do.

Object Lesson

You will need a basketball that is properly inflated, one that is flat, and a watch or alarm to time three minutes.

In preparation: Write out Romans 12:11 on a whiteboard, chalkboard, or poster board, or display it via PowerPoint (download from gmsgc.org).

Ask for four volunteers. Two will be counters and two will be dribblers. Give one dribbler the inflated ball and the other the flat ball. Say . . . We're going to begin with a basketball-dribbling contest. Our two basketball dribblers are going to have three minutes to see how many times they can dribble the basketball. It's the job of the two counters to track that for us. When I give the signal to begin, the dribblers will dribble the basketball, and the counters will count how many times they do it. I'll then give the signal that the three minute contest is finished. Dribblers, are you ready to give your very, very best? Listen to responses. Say . . . Great! Then let's begin!

After the three-minute contest is finished, ask the counter of the flat basketball how many dribbles her partner had, and ask the counter of the inflated basketball to share how many dribbles her partner had. Ask the dribblers why there was such an extreme difference in the amount of dribbles when they both had basketballs and the same amount of time to dribble. Thank volunteers and ask them to take their seats.

Say . . . Although both dribblers were zealous in giving their best to dribbling their basketball, only one of the dribblers experienced success. Let's think more about what is means to be zealous.

Message

Say . . . As a young girl, whenever I was being lazy or poky my mom would say, "If you were moving any slower, you'd be going backward!" Sometimes we

categorize people in the same way. If they're moving slow, we think they're apathetic. If they're moving a thousand miles an hour we see them as zealous!

In our object lesson both of the girls were zealous about dribbling their basketballs, yet only one of the girls experienced success. Let's pretend one of the girls would have been zealous about sitting on her basketball instead of dribbling it. That's not true zeal either! If her assignment was to dribble the ball, it's not OK to be zealous about sitting on it. We must never be eager to do wrong things!

When it comes to being zealous, we must measure it to the truth of God's Word. Is this something that is disobedient to God? Then we shouldn't be zealous about it! Is it something that pleases God? Then we should be zealous and passionate about giving it our very best.

GEMS Counselor, have the girls read Romans 12:11 aloud with you from the whiteboard/chalkboard/poster board/PowerPoint. **Parents**, have your family read this verse aloud with you from their Bibles.

God tells us in His Book, the Bible, *Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord* (Romans 12:11).

Our zeal must be driven by a love for God that demonstrates itself in service to others! We must be zealous, diligent, and eager to display love for God by giving our very best to the things He's asked us to do. That may or may not require speed. God would never tell us to hurry an aged grandma up the stairs. Instead He would tell us to slow down and help Grandma up the steps, one by one. God would never tell us to be zealous about doing things that are contrary to His Word. Instead He would tell us to love Him by obeying Him.

If your zeal for God looks like a deflated basketball, it's time to feed the fire! Talk to God in prayer and ask Him to fill you with a deeper love for Him that translates into a true zeal to serve others.

Passionate girls feed the fire by zealously giving their very best to the things God asks them to do.

Let's Pray

Father God, we admit that too often we're zealous for all the wrong things – hurrying from one place to another instead of keeping our relationship with You our priority. Please forgive us. Please fill our hearts with a deeper love for You that translates into an eagerness to serve others. We want to know You and love You more. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Object Lesson Three: Give Your Very Best!

Family Connection Time

Gather your children together for discussion time. As this special time together becomes a regular part of your family's life, remember that what we teach our children is more often "caught" than "taught." Our kids will be the first people to call us on it if what we share during our family connection time doesn't correlate with the way we live every day.

Your GEMS daughter experienced this entire object lesson at club. As a family, read the message portion of the object lesson together. If your children are of reading age, have them take turns reading the paragraphs.

Questions for Family Time Discussion

1. Reread Romans 12:1. What shouldn't be lacking in our lives?
2. Ask each person in your family to share a hobby they are zealous about. What proof or evidences is there that you are zealous about this hobby?
3. Ask each person in your family if they are zealous about loving God and serving others. If so, what proof or evidences is there that they are zealous about God? If not, why?
4. Talk about ways your family can come to know and love God more.

Family Prayer

Father God, thank You that You love us and are eager for us to know and love You more. We confess that too often we're zealous about earthly pursuits rather than a deeper relationship with You. Please grow a deeper love within each one of us for You. Cause our family to desire to know You more and more. Draw us near to You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Bible Verse

Ephesians 6:7

Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men.

Verse to Memorize

Ephesians 6:7

Life Lesson

People who feed the fire give their very best to adding the spiritual disciplines of PASSION (Pray Constantly, And Study God's Word, Serve Others, Interact with God's People, Open Up and Talk about God, Notice God in the Ordinary) to their lives.

Object Lesson

You will need the DVD *Facing the Giants* (Sherwood Pictures, Rated PG) and the means to play it.

In preparation: Write out Ephesians 6:7 on a whiteboard, chalkboard, or poster board, or display it via PowerPoint (download from gemsgc.org).

Hold up the Facing the Giants DVD cover and say . . . Facing the Giants is a movie about a high school coach who, after experiencing six consecutive losing seasons, feels like a failure in football and in life. He turns to God in desperation and makes the choice to trust God and to give God his very best. The coach not only gave his best, but also encouraged his team to do the same. Let's watch a short clip of this movie together.

Facing the Giants

Total runtime: 6 minutes

Start: Scene Selection 12: The Deathcrawl

Stop: After Coach says, "What is it Jeremy?" Jeremy says, "I weigh 160."

Say . . . Coach Taylor pushed and encouraged Brock to give his very best, and Brock did just that. He gave his very, very best.

Message

Say . . . God desires you to give your very, very best to feeding the fire in your heart. Football teams practice drills and plays to give their very best to their games. Musicians practice scales and pieces to give their very best in their concerts. Actors and actresses memorize lines to give their very best to their performances.

To give our best to feeding the fire in our heart, we need to practice the holy habits or spiritual disciplines of PASSION. Ask the girls to do the actions with you!



P is for Pray Constantly. Girls fold their hands in prayer. Say . . . Please say, "Pray constantly!" Girls repeat, "Pray constantly!" Talking and speaking to God feeds the fire in our hearts because it develops a deeper relationship between God and us. God wants us to pray anytime, anywhere, and about anything.



A is for And. Girls hold forearms in the shape of a plus sign. Say . . . Please say, "And." Girls repeat, "And."



S is for Study God's Word. Girls extend their arms, and place their hands together like an open book. Say . . . Please say, "Study God's Word!" Girls repeat, "Study God's Word!" Reading God's Word, the Bible, feeds the fire in our hearts because we learn how God wants us to live. It's important to read God's Word every day.



S is for Serve Others. Girls move their hands and arms like they're shoveling dirt. Say . . . Please say, "Serve others!" Girls repeat, "Serve others!" Serving others feeds the fire in our hearts because we're doing something God requires of us. We serve God when we serve others. Real servants serve with all their hearts – no matter what the task.



I is for Interact with God's People. Girls interlock their arms with the girls near them. Say . . . Please say, "Interact with God's people!" Girls repeat, "Interact with God's people!" Interacting with God's people feeds the fire in our hearts because we're able to encourage one another to act justly, love mercy, and to walk humbly with God.



O is for Open Up and Talk about God. Girls hold their hands to their mouths like they're making an announcement. Say . . . Please say, "Open up and talk about God!" Girls repeat, "Open up and talk about God!" Opening up and talking about God feeds the fire in our hearts because it shows God how much we love Him. Loving God is contagious – we'll want everyone else to know about Him and His love, too!



N is for Notice God in the Ordinary. Girls hold their hands to their eyes like binoculars. Say . . . Please say, "Notice God in the ordinary!" Girls repeat, "Notice God in the ordinary!" Noticing God in the ordinary feeds the fire in our hearts because we see Him making Himself known to us and take note of all the tender ways He cares for us.

Girls, as GEMS counselors (and parents!) we are committed to giving you our very best this season. We're going to put these holy habits into our lives and then walk alongside you, and crawl on our knees if we have to, to encourage you to do the very same.

There will be days when you don't feel like praying or reading your Bible, but we're going to come alongside you and say, "Don't quit! Don't quit!" There will be times when it will take great courage to open up and talk about God, but we're going to be right there saying, "Give your very best! Give your very best!"

Will you do that? Can we count on you to give your best to adding these spiritual disciplines to your life? Can we count on you to encourage the other people in this club and your family to do the same? We believe you will.

Let's look at the truth about what God says it means to give your very best for Him.

GEMS Counselor, have the girls read *Ephesians 6:7* aloud with you from the whiteboard/chalkboard/poster board/PowerPoint. **Parents**, have your family read this verse aloud with you from their Bibles.

God tells us in His Book, the Bible, *Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men* (Ephesians 6:7).

Girls of passion feed the fire by praying constantly, and studying God's Word, serving others, interacting with God's people, opening up and talking about God, and noticing God in the ordinary.

Let's Pray

Father God, thank You for Your Word, Your Spirit, and for the people in our lives who encourage us to give our very best to feeding the fire. Help us be girls and women who wholeheartedly live for You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Object Lesson Four: Pray Constantly

Bible Verses

Philippians 4:6-7

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Verses to Memorize

Philippians 4:6-7

Life Lesson

People who feed the fire pray constantly with thanksgiving.

Object Lesson

You will need a watch, clock, or other device to time one minute.

In preparation: Write out Philippians 4:6-7 on a whiteboard, chalkboard, or poster board, or display it via PowerPoint (download from gemsgc.org).

Say... For the next minute, I'd like you to whisper to the people who are near you. You may talk about whatever you'd like. When I give the signal to begin, go ahead and start quietly talking until I give the signal to stop, OK?

After giving the signals to start and end, say... How many of you know how many breaths you took while you were whispering to your neighbors? *Listen to responses. Say...* You probably weren't counting breaths, were you? Raise your hand if you even thought about taking a breath. Be honest. While you were whispering, how many of you thought to yourself, "Oh, yeah, I better breathe!" *Listen to responses. Say...* Unless we're short of breath, we don't usually intentionally think about breathing, yet we do it continually.

Message

Say... Breathing gives life to our bodies. Breathing is continual. We breathe while we talk, eat, and play. We never quit breathing because it's time to do something else; we just keep doing it to give life to our bodies!

Praying gives life to our walk with Jesus. God wants us to pray while we talk, eat, and sleep. We should never quit praying because it's time to do something else; we should just keep doing it to give life to our walk with Jesus!

Let's look at the truth about what God says about praying constantly.

Family Connection Time

Gather your children in your family's favorite space in your home (or outdoors if that is possible!) Mentally avoid looking at this time as something to be squeezed in. Instead, be determined to make this connection time a top priority and privilege!

Your GEMS daughter experienced this entire object lesson at club. As a family, read the message portion of the object lesson together. If your children are of reading age, have them take turns reading the paragraphs.

Questions for Family Time Discussion:

1. Reread Ephesians 6:7. What does it mean to do something wholeheartedly?
2. Ask each person in your family to share something that they're wholehearted about doing. What is required to stay wholehearted about this (time/effort)?
3. Look at the passion disciplines/holy habits within the message portion of this object lesson/devotional thought. Using that list, have each person in the family identify one discipline that they're going to wholeheartedly focus on for the next 21 days. Mark your calendars and your commitments. Succeeding for 21 days will forge the habit into your life and should make the action seem second nature.
4. As a family, watch the *Facing the Giants* DVD (Sherwood Pictures, Rated PG) within the next 21 days.

Family Prayer

Father God, thank You for what we're learning as a family about the spiritual disciplines we need to put in place in our lives to strengthen our relationship with You. Strengthen us through Your Word and Your Spirit to persevere in the commitments we just made. Help us encourage one another in those commitments, too. We want to give You our very best! In Jesus' name, Amen.

