

MY BEST FRIEND



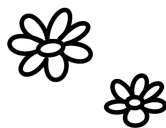
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With thanks to Steph Poulton, Jenn Waldal and Bruce Wilkens for their helpful insights and to Evynn Schlender and Alejandrina Zhou for their delightful illustrations.

More kids, youth and adult discipleship resources can be found at www.ywambelt.org.



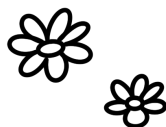
This is Carmen. Carmen is a happy girl. Want to know why? She knows she is loved by Jesus - completely and forever. Now that's a whole lot of love for a very long time.




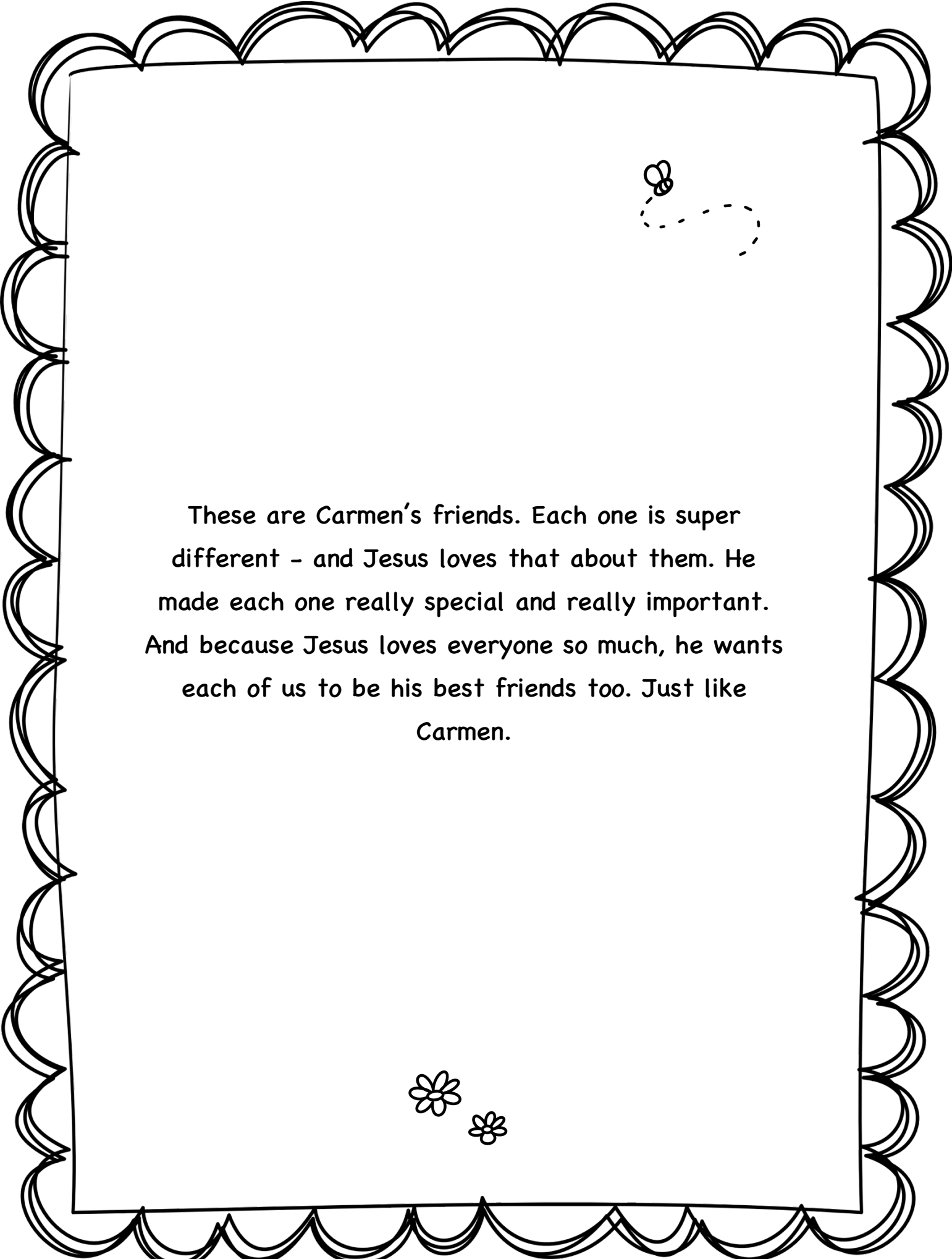





This is Carmen's best friend. His name is Jesus. He's pretty amazing when you think about it. He knows everything there is to know, including everyone. He can even be friends with them all at once. He is stronger than anyone or anything. He even holds the world together. Now that's a very cool friend.

