

A NOTE TO PARENTS

This Sunday's Gospel is the last in a series centering on a common theme: Jesus' condemnation of the religious power structure of his day. The Pharisees of Jesus' time were learned, while most Jews were poor and had little time for study. The Pharisees could afford to learn the Law, and to observe its ritual requirements. Judging by Jesus' condemnation of them, they had come to use these advantages mainly to flaunt their own power, and also to rub the noses of the powerless in their powerlessness, by emphasizing the laws that the poor were powerless to keep—the ones about cleanliness, clothing, and the Sabbath, for example. Meanwhile, says Jesus, they themselves will scarcely lift a finger over the things that really matter: justice, mercy, and faith.

As a parent and religion teacher, I feel an uneasy kinship with Jesus' Pharisees. I can imagine Jesus telling my children, "Your mother sits in Moses' seat, so do whatever she tells you; but don't do as she does, for she says, but doesn't do it ... " It's easy to lecture children about sharing, and being helpful, and being polite and attentive, and dropping whatever they are doing to come when called, and respecting other people's moods (translation: keeping out of my way when I'm crabby) ... but how often do I really do these things? Am I binding heavy burdens on my children by asking them to do what I myself don't even attempt?

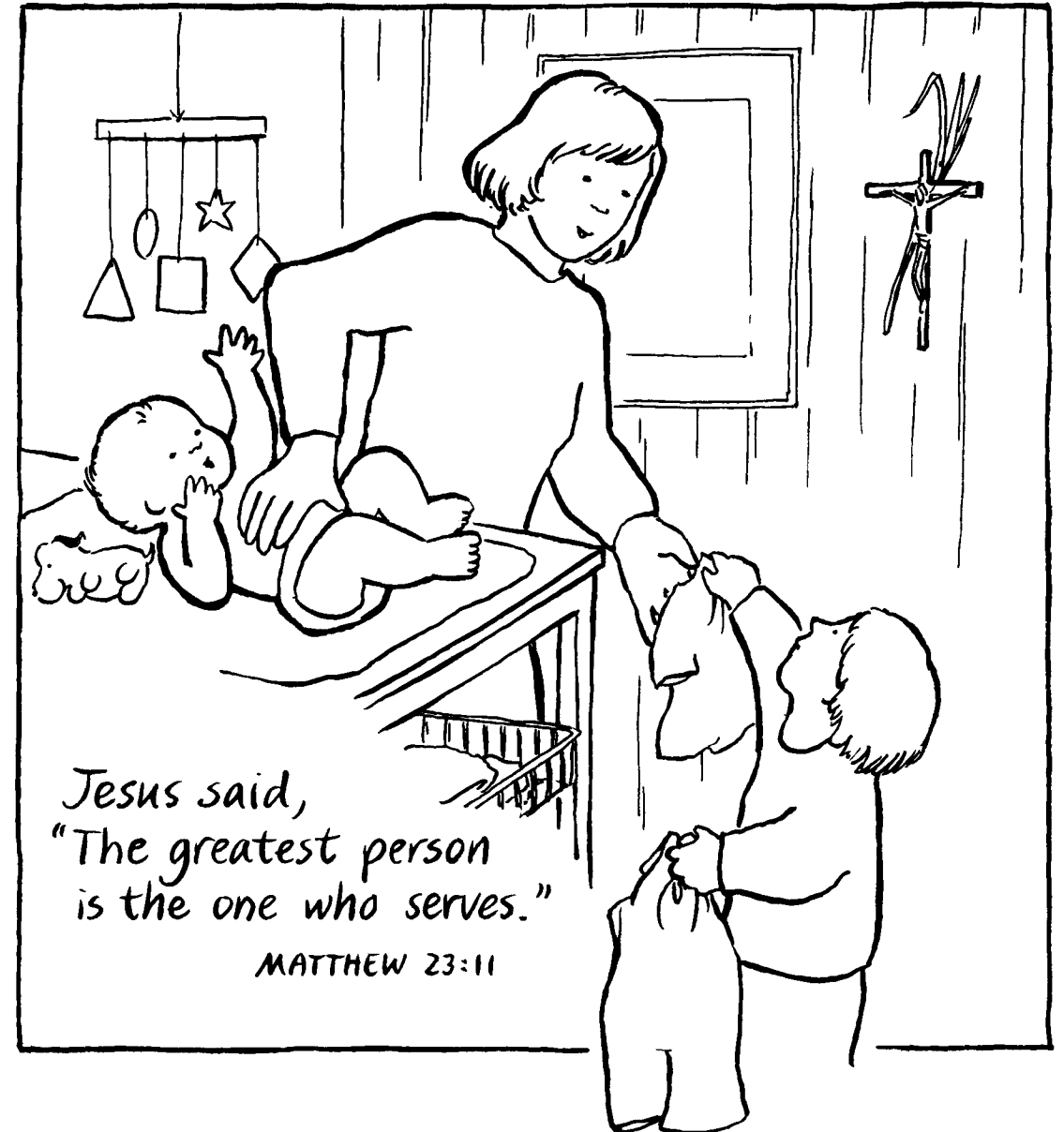
In their book *Children of Joy: Raising Your Own Home-Grown Christians* (Wellesley, MA: Roundtable Press, 1975), David and Elizabeth Gray point out that many of our child-rearing practices, whatever their intention, have the effect of giving children the idea, "I can't wait to grow up so that I can be as big, powerful and arbitrary as my parents, and have my own way all the time." Against this, Jesus says, "Whoever is greatest among you shall be your servant." This does not mean letting our children rule the roost. It does mean not using their immaturity, inarticulateness, weakness, and reverence for us as weapons to get our own way. We are their parents on earth; but as Jesus also tells the Pharisees, we are all children together in God's eyes.