GEMS Counselor, have the girls read *Philippians 4:6-7* aloud with you from the whiteboard/chalkboard/poster board/PowerPoint. **Parents**, have your family read these verses aloud with you from their Bibles.

God tells us in His Book, the Bible, *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus* (Philippians 4:6-7).

When we're anxious or worried, God tells us to talk to Him in prayer. No matter the size of our problem, He desires to hear from us. He wants us to talk to Him about anything, anytime, anywhere. When people are in hot water or deep troubles, they often shout out to God for help.

If the only time we talk to God is when we're in 911 situations, we're missing out on an important part of prayer. Within this verse is the reminder that when we pray constantly it should be done *with thanksgiving*.

There's a cool thing that happens in thankful hearts: worry dies! Seriously. Try it for yourself and you'll see that it's true. The next time you're worried about something and are praying constantly about the problem, stop and count the things you're thankful for. It's in saying thanks to God, even in hard times, that His peace will flood your heart and mind.

Girls of passion feed the fire by praying constantly and being thankful.

Let's Pray

Father God, thank You that You love to hear from us anytime, anywhere, and any place. Forgive us when we worry. Help us to always pray about everything and continually tell You the things we're thankful for. You are so good to us! In Jesus' name, Amen.

Family Connection Time

Families work best with a routine. Set a regular schedule to gather your family together for discussion time. Fit it into the routine of your household like dinner or bedtime. Before Family Connection Time or Bible Time give your family a 15-minute warning. Tell them they have 15-minutes to finish what they're doing, and then you'll meet them at _____ (time) in the _____ (room).

Your GEMS daughter experienced this entire object lesson at club. As a family, read the message portion of the object lesson together. If your children are of reading age, have them take turns reading the paragraphs.

Questions for Family Time Discussion

1. Reread *Philippians 4:6-7*. What do these verses tell us not to do and what do they tell us to do?
2. Ask each person in your family to share something that they're worried about right now.
3. Although we don't give thanks for death, disaster, and difficult circumstances, we can give God thanks *in* those things. Ask each person to think about a situation that they're worried about and then list one thing they're thankful to God for *in* it.
4. Set a timer for five minutes. Count how many things your family can list that they're thankful for before the timer goes off.

Family Prayer

Father God, thank You for inviting us to talk to You about anything, including the things that cause us to fret and worry. Help us to pray constantly with thanksgiving. One of the many things we're thankful for is this family and the opportunity we have to pray together. Help us to more and more be a family of prayer. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Object Lesson Five: Study God's Word

Bible Verses

2 Timothy 3:16-17 TNIV

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that all God's people may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Verses to Memorize

2 Timothy 3:16-17

Life Lesson

People who feed the fire study God's Word and let it soak into their words, actions, and thought life like a sponge soaks up water.

Object Lesson

You will need a Bible, a bucket of soapy water, a rock, and a sponge.

In preparation: Write out 2 Timothy 3:16-17 on a whiteboard, chalkboard, or poster board, or display it via PowerPoint (download from gemsgc.org).

Place the rock and sponge into a pail of soapy water before girls arrive so they can't see them. Say . . . Do you agree that to scrub the floor or wash the kitchen counter all you need is warm, sudsy water and something to wipe the surface with? Listen to responses.

If that's true, to wash the tabletops after snack time I could use this warm, sudsy water, and (*pull the rock out of the water*) this rock to wipe the surface. Will that work well? *Listen to responses. Say . . . That won't work at all, will it? The rock can't soak up the mess, and it will scratch the tabletop instead of clean it.*

Pull the sponge out of the pail and squeeze the water out. Say . . . The opposite is true of sponges. Sponges are effective in cleaning because they can soak in water, clean up spills, and gather crumbs.

Place the rock and the sponge on the table so all the girls can see them. Say . . . When we read and study God's Word, our hearts are either like a rock or a sponge. Listen carefully and determine which one best describes your heart.

Message

Hold your Bible in your hands and say . . . This is the most important book that has ever been written. It's God's Book, the Bible. It's the primary way that God talks to you and me. When we read God's Book we will hear what God says. Every page in this book is absolutely true, useful, and needed to teach us how He wants us to live.

GEMS Counselor, have the girls read 2 Timothy 3:16-17 aloud with you from the whiteboard/chalkboard/poster board/PowerPoint. **Parents**, have your family read these verses aloud with you from their Bibles.

God tells us in His Book, the Bible, *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that all God's people may be thoroughly equipped for every good work* (2 Timothy 3:16-17, TNIV).

When we read and listen to God's Word, we're either like a rock or a sponge. Which best describes you?

- Rocks read their Bibles, but don't really hear what God says because they're thinking about something else.
- Rocks don't pay attention during Bible lesson and devotional times at GEMS.
- Rocks don't let God's Word change the way they live.

If you're a rock, God's truth can't soak into your life and it won't change the way you live. Rocks don't keep the fire burning in their hearts.

Listen to what is true for sponges.

- Sponges read their Bibles slowly and focus on what God is saying to them.
- Sponges concentrate during Bible lesson and devotional times at GEMS.
- Sponges soak up God's Word and apply what it says to what they say, what they do, and what they think about.

If you're a sponge, you listen to God talking to you in His Book and seek to live out what you learn. When we sincerely study God's Word it will show us truth, expose our rebellion, correct our mistakes, and train us to live God's way (2 Timothy 3:16-17, MSG).

Girls of passion feed the fire by being sponge-like when they read their Bibles. They let God's Word soak in and change the way they live.

Let's Pray

Father God, thank You for Your book, the Bible. Thank You that it is true and teaches us how to live. Please forgive us when we don't read our Bibles every day and don't let it change us. Help us to hear You talk so we can learn how You want us to live. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Object Lesson Six: Serve Others

Bible Verses

Matthew 20:26-28

[Jesus said,] "Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave – just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Verses to Memorize

Matthew 20:26-28

Life Lesson

People who feed the fire measure true greatness by being like Jesus who came to serve, not be served.

Object Lesson

You will need a Bible and a trophy or medal.

In preparation: Write out Matthew 20:26-28 on a whiteboard, chalkboard, or poster board, or display it via PowerPoint (download from gemsgc.org).

Ask . . . If you could do one great thing with your life, what would it be? Would you want to cure cancer, win an Olympic gold medal, live on the moon, or be the world's greatest mom? Listen to responses. *Those who volunteer answers should stand and hold the trophy/medal while they share.*

Say . . . Those are really great things to do. All of you are talented and gifted in unique ways, and as you grow, learn, and work hard, you'll be able to work toward those dreams.

Place the trophy/medal to the side and hold your Bible. God has a Word for us on what it means to be truly great and it has nothing to do with trophies, fame, or riches.

Message

Hold your Bible in your hands and say . . . If you want to know how to be greater than the greatest success you can imagine, we need to turn to God's Word to see what that looks like.

GEMS Counselor, have the girls read Matthew 20:26-28 aloud with you from the whiteboard/chalkboard/poster board/PowerPoint. **Parents,** have your family read these verses aloud with you from their Bibles.

Family Connection Time

Gather your family for Family Connection Time. The time you spend with your children in God's Word will help establish their faith and personal convictions that are foundational in helping all of us know why we believe what we believe. If you make Bible reading a daily part of your family's routine, your home can be the best Bible school your children will ever experience.

Your GEMS daughter experienced this entire object lesson at club. As a family, read the message portion of the object lesson together. If your children are of reading age, have them take turns reading the paragraphs.

Questions for Family Time Discussion:

1. Reread 2 Timothy 3:16-17. Why is the Bible useful?
2. How important is it to believe that every word of the Bible is true?
3. Ask each family member to share his or her favorite Bible verse or Bible story.

If your family does not own a Bible, please contact the Club Coordinator of your daughter(s)' GEMS Club. If you desire to begin reading God's Word, but don't know where to begin, a good place to start is in the New Testament in the book of John.

Family Prayer

Father God, thank You that Your Book, the Bible, is absolutely true from cover to cover and useful in showing us truth, exposing our sin, correcting our mistakes, and training us to live Your way. Help us to regularly read and dig deep into its truth as individuals and as a family. In Jesus' name, Amen.

God tells us in His Book, the Bible, [Jesus said,] "Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave – just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:26-28).

To be truly great, we need to serve others instead of looking for ways to be served. Truly great people have a fire of love for God and eagerness to serve others burning in their hearts!

One of the lies that our culture tells us through television shows, movies, and magazines is that truly great people are famous, beautiful, rich, smart, and winners on the latest reality show. Don't fall for the lie! True greatness isn't measured by what you get, but by what you give.

The truth about greatness is seen in Jesus who perfectly modeled what it means to be a humble, loving servant. Jesus cared more about helping people than He did about His reputation, His comfort, and even His life. He didn't serve people because He had to; He served because He wanted to. He didn't serve out of guilt or duty; He served out of joy and love!

His life was marked by service. He healed lepers that others banished from their homes and cities because of their dreadful and hopeless disease (Matthew 8:1-4). He fed people that others wanted to send home to buy their own food (Matthew 14:13-21). He talked to people about His love and forgiveness when others shunned, avoided, and ignored them (John 4:1-26). And, He showed the full extent of His love when He willingly died on the cross to take the punishment for our sins (John 3:16-17).

Girls of passion feed the fire by letting God's love and Jesus' example motivate them to be truly great servants who are eager to help and serve people.

Let's Pray

Dear Jesus, thank You for Your perfect example of how to be a humble, loving servant. Too often we'd rather sit back and be served than put in the time and effort to serve others. Please forgive us. We want to serve others the way You serve us. In Your name we pray, Amen.

Family Connection Time

Is making time for this Family Connection Time a challenge in your fast-paced life? If so, it's even more critical for you than most to seek out a time to stop and spend time with your family. The first step is making the commitment to regularly gather your family to read God's Word and to pray. The next step is to do it. There's no time like the present! Gather your children for discussion time now.

Your GEMS daughter experienced this entire object lesson at club. As a family, read the message portion of the object lesson together. If your children are of reading age, have them take turns reading the paragraphs.

Questions for Family Time Discussion

1. Reread Matthew 20:26-28. How did Jesus define great people?
2. Ask each family member to name someone from the past or present who is a well-known hero. Would Jesus define the people you named as truly great? Why or why not?
3. Ask everyone to share their favorite way to serve other people.
4. Ask family members to identify specific ways they can serve one another.

Family Prayer

Father God, thank You for what we can learn about serving others through Your Word and Your Son, Jesus. Forgive us when we are too lazy, busy, or oblivious to serve others in the way You desire. Please make it evident where You want our family to serve today. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Object Lesson Seven: Interact with God's People

Bible Verse

Hebrews 10:25

Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Verse to Memorize

Hebrews 10:25

Life Lesson

People who feed the fire spend time with God's people, encouraging and loving one another.

Object Lesson

You will need a Bible, and a Lego® building block for each girl.

In preparation: Write out Hebrews 10:25 on a whiteboard, chalkboard, or poster board, or display it via PowerPoint (download from gemsgc.org).

Give each girl a Lego® and say . . . What are some fun things you've made in the past with Legos®? *Listen to responses.* I've given you each one Lego®. Only using the Lego® I've given you, build your favorite thing. *Listen to responses of it's impossible to build something with a single Lego®!*

Say . . . You're right, girls. Building is impossible when we only have one Lego® to use. Legos are meant to work together – not individually! Go ahead and put your Legos together so you can build something special. *Divide the girls into groups of six to eight and give them additional Legos to use. After five minutes of building, ask them to show and tell what they've made.*

Message

Say . . . Legos® are useless unless they're working together. They are designed to interlock and connect with one another.

God's children are also useless unless they're working together. We are designed to interact and connect with one another. We need each other!

Hold the Bible and say . . . God loves it when we hang out, talk to each other, and laugh together. He also gets very specific in His Book, the Bible, about the things we should do for one another when we're together.

