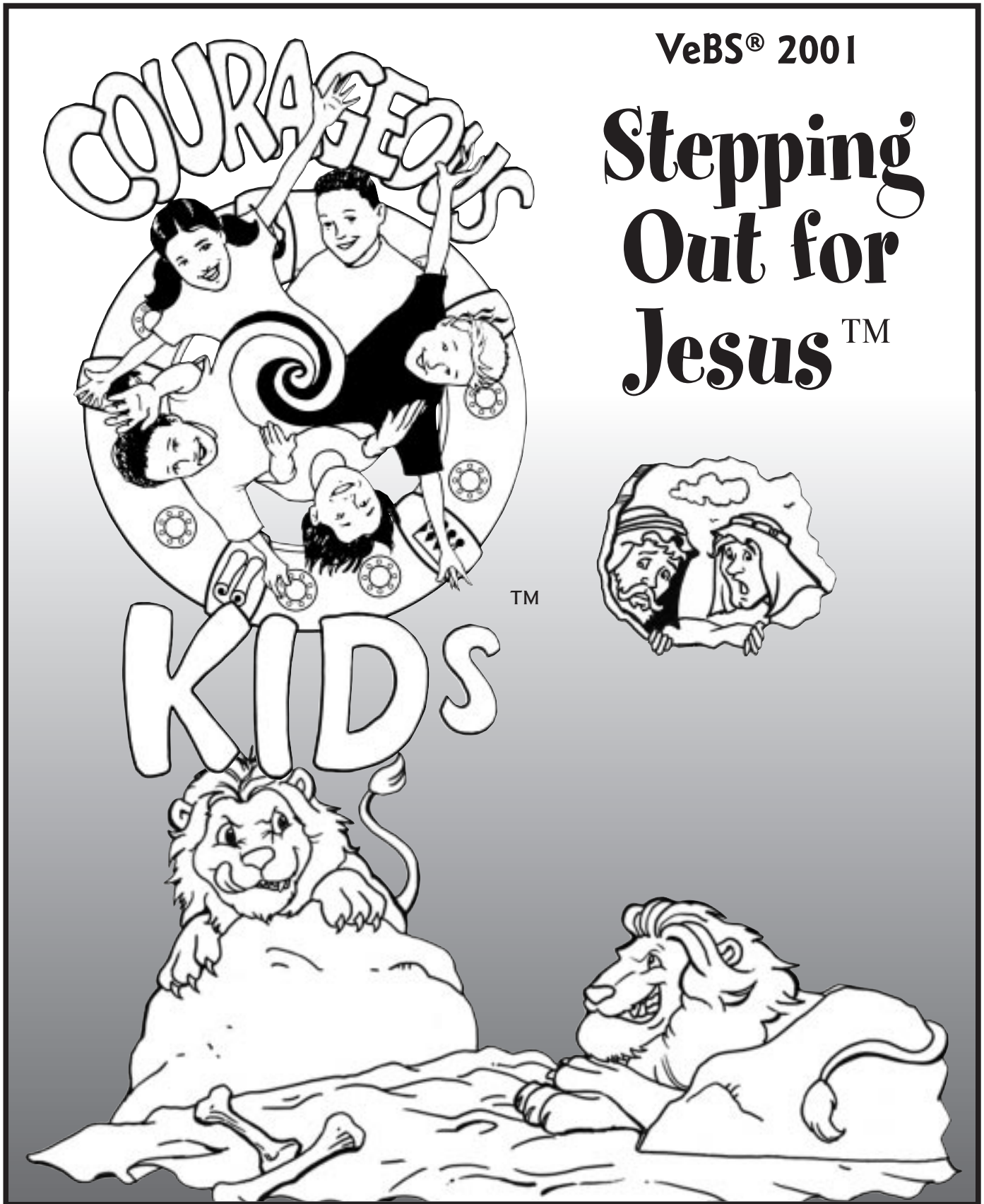


Print this coloring page. Then use your own crayons or markers to color it the way you want as a reminder of your courageous journey at VBS this year.



Courageous Kids™ Stepping Out for Jesus™ Summary

*“Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young,
but set an example for the believers
in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.”*
—1 Timothy 4:12

Here is an overview of the five site destinations that make the **Courageous Kids™ Very exciting Bible School®** program. Please note: the **VeBS®** program that your child attends for **Courageous Kids™** may have adapted the program content. Children visit the sites in random order.



Stepping into the Palace

Bible Story: Esther Steps Out in Speech

Esther risked her life by speaking out for her people, the Jews, against others who wanted to exterminate all Jews. She found courage to speak out for what was right through prayer. (Esther 4:15—6:4; 8:3-17)

Memory Verse: Matthew 12:34b,
“Out of the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks.”

Core Concept: Jesus wants us to speak out boldly for Him.

I can be an example for Jesus by: boldly speaking out for Him.

Stepping into the Nile River

Bible Story: Miriam Steps Out in Love

Miriam showed love to her baby brother Moses by watching over him and stepping out to protect him. (Exodus 1:8—2:10)

Memory Verse: John 15:12

“Love each other as I have loved you.”

Core Concept: Jesus wants us to show love to our families and others.

I can be an example for Jesus by: showing love to my family and others.





Stepping into the Lions' Den

Bible Story: Daniel Steps Out in Life

Daniel lived for God every day. Even when living for God meant Daniel would be thrown in a den of lions, he didn't stop. God sent an angel to protect Daniel in the lions' den. (Daniel 1:3-4, 17-21; 6:3-23)

Memory Verse: John 8:12

"Jesus . . . said, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.' "

Core Concept: Jesus wants us to live for Him every day.

I can be an example for Jesus by: living for Him every day.

Stepping into the Temple

Bible Story: Josiah Steps Out in Purity

Josiah became King of Israel when he was eight years old. He loved God and set about purifying the land of Israel. He destroyed idols and altars to false gods. He repaired God's temple and showed the people how to follow God's Word.

(2 Chronicles 34:1-8, 33; 2 Kings 23:1-5)

Memory Verse: Matthew 5:8,

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God."