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Year A
PROPER 26
TRACKS 1 and 2



Jesus said,
"The greatest person
is the one who serves."

MATTHEW 23:11

Jesus told his friends to be like one family, whose father is God.



We should not try to be fancier or more special than other people.



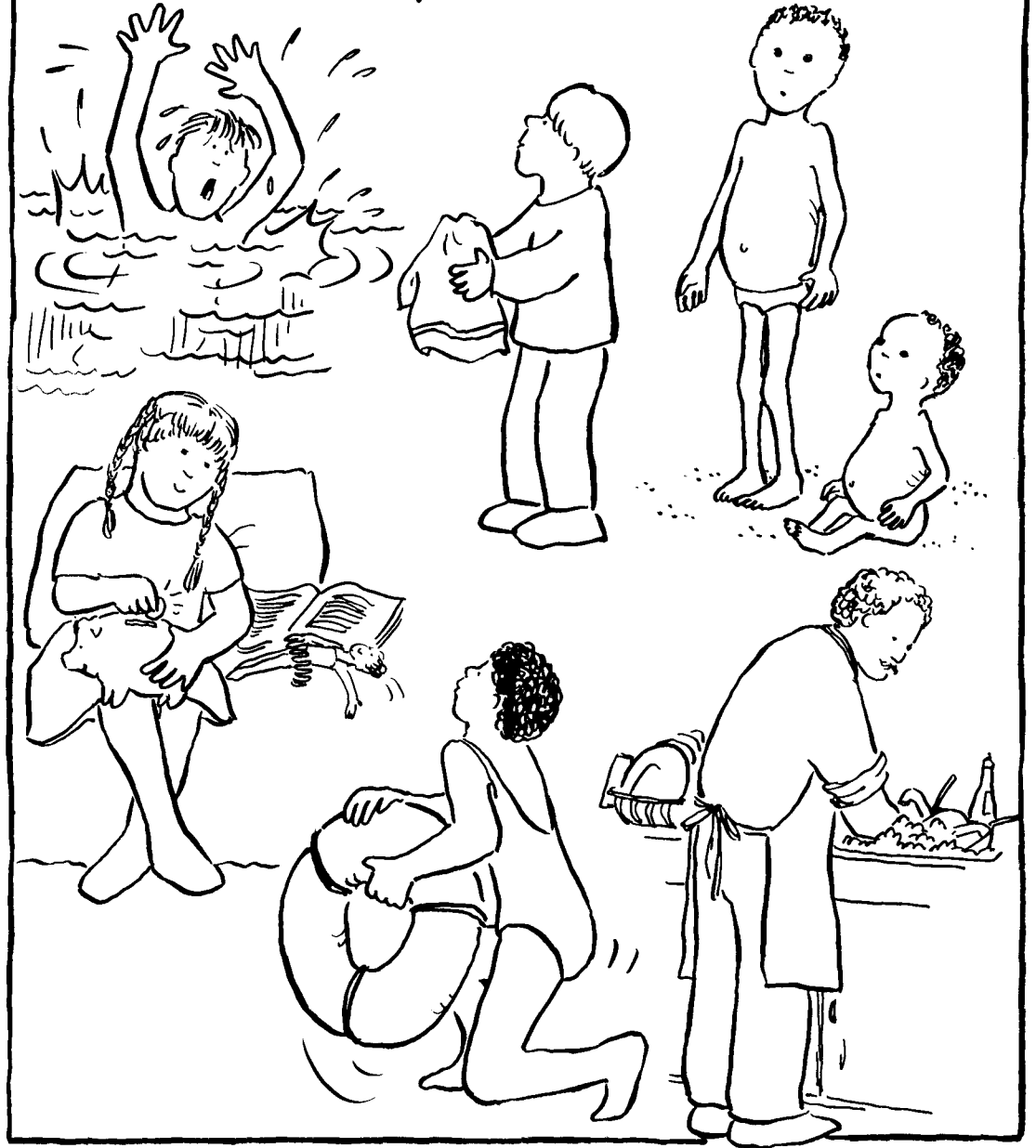
We should not push to be first.