When you meet with other Jesus followers at GEMS, church, or other places, are these instructions true of you?

- You get along with one another (Romans 12:16).
- You love one another (Romans 13:8).
- You greet one another warmly (Romans 16:16).
- You accept one another (Romans 15:7).
- You serve one another (Galatians 5:13).
- You're kind to one another (Ephesians 4:32).
- You speak to one another (Ephesians 5:19).
- You're hospitable to one another (1 Peter 4:9).
- You encourage one another to live for Jesus (1 Thessalonians 5:11).

One of the most important things we can do when we meet together is worship God and talk about Him. That's so important to God that He commands us to get together often!

GEMS Counselor, have the girls read Hebrews 10:25 aloud with you from the whiteboard/chalkboard/poster board/PowerPoint. **Parents,** have your family read this verse aloud with you from their Bibles.

God tells us in His Book, the Bible, *Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching* (Hebrews 10:25).

God knows that it is not good for us to be alone. That's one of the reasons we're so thankful that you're at GEMS! It gives us opportunity to encourage one another to act justly, love mercy, and to walk humbly with God (Micah 6:8).

Girls of passion feed the fire by going to church and GEMS and grabbing hold of every opportunity to read the Bible with other Jesus followers.

Let's Pray

Heavenly Father, thank You for all the girls and women we're able to interact with at GEMS Girls' Clubs. Help us to always practice the "one another" commands of accepting one another, serving one another, being kind to one another, encouraging one another, and so much more. Thank You for the privilege of being part of Your family. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Object Lesson Eight: Open Up and Talk About God

Family Connection Time

Gather your family together for Family Connection Time. Keep this time casual and interactive. Children learn better when they're engaged, so be intentional in keeping this special time engaging and enjoyable. You will experience rich rewards and lifetime memories by making this a regular part of your family routine.

Your GEMS daughter experienced this entire object lesson at club. As a family, read the message portion of the object lesson together. If your children are of reading age, have them take turns reading the paragraphs.

Questions for Family Time Discussion

1. Reread Hebrews 10:25. Why is it important to regularly meet together with other Jesus followers?
2. Have each person share his or her favorite place to meet with other Jesus followers.
3. Look at the "one another" commands within the message portion of this object lesson/devotional thought. Are these instructions true of the way you treat one another within your family? If not, what changes can your family make to do these things for each other?

If you don't currently have a place to weekly interact with God's people, please contact your Club Coordinator. She'll gladly tell you about the Sunday worship services and other gatherings that take place at the church where she worships. You're warmly invited!

Family Prayer

Father God, thank You for our family and the privilege that we have of interacting with one another on a daily basis. Help us to live out the commands You've given us about how to act toward one another and the people outside our family that we interact with. Thank You for the relationships You've given us. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Bible Verse

Romans 1:16

I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

Verse to Memorize

Romans 1:16

Life Lesson

People who feed the fire demonstrate their love for God by opening up and talking about Him to others.

Object Lesson

You will need a Bible and two liters of soda (same kind and brand) – one that's never been opened and one that was opened and given time to go flat. Before club, put the cap back on the flat liter so you're unable to see the difference between the two sodas.

In preparation: Write out Romans 1:16 on a whiteboard, chalkboard, or poster board, or display it via PowerPoint (download from gemsgc.org).

Place the two bottles of soda on the table and ask . . . Do you see any difference between these two sodas? Listen to responses. Say . . . They look exactly the same, don't they? Let's see if we can hear any difference between them. Be very quiet and listen! First open the flat soda. Ask . . . Did you hear anything? Listen to responses. Say . . . Now let's open the other soda. Ask . . . Did you hear anything? Listen to responses. Say . . . There is a difference in what we hear, isn't there? When we open up carbonated drinks and they make a noise, we know they're fresh.

Message

Hold your Bible and say . . . Carbon dioxide in soda makes it fizzy and produces a popping noise that let's us know it's brand new. We instantly know if soda is fresh or flat by whether or not we hear a popping sound.

The same is true of you and me! God lives in our hearts when we ask Jesus to be our forever Friend. When we open up and talk with other people, they can instantly know if our relationship with God is fresh or flat by the words we say. If we avoid talking about God, are ashamed of our relationship with Him, or use language that is cruel or crude, it's an offensive noise that alerts people to a flat and lukewarm life.

If we open up and talk to people about God, what He's doing in our lives, and how much God loves them, too, it demonstrates that our relationship with God is alive and well. Our talk will pop with joy, courage, and boldness because we love God and want others to know Him, too!

GEMS Counselor, have the girls read *Romans 1:16* aloud with you from the white-board/chalkboard/poster board/PowerPoint. **Parents**, have your family read this verse aloud with you from their Bibles.

In God's Book, the Bible, a man named Paul wrote, *I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile* (Romans 1:16).

Paul continually opened up and talked about God to people who had a relationship with Jesus and to people who had never heard of Him before. We can learn so much from Paul's words and example. He was proud to proclaim that He loved God and was eager to tell people how they could know God, too.

Think about the conversations you've had with people today. Have you been luke-warm and kept God a secret? Or are you popping and fizzing with conversations about His love for you and for others?

Girls of passion feed the fire by opening up and talking about God. Loving God is contagious – we'll want everyone else to know about Him and His love, too!

Let's Pray

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your love for us and all the ways You are at work in our lives. Forgive us when we keep those good things a secret. Helps us to be bold and courageous in opening up and talking about You more. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Family Connection Time

Invite your family to gather with you for Family Connection Time or what many families call family devotions. This time can be morning, noon, or night. It's easier to establish consistency if you decide on a general daily schedule or pattern. Long after you've worked your way through this devotional/object lesson booklet, continue the habit of regularly meeting with your children to open up and talk about God.

Your GEMS daughter experienced this entire object lesson at club. As a family, read the message portion of the object lesson together. If your children are of reading age, have them take turns reading the paragraphs.

Questions for Family Time Discussion:

1. Reread Romans 1:16. How did Paul feel about telling people about God?
2. Open up and talk about God with one another. Have each person share one way they experienced God's love and care today.
3. Have you ever been too ashamed or afraid to tell other people that you love Jesus? If so, tell about your experience. If you could go back in time, what would you have done differently?
4. Think about a friend, classmate, or co-worker that doesn't know Jesus. Pray for this person as a family. If you're the person that would like to know Jesus more, open up and ask the Club Coordinator or another Jesus follower to tell you what it means to have a relationship with Him.

Family Prayer

Dear Jesus, thank You for this opportunity to open up and talk about You with our family. Help us to have this same boldness and joy in sharing Your love with our neighbors, classmates, co-workers, and friends. We want everyone to know You and to have a relationship with You. In Your name, Amen.

Object Lesson Nine: Notice God in the Ordinary

Bible Verse

Deuteronomy 4:29

But if from there you seek the LORD your God, you will find him if you look for him with all your heart and with all your soul.

Verse to Memorize

Deuteronomy 4:29

Life Lesson

People who feed the fire hunt for God by looking for Him and noticing Him in the ordinary.

Object Lesson

You will need to log on to www.bear-tracker.com and print out animals tracks and prints that may include: domestic cattle, grizzly bear, porcupine, raccoon, duck, robin, lizard, snake, grasshopper, striped skunk, etc.

Other options include doing this object lesson/devotional thought at camp where you can identify bird and animal tracks, or finding a book from the library that has animal track photos.

In preparation: Print out at least six different animal tracks that you can hold up in front of the group or pass around for the girls to see. Since girls will be asked to guess what animal they think the track belongs to, don't label the tracks.

Write out Deuteronomy 4:29 on a whiteboard, chalkboard, or poster board, or display it via PowerPoint (download from gemsgc.org).

Hold up the animal tracks one by one and ask . . . Can anyone identify what animal, bird, or reptile this track belongs to? Listen to responses. Give hints if necessary.

Say . . . Very good, girls! Tracks give us clues to what animals have been in the area. It's fun to be a detective and study track sizes, patterns, and stride lengths to identify God's creatures. Even if we never saw the animals with our own eyes, we can know they were there by the tracks they left along the way.

Message

Say . . . Sometimes we leave clues or tracks of our presence, too. Without seeing us, our parents can tell that we've been in a room when they spot our fingerprints on the windows, the mud that we tracked through the back hallway, or the banana peel we left on the table.

Did you know that God also leaves signs or clues of His presence? We don't need to visibly see God to know that He's at work in the world. We can identify His presence by the clues or tracks He leaves in our lives, our family, and the world around us.

To see God, we need to be on watch and looking for Him in the ordinary. Here are some tracks, clues, and signs that God is at work in your life!

1. We can see God when we take note of how He answers our prayers.
2. We can see God when a surprise event occurs that shows us God's love and care for us.
3. We can see God when we read His Book, the Bible.
4. We can see God when God the Holy Spirit talks to us using words or feelings – like a strong urge to go talk to someone who is having a bad day.
5. We can see God when He helps us serve others in ways we didn't think were possible.
6. We can see God when there's an unusual timing of events or circumstances that no one but God could have put in place.
7. We can see God in the beauty of the world He made.
8. We can see God when He uses other people to help us.

GEMS Counselor, have the girls read Deuteronomy 4:29 aloud with you from the whiteboard/chalkboard/poster board/PowerPoint. **Parents,** have your family read this verse aloud with you from their Bibles.

God tells us in His Book, the Bible, *But if from there you seek the LORD your God, you will find him if you look for him with all your heart and with all your soul* (Deuteronomy 4:29).

Girls of passion feed the fire by looking for God with their whole heart and soul.

Let's Pray

Dear God, we want to see You! Thank You that if we are serious about looking for the signs of Your presence in our lives, our families, and our world, we will find You. Help us to see You in the ordinary and to be quick to identify and share the signs of Your presence and love to the people around us. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Object Lesson Ten: Jesus Washing Disciples' Feet (Skit)

Bible Verses

John 13:14-15

[Jesus said,] "Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you."

Verses to Memorize

John 13:14-15

Life Lesson

People who feed the fire are true servants; they serve willingly and wholeheartedly no matter what the task.

Object Lesson

You will need a narrator, Jesus, Peter, and three disciples with speaking parts. If there are enough girls, eight more can serve as disciples who sit around the Passover table so there's a total of 12 disciples. Set the upper room with chairs, a table set with 13 plates and cups, a loaf of un-sliced bread, and a jug of grape juice. You will also need a towel, pitcher of water, and a basin/large bowl for Jesus to pour the water into.

In preparation: Write out John 13:14-15 on a whiteboard, chalkboard, or poster board, or display it via PowerPoint (download from gemsgc.org).

Say . . . We are going to do a skit to learn more about what it means to be a servant.

Jesus Washing Disciples' Feet (Skit)

Based on John 13:1-17

Narrator: In Jesus' day, people walked from place to place. The dusty, dry roads left their feet dirty and smelly. If you and I are guests in someone's home, we wipe our shoes on a mat or take them off. In Jesus' day, when you were guests in someone's home for dinner, it was customary to have your feet washed by a servant. The job of washing feet was a lowly task. Listen in on a conversation that Jesus' disciples may have had as they prepared for a festival called the Passover.

Disciple 1: *Walks into a room with a table and chairs.* Are you sure you heard Jesus right? The Passover is a really big deal and compared to some of the rich guys that have been having us over for dinner, this place is plain and ordinary.

Family Connection Time

Gather your family together giving them your full attention and energy during this special connecting time.

Your GEMS daughter experienced this entire object lesson at club. As a family, read the message portion of the object lesson together. If your children are of reading age, have them take turns reading the paragraphs.

