



BEING USED BY GOD

Disciples & Early Church • U2#4 1st-3rd Gr. • Aug.4, 2024

Concept

God has called us to share the news of reconciliation through Christ.

Goal

Students will learn that God wants to use them, like he used Paul and the followers of Jesus, to share the good news about Jesus with all people!

Passage

Acts 13:2-3, 5, 32, 42-43, 45, 48-50

Key Verse: "When the Gentiles heard this, they were very glad and thanked the Lord for His message..." Acts 13:48a (NLT)

Planning Ahead

Lesson Supplies	Craft Supplies
<p>Introduction & Lesson:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Paper doll pattern printed on 11" x 17" paper, 1/class</i> Adult scissors <p>Learning Activity #1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Frisbees, 2/room</i> <p>Optional Activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrap paper, 7 sheets/class 	<p>Activity Station:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Adam Raccoon and the Mighty Giant, Glen Keane</i> <i>Dominoes, 1 box/room</i> <i>Stamp pads</i> <i>Stampers</i> <i>Gospel cards printed on cardstock, 1 sheet/student</i> Markers

*TEACHERS PLEASE NOTE

For clarity, the italicized areas in the Planning Ahead section indicate supplies that are in—and should be returned to—your classroom SHARED SUPPLY bag.

Background Information (for the teacher)

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In Acts 13 the Holy Spirit personally directed the disciples as they carried out the great commission. Their mission to the Gentiles reads like the carefully laid plans of a modern international business. Peter and Paul established separate ministries and their disciples learned on the job through many and varied missionary trips. In Acts 13, as they fasted and prayed for guidance, the Holy Spirit told them to send Paul and Barnabas to Cyprus. As promised, the Holy Spirit was at work in the hearts of those who were to hear, many believed the Gospel and begged for more teaching.

Today, if we do not see the work of the Holy Spirit as clearly as Luke did perhaps it is because we are not dependent on Him to guide us. As the disciples followed the leading of the Holy Spirit, some rejected them and their message and some gathered to hear, begging for more. We can depend on the Holy Spirit to do the work of preparing the hearts of others and to empower us and provide what we need as we step forward with boldness in fearful witnessing situations. Regardless of the result, our call is to be ambassadors to reconcile the world to Christ (2 Corinthians 5:18-20). As we determine to take our identity and purpose seriously, like Paul we will experience rejection and success. And, like Paul, we must not lose heart, but continue to tell everyone who will hear of Christ's love and forgiveness "... for in due time we shall reap if we do not grow weary" (Galatians 6:9).

The church's early witness to their world was by word of mouth and personal teaching. Now, in addition to word of mouth and personal teaching, we have various media and communications to send our messages through the world. Consider the methods God uses to reach across cultural and political barriers. Which are most effective in your neighborhood, in the mission field, etc.? How were you told about Christ? What was most effective in convincing you of God's love and truth?

Set Up

For the Lesson, fold the 11" x 17" printed paper doll accordion-style, using the dotted line as a guide for the width of the folds. When you cut around the "half-person" and open it, there will be a number of "people" holding hands.

Incorporation Lg. Group

Activity Stations:

- **Craft – “Good News Cards”**
 - **Instructions:** Give each student a cardstock sheet with printed cards. Fill in the blank spaces. Cut out the cards and decorate them with stampers or markers. Hole-punch each card in the same location. Put them in order and string yarn through the holes to tie them together. Then have them practice with each other to share the Good News using the cards.
- **Story- Adam Raccoon and the Mighty Giant**
 - **Instructions:** Read the story and discuss the questions in the back of the book.
- **Game- Dominoes**
 - **Instructions:** Divide the dominoes into two equal groups. One teacher and several children should make a straight row of standing dominoes. Another teacher and group of children make a line of dominoes that fork into a "Y." When both groups have used all the dominoes, knock down the chains. Explain that when we tell others about Jesus and they say yes to Jesus, they will tell others who will tell others and the word spreads. As the dominos fall, we have a picture of how the word spreads. Our missionaries tell a few people about the good news and teach them to tell others. Then several people can go tell their friends, and God's word spreads to the whole world.

Introduction Lg. Group

Today we will look at a situation in the early church when the disciples, Paul and Barnabas, began to teach the truth about Jesus to their fellow Jews. Some listened to and believed the teachings about Jesus. But some were unwilling to listen and to believe the truth. But that didn't stop Paul and Barnabas from teaching the truth. And as a result of their persistence there were Jews and Gentiles who did listen and believe. Our key verse today is, "When the Gentiles heard this, they were very glad and thanked the Lord for His message..." (Acts 13:48a).

Transition

Please gather around as we read our passage for today.

Lesson Lg. Group

Listen as I read Acts 13:2, 3, 5.

When Paul and Barnabas received Christ, God gave them a new identity and a new purpose in life. In Acts 1:8 Jesus told the disciples that they would receive power from the Holy Spirit to be His witnesses to the whole earth.

Lesson Continued

So, their purpose was to tell others the good news that Jesus paid for their sins when He died on the cross. In **Acts 13:5** it says that they went to the Jewish synagogues to tell the people about God's plan from the time of Abraham and that Jesus was the promised Messiah. Look at **verse 32**. With God's Holy Spirit to help them, they were excited to be used by God to tell others the good news.