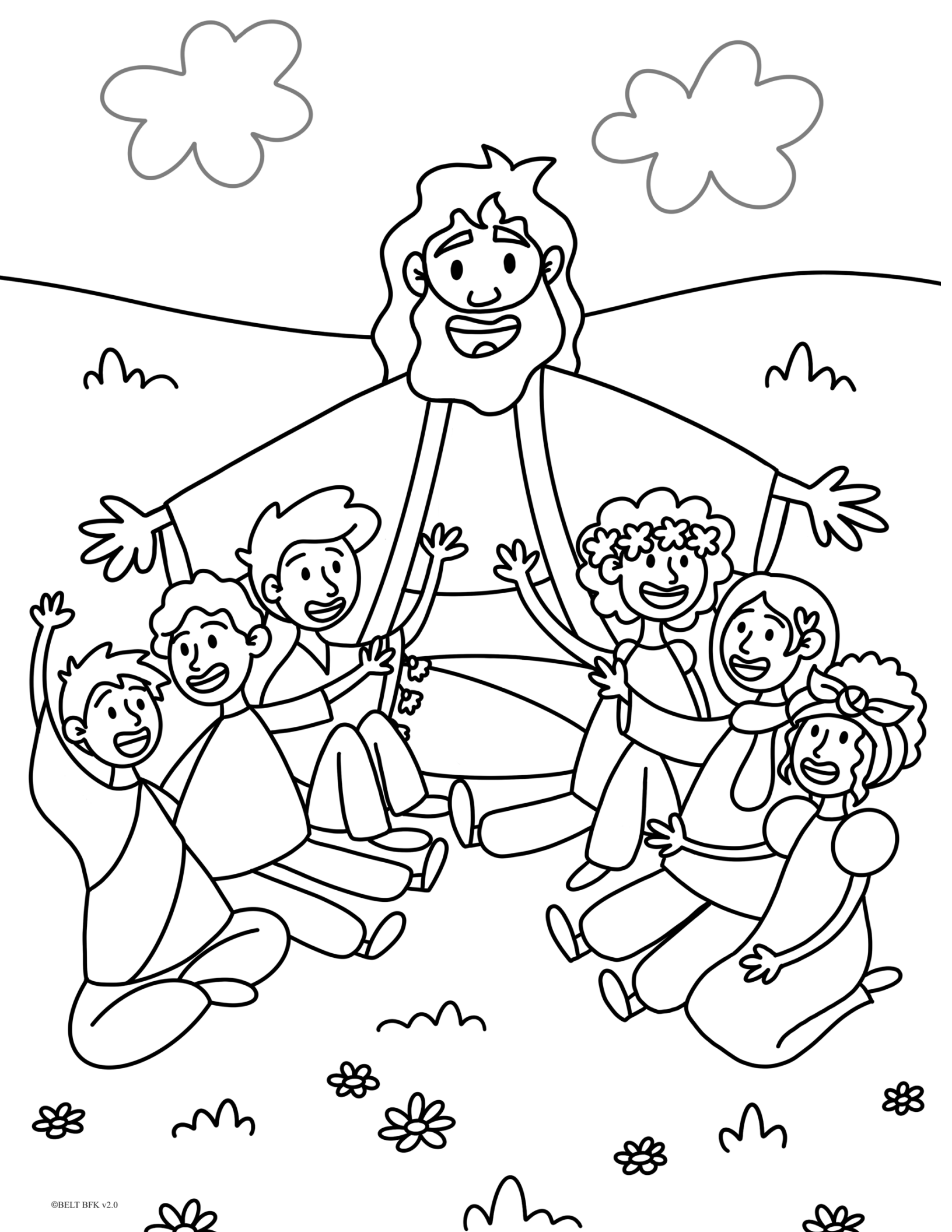



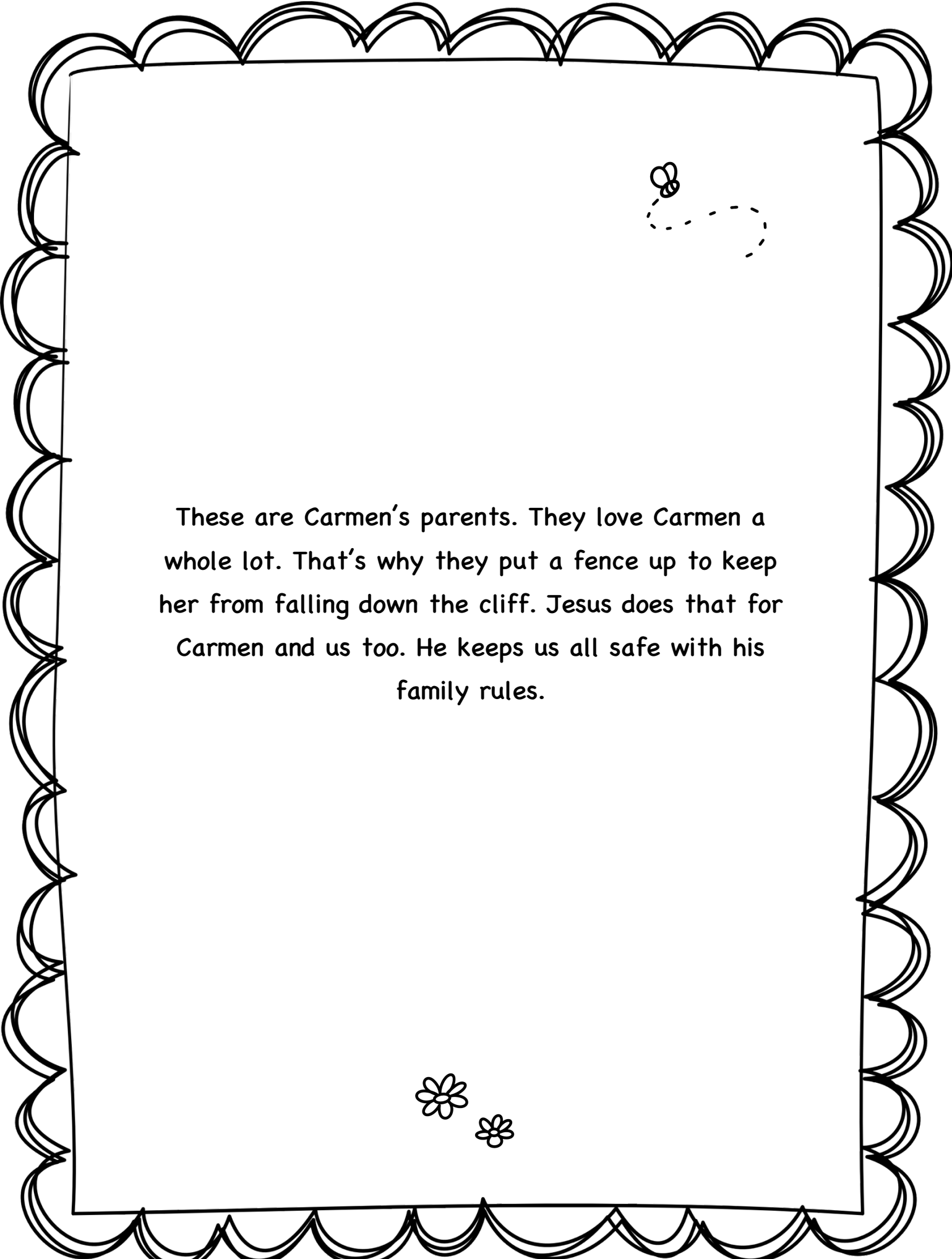





These are Carmen's friends. Each one is super different - and Jesus loves that about them. He made each one really special and really important. And because Jesus loves everyone so much, he wants each of us to be his best friends too. Just like Carmen.