Core Concept: Jesus wants us to keep our thoughts and actions pure.

I can be an example for Jesus by: keeping my thoughts and actions pure.



Stepping into the Battlefield

Bible Story: David Steps Out in Faith

With his faith in God, David stepped out to fight Goliath. God gave David the victory over Goliath because David had faith in God. (1 Samuel 17:1-11, 20-24, 32-50.)

Memory Verse: Matthew 17:20b

"If you have faith as small as a mustard seed . . . nothing will be impossible for you."

Core Concept: Jesus wants us to put our faith in Him.

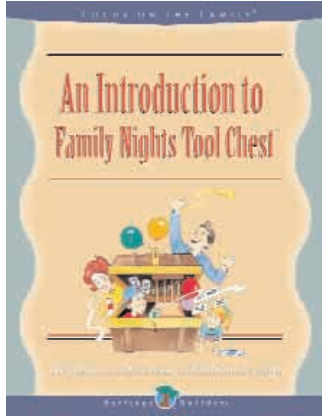
I can be an example for Jesus by: putting my faith in Him.

Family Devotional Activities

Here are additional resources that can help you and your family to continue the Courageous Journey that started at **Courageous Kids™ VeBS®**.

Stepping Out as an Example in Speech

Help your family members learn more about setting an example with their speech by leading them in the following activity adapted from *An Introduction to Family Night Tool Chest*, book 1 of the *Family Night Tool Chest* series from Heritage Builders.



The Point: We can be examples for Jesus in our speech.

Supplies: You'll need an empty jar or clear container and a handful of dimes or quarters in a bowl.

Activity: Have everyone go brush their teeth. After brushing, take turns looking at each others' tongues. Use small mirrors to let each person look at his or her own tongue.

Ask, **Did you see where good words and bad words come from by looking at your tongues?** (Of course we can't see where words come from.)

Ask, **Where do our words come from?** (They come from our minds and hearts to express our thoughts and feelings.)

Our throats and mouths make the sounds of words, the thoughts and feelings in our words come from our hearts and minds. We say what we think and feel.

Read aloud Proverbs 15:28 and Luke 6:45 and discuss:

- **What do these verses mean?** (Our words are examples of what we think and feel. Evil thoughts result in evil words; good thoughts cause good words.)
- **What can you tell about a person by the way he or she talks?** (You can learn about the person's heart. Words can show if we are kind or mean.)
- **Imagine that a blind person came to our home. By only listening to our words, what would that person be able to tell about us? Explain.**

Our words show what's in our hearts and minds. If we want our speech to set an example for Jesus, we must be sure our hearts and minds are clearly set on what is

important to God!

Read aloud Matthew 15:18 and Ephesians 4:29

- **What kinds of words help others?** (Words of praise and comfort, offers of help, etc.)
- **What kinds of words build up others?** (Words that encourage and appreciate. Positive words such as "you did a good job" and "you're special.")
- **What kinds of words help others?** (Words that teach and explain what we should do.)
- **How can we use more of these kinds of words here at our home?** (Encourage everyone to suggest ideas of times, places, and ways to speak more kindly to each other. Repeat words and phrases that family members might say to one another. Reinforce how everyone in your family can be examples of Jesus through their speech.)

Start a week-long family game to challenge everyone in your family to speak kindly and to listen for others being an example of Jesus in their speech. Put out an empty jar or clear container. Put a handful of dimes or quarters in a bowl. Explain, **Starting now and during the coming week, every time you hear someone in our family be an example of Jesus in their speech, take a coin from the bowl and put it into the jar or container. At the end of the week, we'll count the money in the jar and use it for a fun family activity.** Challenge everyone to remind each other of ways to be examples of Jesus in their speech.

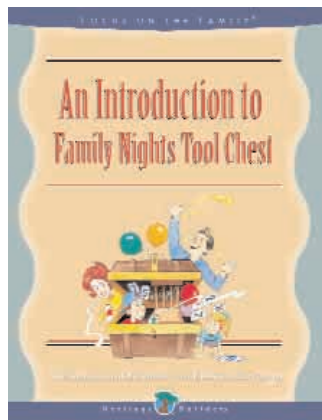
Wrap-up: Wrap-up your family time together by asking everyone to repeat this Life Slogan with you: **Do it God's way—watch what you say!** Have everyone repeat the slogan a few times. Then encourage them to start listening for each other to speak like good examples of Jesus and start collecting coins in the jar.

Close in prayer: Allow time for family members to tell their prayer concerns. Remember to ask God to help you be examples of Jesus in your speech. Thank God for His Word and your time together.

You can find the above family activity and many other family activities in Heritage Builders Family Night Tool Chest books published by Chariot Victor Publishing. Request the books at your local Christian bookseller or on line at: www.chariotvictor.com or www.heritagebuilders.com.

Stepping Out as an Example in Life

Help your family members learn more about setting an example with their lives by leading them in the following activity adapted from *An Introduction to Family Night Tool Chest*, book 1 of the *Family Night Tool Chest* series from Heritage Builders.



The point: We can live for Jesus every day.

Supplies: You'll need an area to make an obstacle course, several preschool blocks or other objects to carry.

Activity: Have your family work together to build an obstacle course. Your course might consist of crawling under tables, walking around a chair, jumping over a toy, running around your backyard, and so on. Adapt your course for the ages and abilities of your family.

When your course is ready, have each member make a "practice run" through the course as you time each one. Record the times. Be sure to do the course yourself and have someone time you!

Announce, **Now we will each run the course again to race against our own times. The one who improves his or her time the most wins. But this time we each must carry these objects through the course but not let them be damaged or dropped.** Give everyone a few preschool building blocks or other cumbersome object. (Suggested objects: a few preschool building blocks, a water balloon, a plastic cup of water, etc.) Have each family member run your course again while carrying their blocks or other objects. Record the times. Don't suggest this, but if your children figure out creative ways to carry their blocks, that's okay. If interest is high, you might have each one run the course a third time, but give each family member a double amount of blocks to carry.