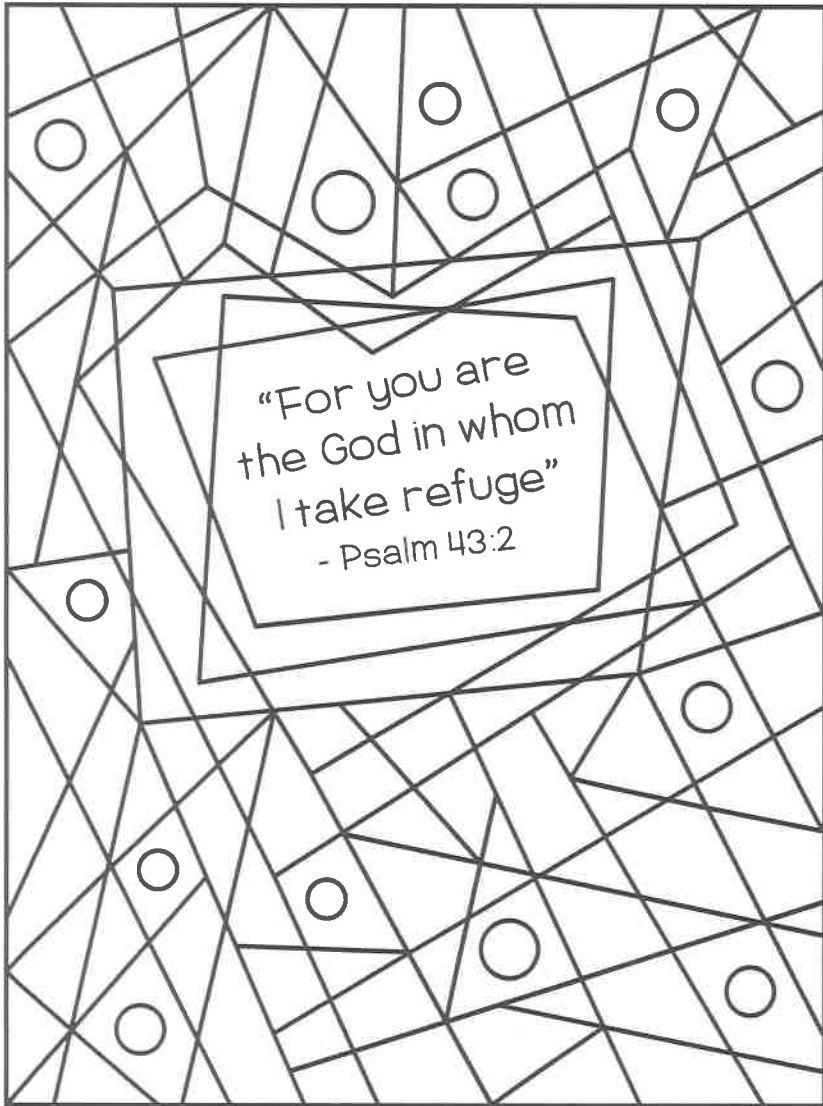


We should love and help and care for each other!



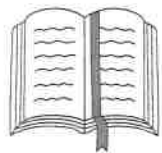