Questions for Family Time Discussion:

1. Reread Deuteronomy 4:29. If we're serious about seeking God, will we find Him?
2. What animal tracks are easiest for your family to identify? Where is your favorite place to look for animal tracks?
3. Look at the list within the message portion of this object/lesson devotional thought of ways that we can see God. Using that list, have each person in the family answer this question: How did you see God today?
4. "How did you see God today?" is a wonderful conversation starter. Each night at dinner or bedtime ask your family, "How did you see God today?" Remember, there is no such thing as coincidences; they're all God-incidences.

Family Prayer

Father God, thank You that You are always at work and on the move in very personal ways in our lives, our family, and in this world. Help us to step into each new day wide-eyed and on alert to Your works and wonders. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Disciple 2: Jesus told us to go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water would meet us. We're to follow him and say to the owner of the house he enters, "The Teacher asks: Where is my guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?" He will show you a large upper room, furnished and ready. We are to make preparations for us there.

Disciple 3: Well, that's what we did, so this must be the place. It sure would be nice to have a servant around to wash our feet though.

Disciple 1: *Sniffs the air* ... No doubt. Your feet stink.

Disciple 3 playfully pushes Disciple 1.

Disciple 2: Quit joking around you guys. Let's make sure everything is prepared for the Passover meal.

The three disciples check out the table to make sure it's ready. Peter enters.

Disciples 1, 2, 3: Hi, Peter!

Peter: Hi, guys. So this is the place, huh? Peter looks around. It'll work, but it sure would be nice if there were a servant around here to wash our feet.

Disciple 1: *Sniffs the air* ... No doubt. Your feet stink.

Peter: What?!?

Narrator: Jesus then entered the upper room with the remaining disciples and they sat and ate the Passover meal.

Jesus enters the room with the remaining eight disciples (if enough girls are available). They all sit at the table. Jesus pours grape juice into each cup and breaks a piece of bread off of the loaf for each disciple while the Narrator reads.

Jesus told the disciples that they had no idea how much He was looking forward to eating this Passover meal with them before His time of suffering. He took the cup and the bread and gave thanks to God for it. He said that they should eat it in His memory. The bread represents Jesus' body and the cup represents Jesus' blood. He gave them to us when He died on the cross to take the punishment for our sins.

Instead of being thankful that Jesus was willing to suffer for the sake of the world's wrongdoing, the disciples started to fight amongst themselves about who was the greatest. Jesus heard their bickering and said, "Who would you rather be: the one who eats the dinner or the one who serves the dinner? You'd rather eat and be served, right? But I've taken my place among you as the one who serves."

Jesus then stands up, wraps a towel around His waist, pours water into a basin, and washes feet. Have Jesus wash Peter's feet while the Narrator continues to read.

Narrator: Jesus got up from the table, took off His outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around His waist. After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash His disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around Him.

Peter: Jesus, are you going to wash my feet?

Jesus: Peter, you do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand.

Peter: No, Jesus! You shall never wash my feet! Not ever!

Jesus: Peter, if I don't wash you, you can't be part of what I'm doing.

Jesus continues to wash feet while the Narrator reads.

Narrator: After Jesus washed everyone's feet He said, "Do you understand what I have done to you? You address me as 'Teacher' and 'Master', and rightly so. That is what I am. So if I, the Master and Teacher washed your feet, you must now wash each other's feet. I've set a pattern for you. What I've done, you must do."
Peter stands.

Peter: Instead of looking for servants to wash our feet or to do things for us, we should be on the look out for people that we can help.

Disciple 1 stands.

Disciple 1: Instead of telling people they stink, we should encourage them with words that bring hope and healing.

Jesus stands.

Jesus: Always follow my example by humbly serving others no matter how lowly the task.

GEMS Counselor, have the girls read John 13:14-15 aloud with you from the white-board/chalkboard/poster board/PowerPoint. **Parents,** have your family read these verses aloud with you from their Bibles.

God tells us in His Book, the Bible, [Jesus said,] "Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you" (John 13:14-15).

Girls of passion feed the fire in their hearts by being true servants who imitate Jesus' example of selfless service.

Let's Pray

Dear Jesus, thank You for the pattern of service that You perfectly set for us to follow. Please forgive us when we'd rather be served than serve others. Make us wholeheartedly willing to wash feet or to do whatever other task You need us to do today. In Your name, Amen.

Object Lesson Eleven: True Service

Bible Verse

2 Corinthians 9:12

This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God.

Verse to Memorize

2 Corinthians 9:12

Life Lesson

People who feed the fire want to be true servants.

Object Lesson

You will need a plastic flower in a vase that contains water and a real flower (as similar to the plastic flower as possible) in a similar-size vase that contains water.

In preparation: Write out 2 Corinthians 9:12 on a whiteboard, chalkboard, or poster board, or display it via PowerPoint (download from gemsgc.org).

Ask two volunteers to come forward. Give each girl a vase that contains a flower. Say . . . Would the two of you agree that these flowers are both pretty? Listen to responses. Say . . . Although they look similar, are in similar sized vases, and are both in water, there's something very different about these two flowers. What's the difference? Listen to responses. Say . . . That's exactly right. One of the flowers is real and the other flower is not. The significant difference between real and fake flowers is life!

In God's eyes there is also a big difference between girls who serve others with a heart that is filled with a love for Him, and girls who serve others out of false motives.

Thank the volunteers and place the flowers on opposite ends of the table in front of the group. When you read the paragraphs about true and real service, stand near the real flower. When you read about fake service, stand near the plastic flower.

Message

Say . . . Real service that pleases God is only possible when we have a relationship with Him. True service is willing to do large tasks like cleaning up after dinner when it's not your turn as well as small stuff like picking up a candy wrapper that someone else threw on the sidewalk. True servants don't care if anyone notices the things they do. They serve because they are so thankful for who God is and what He has done for them. They don't care if they get thanked.

Family Connection Time

Gather your family together in the kitchen for Family Connection Time. Assign each person to one or more parts in the skit, depending on how many people are of reading-age in your family.

Your GEMS daughter experienced this entire object lesson at club. As a family, read the skit and message portion of the object lesson together.

Questions for Family Time Discussion:

1. Reread John 13:14-15. What did Jesus tell His disciples they must do?
2. Do you find it more difficult to serve others or to be served? Why do you think that is?
3. Jesus served others willingly and with humility. Tell about a time when you found it difficult to humble yourself and willingly serve someone.
4. List ways you could serve your family, neighbors, co-workers and/or classmates. Now choose one task that you will do together as a family to serve someone else this week.

Family Prayer

Dear Jesus, thank You for being a willing and humble servant that we can model our lives after. We admit that there are people in our lives that we don't feel like serving. Please forgive us. Soften our hearts with Your love so that we'll serve them with the love You have given us. In Your name, Amen.

GEMS Counselor, have the girls read 2 Corinthians 9:12 aloud with you from the whiteboard/chalkboard/poster board/PowerPoint. **Parents**, have your family read this verse aloud with you from their Bibles.

God tells us in His Book, the Bible, *The service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God* (2 Corinthians 9:12).

Fake service is done so people will say how great you are. Fake servants only say yes to service opportunities when they think it will result in attention or praise, and special favors like cash, candy, and an extended recess or bedtime. They're always on the lookout for what's in it for them instead of what they can do for others.

True service is just as helpful to your friends as it is to the bully on the block. True servants don't withhold service from some and lavish it on others. They freely extend love and kindness to anyone who needs a word of encouragement, a listening ear, or a helping hand.

Fake service is determined by our mood. If we feel good and upbeat, we serve. If we're sick or sad, we don't. Fake servants only serve if it doesn't take too much time or overlap with their favorite TV show. They rarely serve by themselves because they don't like to serve unless their friends will do it with them.

If you wonder if you're a fake servant or a true servant, ask yourself this question in the middle of your work: Why am I doing this? If you're doing it because you want people to see how wonderful you are, you're a fake. If you're serving because you want people to see how wonderful God is, you're the real deal. God is living in you!

Girls of passion feed the fire by serving from a heart of gratitude.

Let's Pray

Dear God, thank You for teaching us the difference between real service and fake service and how much that matters to You. Help us to serve others out of a thankful heart to You. May we serve in such a way that people see how great and wonderful You are. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Family Connection Time

Gather your family together for Bible reading time. Hugs, words of affirmation, and these special times together demonstrate to your children how precious they are to you. Tell them daily, "I love you!"

Your GEMS daughter experienced this entire object lesson at club. As a family, read the message portion of the object lesson together. If your children are of reading age, have them take turns reading the paragraphs.

Questions for Family Time Discussion

1. Reread 2 Corinthians 9:12. True service is a thank you gift to God. What are you thankful to God for?
2. Why is serving others important?
3. List two characteristics that describe a true servant. List two characteristics that describe a fake servant.
4. Tell about a time when you served someone else. What did you do? Were you a true servant or a fake servant?

Family Prayer

Lord God, thank You for this special time that our family can spend with You. Please forgive us for the times that we've been fake servants and cared more about how our actions were going to benefit us than if they would please You. Help us to be thankful people that demonstrate our gratitude through true and real service. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Object Lesson Twelve: Shaped to Serve

Bible Verse

Ephesians 2:10

For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Verse to Memorize

Ephesians 2:10

Life Lesson

People who feed the fire thank God for the way He's specially created them to serve others.

Object Lesson

You will need basic shapes from a shape-sorting toddler toy (toys that toddlers place colorful shapes into the corresponding holes) or tasty shapes like Cheerios® (or other O-shaped cereal) candy corn (or other triangle-shaped treats), Cheez-It® crackers (or other square shaped crackers), and miniature pretzels.

In preparation: Choose what items you're going to have teams sort. You'll need at least a dozen or so items for every team of six to eight girls.

Write out Ephesians 2:10 on a whiteboard, chalkboard, or poster board, or display it via PowerPoint (download from gemsgc.org).

Assign teams of six to eight girls. Distribute the same number of items to each team. At your signal the girls need to sort their items as quickly as possible. The first team to correctly sort all of her items into individual piles wins.

Message

Say... On Saturday I walked to my husband's shop to talk and found him struggling to install a new starter on his tractor. No matter what he tried he couldn't get his hand or any other tool behind the starter to screw on the bolts and secure the starter to the equipment.

"You try it," he said.

"Me?" I laughed. Inside my head I thought of all the reasons that I could never do that. I don't know anything about tractors. I've never driven one, and I certainly don't know how to fix one. What was he thinking asking me?

"I'm serious," he said. "Your hand is much smaller than mine. See if you can reach behind there and tighten those bolts with your fingers."

I tried it and it worked. My hands were shaped just right to help my husband.

Did you know that God shaped each one of you in a special way to serve Him? He didn't shape you like triangles, circles, and squares. He shaped you with strengths, abilities, and a passion to serve!

GEMS Counselor, have the girls read Ephesians 2:10 aloud with you from the whiteboard/chalkboard/poster board/PowerPoint. **Parents**, have your family read this verse aloud with you from their Bibles.

God tells us in His Book, the Bible, *For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do* (Ephesians 2:10).

God shaped each one of you in a unique and beautiful way. He's shaped some of you with ears that are such good listeners, some of you have eyes that see people who are hurting, and some of you have lips that always speak a kind word of encouragement. For others He's given hands that are strong to serve, and feet that are quick to help. He's given all of you a heart that loves Him and wants to serve others.

God loves variety, so no one in this room is shaped exactly alike. Think about the way He's shaped you to serve, and give Him thanks for your personality and abilities.

Girls of passion feed the fire by using their gifts to serve others!

Let's Pray

Dear God, thank You for the unique and special way You've shaped us to serve. Help us identify our strengths and abilities and then use those talents to zealously serve others. Thank You for the plan You have for our lives to do good works. Thank You for the ways that GEMS is preparing us for that work. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Object Lesson Thirteen: The Service of Courtesy

Bible Verses

Titus 3:1a, 2

Remind the people . . . to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and to show true humility toward all men.