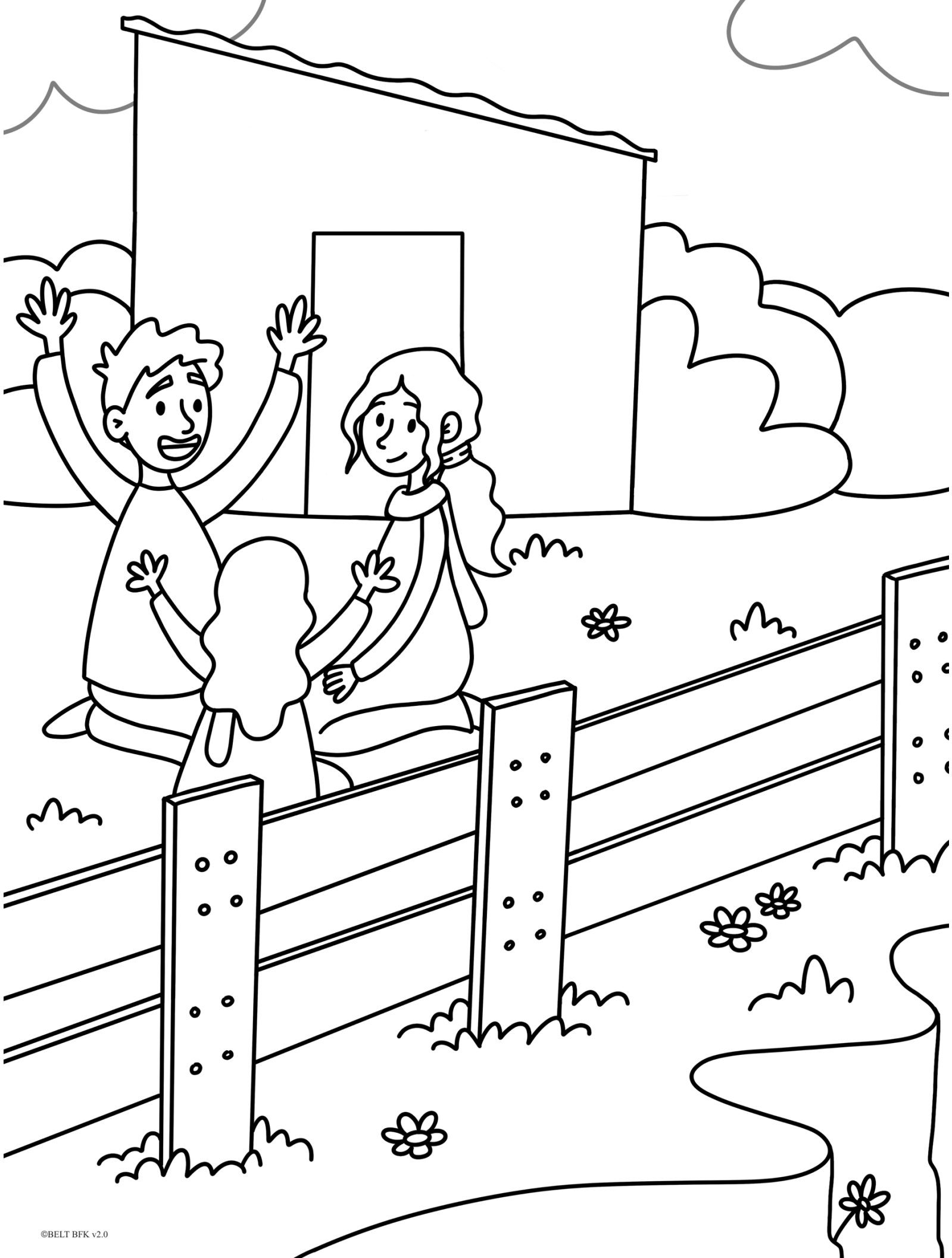






These are Carmen's parents. They love Carmen a whole lot. That's why they put a fence up to keep her from falling down the cliff. Jesus does that for Carmen and us too. He keeps us all safe with his family rules.

