

## **Happy Independence Day! Or is it Dependence....?**

We get pretty excited about our national pride, especially when it comes to holidays like the Fourth of July. We celebrate our independence and freedom as a country. Independence is something that is highly valued in our culture, and it is a great thing to be able to operate on our own. However, God has not created us to be isolated creatures, but to rely on one another. We have relationships and needs for good reasons, and we can celebrate that, too. This lesson visits the importance of being dependent on others.

**Lesson focus:** God has made us for one another. We rely on each other and especially on Him for everything that we have. We may be independent, but we are dependent on God.

**Passage:** Various passages

**Target Audience:** Kindergarten-6<sup>th</sup> grade

**Materials Needed:** Heavy objects, white boards and dry erase markers, papers, decorative materials, Bibles.

**Lesson Opening:** Here are a few potential ideas for openers, which can be used all at once or sprinkled within the lesson:

- Can you do it alone? Invite students to lift a heavy object or move something across the room. It is difficult to do on your own, but with others to help it makes the job easier!
- Solo games? Ask students if they can play some simple white board games by themselves: things like tic-tac-toe or hangman are not quite as fun with just one person!
- What would you do if.... Have children list or discuss things that happen during their day on a regular basis (going to school, having dinner with family, etc.). Would they be able to do these things if they were completely alone? It might be quite difficult!!!

Let children know that in this lesson they will be hearing about some ways that we are created to work with and need other people. We might enjoy doing some things on our own, and learning independence is important, but God did not make us to be entirely solo. We need each other!

### **Bible Lesson:**

Happy Independence Day! We celebrate how we are an independent nation, or how we are independent people. This is an important feature of our lives. However, God has not designed us to be completely independent. He made multiple people, because He knew it was not good for us to be alone. The book of Genesis reminds us of this, at the very beginning of God's word:

*The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."<sup>19</sup> Now the Lord God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name.<sup>20</sup> So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals.*

*But for Adam<sup>21</sup> no suitable helper was found.<sup>21</sup> So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs<sup>22</sup> and then closed up the place with flesh.<sup>22</sup> Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib<sup>22</sup> he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. -Genesis 2:18-22*

God made us for one another. He doesn't want us to be all alone on our own, but gives us friends and family and other people to guide us along the journey. Who is your best friend? Do you have someone special that you appreciate? Thank God for those people! God knows that life is difficult, and He gives us people to share the load and bear each other's burdens. Even in the Old Testament this precedent was set:

*The Lord said to Moses: "Bring me seventy of Israel's elders who are known to you as leaders and officials among the people. Have them come to the tent of meeting, that they may stand there with you. <sup>17</sup>I will come down and speak with you there, and I will take some of the power of the Spirit that is on you and put it on them. They will share the burden of the people with you so that you will not have to carry it alone. -Numbers 11:16-17*

God knew that even mighty leaders were not meant to work alone. He instructed people to get helpers. When the United States was a young country and decided to split away from England, the French helped the nation. We need others for support and assistance! And having a "buddy system" just works:

*Two are better than one,  
because they have a good return for their labor:*

*<sup>10</sup> If either of them falls down,  
one can help the other up.*

*But pity anyone who falls  
and has no one to help them up.*

*<sup>11</sup> Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.  
But how can one keep warm alone?<sup>2</sup>*

*<sup>12</sup> Though one may be overpowered,  
two can defend themselves.*

*A cord of three strands is not quickly broken. -Ecclesiastes 4:9-12*

Whether it's friends, parents, brothers, sisters, teachers, pastors, coaches, garbage men, firefighters, or others, God gives us one another to share life and to make us stronger. He gives everyone special gifts that help in this, as well. We are all part of the body of Christ:

*Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.<sup>28</sup> And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues.<sup>29</sup> Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles?<sup>30</sup> Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues<sup>31</sup>? Do all interpret?<sup>31</sup> Now eagerly desire the greater gifts. -1 Corinthians 12:27-31 (also 12:12-26)*

There's another essential thing to remember. God makes us dependent on one another and provides people. But more importantly, we are to rely on God Himself. We cannot even take a breath without God's help. He made us, saved us, and loves and cares for us now. We are not entirely independent because we depend on HIM!

**Craft:** Have students make special cards or treasures for someone important to them. It could be a friend or a family member, but make it something that shows how much they are appreciated. Or, have students work together to make a “friend card” or matching buttons. They might even craft a picture and turn it into a jigsaw puzzle. **OR,** make bracelets or necklaces together that match! Multiple possibilities can convey an appreciation for one another.

**Close** with prayer and thank God for making us and for allowing us to depend on Him for all things. Ask for help in supporting one another and celebrating relationships as well as freedom!

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# Children's Message: Citizens of Heaven

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*Come in with American flags, patriotic paraphernalia, etc....*

Hi everyone!