The people responded differently to this good news. Remembering that the Jews were the group of people who had been waiting for God to send someone to save them, how do you think they responded? Let's look at **verses 42 and 43**. Some were thrilled and begged to hear more. Let's look at **verses 45 and 50**. Some were hostile and rejected not only the truth, but also Paul and Barnabas who spoke the truth.

The rejection and hostility did not stop Paul and Barnabas from proclaiming the truth. Look at verse 48, our key verse, "When the Gentiles heard this, they were very glad and thanked the Lord for His message..." (**Acts 13:48a**). They went to the Gentiles to tell them about Jesus. The Gentiles received their wonderful truths, rejoiced and praised God that they could have a relationship with Him. What is the truth we as Christians are so anxious to share anyway? The Good News cards you made tell exactly what is important for everyone to know.

Instructions: Pick up the scissors and folded paper doll. Cut the paper around the printed doll as you give the gospel.

Let me show you how it works. We tell one other person that God's love for them is so great that He sent His own son Jesus to die on the cross to pay for our sins. We want to be sure that they understand they cannot pay for their own sins but that they have to ask that Jesus' death pay for their sins. And when they do, God forgives them and promises to live with them forever. We tell one person and that person may say, "Yes, I believe that is true and I want to ask Jesus to forgive me." Or, that person may say, "I don't believe you," "I'm not interested" or "I don't want to hear about it." But if they don't believe you or say they aren't interested, that shouldn't stop you from telling people. That news is too good to keep to yourself. God wants everyone to hear His good news. When someone says, "yes" to that good news, they tell others and so on until we get a chain of believers like this. (Open the paper person chain.)

When the disciples went to the cities in Asia, many believed and were anxious to hear more. But there was opposition, too. Whenever the gospel is shared, some will oppose it and some will be anxious to hear more. Remember the key verse, "When the Gentiles heard this, they were very glad and thanked the Lord for His message..." (**Acts 13:48a**).

Transition

Let's play a game that reminds us that we can keep the good news going and going if we keep telling others about Jesus. Just as each player will keep the Frisbee going, the good news about Jesus keeps going out to others as we each choose to share it.

Learning Activity#1 Lg. Group

Game – Perpetual Motion [1]

Instructions: Divide into 2 teams if you have a class bigger than 12. Players sit in a circle on the floor and count off so that each person has a number. Place the Frisbee on the floor in the center of the circle. The first player gets up, turns the Frisbee on edge and spins it as you would a coin. As the player sits down he or she calls out the number of another player. The player whose number is called jumps up, gets the disc before it stops, gives it another spin, and calls out another player's number before sitting down. Players continue calling each other's numbers and keeping the disc spinning. If the disc completely stops spinning, a player starts it again. The object of the game is to cooperate in keeping the disc spinning, not to trick other players.

[1] Bob Gregson, *The Incredible Indoor Games Book*, © 1982 by Fearon Teacher Aids, 23740 Hawthorne Blvd., Torrance, CA 90505, p. 129.

Transition

Let's get into small groups to finish up.

Learning Activity#2 Sm. Groups

In Acts 13 we learn what happened to the disciples as they traveled from city to city telling people about God's love. They shared that Jesus suffered, died and rose from the dead for everyone. Some people believed but others didn't. The disciples were sad when people chose not to listen, but the Holy Spirit encouraged them to keep telling everyone about Jesus. They went everywhere God sent them and moved on when He told them to. They decided to tell everyone the good news whether those people believed the truth or not. Turn to the book of Acts, chapter 13, verse 48 to find our key verse. Would someone like to read it for us? "When the Gentiles heard this, they were very glad and thanked the Lord for his message..." (Acts 13:48a). When the people were glad to hear the truth and were excited about it, the disciples wanted even more to tell others about Jesus.

- Do you have any questions about the good news of Jesus?
- Have you ever been really excited to tell someone about Jesus?
- What did you tell them about Jesus?
- What happened when you told them?

Missions Prayer: Talk about and pray for the Oasis Giving Campaign.

Let's pray that the Holy Spirit will show us how and where to tell others about the love and forgiveness of Jesus.

Game – Group Juggling [1]

Instructions: Crush 7 pieces of paper into balls.

Everyone stands in a circle about one arm's length apart.

The first player throws a crushed paper ball to someone on the other side of the circle, who throws it to a third person, and so forth. This continues until the ball makes its way to everyone once and returns to the original person. Each player should receive the ball only once. Players are to remember to whom they throw the ball. When a pattern is set it is never broken throughout the game.

The leader throws the first ball. As the rhythm of the pattern becomes smoother and throwers and receivers get used to it, another ball is added then a third, then a fourth. Players should be able, depending on the size of the group, to keep six or seven balls moving at once.

To help keep the rhythm of the group moving in a steady flow, try having everyone sing a song, such as "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" or repeat a silly chant—"Pass the ball, not the wall!"—that follows the beats of catching/throwing.

[1] Bob Gregson, *The Incredible Indoor Games Book*, © 1982 by Fearon Teacher Aids, 23740 Hawthorne Blvd., Torrance, CA 90505, p. 127.