Verses to Memorize

Titus 3:1a, 2

Life Lesson

People who feed the fire serve others by being loving and courteous.

Object Lesson

You will need any candy that comes in different colors: M&M's®, jellybeans, Lifesavers®, Skittles®, etc.

In preparation: Write out Titus 3:1a, 2 on a whiteboard, chalkboard, or poster board, or display it via PowerPoint (download from gemsgc.org).

On a whiteboard, chalkboard, or poster board write out the following chart. You may need to add/delete/change colors depending on what candy you use. Don't show the girls the chart until after they've picked their candy!

Candy Colors	Tell About
Yellow	Something that makes you happy
Green	Your favorite place in God's creation
Red	An embarrassing moment
Orange	Something that most people don't know about you
Black	Your favorite game
White	Anything you want to share about yourself
Blue	Your favorite hobby
Purple	What you want to be when you grow up

Family Connection Time

Gather all of your family members together for Family Connection Time. Even your preschoolers will benefit from this time in God's Word. They will enjoy spending time reading the Bible with your family and you'll be delighted by how much little children can understand about God.

Your GEMS daughter experienced this entire object lesson at club. As a family, read the message portion of the object lesson together. If your children are of reading age, have them take turns reading the paragraphs.

Questions for Family Time Discussion:

1. Reread Ephesians 2:10. What did God especially create us to do?
2. Have each family member identify two ways that God has especially shaped him or her. It may be a love for fixing things, baking, music, or being a good listener.
3. Take turns identifying one strength or talent you each see in other family members.
4. Think about your life – the way God has uniquely shaped you, and the ways other people see that, too. What could you do to use your strengths and abilities to serve someone else?

Family Prayer

Creator God, You shaped each one of us with different strengths, passions, gifts, talents, and abilities. Help us to see those good things in ourselves and in one another. Show us ways to use our unique shape to serve others in the work that You've prepared for us to do. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Divide the girls into groups of six to eight. Pass the candy bowl around and have each girl pick three pieces of candy. After girls have their candy in hand, show them the chart. They need to share with their small group whatever corresponds with the color on the chart. Encourage them to be courteous to one another. They should take turns sharing, be careful not to interrupt, and listen carefully to what's said. After they share, they may eat their candy.

Message

Say... One very important way we can keep our spiritual fervor serving the Lord is by being courteous to one another. We serve one another when we demonstrate good manners like being focused listeners, not interrupting, saying please, thank you, excuse me, and I'm sorry, opening doors for the elderly, allowing people to get in line in front of us, chewing food with our mouths closed, writing thank you notes, greeting people with a warm hello and big smile, and showing respect to authority by saying Mr. and Mrs.

Those seem like such small things, but they speak volumes about our love for God and love for people! When we're rude and impolite, people can't see Jesus in our words and actions. When we're courteous and well-mannered they experience sweetness that points to Jesus' love, kindness, and gentleness.

GEMS Counselor, have the girls read *Titus 3:1a, 2* aloud with you from the white-board/chalkboard/poster board/PowerPoint. **Parents**, have your family read these verses aloud with you from their Bibles.

God tells us in His Book, the Bible, *Remind the people... to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and to show true humility toward all men* (Titus 3:1a, 2).

Girls of passion feed the fire in their hearts by being considerate, courteous, gentle, and big-hearted. These small gestures are big gifts that demonstrate God's love.

Let's Pray

Dear God, thank You for the considerate, courteous, gentle, and bighearted love that You demonstrate to us every day. Help us to pass Your love along to everyone we meet. May our big smiles and good manners clearly point people to Jesus. Feed the fire in our hearts by helping us serve others with humility. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Family Connection Time

Gather all of your family members together for Family Connection Time. At the conclusion of each object lesson/devotional thought is a suggested family prayer. Be encouraged to also pray for family needs, and to thank God for the ways He's at work in your family.

Your GEMS daughter experienced this entire object lesson at club. As a family, read the message portion of the object lesson together. If your children are of reading age, have them take turns reading the paragraphs.

Questions for Family Time Discussion:

1. Reread Titus 3:1a, 2. How does God want us to treat one another?
2. As a family, list ten things that are considered good manners. There are a number of ideas within the message portion of this object lesson to get you started.
3. On your list of ten, rate how your family is doing from 1 (very poor) to 5 (very good). Circle the manner that your family is going to work on improving this week.
4. Writing thank you notes is a special and tangible way to demonstrate good manners and encourage others. As a family, write a thank you note to someone who has shown special kindness to your family. Have each person sign the note.

Family Prayer

Our loving and gentle God, thank You for the tender ways You care for our family and watch over us. Please help us demonstrate Your love and gentleness to the people within our family, our neighborhood, our school, and our workplaces. Forgive us when we are rude and short with one another. We want to mimic Your love and kindness to all people. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Object Lesson Fourteen: Nail Your Colors to the Mast

Bible Verse

1 Corinthians 16:13 (TNIV)

Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong.

Verse to Memorize

1 Corinthians 16:13 (TNIV)

Life Lesson

People who feed the fire are passionate and courageous in standing firm in their love and commitment to Jesus.

Object Lesson

You will need two volunteers.

In preparation: Write out 1 Corinthians 16:13 (TNIV) on a whiteboard, chalkboard, or poster board, or display it via PowerPoint (download from gemsgc.org).

Invite one volunteer to come forward. Ask... When you stand on one foot, which foot is easiest for you to balance on? *Listen to response. Say...* That's great. I'd like you to stand on that foot for as long as you're able.

Invite another volunteer to come forward. Say... I'd like you to gently push _____ (volunteer #1). Be gentle, but go ahead and give her a push.

Volunteer 1 will easily fall. Say... Let's do this again, but a little differently. _____ (volunteer #1), I'd like you to stand on both feet, and spread them at least shoulder distance apart so you have a firm footing. _____ (volunteer #2), I'd like you to gently push _____ (volunteer #1). Be as gentle as you were last time, and we'll see what happens.

Volunteer 1 will stand firm. Thank the volunteers. If there's time allow all the girls to take turns doing that with partners.

Great job, girls! When we plant our feet and get a firm footing, we're able to stand firm. *Invite the girls to take their seats and listen quietly to the message.*

Message

Say... Have you ever heard the term, "Nail your colors to the mast"? It's a term used by people in the Navy who are in battle. When a ship was sailing into battle, the sailors used a hammer and nails to nail their country's flag – its colors – to the mast. By nailing their colors to the mast it kept the flag from being easily removed

and replaced with a white flag that meant surrender. When sailors nailed their colors to the mast it meant no surrender. They were not going to back down – they were not going to give up. The captain and the crew are ready to fight until the ship goes down.

As Jesus' followers, we must nail our colors to the mast. We must plant our feet in a passionate love for Jesus and stand firm in our obedience to God. When we're tempted to do wrong, our stance should be no surrender! No compromise!

At GEMS Club we nail our colors to the mast and make it clear that this is a place where people love Jesus. We stand firm by praying and reading the Bible, and are courageous in talking and singing about God's love.

Whenever you're outside of club, I challenge you to do the same. Whether you're with other Jesus' followers or kids who don't know who God is, nail your colors to the mast! Make it clear that you love Jesus and that you'll only talk and act in ways that please Him.

That might not always be easy. There may be people who think you're strange or call you names. But, God will help you overcome your fears and intimidation. He will give you the strength and the courage to stand firm.

GEMS Counselor, have the girls read 1 Corinthians 16:13 (TNIV) aloud with you from the whiteboard/chalkboard/poster board/PowerPoint. **Parents**, have your family read this verse aloud with you from their Bibles.

God tells us in His Book, the Bible, *Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong* (1 Corinthians 16:13, TNIV).

When we nail our colors to the mast we let everyone know that we love Jesus and we're going to passionately and zealously live for Him no matter what.

Girls of passion feed the fire in their heart by standing firm and being courageous and strong in living for Jesus.

Let's Pray

Dear God, thank You for providing exactly what we need to nail our colors to the mast and stand firm in our love for You. Please forgive us when we get weak-kneed and nervous about letting other people know that we love You. Give us strength and courage to live for Jesus at all times and in all places. In His name, Amen.

Object Lesson Fifteen: Serve The Hurting

Bible Verse

Psalms 147:3

He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.

Verse to Memorize

Psalms 147:3

Life Lesson

People who feed the fire serve hurting people through their presence and prayers.

Object Lesson

You will need a roll of toilet paper and masking tape for every six girls.

In preparation: Write out Psalm 147:3 on a whiteboard, chalkboard, or poster board, or display it via PowerPoint (download from gemsgc.org).

To begin, group the girls into teams of six, and give each team a roll of toilet paper and masking tape. Each team must choose one model to be wrapped in toilet paper. Explain that they have seven minutes to wrap up their model in toilet paper. If the paper breaks, they need to tape it together. At the end of seven minutes (or less if a team beats that time!), you'll see which team had the best and most complete wrapping job. Give the signal to begin!

After teams are finished, celebrate their accomplishments, and invite the girls to take their seats and listen quietly to the message.

Message

Say... Doctors use casts to bind up broken bones, and they use gauze and bandages to bind up wounds. If you've ever been sick or injured you know the pain that comes from being hurt, and you know the calming, peaceful touch of having someone take care of you. Loving caregivers bind up your physical wounds and are an important part of your healing.

People have physical wounds like broken arms, skinned knees, and cuts and bruises. People also have spiritual and emotional wounds like being sad because their parents are sick or getting divorced, or the hurt that comes when you feel left out, misunderstood, or when people gossip about you or say mean things to you. These wounds can hurt more than bumps and bruises!

God is the one that heals physical, emotional, and spiritual wounds. He binds them up!

Family Connection Time

Gather your family together for Family Connection Time. Do your best to try to incorporate everyone by having them read, pray, ask or answer questions, or even turn pages. Be intentional in having everyone be active and attentive in this special time in God's Word.

Your GEMS daughter experienced this entire object lesson at club. As a family, read the message portion of the object lesson together. If your children are of reading age, have them take turns reading the paragraphs.

Questions for Family Time Discussion

1. Reread 1 Corinthians 16:13 (TNIV). What four commands are contained in this short verse?
2. As a family, do people know where you stand in your faith (or doubt) about God?
3. Tell about a time that people asked you what you believed about God. What did you say? Were you bold or timid in sharing?
4. If you love Jesus, how can you nail your colors to the mast and make it clear to your neighbors, coworkers, and/or classmates that you are Jesus followers?

Family Prayer

Dear Jesus, You tell us in Your Word that once we say yes to a relationship with You we must not look back or make excuses for not serving You. If we're excuse-makers, we're not fit for service in Your Kingdom. Help us through God's Word and Spirit to stand firm and be courageous and strong in our faith today and always. In Your name, Amen.

GEMS Counselor, have the girls read Psalm 147:3 aloud with you from the white-board/chalkboard/poster board/PowerPoint. **Parents** have your family read this verse aloud with you from their Bibles.

God tells us in His Book, the Bible, *He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds* (Psalm 147:3).

Two ways that God heals the heartbroken and bandages their wounds is through our prayers and our presence. When you see someone who is hurting, you serve him by praying for him. Even if you don't know all the details, we can simply lift her to Jesus by praying, "Dear Jesus, You know my friend's hurt more than I do. Please comfort my friend. Please give her all that she needs today."

Another way we can serve the brokenhearted is through our presence. Sometimes when we know people are hurting we stay away because we don't know what to do or what to say. Girls, please don't do that. Be zealous in your service by going to them. Don't worry about what to say. You probably don't need to say anything at all. Sit by them, give them a hug, and simply tell them that you love them and are praying for them. And if they want to talk, be a good listener.

Girls of passion feed the fire by serving the hurting through their prayers and presence. Can you think of someone who is hurting today? Before we pray, please cup your hands together and picture that person in your hands. You're going to lift this person to Jesus right now in prayer.