After everyone catches their breath, gather together and ask these questions.

- **How did carrying your blocks affect your ability to run the obstacle course?** (Let each family member talk.)
- **What was the best way to get yourself and your blocks through the course?** (Give time for everyone to tell their ideas.)

Let's talk about what this game has to do with our lives. Think of each day as an obstacle course you must run. The blocks you carried through our obstacle course represent the things that make it difficult to live for Jesus in your every day life.

- **What can make it difficult for you to live for Jesus each day?** (Let everyone think and talk. The different situations each family member faces each day will present different challenges to living for Jesus.)

Read I Corinthians 9:24. **Living for Jesus is like running a race. God wants us to run to win.**

- **What do you think "the prize" is?** (Allow time for everyone to think. Invite more than one response. The prize Paul refers to is our eternal life.)

Read Proverbs 3:6.

- **How can you acknowledge God?** (Let everyone tell their ideas. You might explain that acknowledge means to show that we know and love God. We can acknowledge God in many ways. For example: the things we do, say, how we act, places we go or don't go, and so on. All the things we do in our lives should show we love and know God!)

Ask, **How will you be an example of Jesus in the next few days?** (Accept each response and encourage each other to live for Jesus.)

Wrap-Up: Ask everyone to listen to your new slogan. **Win the race by living for Jesus.** Repeat the slogan together a few times to help everyone remember it.

Close in Prayer: Allow time for each family member to mention prayer concerns and answers to prayer. Then close your time together with prayer for each concern. Thank God for your time together encouraging each other to live for Him.

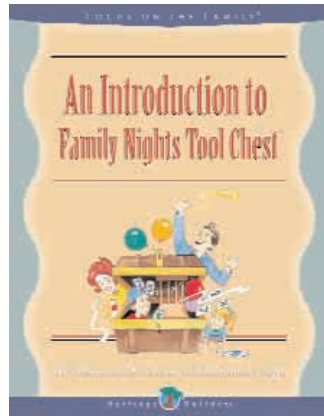
You can find the above family activity and many other family activities in Heritage Builders Family Night Tool Chest books published by Chariot Victor Publishing. Request the books at your local Christian bookseller or on line at:

www.chariotvictor.com or www.heritagebuilders.com.

If your children are in preschool, look into the Heritage Builders® *Family Nights Tool Chest™ Old Testament Bible Stories for Preschoolers*. There you will find plans for family activities about Daniel.

Stepping Out as an Example in Love

Help your family members learn more about setting an example in love by leading them in the following activity adapted from *An Introduction to Family Night Tool Chest*, book 1 of the *Family Night Tool Chest* series from Heritage Builders.



The Point: We show love by serving each other.

Supplies: Plain paper, scissors, and pencils or pens.

Activity: Read the following story to your family:

A dime for a horse! A quarter for a tractor! A cow for only three cents!

Can you imagine shopping at prices like these? The people who paid these prices weren't really shopping. They were helping their friends. Let me explain.

In the 1930's the United States went through a time called the Great Depression. During this time many factories, banks, and stores closed. Millions of people lost their jobs, all their money, and their homes.

Also during this time, the middle areas of the United States such as Kansas, Oklahoma, and Colorado were without rain for a long time, and the land became very dry. Huge windstorms blew the dusty soil away. Can you imagine what this might have been like?

With no rain and so much wind, most farmers couldn't grow anything on their land. They became poorer and poorer, and often borrowed money from the bank for things they needed. But when the farmers couldn't pay back the money they owed, the banks would come and auction off everything the farmer and his family owned. This was sort of like a garage sale, but everything had to be sold to satisfy the bank. How would you feel if you were in this situation?

The farmers in communities cared about each other, and figured out a way to help each other during these hard times. When a bank would come sell everything all the people in the community would only bid a few pennies on what was for sale. That's how they'd get a horse for only a dime, or a tractor for twenty-five cents. The bank never made much money on these "penny auctions," but there wasn't much else the bankers could do. They still sold everything the farmer had!

Then later, the people in the community would come and give the farmer everything they'd bought at the auction. Instead of thinking how fortunate they were to buy a horse for ten cents, they gave it up for their friend.

Discuss:

- **What do you think the farmers and their families felt about selling all of their things?** (*Sad, angry, etc.*)
- **How do you think they felt when people in their communities gave everything back to them?** (*Surprised, happy, thankful, etc.*)
- **Explain how the people who bought things and gave them back were showing love?** (*They spent their money to help others, they didn't think of what they wanted, they might not have had much money but they still spent money to help their friends, and so on.*)

There aren't "penny auctions" anymore, but we can still show love to others around us in other ways.

Read John 15:12 and Galatians 5:13c.

God wants us to love each other. One place to start is right here in our home.

- **How can you show love to others in our family?** (*Talk about ways to show love to each other. Accept the different expressions of love for the different ages and personalities in your family. Reinforce all of the ways you each have to show love.*)

Give out paper and scissors. Get everyone involved in cutting out several heart shaped papers about three or four inches in size. On each heart you might write, "Secret Service of Love." Then put all of the hearts in a pile, mix them up and give each family member an equal number of hearts.

During the next few days, secretly show love to others in our family. Then leave one of your "Secret Service of Love" hearts at or near the spot where you showed love. You might leave a heart right away, or maybe wait a little bit until you can secretly leave a heart. Since we all have hearts made by each other, no one will know who left a heart. But that's the idea, we serve in love but don't make a big deal about doing it! Let's set a goal that over the next few days, we will all secretly use up our hearts.

Wrap-Up: Tell everyone that you have a new slogan to help them remember to secretly serve in love. ***When my love is true, actions show it to you!*** Repeat the slogan together a few times to help everyone remember it.