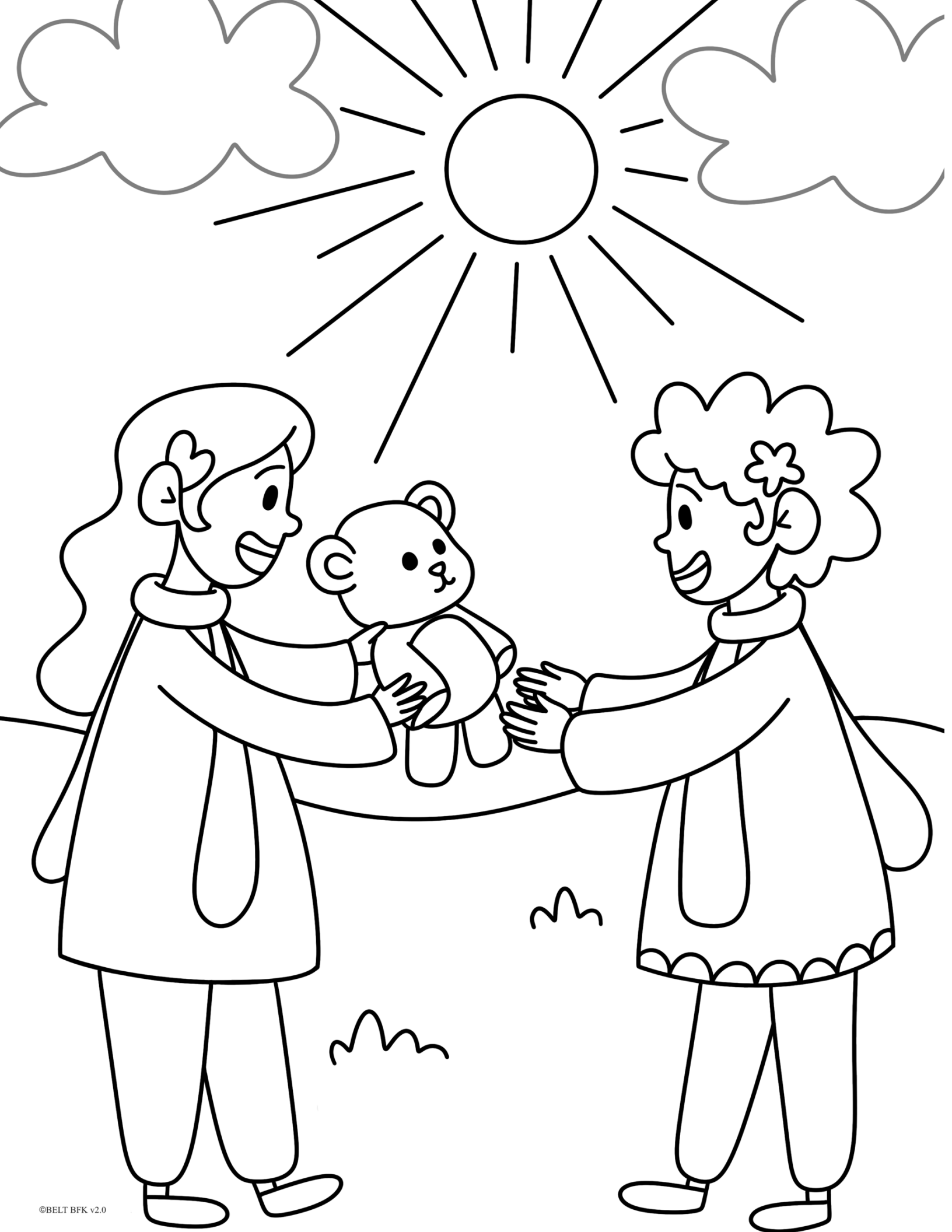






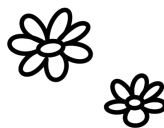
These are Jesus' family rules. You may know some of them already. They are pretty smart. Don't steal. Don't hurt other people. Listen to your parents. Tell the truth. Don't be jealous. Be kind to everyone - including Jesus. Doing these things helps everyone stay happy together. It shows we love others just like we love ourselves.







This book is a special gift from Jesus to Carmen. It's called the Bible. There are some amazing stories inside. There are also some important things for Carmen to remember and some things to do that will keep her safe and happy. It includes Jesus' family rules. It's too bad Silas doesn't know about the Bible so he sometimes finds himself in trouble.