Let's Pray

Dear Jesus, today we are all thinking of people who are hurting. We've pictured these people in our minds and are lifting them to You in prayer. Please heal their broken hearts and bandage their wounds. Give us wisdom, love, and gentleness to be present in their lives. Show us more and more how to serve the hurting people around us. In Your name, Amen.

Family Connection Time

Gather your family together for Family Connection Time. Keeping this time together as a family can be less challenging if you work it into the already established routine in your family. Keep it short and simple. If the kids are dragging their feet to the family room, check your own attitude. Are you approaching this as a chore or entering into it with eagerness and joy? Your attitude is contagious to your kids!

Your GEMS daughter experienced this entire object lesson at club. As a family, read the message portion of the object lesson together. If your children are of reading age, have them take turns reading the paragraphs.

Questions for Family Time Discussion:

1. Reread Psalm 147:3. What does God do for the hurting?
2. List the people that you know who are hurting physically, spiritually, or emotionally.
3. Choose one or more of these people that your family can encourage through your presence. What will you do?
4. Prayer is also an important part of service. Take turns praying sentence prayers for the people that you listed. It can be very basic and simple. Dear Jesus, please heal _____. Please encourage _____. Please bind up _____.

Family Prayer

Dear God, thank You that You heal the brokenhearted and bind up their wounds. Today our family has talked about people that need physical, spiritual, and emotional healing. Please encourage them through Your Spirit, Your Word, and through us. Help us to serve others by being present in their difficulties. Please also heal and bind up our family's hurts. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Object Lesson Sixteen: Service That Stoops

Bible Verses

Philippians 2:7-8

[Jesus] made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death – even death on a cross!

Verses to Memorize

Philippians 2:7-8

Life Lesson

People who feed the fire stoop and serve; they even do tasks they don't feel like doing.

Object Lesson

You will need a limbo stick (or broom stick!) and peppy music, or the actual "Limbo Rock" song by Billy Strange and Jon Sheldon. (Ev-'ry lim-bo boy and girl, all a-round the lim-bo world, gon-na do the lim-bo rock, all a-round the lim-bo block...)

In preparation: Write out Philippians 2:7-8 on a whiteboard, chalkboard, or poster board, or display it via PowerPoint (download from gemsgc.org).

Begin by playing the limbo with the girls. The limbo is a West Indian dance that involves bending the body backward from the knees and moving under a horizontal bar or rope that is put into progressively lower positions. Ask two counselors to hold a limbo pole/broomstick at a level that every girl will be able to arch their back and walk under. Play the music and keep having the counselors move the pole down at increments until you have a limbo winner.

Celebrate the winner, and invite the girls to take their seats and listen quietly to the message.

Message

Say... Doing the limbo involves bending your body backward from the knees. Serving humbly involves bending the body forward to your knees. Service that stoops means we're willing to zealously and wholeheartedly serve others no matter what the task.

That's the way Jesus humbly served the disciples when He washed their feet. He stooped down and was willing to do what no one else in the room was willing to do: He washed His disciples' filthy feet (John 13:1-17).

Have you ever been asked to serve in a way that you didn't want to serve? Maybe your mom asked you to clean up the mess in the family room, and you didn't make that mess! Maybe your teacher asked you to miss part of your noon hour to read to a classmate, and you wanted to go play with your friends instead. Or maybe you were in the middle of a good book or a game, and your dad asked you to take out the garbage when it was your sister's turn. You definitely didn't feel like doing that!

When those things happen, do you stoop to your knees and cheerfully serve or do you stand to your feet and say, "No way!"

Anne Graham Lotz writes in her book, *My Heart's Cry – Longing for More of Jesus*, "How repulsive and prideful to think anything – any job, any person, any position, any service, any task, any place – is beneath you and me when Jesus, Lord of glory, Creator of the universe, left heaven's throne and took upon Himself the form of a servant!"

GEMS Counselor, have the girls read *Philippians 2:7-8* aloud with you from the whiteboard/chalkboard/poster board/PowerPoint. **Parents**, have your family read these verses aloud with you from their Bibles.

God tells us in His Book, the Bible, *[Jesus] made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death – even death on a cross* (Philippians 2:7-8)!

Jesus was willing to stoop and humbly serve us. His love was so deep for us that He was willing to do any task – including dying on the cross for you and me.

Girls of passion feed the fire by cheerfully and willingly stooping to serve others – no matter what the task is.

Let's Pray

Dear Jesus, You willingly left Heaven to come to earth as a servant of all. Thank You for living a selfless, obedient life and then dying a selfless, obedient death. Help us to follow Your example in the way we serve others. In Your name, Amen.

Object Lesson Seventeen: Service of Listening

Bible Verse

James 1:19 (TNIV)

My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.

Verse to Memorize

James 1:19 (TNIV)

Life Lesson

People who feed the fire serve others by listening well.

Object Lesson

You will need two cotton balls for every girl and a watch or timer.

In preparation: Write out James 1:19 (TNIV) on a whiteboard, chalkboard, or poster board, or display it via PowerPoint (download from gemsgc.org).

Give each girl two cotton balls and these instructions . . .

1. Choose a partner that is sitting next to you.
2. For three minutes (I'll give the start and stop signal), both of you should talk to each other **at the same time** about your favorite topic. It might be swimming, scrapbooking, shopping, or something else.
3. Put a cotton ball in each ear and then I'll give the signal to begin.

After the stop signal is given, ask the girls to pull the cotton balls out of their ears. Ask . . . How did it feel when you were talking to your partner and she wasn't listening because she was talking? Listen to responses. When we talk, we want people to listen to us, don't we? Let's think about the importance of listening together.

Message

Say . . . One of the ways we can serve one another is by listening to each other. Sometimes, even when we hear what's being said we fail to really listen.

Jesus was an attentive listener. He was never too busy or too distracted to listen. When people wanted His attention, He was patient instead of irritable. He loved people by listening to them and noticing their needs.

Jesus noticed when a woman who had been bleeding for twelve years touched Him in the middle of a crowd (Mark 5:24-34). He listened to her story.

Family Connection Time

Gather your family together for Family Connection Time. One of the ways to keep this time special, encouraging, and fun, is to tie it to a sweet treat or healthy snack after your study. Maybe it's going out for ice cream or blending healthy smoothies. Whatever snack tradition you choose, reserve it only for this special night together to keep it extra special.

Your GEMS daughter experienced this entire object lesson at club. As a family, read the message portion of the object lesson together. If your children are of reading age, have them take turns reading the paragraphs.

Questions for Family Time Discussion:

1. Reread Philippians 2:7-8. How does Jesus' example of stooping to serve challenge our natural tendency to be self-centered?
2. Talk about a time that you were asked to serve and you didn't feel like it. How did you respond? Did you grumble and complain or were you willing and cheerful?
3. Is there a need in your family or your neighborhood that no one wants to do because it's too unpleasant, difficult, or feels "beneath you?" Identify the need and talk about how your family could stoop to serve in this way.
4. Another way to serve others is to clear up petty squabbles by stooping and saying, "I'm sorry." Can you think of someone that you have offended or hurt in your family, at school, or at work? Identify the person and stoop and say you're sorry as soon as possible. There's no time like the present if that person is in the room!

Family Prayer

Dear Jesus, thank You for humbly serving out of Your love for us. We are grateful. Forgive us when we grumble instead of serve, and complain instead of willingly helping others. Teach us to feed the fire by humbly serving others no matter what the task. In Your name, Amen.

Family Connection Time

Invite your family to join you in a comfy place in your home or outside, if possible. Family Connection Time provides space to celebrate God's blessings to your family, to express your fears and/or challenges, and to strengthen family relationships. Work hard to keep things like television, sports, meetings, busyness, and lack of discipline from keeping your family from this special time.

Your GEMS daughter experienced this entire object lesson at club. As a family, read the message portion of the object lesson together. If your children are of reading age, have them take turns reading the paragraphs.

Questions for Family Time Discussion:

1. Reread James 1:19. What should we be quick to do and slow to do? Does that describe you?
2. As a family, choose one person to initiate a conversation by telling what he or she did today. The rest of the family must speak only when necessary, not bringing up any of their own ideas. Try this for two minutes per person.
3. Are you a good listener? Be honest with yourself as you think through these questions:
 - a. Do you frequently change the subject when it's your turn to talk?
 - b. Do you interrupt someone if you have something you want to say?
 - c. When someone tells you about a problem, do you jump to a solution when they haven't asked for your input?
 - d. In your conversations, do you usually talk about yourself?
4. Think about someone who is shy or gets overlooked at work or school. Initiate a conversation with this person as soon as you're able, and listen well.

Family Prayer

Dear heavenly Father, we confess that too often we're quick to speak and slow to listen. Please forgive us. Help us to serve one another by opening our ears and hearts to people's joys and needs. Continue to teach us through Your Word and Spirit how to be good listeners. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Jesus noticed Zacchaeus high up in the tree (Luke 19:1-10). He went to Zacchaeus' house to listen to him and help him.

Jesus noticed children and babies (Luke 18:15-17). He touched, blessed, and listened to them.

Jesus wants us to notice people and listen to them, too. It's a way of demonstrating love for Him and love for others.

GEMS Counselor, have the girls read James 1:19 (TNIV) aloud with you from the whiteboard/chalkboard/poster board/PowerPoint. **Parents**, have your family read this verse aloud with you from their Bibles.

God tells us in His Book, the Bible, *My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry* (James 1:19, TNIV).

In order to listen like Jesus, we must listen well. We cannot truly listen when we're talking or when there's chatter in our head wondering what we're going to say next or how what someone else is saying will impact us.

Learn to listen with your heart. Jesus didn't merely listen to people out of politeness; He listened with His heart. Have a sincere, genuine concern for your friends, classmates, and family. Work hard at breaking bad habits like interrupting or changing the subject when it's your turn to talk. Instead, ask questions, pay attention, and keep your lips zipped and your ears open.

Girls of passion feed the fire by serving others through their attentive listening.

Let's Pray

Dear Jesus, thank You for what You teach us about noticing others and really listening to them. Too often we're more concerned about being heard, than hearing others. Please forgive us. Help us to be quick to listen and slow to speak. In Your name, Amen.

Object Lesson Eighteen: Compelling Love

Bible Verses

2 Corinthians 5:14-15

For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

Verses to Memorize

2 Corinthians 5:14-15

Life Lesson

People who feed the fire are compelled by Jesus' love to live for Him instead of for themselves.

Object Lesson

You'll need at least one bottle of bubbles with a bubble wand. If possible, provide bubbles and bubble wands for all the girls.

In preparation: Write out 2 Corinthians 5:14-15 on a whiteboard, chalkboard, or poster board, or display it via PowerPoint (download from gemsgc.org).

If there's enough bubbles and bubble wands for all the girls, go outside and blow bubbles for 5-7 minutes.

After girls are finished blowing bubbles, ask everyone to sit and listen quietly. Blow a bubble in the air and say . . . What compels the bubble mixture to move from the wand into the air? Listen to responses. That's exactly right. My breath moved or compelled the bubble mixture into the air. Frisbees and balls are compelled into the air with an arm toss, and kites are compelled to fly by the wind.

Message

Say . . . As Jesus followers, our service to others should be compelled by God's love. The things we do, say, and think should be compelled or urged on by His love.

GEMS Counselor, have the girls read 2 Corinthians 5:14-15 aloud with you from the whiteboard/chalkboard/poster board/PowerPoint. **Parents,** have your family read these verses aloud with you from their Bibles.

God tells us in His Book, the Bible, *For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again* (2 Corinthians 5:14-15).

It's Jesus' love that should compel us to no longer be selfish, but to live lives of love and service to others.

When Jesus and Peter were having a breakfast of fish and bread beside the Sea of Galilee, Jesus asked Peter if he loved Him. Peter said, "Yes! You know that I love You, Jesus!" Then Jesus told Him to take action. "Feed my lambs" (John 21:13-15).