So we have been celebrating our country lately, and I am ready to display some American pride. Do you know what Independence Day is about? We are honoring the time when we decided to declare ourselves a separate nation. People do that in several ways. Sometimes there are picnics and barbecues. Sometimes we have parades. Sometimes we have fireworks and special songs...What do you like to do for the Fourth of July?

Well, it is fine to have pride in our country. Being a citizen is a privilege and responsibility. Sometimes people become citizens by where they are born, and other times they take special tests and classes to become citizens. Either way, being a citizen means that we have rights and can live and work in this country. It is a wonderful thing.

Did you know that we have another kind of citizenship, too? The Bible talks about being citizens of Heaven. That means that our lives on this Earth are only a temporary home. We belong to God's family and have a home ready in His country someday. What does that mean? We do not live in Heaven yet, but we have the rights of being children of the King and we will gain Heaven as an inheritance. You know what else? God has given us a special job to tell other people about that Heavenly home. We get excited about national pride, but we should get even more excited about Heaven. We should be so excited we want to tell our friends and people around us about it! In the Gospel, Jesus sent out disciples to share the news of the Kingdom with others. He warned them that some people might not receive them well or be as eager over the message, but that He tasked them with spreading the good news to everyone.

We hope you enjoy this free resource.

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I'm Tony Kummer - I started this website in 2007, but God is using it beyond my imagination. The mission is simple.

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*Help you tell kids about Jesus!*

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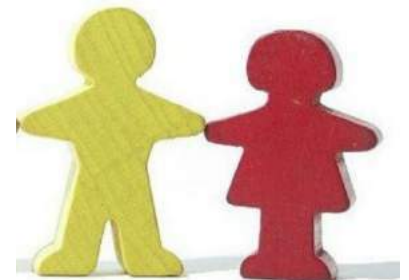
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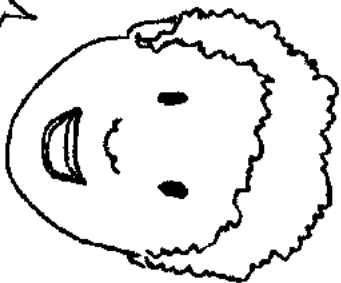
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2. Link to us from your blog or church website.
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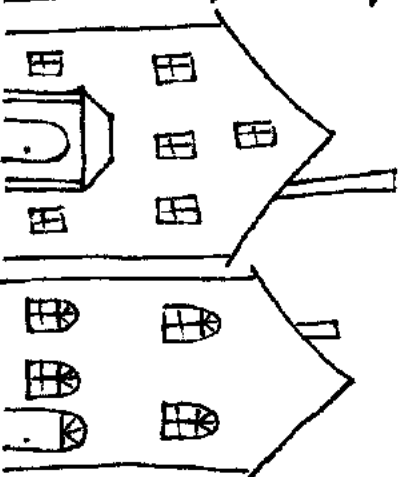
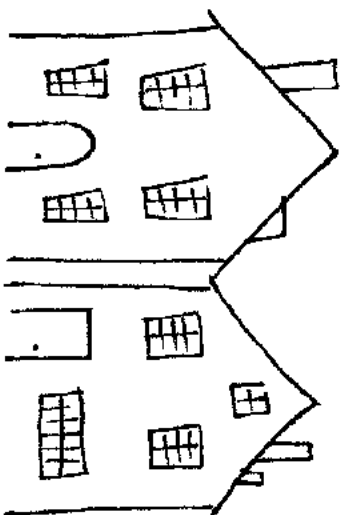
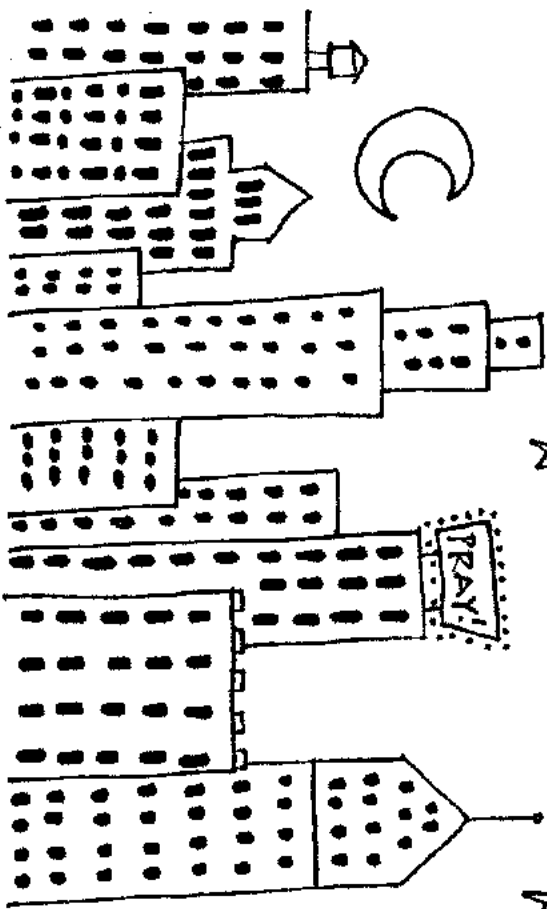


I'd love to hear your feedback on this download. [Tony@ministry-to-children.com](mailto:Tony@ministry-to-children.com)

May God bless you and continue to bless your ministry!