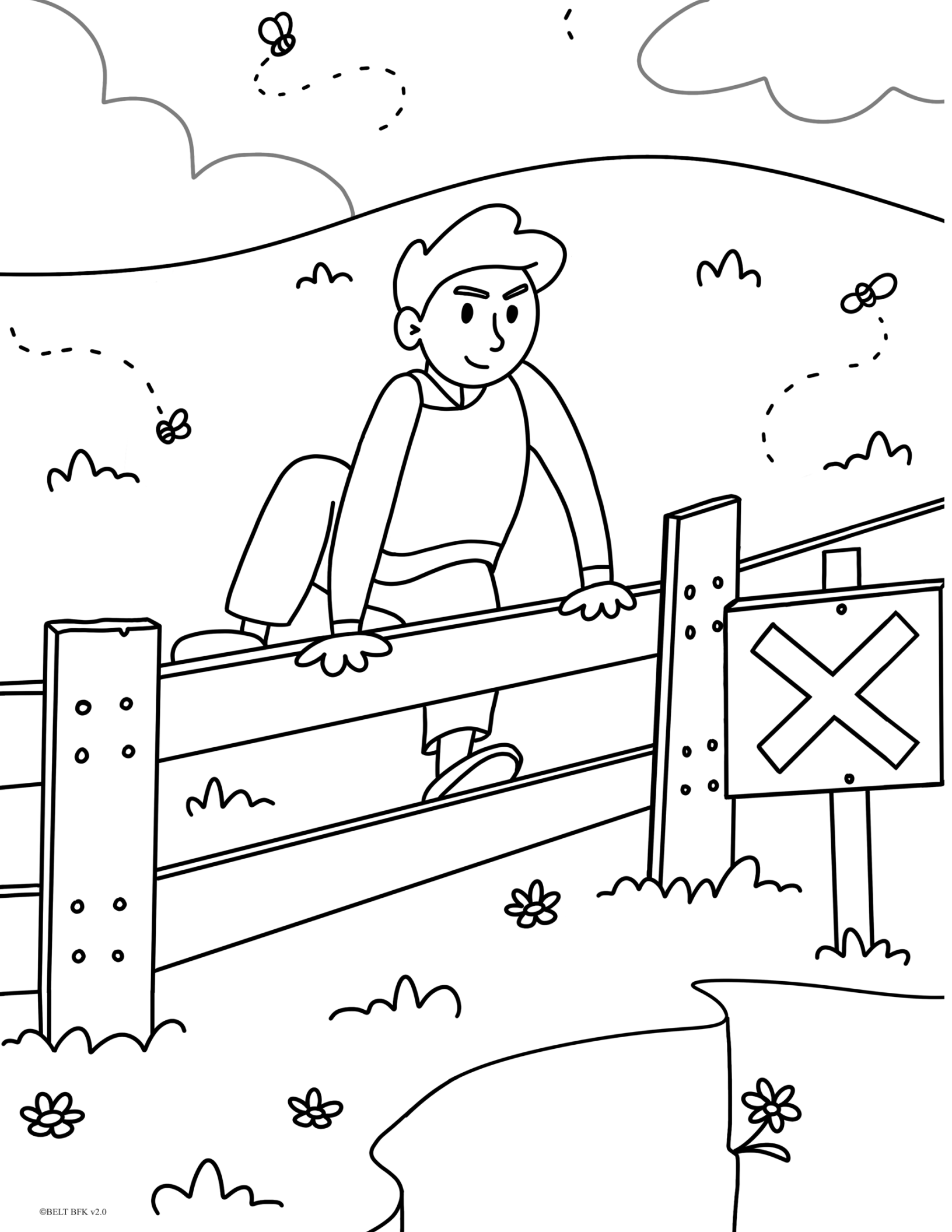






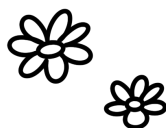
This is Carmen's friend, Silas. Sometimes he does things he knows he's not supposed to. He saw the sign to stay away, but he thinks it would be more fun to play on the other side of the fence. He doesn't see how dangerous the cliff is. You know, sometimes we're like Silas. We know the right thing to do, but we don't want to do it. But then we find ourselves in trouble too.