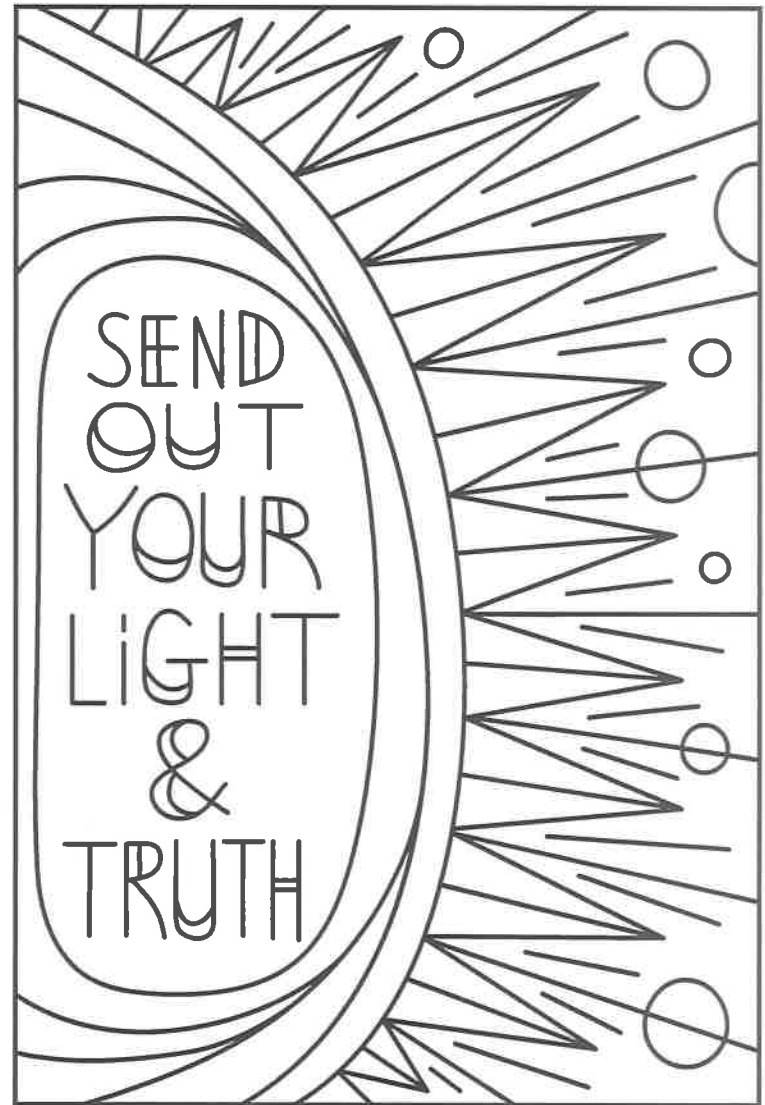
Match the people who need help with the ones who can help them.