GOOD BLESS AMERICA!

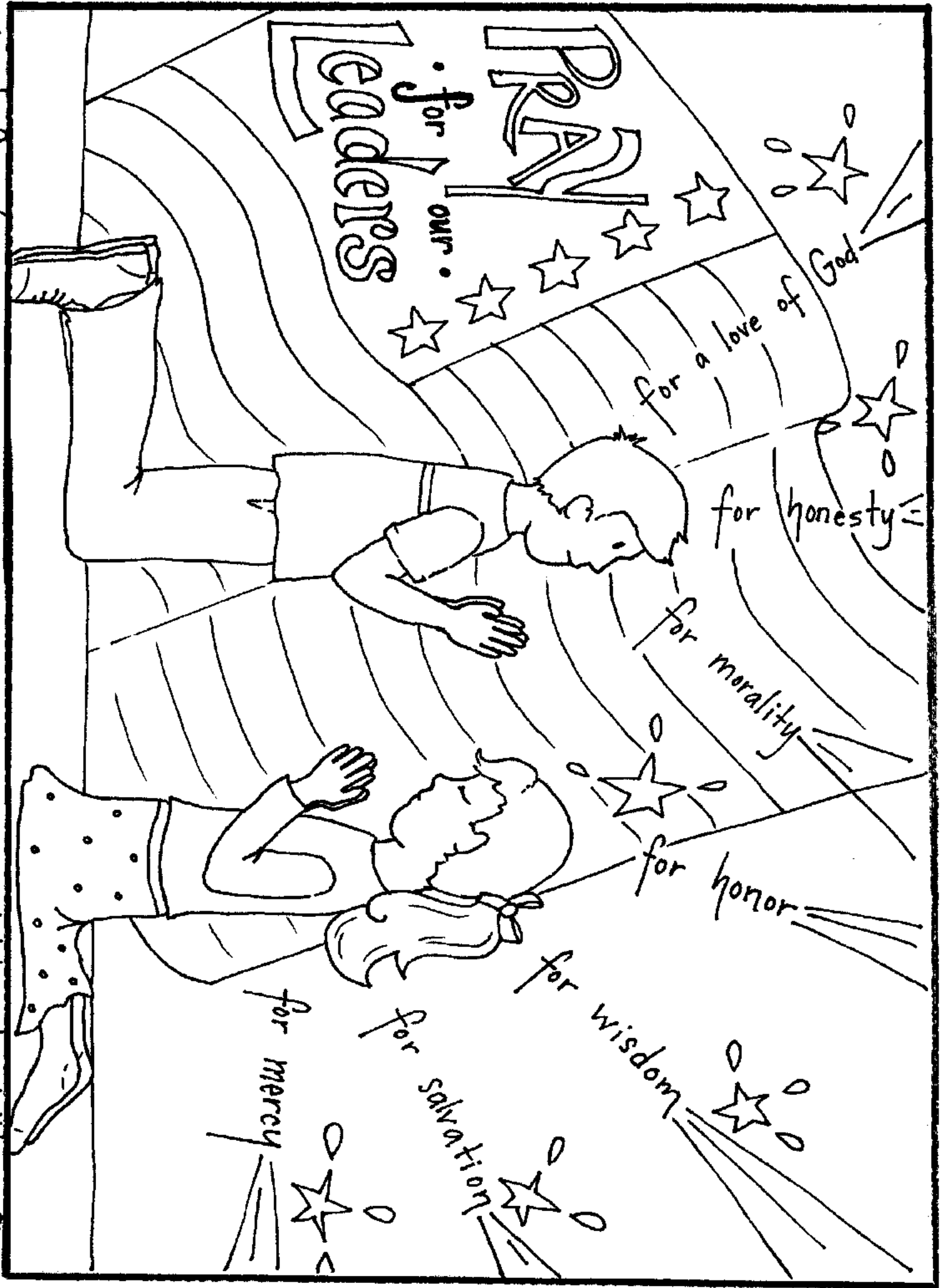




GOD BLESS AMERICA

Let's Pray!

Let's hope!



Mandy Grace '10

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