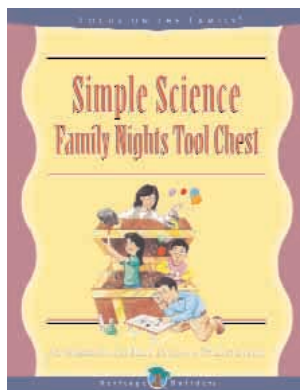
Close in Prayer: Invite each family member to talk about prayer concerns and answers. Then close your time together praying for each other, thanking God for answers to prayers, and for the concerns mentioned.

You can find the above family activity and many other family activities in *Heritage Builders Family Night Tool Chest* books published by Chariot Victor Publishing. Request the books at your local Christian bookseller or on line at www.chariotvictor.com or www.heritagebuilders.com.

If your children are in preschool, look into the *Heritage Builders® Family Nights Tool Chest™ Old Testament Bible Stories for Preschoolers*. There you will find plans for a family activity on baby Moses.

Stepping Out as an Example in Faith

Help your family members learn more about setting an example in love by leading them in the following activity adapted from *Simple Science* of the *Family Night Tool Chest™* series from Heritage Builders®.



The Point: Nothing is impossible when it is God's will.

Supplies: You will need a hard-boiled egg (shell peeled off), butter, a glass bottle with a mouth just a little smaller than the egg, paper, matches, and a Bible.

Activity: Collect the supplies and gather your family. Set your peeled hard-boiled egg on top of the bottle. Tell the children to get the egg into the bottle by only telling it to go in. Obviously, this won't work and most children will say it is impossible. That's okay. Enjoy a few moments of silliness before continuing.

Ask, **How could you get the egg into the bottle without breaking either the bottle or the egg?** (Don't worry, if they have no idea, it's okay. And if your kids have ideas, they probably won't work.)

Remove the egg. Lightly grease the jar's mouth with butter. Hold the bottle sideways and slowly slide a lighted piece of paper into it. Place the bottle upright on the table. Place the egg vertically on the bottle so it seals the opening. The fire will create a vacuum as it burns up the oxygen in the bottle and will suck the whole egg into the bottle!

Read aloud Matthew 21:18-22. Then ask the following question.

- **How did the disciples react when Jesus said that the tree would not bear fruit again?** (Surprised; they didn't believe Him.)

When I asked you how to get the egg into the bottle, you couldn't do it by telling the egg what to do. You may have thought it was impossible, just as the disciples thought what Jesus had done was impossible. But with God, all things are possible.

Ask your children if they can remove the egg from the bottle without breaking the bottle or the egg. Encourage them to believe in the possibility just as they should believe that God can do anything.

Turn the bottle upside-down so the egg creates a one-way valve sealing the mouth of the bottle from the inside. Blow into the bottle as long and hard as you can, then firmly (without breaking the bottle) set the bottle right-side up on a table. The egg should pop out of the top.

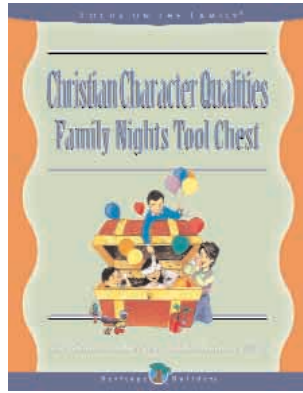
Wrap-Up: Tell your family you have a new slogan for them to remember. **God is able, I'll be faithful.** Repeat the slogan together a few times to help everyone remember it.

Close in Prayer: Allow time for each family member to mention prayer concerns and answers to prayer. Then close your time together with prayer for each concern. Thank God for your time together encouraging each other to have faith in God.

You can find the above family activity and many other family activities in Heritage Builders Family Night Tool Chest books published by Chariot Victor Publishing. Request the books at your local Christian bookseller or on line at www.chariotvictor.com or www.heritagebuilders.com.

Stepping Out as an Example in Purity

Help your family members learn more about setting an example in purity as Josiah did with this activity adapted from *Christian Character Qualities Book 3 of the Family Night Tool Chest™* from Heritage Builders®.



The Point: Fill your mind with good so there won't be room for the bad.

Supplies: You'll need a Bible, a bucket of water and several large rocks. This activity will splash and spill water, so consider doing it outside.

Activity: Fill the bucket to the brim with water.

Read aloud Proverbs 4:23 and Philippians 4:8.

Let's pretend that this bucket is our hearts and minds. The bucket is full of water, which stands for all the good thoughts that God wants us to have in our minds.

- **What are some of those good thoughts?** (Encourage everyone to contribute their ideas. These might include verses memorized from the Bible, love for God and others, patience, kindness, pleasant and encouraging words, fun family times, memories of beautiful scenery, and so on.)

Now there are all kinds of bad thoughts that Satan wants to get into our minds. These rocks represent those bad thoughts.

- **What might be an example of a bad thought?** (Ask one person to suggest a bad thought. For example, hit my brother, do a mean trick, take something that I shouldn't, and so on. The seriousness and context of thoughts will vary depending on the ages and experience of your children.)

Let's see what happens when (name the thought suggested) **gets into our minds.** Drop the rock into the bucket.

Be prepared for a splash!

Oh no! Bad thoughts make a mess of things!

- **Where did the bad thought go?** (Into the bucket and our minds. It looks like that is where it will stay.)
- **What happened to some of the good thoughts?** (They're gone. Spilled out all over the place! Looks like the bad thought pushed out good thoughts.)

When we let bad thoughts into our minds, they push out some good thoughts. If we focus our attention on God and other good things, we can keep bad thoughts out. The Bible explains this clearly.

Read Psalm 119:9 and 11.

We keep our thoughts and actions pure by living according to the Bible. The more Bible verses and knowledge we know ("hide in our hearts") the less we sin.

- **Why do you think this is true?** (The Bible teaches what is right and good so we know what is wrong, the more we know and think about God the easier it becomes to stay away from bad things, spending time with God gives us less time for getting into trouble, etc.)

Wrap-Up: Tell your family you have a new slogan for them to remember. **Stay out of a bind. Let God fill your mind.** Repeat the slogan together a few times to help everyone remember it.