Again, Jesus asked Peter, "Do you truly love me?" Peter answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus again told Him to take action, "Take care of my sheep" (John 21:16).

A third time, Jesus asked Peter, "Do you love me?" Peter answered, "Jesus, You know all things! You know that I love You!" A third time Jesus told Him to take action, "Feed my sheep" (John 21:17).

Jesus was telling Peter to let that love compel Him to love and serve the men, women, and children around Him. Jesus is also telling you and me to let our love for Him compel us to serve the people around us, too!

Girls of passion feed the fire by letting God's love compel them to zealously serve others.

Let's Pray

Heavenly Father, thank You for the lavish love that You have for each of these girls and counselors. Please let Your love compel us to wholeheartedly love and serve others. Use us to encourage, help, and teach the people around us about what it means to have a relationship with You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Family Connection Time

Gather your family together to spend time in God's Word and prayer. The greatest gift you can give your kids is to introduce them to Jesus and to help them develop a personal relationship with Him. It's our prayer that this object lessons/devotional thoughts booklet helped draw your family closer to Jesus and to one another. Although this book may be finished, don't stop the regular connecting time that it's provided for you and your family!

Your GEMS daughter experienced this entire object lesson at club. As a family, read the message portion of the object lesson together. If your children are of reading age, have them take turns reading the paragraphs.

Questions for Family Time Discussion:

1. Reread 2 Corinthians 5:14-15. What should compel us to say no to living for ourselves, and yes to living for Jesus?
2. What compels or motivates you to help others?
3. How we serve others doesn't have to be big. What's important is how we do it! Describe your attitude when you serve others?
4. If you've worked your way through all the lessons in this book as a family, have each person share their favorite memory of Family Connection Time.

Family Prayer

Dear Jesus, thank You for teaching us through Your friendship with Peter that our love for You must compel us to serve others. Thank You for a GEMS season where we learned to feed the fire at club, and here at home. Please help us to continue to grow in our love for You and our zeal to serve others. In Your name, Amen.

Devotionals/Object Lessons

FEED THE FIRE!

Scripture: Revelation 3:15-16, Romans 12:11

You will need: no supplies needed.

In preparation: lead this object lesson/devotional in a large room or outdoors where there's lots of space to move.

Divide the girls into teams of six to eight. Ask each team to stand single file behind the start line. Demonstrate apathy by the way you explain the relay. Show lack of emotion and an "I don't care" attitude. Give a big yawn and say...

We're going to begin our devotional time with a relay. The first person in line takes a hard-boiled egg and rolls it on the ground with her nose up to the cone that is directly in line with your team. *Stand about ten feet away where the line of cones should be placed, look down at the floor as if you've just realized there aren't any cones, and say...* Oh, there's a problem. I didn't feel like setting out the cones. So you'll just have to pretend that they're here. *Big yawn and stretch...* and now that I'm thinking about this relay, I didn't get around to making any hard-boiled eggs, either. I guess you'll just have to push air with your nose. Once you push your air egg to the cone and back, the next person in your team will take the air egg and push it with her nose to the cone and back. Just keep doing it until everyone has a turn, OK?

Sit on a chair by the "cone line" and as if you're bored out of your mind, say... On your mark, get set, whatever. I mean go.

When girls get to the cones tell them that they didn't go all the way around the cone, or that they didn't pass the air egg off properly to their teammate. Make some teams start over which will cause them to be frustrated and say, "No fair!" When the relay is complete, have the girls take their seats, and resume your normal energetic, positive nature!

Say... How did you feel about this relay? *Listen to responses.* How did you feel about my lack of preparation and my attitude? *Listen to responses.*

Girls, there's a word that describes my total disregard to giving my best to preparing for this relay and to leading you well. It's called apathy. According to the dictionary, apathy is a lack of interest or concern, especially regarding matters of general importance or appeal; indifference; lack of emotion or feeling; impassiveness. In other words apathy says, "I don't care." Apathy lacks heart.

In God's Book, the Bible, God describes apathy as being lukewarm. Listen to what God says about being lukewarm. It's in the book of Revelation, chapter 3, verses 15-16, *I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are*

lukewarm – neither hot nor cold – I am about to spit you out of my mouth. God clearly tells us that being lukewarm or apathetic makes Him sick.

The opposite of apathy is passion! Passion is an intense, strong emotion that shows a keen interest in a particular subject or activity. Passion says, "I care." Passion has a very, very big heart.

In God's Book, the Bible, God describes passion as being zealous. Listen to what God says about being passionate. It's in the book of Romans, chapter 12, verse 11, *Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.* Passionate hearts are in love with God and eager to serve others. Their hearts are on fire for God!

Throughout this GEMS season we're going to be studying the verses that we just read and focusing on the theme, *Feed the Fire!* Girls, many people in our world are apathetic. They don't love God as they should and they really don't care about the things He wants them to do or the people He wants them to serve. They just don't care. And it's important to see and understand that sometimes those apathetic people are you and me.

God wants us to feed the fire in our hearts! He wants us to love Him and care about others – to care so much that we are eager to wholeheartedly serve them! And one of the ways that He can feed that fire is right here at GEMS when we pray together, meet together, sing together, play together, and study the Bible together. I'm so glad you're here tonight (today). Will you commit to eagerly giving your best to our time together this season? Let's pray together.

Prayer: Father God, thank You for a new GEMS season and each girl here tonight (today). Please teach us through Your Word and Spirit to say no to apathy, and yes to zealous, passionate living for You. Help us to love You with all our hearts and to seek to zealously and wholeheartedly serve You by serving others. It's because of Jesus that we pray, Amen.

HOT, COLD, OR LUKEWARM?

Scripture: Revelation 3:15-16

You will need: hot bubbly water in a container large enough to soak your feet in, a towel, water glass, a pitcher filled with cold water and ice cubes, and a pail of lukewarm scum water from a pond or ditch.

In preparation: place the water options: hot, cold, and lukewarm on a table in front of the girls.

Ask for three volunteers to come forward.

Volunteer #1: *Place the hot sudsy water on the floor and treat her to a warm foot washing. As you're drying her feet ask...* How did that feel? *Listen to response.* In God's Book, the Bible, we learn about the city of Hierapolis. This city

had hot, spa-like waters that were used for medicinal purposes. Can you picture the girls from that city putting their feet in those wonderful spa-like waters? Their city's waters were healing!

Volunteer #2: *Pour this volunteer an ice-cold glass of water. Ask . . . How does that taste? Listen to response. When does cold water taste especially good? Listen to response.* In God's Book, the Bible, we also learn about the city of Colosse. Colosse was known for its cold and pure drinking water. Can you picture the girls from that city taking a long drink from pure waters that had to be much better than any bottled water you can buy at a grocery store? Their city's waters were thirsty-quenching!

Volunteer #3: *Show the volunteer and the group the pail of lukewarm scum water. Say . . . I'm going to give you a choice. Would you rather have me wash your feet in this water or would you rather drink it? Your choice! Listen to response, but don't let her chose either one!* I found this lukewarm scum water in (*location*). It's not good for soaking in or drinking! In God's Book, the Bible, we also learn about the city of Laodicea. Laodicea was known for its lukewarm waters that were considered nauseous and undrinkable. Can you picture the girls from that city pulling up their noses with disgust at their water and being sad that they couldn't bathe in it or drink it? Their city's waters were useless!

Thank volunteers and dismiss them to their seats.

In the book of Revelation, chapter 3, verses 15-16, God said this to the people of Laodicea: *I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm – neither hot nor cold – I am about to spit you out of my mouth.*

God is telling us that He sees and evaluates our deeds. He sees the way you and I greet our family in the morning, He sees the way you treat the girl you don't see eye to eye with at school, He sees the amount of effort you put into your schoolwork, and He sees what we do in our spare time. He sees all of it, and He measures each deed as hot, cold, or lukewarm.

Like sudsy waters, hot is good. Like an icy drink, cold is good. And like scum water, lukewarm is useless, ineffective, and makes God sick.

Close your eyes and think about the things that you've done and said in the last 24 hours. If you see good things that are like hot and cold waters, wonderful. Keep doing those things, plus more. That pleases God! But if you see things that are wrong, it's time to make a change. Let's pray together right now and ask for God's help.

Prayer: Father God, thank You for showing us the truth about being hot, cold, or lukewarm. It's our hearts desire to do good and to show love to You by loving others. Show us the changes that need to be made in our lives, and then help us to make those changes. Thank You that You will help us do that. In Your Son Jesus' name, Amen.

ZEALOUS SERVICE

Scripture: Romans 12:11

You will need: no supplies needed.

In preparation: lead this object lesson/devotional in a large room or outdoors where there's lots of space to move.

Ask all of the girls to stand. Say . . . I'm going to give you some words and phrases to act out. I know all of you are wonderful actresses, so put your all into this, OK?

- Walk lethargically.
- Greet one another with enthusiasm.
- Pretend to eat breakfast in slow motion.
- Run with fervor.
- Crawl sluggishly.
- Jump with zeal.
- Sit down with eagerness.

Great job, girls! Did you notice that you were doing things that were opposite of one another? Lethargy, slow-moving, and sluggish behaviors are all low energy, slow-moving actions. Enthusiasm, fervor, eagerness, and zeal are all high-energy actions! These are things God wants to see in our lives. Before you think, I can do that! I'm a fast runner, and I can eat pizza quicker than anyone I know, slow down! Let's stop and really think about the things God wants us to be eager and zealous about.

One of the places we unpack God's Word on zeal in is the book of Romans, chapter 12, verse 11. It reads, *Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.*

God wants us to be zealous, eager, enthusiastic, and passionate about loving and serving Him. Some of you may be wondering how we can serve a God that we cannot see? How exactly does that work? God's Son Jesus tells us in the book of Matthew, chapter 25, that if we feed people who are hungry, and give a drink to those who are thirsty, and give clothes to those who need them, it's as if we did it for Jesus Himself. Every time we smile at a stranger, visit someone who is sick, or befriend someone who is lonely, we're really serving God!

Have you ever watched a pot of boiling water? Does the water lie motionless when it's boiling? *Listen to responses.* You're right. It's on the move! Figuratively, spiritual fervor means that something is boiling or seething. To be passionate about God and zealous to serve others is to have a heart that is boiling, seething, and fanned into a huge flame that is on the move for God. Does that describe the way you love God and serve others? Let's pray.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, please fan into flame hearts that love You and desire to serve others. Where our service is lethargic, replace it with a zeal and eagerness to help others. If our love for You is lacking, please ignite passionate, whole-hearted love that mirrors the passionate whole-hearted love You have for us. In Jesus' name, Amen.

PRAY CONSTANTLY

Scripture: Matthew 7:7-11

You will need: pizza box, pizza coupons, or pizza cut into small squares so everyone can have a taste!

Hold a pizza box in the air and say... We're going to take a pizza survey.

Please stand if you love pizza. *After their response, ask them to sit again.*

Please stand if cheese pizza is your favorite. *After their response, ask them to sit again.*

Please stand if you like pineapple on your pizza. *After their response, ask them to sit again.*

Please stand if pepperoni pizza is your favorite. *After their response, ask them to sit again.*

Please stand if you love your pizza loaded down with meats and vegetables. *After their response, ask them to sit again.*

Please stand if all this talk about pizza is making you very, very hungry! *After their response, ask them to sit again.*

Prayer is talking and speaking to God, and when we pray it feeds the fire in our hearts because it develops a deeper relationship between God and us. God wants us to pray anytime, anywhere, and about anything.

Sometimes prayer can be like ordering pizza. When you order pizza, you get very specific about what you want on that pizza, and God tells us to get very specific in our prayers, too. In the book of Matthew, chapter 7, verses 7-8, Jesus says to us, *Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.* If there's a need in your life, God says: Ask Me to meet that need!