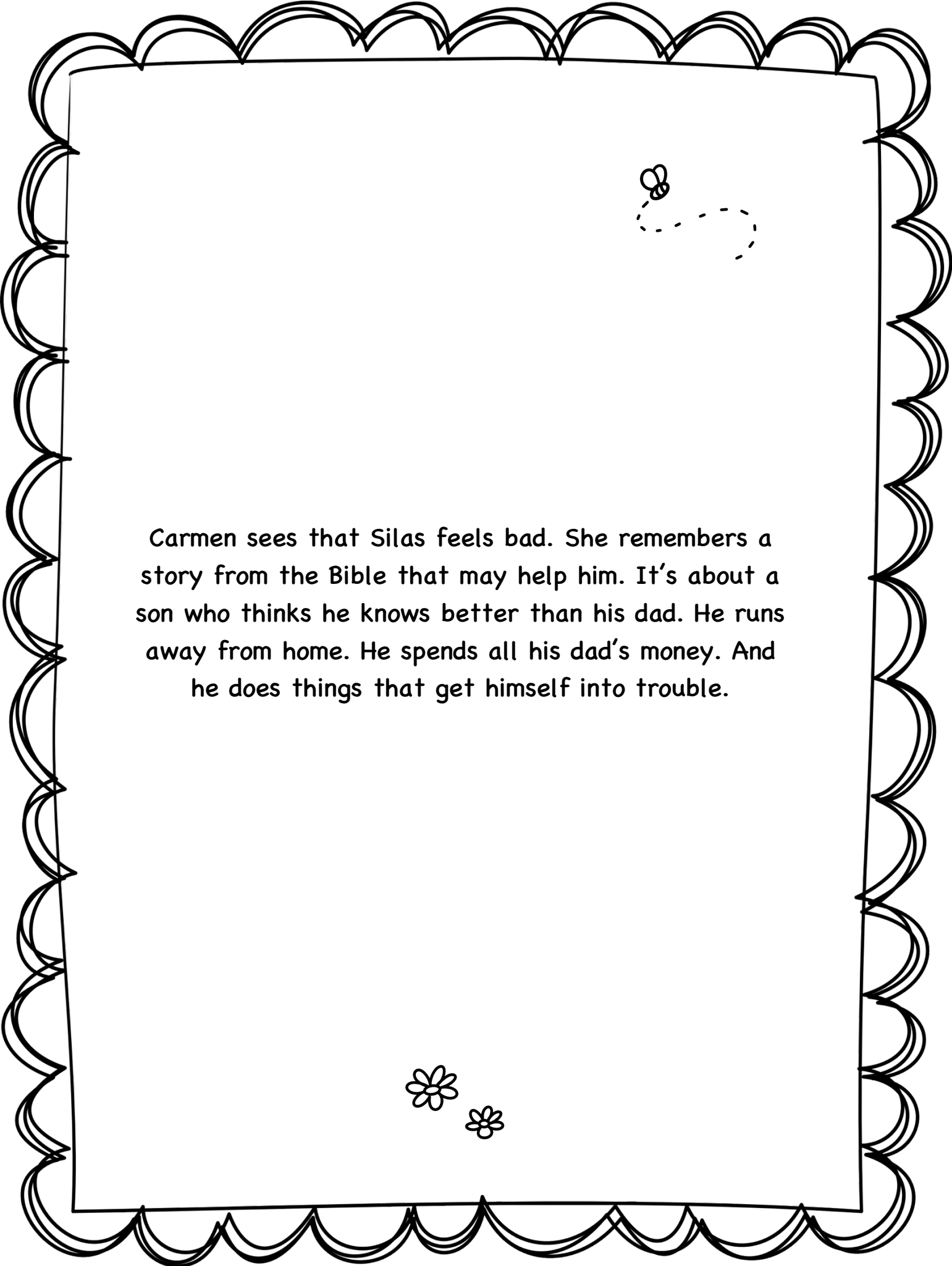





Now Silas is hurt. He feels pretty bad inside too. He wishes he had obeyed. His parents are sad he is hurt. Jesus is the most sad. Next time Silas will listen.







Carmen sees that Silas feels bad. She remembers a story from the Bible that may help him. It's about a son who thinks