Close in Prayer: Allow time for each family member to mention prayer concerns and answers to prayer. Then close you time together with prayer for each concern. Thank God for your time together learning to keep your thoughts and actions pure.

You can find the above family activity and many other family activities in Heritage Builders Family Night Tool Chest books published by Chariot Victor Publishing. Request the books at your local Christian bookseller or on line at: www.chariotvictor.com or www.heritagebuilders.com.

Courageous Christians Devotional Stories

The following devotional stories for family reading have been taken with permission from *Courageous Christians* by Joyce Vollmer Brown, published by Moody Press, Copyright 2000. The testimony of the five courageous Christians given below, and many other people of faith presented in *Courageous Christians* by Joyce Vollmer Brown, can help you and your family to continue the Courageous Journey that started at **Courageous Kids™ VeBS®**.

ERIC LIDDELL

TEACH ME TO DO YOUR WILL, FOR YOU ARE MY
GOD; MAY YOUR GOOD SPIRIT LEAD ME ON LEVEL
GROUND. (PSALM 143:10)

He was one of Scotland's most beloved athletes, but Eric Liddell became better known for what he didn't do than for what he did.

Eric was born in China to missionary parents. When he and his brother were old enough, they were sent to boarding school (a school that students live in) in Scotland. He became a fine athlete and a champion at rugby, a game like football. He also set a school record in the one-hundred-yard dash.

When he went on to the university, Eric played rugby in international contests. He also ran races and began training two or three times a week. Soon he was winning one trophy after another in national and international meets.

After becoming the British champion in the one-hundred-meter sprint, he planned to run it in the 1924 Olympics. This was considered one of the most important races, and Eric was expected to win the gold medal. But when he heard that the race would be held on a Sunday, he said he wouldn't compete. He believed Sunday should be a day to rest and focus on the Lord.

His decision was reported around the world. Many people thought he was letting his country down. Even though he was pressured to change his mind, he quietly refused. If he could not run and honor God, he would not run.

Although there wasn't much time left before the Olympics, he began training for the quarter-mile race. That would not be held on a Sunday. On the day of that race, someone slipped him a note that said, "In the old book it says, 'He that honours me, I will honour.'"¹

God did honor Eric for his obedience. He not only won the quarter-mile race, but he also set a world's record. When he came home with a gold medal, even those who had criticized him considered him a national hero.

While he finished college, he was in great demand to speak at gospel meetings. His tremendous popularity drew large crowds, and his words and his life caused many to trust in Christ. But Eric didn't believe this kind of speaking was God's plan for his life. After he gradu-

ated, he left Scotland, his fame and his adoring fans, and a stream of job offers. He traded it all for a life of hardship in a country where foreigners were often mistreated. He went back to China and taught science in a mission school.

While he was teaching there, he fell in love with the daughter of other missionaries. Eric and Florence were married and soon had two little girls whom he adored.

They had a very happy home until he was asked to work in the war-torn countryside. China was in the middle of a civil war. At the same time, Japan had invaded the country and was taking over more and more territory. Because of the danger, Eric's family would have to stay in the city. He hated the idea of being away from his wife and girls for long periods of time, but he believed God wanted him to say yes.

He became a traveling preacher, making long journeys on foot or by bicycle, dodging bandits and soldiers as he went. He loved people. He was friendly to everyone and won many friends. His tender heart compelled him to rescue wounded soldiers from every army. This was extremely risky, because the Japanese killed anyone they caught helping Chinese soldiers.

Then Britain declared war on Japan, and it became especially dangerous for British citizens to remain in China. Eric sent his wife and two daughters to Canada for their safety. He never saw them again.

Less than two years later, all foreigners still in the country were rounded up and taken to prison camps. Many different kinds of people were crowded together. In the summer, the heat was unbearable. There wasn't enough food. The stress caused some to have mental breakdowns.

Although Eric missed his own family terribly, he kept busy trying to cheer up everyone else. When tempers flared, he was the peacemaker. When others were too weak to do their work, he did it on top of his own. When the camp's children were bored, he taught them math and science and arranged sports activities.

But after eighteen months in the prison camp, Eric became weak and exhausted. He began having terrible headaches. Within a short time, he died of a brain tumor. The entire camp was stunned by his death, because he was so greatly loved.

DISCUSS

Throughout his life, Eric Liddell asked himself, "Does this path I [walk] follow the Lord's will?"² How can we know whether or not our plans are God's will for our lives?

AUTHOR'S NOTES

¹ John D. Woodbridge, Ed., *More Than Conquerors* (Chicago: Moody, 1992), 224.

² Ibid.

HUDSON TAYLOR

COMMIT YOUR WAY TO THE LORD; TRUST IN HIM
AND HE WILL DO THIS: HE WILL MAKE YOUR RIGHTEOUSNESS
SHINE LIKE THE DAWN, THE JUSTICE OF YOUR CAUSE LIKE
THE NOONDAY SUN. (PSALM 37:5-6)

From the beginning, Hudson Taylor's life was greatly influenced by prayer. Before he was born, in 1832, his parents prayed he would become a missionary to China. At the exact time his mother prayed for his salvation, he accepted Christ. He was deeply touched by his father's frequent prayers for the vast country of China, where few had ever heard about Jesus.

As soon as Hudson decided to go to China, he did his best to prepare himself. Because he was frail and sickly, he began exercising and building up his health. In addition to studying Chinese, Greek, Hebrew, and Latin, he worked as an assistant to a busy doctor to learn more about medicine.

He also found a way to strengthen his faith. The doctor he worked for was absentminded and often forgot to pay him on time. Instead of reminding the doctor, Hudson prayed and trusted God to take care of his needs. Several times he had little or no money left when his food ran out and his rent was due, but God always supplied what he needed.

It was during such a time that a poor man asked him to come and pray for his wife, who was desperately ill. The man told him he didn't have any money for medicine or to feed his family. The sight of the man's starving children broke Hudson's heart. He didn't know what to do. All he had was one small coin, and he was out of food himself.