And sometimes prayer is very, very different than ordering pizza. The pizza delivery person will give you whatever you order, but God won't give us everything we ask for. Instead He gives us what is good and best for us – the things He knows we need most. Listen to the next three verses in Matthew 7. Jesus says, *"Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are*

evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in Heaven give good gifts to those who ask him" (Matthew 7:9-11)!

What shape is a pizza? *Listen to responses.* That's right. Most pizzas are round. Have you ever heard someone say that they never get around to praying? Girls, please don't let that be true of you! The greatest reason for talking and listening to God is not, I repeat **is not**, to see what we can get from God. The most glorious and wonderful gift in prayer is that it develops a deeper relationship between God and us.

Let's stand in a circle as a reminder that we are going to get around to praying all the time, to feed our fire! Join hands as we pray.

Prayer: Thank You, heavenly Father, that You love to hear our prayers. You tell us to come to You and ask, and then You give the promise that You will answer with very good gifts. Help us to get around to praying to You all the time, anywhere, about anything. Use it to develop a deeper love for You and to feed the fire in our hearts. In Jesus' name, Amen.

STUDY GOD'S WORD

Scripture: John 17:17

You will need: fairy-tale book and a Bible.

Hold up a fairy-tale book and ask... What are some of your favorite fairy tales? Responses may include Cinderella, The Three Bears, The Ugly Duckling, Three Billy Goats Gruff, etc.

Ask... Are these stories true or are they make-believe? Listen to responses. You're absolutely right. These stories are fun and fascinating, but they're not true. They're make-believe!

Hold up a Bible and ask... What are some of your favorite stories or verses in the Bible? Answers may include Daniel in the Lion's Den, Noah's Ark, Jonah and the Fish, etc.

Ask... Are these stories true or are they make-believe? Listen to responses. You're right. Although angels shutting the mouths of lions, and a grown man being swallowed by a fish for three days and three nights may sound make-believe, they are true. From the story of how God created the world in the first chapter of the Bible to Jesus coming again in the last book of the Bible, each and every word of the Bible is true.

In the book of John chapter 17, verse 17, Jesus said, *Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.* As we read and study God's Word, it's critical to understand that it's not a book of optional suggestions. We mustn't pick and choose the parts we like or the parts we want to obey. It's not a book that merely offers a truth or two. It is The Truth – every page, every sentence, and every word!

God has given us the Bible to guide our decisions, words, thoughts, and actions. Reading God's Word, the Bible, feeds the fire in our hearts because we learn the truth about who God is, what our relationship with Him should be, and how He wants us to live.

Open the cover of the Bible very slowly, and say... Remember, as you open it, read with care. This is a book like no other. It's God's Word of truth to you and me.

Prayer: Thank You, heavenly Father, for giving us the Bible, Your Word of truth. We need Your help to understand what we're studying and to live out the things we learn. Thank You for giving us this perfect guide for how we should speak, think, and act. In Jesus, Amen.

SERVE OTHERS

Scripture: Ephesians 6:7

You will need: two sizes of ice cream scoops – one small, one as large as you have available.

Hold up the two ice cream scoops and ask... If I were serving you an ice cream sundae with all your favorite toppings, what scoop would you want me to use? Listen to responses. The larger one? I thought you might say that! And I agree with you. If you were serving me (the name of your favorite ice cream) I'd ask for the larger scoop, too.

Let's think about the service that we scoop up for one another. When your mom asks you to help her set the dinner table, do you serve up a small scoop or a large scoop of cheerful service? When we do a service project together at GEMS, do you serve up a small scoop or a large scoop of effort? When it comes to seeing and responding to those who need a helping hand, do you serve up a small scoop or a large scoop of willingness?

God gives us these instructions about service in His Word, the Bible. In the book of Ephesians, chapter 6, verse 7 it says, *Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men.* Serve wholeheartedly means to serve in large scoop quantities! Our service must be wholehearted, enthusiastic, willing, and eager!

Serving others feeds the fire in our hearts because we're doing the assignment that God gave to us. We serve God when we serve others. Real servants serve with all their hearts – no matter what the task. And they always serve it up in big scoops!

Prayer: Dear Jesus, thank You for the loving and wholehearted example You give us in God's Word in how we should serve others. Help us to serve wholeheartedly, enthusiastically, willingly, and with big scoops of eagerness. Use our efforts to demonstrate Your love for the people we serve. In Your name, Amen.

INTERACT WITH GOD'S PEOPLE

Scripture: Hebrews 10:24-25

You will need: an open space for girls to move around.

Ask all the girls to stand for the Clump Game. Say... When I give the signal, find people who have something in common with you. Please don't make your common thing what school or church you go to. Choose things like hobbies that you have in common, or sharing the same number of brothers and sisters in your family, how many times your family has moved, or sharing the same hair color. Try to choose things that you may not know about one another!

For our first round, I'm going to give you three minutes to get in groups of three people that you have things in common with. *After three minutes ask the groups what their commonality is. Do it again in groups of 5, groups of 10, and groups of 15 if there is time. When finished, ask the girls to sit down, and say...*

It's good and wonderful to interact with God's people. It builds relationships, it's fun, and we're obeying what God desires for our friendships. In God's Word, the Bible, in the book of Hebrews, chapter 10, verses 24-25 it says, *And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – all the more as you see the Day approaching.*

These verses remind us that God says it's important to get together often so we can encourage each other to be loving people and to do good deeds! Interacting with God's people feeds the fire in our hearts because we're able to encourage one another to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God.

That's one of the reasons why being at GEMS is so very, very important. God uses club night to feed the fire in our hearts. I'm glad you're here.

Prayer: Father God, thank You for this opportunity to meet together to build friendships, to have fun, and to encourage one another to do the things that You require like acting justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with You. Please help us to wisely use every opportunity that You give us to meet with Your people to spur each other on toward love and good deeds. In Jesus' name, Amen.

OPEN UP AND TALK ABOUT GOD

Scripture: Matthew 5:14-15

You will need: a dark room and battery operated candles (or real – depends on the size of your group and the ages of your girls).

Ask the girls to sit on the floor in a circle with their unlit candles in front of them. Light one large pillar candle so they can see you and then have another counselor shut the lights off. Once it's dark and you have the girls' attention, say...

As God's children, one of the things Jesus calls us to be is light to the world. Listen to Jesus' words from the book of Matthew, chapter 5, verses 14-16, *You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in Heaven.*

There's a lot of ways that you and I can light up this world so that more and more people will come to know Jesus. When you greet a stranger on the street with a warm smile, you shine light. When you give a helping hand to a mom with very young children or an elderly neighbor, you shine light. When you say a kind word to a friend or classmate like, "Wow! I love the way you did your hair!" Or, "You're really good at spelling," or "You have a way of making everyone feel special," you shine light. Anytime you show love to others it shines light.

Another way to shine light is to open up and tell others about God. When we're too shy or uncomfortable or afraid to speak up for God, it's like hiding our light under a bowl. The world remains dark and people won't hear about God's love! We must tell others – those who know Jesus and those who don't – about His love!

Let's demonstrate what our opening up and talking about God will look like to the world. *Either light the candle of the girls to your right with your pillar candle, or one by one have the girls touch the light of the girl to the right and then turn it on. Pass on the light until the entire circle is lit. Say...*

Opening up and talking about God feeds the fire in our hearts because it shows God how much we love Him. Loving God is contagious – we'll want everyone else to know about Him and His love, too. It also makes the world a much brighter place.

Prayer: Dear Jesus, You are the Light of the World. Help us to spread Your light to this dark world by opening up and talking about God. With Your help we will shine our lights to each person we meet so that God will be praised and people will know Your love. In Your name, Amen.

SEEING GOD IN THE ORDINARY

Scripture: Jeremiah 29:13

You will need: a tray full of tiny, ordinary objects like paper clips, a spoon, pencils, coins, stamps, toothbrush, remote control, etc., plus a pencil and piece of paper for each girl.

Say... *(name of counselor)* has a tray full of ordinary objects that she's going to show you. Pay close attention as she walks through and shows you the tray. When she leaves there will be a contest to see who noticed the most, OK?

Counselor slowly walks in front of all the girls and shows them the tray of goods, then walks out with the tray where the girls can't see her or the tray!

Ask... How many of you are pretty confident that you could list at least seven items from her tray? *Listen to responses.* Please number your paper from 1 to 7, but don't write anything yet. This mini contest has nothing to do with what was on her tray. I want to see what you noticed about *(name of counselor)*!

How many earrings was *(name of counselor)* wearing?

1. Was *(name of counselor)* wearing nail polish?
2. What color were *(name of counselor)* shoes?
3. Was *(name of counselor)* wearing a ring(s)?
4. Was *(name of counselor)* wearing glasses?
5. Was *(name of counselor)* wearing socks?
6. Did *(name of counselor's)* jeans/pants/skirt have back pockets?

Ask the girls how many they had correct. Applaud the winner and say...

Many of you were so focused on memorizing the things on the tray, that you noticed very little about *(name of counselor's)* earrings, shoes, or glasses. We tend to only notice what we're focused on.

The same can be true of us when it comes to noticing God in the ordinary parts of our days and lives. Although we can't see God, He's here and He's at work. If we seek to focus on Him, we'll see Him in creation, we'll take note of His work in our lives, and we'll notice Him at work in the world around us.

The good news is if we seek Him, we will find Him! Listen to this wonderful promise from God's Word, the Bible, in the book of Jeremiah chapter 29, verse 13, *You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.* If we're zealous, passionate, and wholehearted about seeking God, we'll find Him!

Noticing God in the ordinary feeds the fire in our hearts because we see Him making Himself known to us. It strengthens our relationship with Him and causes our hearts to grow more and more in love with the One who so lavishly loves you and me.

Prayer: Father God, thank You for the promise that if we seek You we will find You when we seek You with all our hearts. Please open our eyes to see You at work in the

small and significant areas of our lives. Please help us to take note of Your beautiful creation and all the ways You demonstrate Your lavish love to us. We love You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You for this reminder to live close to You and to Your people and to rely on Your Holy Spirit for power and strength to preserve. Help us to feed the fire and keep the fire burning brightly in our lives until we cross the finish line and experience eternal life with You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

KEEP THE FIRE BURNING

Scripture: Jude 20-21

You will need: tape that's used at a finish line of a race.

Ask the girls to stand in a circle. Stand in the circle with them and unroll the tape so everyone is holding it. Say...

Please extend your arms to the sky and we're going to hold this finish line tape in the air for as long as we're able! *(Optional: have a counselor time how long the girls can keep their arms in the air.)* When the girls become weary, encourage them. You can do it! Keep it up! When the first arm falls, ask everyone to sit down in the circle, keeping the tape in front of her. Say...

Great job! Did you find it easier to hold your arms up in the air at the beginning or the end? *Listen to responses.* Of course! It's much easier to hold our arms high in the air when they're not tired and weak like we were at the end.

All season long we've been talking about feeding the fire – being passionate about loving God and zealous about serving people. It's much easier to do that when we're at GEMS Club hanging out with our friends and learning God's truths in the Bible than it is after the season is complete and we go home and may forget what we've learned.

That's why it's so important to preserve! This finish line tape is a reminder of that. We need to preserve and keep feeding the fire and running God's race until we hit the finish line.

God calls us to preserve in His Word, the Bible, in the book of Jude, verses 20-21, *But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit. Keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.*

When we're tired of feeding the fire, we need to pray and God the Holy Spirit will give us power and strength to preserve. When we feel like quitting the race before we're finished, we need to keep ourselves in God's love by living close to God and His people. God wants us to encourage one another to keep the fire! You do that so well at GEMS Club. Let's remember to do that when we're not at GEMS, too.

Please hold on to the finish line tape while we pray together.