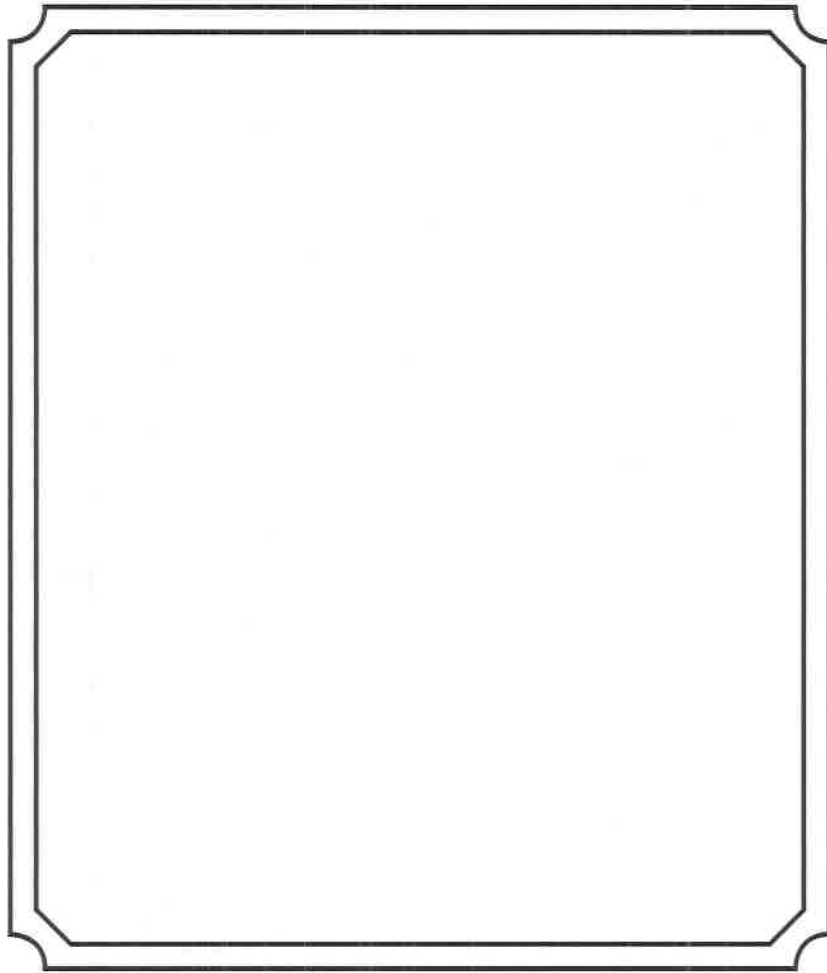
CHILDREN'S WORSHIP • BULLETIN

Activities based on Joshua 3:7-17, Psalm 43, 1 Thessalonians 2:9-13, Matthew 23:1-12.



illustrated
CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

DRAW IT



Joshua 3 describes the priests carrying the "ark of the covenant." This was a structure that the people believed contained God's presence. In the box, draw what you believe God's presence looks like in your life.

WORD SEARCH

Try to find the words from Matthew 23 in the word search below. Words may go up OR down and forward OR backward.

B I E O O R N J L U G L S U S
 S Q C N E V A E H Y W X T M T
 C H A L S S Y N A G O G U E E
 R X L E L P I C S I D Y D S U
 I W P D G Q X Z E K B E E S Q
 B I T I E H H L W G S J N I N
 E O E R Q T B C N R D J T A A
 K J K I E M L P J E F T H H B
 R F R D U H W A A A A F Y O F
 O I A H W I C I X T T S U J I
 N O M S I O H A B E H Q H Z Q
 O X G U B A R L E S E R N N U
 H X U S B O R C V T R L N J P
 M Z J E A R M M W A K H M C U
 F Q U J R E T N A V R E S P O

JESUS	SYNAGOGUE	FATHER
CROWD	MARKETPLACE	MESSIAH
DISCIPLE	RABBI	GREATEST
SCRIBE	TEACHER	SERVANT
HONOR	STUDENT	HUMBLE
BANQUET	HEAVEN	EXALTED

WE ARE
HUNGRY AND
THIRSTY!!!



SO DOG
STEADFAST
S' LOVE ENDURES FOREVER.