He struggled for a few minutes, then gave the coin to the grateful man and went on his way. The next day someone sent Hudson a pair of nice gloves. Inside one of them was a coin worth four times as much as the one he had given the man.

In China, Hudson's faith was tested again and again. He was alone among thousands of people who looked at him with curiosity, dislike, and suspicion. He witnessed and preached for many months with no results. The new missionary society that had promised to send him money seldom sent anything.

He found strength and answers in trusting God and in prayer. Later, he shared the lesson he'd learned with friends: "Depend upon it. God's work, done in God's way, will never lack God's supplies."¹

Hudson realized that his English clothing and looks distracted the Chinese. He bought Chinese robes, dyed his hair black, and attached a pigtail. The Chinese felt complimented, and they respected him in return.

Then he went deeper into the country, where few foreigners had ever gone. He also fell in love with an English girl who worked in a mission school and married her.

After six years of working in China, he became ill and went back to England with his wife and child. But during the next five years, he couldn't stop thinking of the million Chinese people who died each month without knowing God. He translated the Bible into Chinese, completed his medical training, and prayed for more missionaries.

When he couldn't persuade any missionary societies in England to send people to China, he decided that he would have to start his own mission. But he didn't know how he could ask others to take the risks that would be involved. He became so upset about it that he nearly had a nervous breakdown. But finally he realized that the welfare of the new missionaries would not be his responsibility but God's. Then he peacefully prayed for twenty-four more missionaries to China.

Within a year his prayer was answered. The China Inland Mission was started, and Hudson and his family went back to China with the new volunteers. Again he faced hard times. His oldest child died. Some of the new missionaries didn't agree with his methods and caused problems. His beloved wife died at the age of thirty-three after giving birth to their sixth child. The baby also died. The mission's money often ran out.

Through it all, Hudson's faith grew, and God answered his prayers. He wrote a friend, "We have twenty-seven cents and all the promises of God." Soon afterward, a letter came with \$4,000 to broaden the ministry.²

He went back to England again and spoke of all the lost souls in China while he prayed for seventy more missionaries. He never asked for money, but money poured in, and seventy new workers left for China. The next year he asked God for one hundred, and one hundred two sailed.

The greatest trial of all was the Boxer Rebellion of 1900. Chinese who hated foreigners killed many missionaries and Chinese Christians and destroyed their property. Hudson was in England when he heard about all of his missionaries who had been killed. It was almost more than he could bear. "I cannot read," he wrote. "I cannot pray, I can scarcely even think—but I can trust."³

God greatly honored Hudson Taylor's faith. By the time he died and the age of seventy-two, there were 849 missionaries in China and 125,000 Chinese Christians.

DISCUSS

Why do you think some Christians have so much more faith than others? What steps can we take to help our own faith grow stronger?

AUTHOR'S NOTES

¹ John D. Woodbridge, Ed., *More Than Conquerors* (Chicago: Moody, 1992), 52.

² James C. Hefley, *Heroes of the Faith* (Chicago: Moody, 1963), 184.

³ Dr. and Mrs. Howard Taylor, *Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret* (Chicago: Moody, 1932).

Taken from *Courageous Christians* by Joyce Vollmer Brown, Moody Press, Copyright 2000. Used by permission.

KAY COLE JAMES

AM I NOW TRYING TO WIN THE APPROVAL OF MEN,
OR OF GOD? OR AM I TRYING TO PLEASE MEN? IF I
WERE STILL TRYING TO PLEASE MEN, I WOULD NOT
BE A SERVANT OF CHRIST. (GALATIANS 1:10)

Her father and brothers weren't home the hot June night Kay Cole was born. They were hunting bullfrogs in the swamp so that her mother could fry them for supper. There wasn't a doctor around, either. The only black doctor in Portsmouth, Virginia, couldn't be located. So a neighbor and a nurse-midwife helped in the birth.

Kay was the only daughter in a poor black family with six children. Her father had a brilliant mind and loved classical music. He had been a champion debater in high school and had won several singing contests. He had dreamed of becoming a chemist or a doctor, but he couldn't afford to go to college. Frustrated because he was stuck in lowly jobs, he began to drink heavily.

Kay's mother came from a well-respected family in Richmond. All of her mother's sisters went to college and became professional people. They were middle-class blacks at a time when that was a very rare thing. Since Kay's father was unable to hold a job because of his drinking, her mother's family persuaded them to move to Richmond.

The town of Richmond was completely segregated. That meant blacks couldn't ride at the front of the buses. They couldn't use public libraries or swim in public pools. Kay never even had a conversation with a white person until she reached junior high school.

After Kay's father began hitting his wife and older sons, her mom left him and moved the family into a public housing project. Their five-room apartment had a cement floor, walls made of cement blocks, and hundreds of cockroaches. Kay sang in bed to take her mind off the cockroaches that came out when the lights went off.

Some people thought they were lazy or low class because the government paid their rent. They called her family "project niggers." Kay worked hard to get good grades, achieve success, and live right to prove her worth to the people who looked down on her.

Kay's mother got on a bus in the early morning, went to her sisters' homes to cook and clean for them, and came home after sunset. Only four-feet-seven-inches tall, she had a strong homegrown faith in Jesus. She took her kids to church on Sundays and wouldn't allow any swearing. When her sons stole chickens because they wanted fried chicken so badly, she threw the birds out. They'd starve, she said, before she'd allow stolen food in their home.

One day Mrs. Cole tearfully said she was sending Kay to live with a wealthy aunt and uncle who didn't have any children. She knew they could give her the things she couldn't—including a college education.

Kay desperately missed her mother and brothers. To make things worse, her aunt also was an alcoholic. When she drank, she criticized Kay cruelly. At times she would crumple up her homework, scream

that it was all wrong (even when the answers were right), and call her stupid and ignorant. Once again, Kay was being sent the message that she was worthless, inferior, and dumb.

Life became still more difficult when the Supreme Court outlawed segregation in public schools. Kay was one of twenty-six black students sent to a junior high with three hundred whites. Many of the white students resented the blacks and made their lives miserable.