he knows better than his dad. He runs away from home. He spends all his dad's money. And he does things that get himself into trouble.

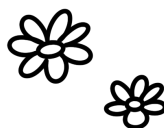


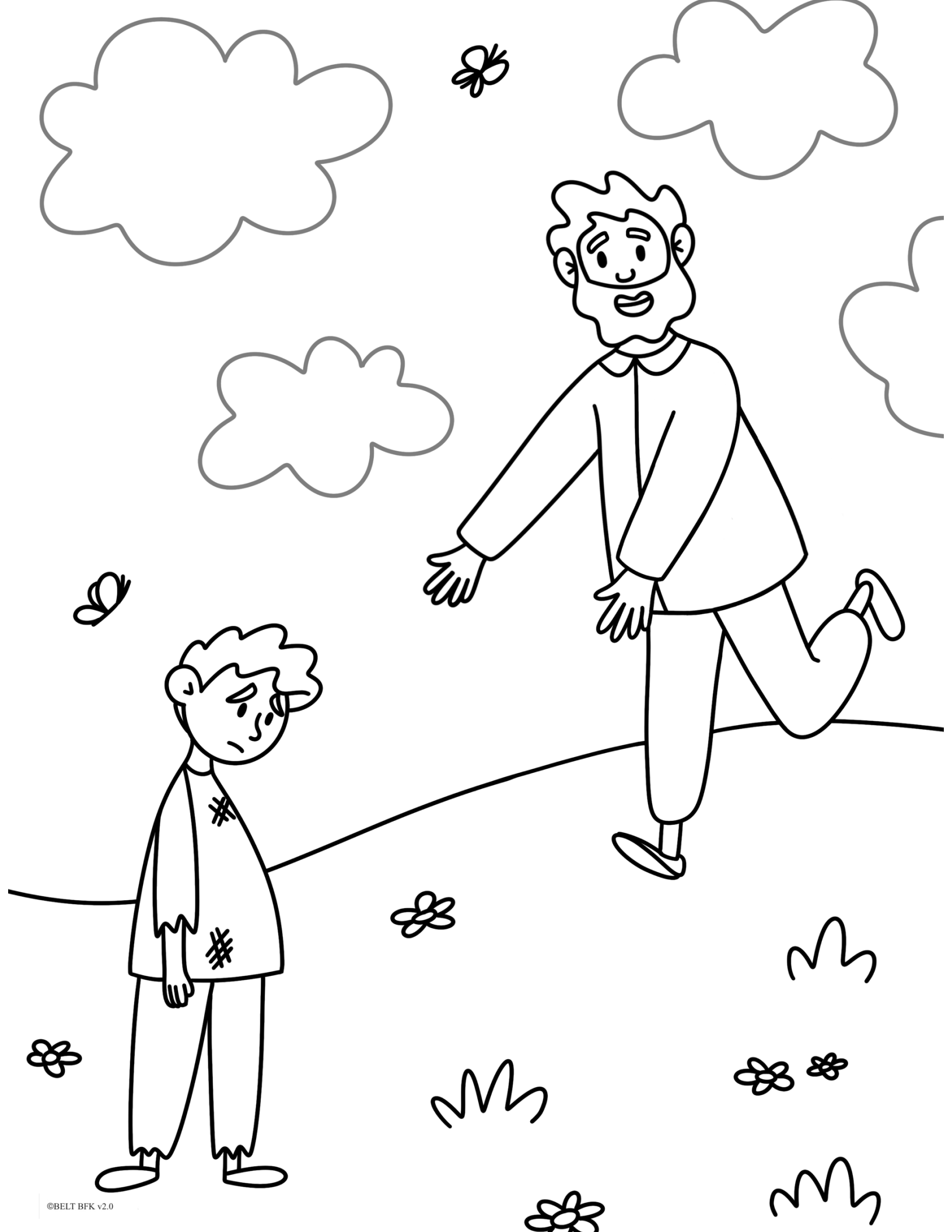




The son feels terrible. He decides to go back home.
He thinks his dad will be angry and send him away.