Kay was pricked with pins while walking to class. Sometimes she was stuck so many times that she had to hold her dress against her body to keep blood from dripping down her legs. She was pushed down the stairs. Teachers gave her papers D's and F's to prove that black children couldn't compete with whites. But the black students hired tutors and worked even harder. After a while, teachers began to grade fairly, and Kay's grades rose to A's and B's.

In church she heard that she was God's beloved child, created in His image. This gave her a sense of worth and dignity that her aunt and hateful whites couldn't destroy. The church also taught her that hate destroys the spirit but love builds it up.

She began reading her Bible every night. She became less concerned with proving herself to others and more concerned with pleasing God. In college she became involved in Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship. Through Bible studies and prayer meetings she realized that God had not only created her but He had created her black. She found a new pride in being black. For the first time, she got to know many white people who were kind and loving.

Following Jesus was not a popular thing to do among the many black students who considered Christianity a religion for whites. At times they ridiculed and harassed her. She didn't enjoy the friction, but Kay would later realize that God was preparing her for what she would face in the future.

She graduated and was hired as a manager with AT&T. Because of affirmative action laws, businesses in the early seventies were looking for educated blacks to hire so they would have their minimum percentage of minority employees.

Kay married Charles James and began to move up in the phone company. She quit work when they had children, but she began volunteering at a crisis pregnancy center and became committed to preventing abortions. After they moved to another city, she went to work for a chain of stores and helped to start a crisis pregnancy center there.

With a growing family and a busy job, Kay felt she was too busy when she was asked to speak for the pro-life position on a black cable TV show. But her husband reminded her of how strongly they both felt about abortion, and she agreed. Then she learned the program would be aired live nationally during prime time, and she was scared to death. She didn't sleep the night before and kept thinking how awful it would be if she threw up on national television.

She faced a woman who had argued the proabortion side many times and was well armed with statistics and polls to make it sound right. Kay felt ill-prepared. All she had was a strong belief that abortion was wrong. But that proved to be enough. She did so well in the debate that the National Right to Life Committee asked her to become their national spokesperson.

The next three years were a whirlwind of traveling, debating, giving speeches, and holding press conferences. Too busy doing to spend much time learning, Kay often felt poorly prepared and very nervous. For weeks before big debates, she couldn't sleep or eat properly. At times she knew the audience would be hostile, and fear clouded her thinking. She learned to cry out to God for help. "Every debate was really a stretching out in faith," she recalls, "and I learned to trust God for wisdom and even for the very words I would speak."¹

Although mail poured in saying her message had touched people, Kay resigned after three years. She wanted to spend more time with her family and to take care of her mother who was dying of cancer.

DISCUSS

Describe a time when you (1) didn't stand up for something you knew was right, because you were outnumbered or (2) did take a courageous stand in spite of what others said or thought.

AUTHOR'S NOTES

¹ Kay Cole James with Jacqueline Cobb Fuller, *Never Forget!* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1992), 165.

Taken from *Courageous Christians* by Joyce Vollmer Brown, Moody Press, Copyright 2000. Used by permission.

ELIZABETH FRY

DO NOT JUDGE, OR YOU TOO WILL BE JUDGED. FOR
IN THE SAME WAY YOU JUDGE OTHERS, YOU WILL BE
JUDGED, AND WITH THE MEASURE YOU USE, IT WILL
BE MEASURED TO YOU. (MATTHEW 7:1-2)

The Gurney family considered themselves Quakers (a group of Christians known for their simple lifestyle). But their religion didn't keep them from enjoying the finest parties England had to offer in the late 1700's. Like her widowed father and sisters, Elizabeth Gurney enjoyed a colorful, shallow life until she was seventeen. At that time she heard a visiting preacher talk about the true meaning of being a Quaker, and Elizabeth's life was never the same.

Much to her family's dismay, she abandoned her fancy clothes, gave up music and dancing, and became a serious Quaker. She began gathering poor children together every Sunday evening and teaching them Bible stories. When she saw where and how the children lived, she wanted to do more for them and their families.

She married Joseph Fry, a wealthy Quaker, and she began to help the poor in practical ways. Even though she soon had children of her own, she found time to go out into the slums of London.

Gathering up her long skirts, she would make her way through narrow passages and up broken stairways. She brought clothes and medicine for any who needed them, and she brought her Bible to teach everyone about the Lord.

One day Elizabeth heard another Quaker speak about the terrible conditions women lived under at Newgate Prison. She could easily have told herself that she was too busy to get involved.

By this time she had eight children. (She eventually had eleven.) But she went to the prison to pray with the women prisoners.

At first, the jailors wouldn't let her go inside. They told her they themselves never went inside alone. It was too dangerous. The women were a wild mob, they warned, who would tear off her clothes and take her things. But Elizabeth would not be discouraged. She had a letter from the governor of the prison granting her permission to go in, and she insisted on going in alone.

No doubt she had second thoughts once inside. She was soon surrounded by three hundred screaming women who behaved like beasts, fighting, clawing, and swearing. Some had children. Many were nearly naked. All were dirty. They were crowded together in four small foul-smelling rooms. There were no beds—only three levels of hammocks. The prison didn't provide clothing or bedding or give the women anything to do. They were, however, allowed to buy alcohol with coins they got from begging through the bars.

If Elizabeth had shown any fear, she would have been in serious trouble. But she kept her gaze steady as she picked up a dirty child and told the women they must all do something for the children. She told them she would start a school if they would help.

Most women of her day and especially of her social background would have looked at the prisoners with total disgust and considered them worthless. But Elizabeth treated them with respect. One of the first Scripture passages she taught from was Isaiah 53:6, which says everyone has sinned and Christ came to take everyone's sins away.

After seeing how great the needs were, Elizabeth convinced other Quakers to join her. They provided clothing for the prisoners and started a school for the children. They also brought materials to teach the women to knit and sew so that they would be able to earn money. To take part, the women had to promise to give up drinking, bad language, and other wrong behavior.