Instead, his dad runs to him and hugs him! He
welcomes him home! And he forgives him completely!

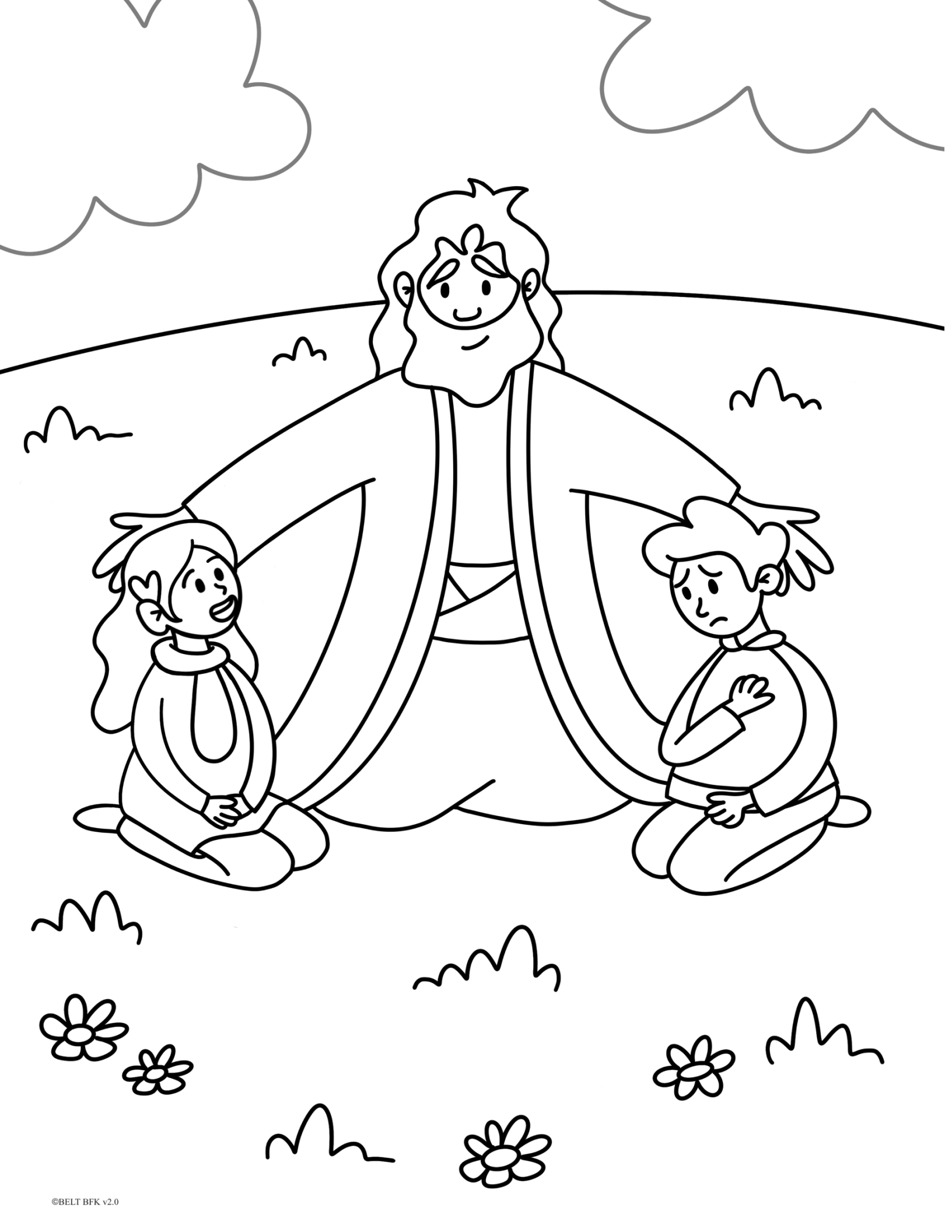






And Jesus is just like that with us. Every time we come back to him and are sorry for our mess ups, he forgives us too. He welcomes us back. He is never angry with us. And he will never stop loving us.







And that is great news! Now Silas can tell this to his friends too. They can always know they are loved. Jesus will always be there for them - and for us too. And we will always have a best friend to cheer us on.