Elizabeth taught them about the Bible. She reached out to the women individually in friendship—telling of her faith, praying with them, and comforting those who were to be executed or sent overseas to convict colonies.

Her trust and respect woke something in the prisoners. She gave them a sense of dignity. They were human beings created in God's image and loved by Him, regardless of what they had done. In time, officials were amazed at the change in them.

In 1818, Elizabeth was asked to talk about her prison work before the House of Commons (England's lawmakers). After that, letters and requests for help poured in. She had made the world aware of the evils in prisons and showed, through her own kindness, that things could be different. Soon she was traveling around Europe, urging governments to treat prisoners better and teaching them how. Whenever the job seemed overwhelming, she would say, "I feel the rock always underneath me."¹

Still, Elizabeth couldn't close her eyes to others who were suffering. Six hours after hearing that a man had frozen to death on the streets of London, she had a committee working to set up a shelter for the homeless. Later on, that committee also provided warm bedding and food and found jobs for the unemployed.

She organized classes for poor children, started more than five hundred libraries for coast guardsmen throughout Britain, and founded a school to train nurses.

On her deathbed, Elizabeth could say, "Since my heart was touched at seventeen . . . I never have awakened from sleep, in sickness or in health, by day or night, without my first waking thought being how best I might serve my Lord."²

DISCUSS

It's been said that Elizabeth Fry loved the unlovable into loveliness. Have you ever considered someone a hopeless case, not worth your time or interest? How can we maintain a loving attitude toward such people?

AUTHOR'S NOTES

¹ Edith Dean, *Great Women of the Christian Faith* (New York: Harper, 1959), 170.

² Elliot Wright, *Holy Company: Christian Heroes and Heroines* (New York: Macmillan, 1980), 123.

Taken from *Courageous Christians* by Joyce Vollmer Brown, Moody Press, Copyright 2000. Used by permission.

JOHN NEWTON

HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH THE FRUITLESS DEEDS OF
DARKNESS, BUT RATHER EXPOSE THEM. . . . EVERY-
THING EXPOSED BY THE LIGHT BECOMES VISIBLE, FOR
IT IS LIGHT THAT MAKES EVERYTHING VISIBLE.

(EPHESIANS 5:11, 13-14)

John Newton was born in England in 1725 to a godly mother and a sea captain father. He started going to sea when he was nine. By the time he was fourteen, he could handle a ship as well as any grown man. Then his mother died, and his father remarried. John no longer felt wanted at home. Filled with bitterness, he turn his back on God.

Wanting to be alone one night, he went for a long walk and stopped in a bar. A navy officer and some soldiers followed him when he left. They hit him on the head, carried him to a ship, and threw him into the hold.

At the time, men were often forced into the English navy in this way. John learned that the ship he was on would be gone for five years, and he tried to escape. He was soon caught, though, and thrown back into the hold. A week later he was convicted of desertion and sentenced to be beaten eight dozen times with a tough leather whip.

Before his wounds had time to heal, he was forced to work. The brutal punishment filled him with hatred, and he dreamed of killing the captain. Then one day he was traded for a sailor on another ship.

He found he had been moved to a slave ship. In those days, most people in England thought buying and selling slaves was a respectable business. At first he was horrified to see how cruelly the slaves were treated. But after he heard how much money the slave trader had made in a short time, he wanted to work for him.

The trader, Amos Clow, made a bargain with the ship's captain to let him go. Amos liked John very much until another slave trader stole some of his things and blamed John. Then Amos made John his slave and treated him badly.

And then, yet another slave trader talked Amos into letting John come to work for him. This trader treated him well and helped him become rather wealthy. John became very proud. He drank, swore, and often made fun of religious people.

But when his ship got caught in a terrible storm, he wasn't so sure of himself. He was afraid of drowning, and he tried to remember what his mother had taught him about the Bible. The ship survived the storm, but it was badly damaged and most of its food supply was lost. Five days passed before the desperate crew spotted land. John finally got to shore and went to a church, where he told God he was sorry for his sin and asked Jesus to come into his heart.

Now that he was a Christian, he made changes in his life. He stopped swearing and drinking. He started treating his slaves and crew with more kindness. He also married a sweet girl he had known since his youth.

His eyes were opened to how wrong slavery was while he was on a three-year slave trading trip. A man who had just bought ten slave boys said he planned to work them as rough and hard as he could—until they had to be replaced with a new load. Seeing the terror on the faces of the young boys, John felt as if he had killed them himself. Later, the sobbing and moaning of the slaves in their quarters haunted him. He knew he could no longer be a part of the slave trade.

He returned home and found a job inspecting and taxing ships. In his free time he read the best Christian books available. Although he had quit school at eleven, he now studied Greek and Hebrew so that he could understand the Bible better. He was often asked to share his life's story, and he soon overcame his natural shyness. When friends suggested that he become a pastor, he agreed.

John's heart was filled with wonder and gratitude that God had forgiven him for his sins and all the pain he had caused others. He expressed his deep gratitude in a beautiful hymn he wrote, which has touched people ever since—"Amazing Grace."

For forty-three years John served as a loving pastor. He spoke out on the evils of the slave trade and wrote a book about the brutality he had seen. He persuaded William Wilberforce, a popular lawmaker in England, to wage war on the sickening business, until a law was finally passed to stop it.

The former slave trader also helped start two worldwide missionary societies. The groups took the Good News that sets men free to the very parts of Africa where John had enslaved so many.

DISCUSS

After John Newton realized how wrong slavery was, he did everything he could to stop it. Have you ever tried to stop a wrong? When? Is there something going on around you that you feel God wants you to speak out against?

Taken from *Courageous Christians* by Joyce Vollmer Brown, Moody Press, Copyright 2000. Used by permission.

Resources to Continue the Journey at Home

Cook Communications Ministries offers a wide range of resources that can help you and your family to continue the Courageous Journey that started at **Courageous Kids™ VeBS®**. The following online connections will introduce you to just a few of these available resources for kids and for parents.



www.faithparenting.com



www.faithkids.com