

The First Christians

PLEASE NOTE!

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Introduction

There are many words which could be chosen to describe the time of the first Christians. “Exciting” and “dangerous” would no doubt be high on the list. It is hoped that, as you teach these lessons, the children will gain some insight into what life was like for those early Christians, but then also see what they have to say to us today. Unsaved children need to know what a difference it can make to them that the Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead; they need to know that their greatest need is to have their sins forgiven and that Jesus is the only One Who can meet that need. Christian children need to know that God is with them by His Holy Spirit and that, although they can expect some degree of persecution, He has promised never to leave them. As you teach these lessons, may God use you to show the children how He can meet all their needs.

Teaching Bible truths

As you teach these lessons make sure that you do not get so engrossed in the narrative that you do not teach Bible truths. We fall short of our responsibility as teachers if we only tell children Bible stories. It is essential that children learn the truths those stories were written down to teach us, and that we then take them a step further to show what that truth means to them in their daily lives. Of course, we cannot in one lesson cover all the teaching any particular story would provide, so in each of these lessons one central truth has been chosen. The teaching of the central truth has been woven throughout the narrative, but to help you in your preparation the teaching sections have been marked “CT”. These are also marked out in the lesson plan.

You will notice that the central truths are marked with a “U” or an “S” to show the kind of children the truth is applied to - unsaved or saved. This is also made clear in the text by using phrases such as, “If you have not trusted the Lord Jesus to forgive your sin ...” or, “Christian, you ...”.

The application of the truth has been highlighted with a line beside the text. You may feel it necessary to adapt the applications to better suit the children you teach. For example, the application may use a boy’s name, yet you have only girls present. It could be that the application given is more applicable to older children, while yours are very young. Make the changes you feel are necessary. The important thing is that the Word of God is applied to their lives.

Make yourself available for counselling

When you present the Gospel message, there will be children who will respond to it independently. They may or may not at a later date tell you that they have trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour. There will, however, be others who would like some help. They may have questions to ask; they may need help or encouragement in knowing what to say.

As you teach the saved children, there may be times when they would like advice in a difficult situation; they may need clarification on how a particular lesson applies to their daily lives; they may find themselves in a situation where they do not know what the Bible says they should do; they may want to share a difficulty so that you can pray for them, especially if you are the only Christian support they have.

For these reasons it is important that the children know you are available to talk. It is also important that they know when and where to go when they want to talk to you. Finally, it is essential that unsaved children do not confuse coming to the Lord Jesus with coming to you.

In all cases you should not make yourself available at the same time as giving the Gospel invitation, so that the children never get the impression that they cannot come to Christ without coming through you, or that they are saved simply by waiting to speak to you.

An example for use with the unsaved child

“Do you really want to live for the Lord Jesus, but don't know how to come to Him? I will be glad to explain it from the Bible; come and see me. I'll be standing by that tree when the meeting is over. Remember, I can't take away your sin - only the Lord Jesus can do that - but I will be glad to help you understand better how you can come to Him. Just come and sit with me under that tree.”

An example for use with the saved child

“If you have trusted the Lord Jesus as your Saviour and you have never told me about it, please let me know. I'll be standing beside the piano after the meeting is finished. I would like to know if you too have trusted the Lord Jesus as your Lord and Saviour, so that I can pray for you and perhaps help you.”

Memory verses

A Scripture verse to teach the children is suggested for each lesson. If you are teaching the lessons as a series over six weeks it would be advisable to choose two or three verses to teach well, which the children will then remember. If you try to teach all six, the children may not really know any of them well.

How children learn

Children (and indeed adults!) remember very little of what they only hear - about 10%. If they hear and see, the amount remembered rises to 50%. Your teaching will increase in effectiveness as you use **pictures** and **wordstrips** while you speak. To attain the maximum benefit - remembering 70% - the children need to do as well as hear and see. You can involve the children during the lesson by asking **questions** (examples are given in the lesson texts) and by organising older children to have verses ready to read out in the course of the lesson rather than reading them all yourself. To further reinforce the teaching, a **carry-over activity** has been suggested at the end of each lesson. During the time the children are working on these activities, you and your helpers have a natural opportunity to talk about what has been taught. **Review questions** are also provided (see note below).

Practise using the visuals

Flashcards

It is wise to practise using the visuals before teaching the lesson to children. Become thoroughly familiar with the flashcards and know when you need to use them in the lesson.

Flannelgraph figures

Practise using the visuals and changing the scenes before you go to teach. Become thoroughly familiar with all the figures and know when you need to use them in the lesson. Scenic backgrounds can be purchased to use with these lessons. We give suggestions before each scene, but they are by no means essential. All your teaching can be done on one plain flannel.

Extra visual aids

On a piece of card print out the words of the central truth for each lesson. If you are using a flannelboard, back the card with flannel or pieces of flocked paper. (Use lower case letters, so that even the younger ones can read the words easily.) Put this card on the board at the beginning of the class or when you first teach the central truth in the lesson.

Additional helps

Along the left and right margins additional helps are provided, giving background information and optional ideas on how to add interest to your lesson.

These ideas are designed to incorporate different learning styles. For effective learning some children need to see or write, others need to hear or speak, others need to touch or handle, and still others need active participation.

You can use these ideas in your club as time allows.

Review questions

For each lesson some review questions are given. These can be used after the lesson or the following week, before teaching the new lesson.

Review time, if conducted in an orderly way, can be an ideal opportunity to reinforce what you have taught, while still being fun for the children. You can use this time ...

- 1 to find out how much the children are understanding and remembering.
- 2 to help you as a teacher to know what you need to emphasise more so that the children will remember better.
- 3 to provide a time of fun in the class. The children like competition and look forward to this part of the programme. But it is more than just a game: it is a time of learning.

In this textbook only questions on the lesson are included. It would be profitable to include questions also on the songs, verse and whatever else you teach. In this way the children realise that every part of the programme is important.

Overview

Lesson	Central truth	Application	Memory verse
The witnesses Mark 16:1-15 Luke 23:47 - 24:12 Luke 24:36-53 John 19:38 - 20:23 Acts 1:1-11	The Lord Jesus Christ is risen from the dead	Unsaved: He can save you Saved: He is always with you	"... The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again" Luke 24:7
God's power for the Christian Acts 2:1-41	God the Holy Spirit lives in every Christian	Unsaved: Trust the Lord Jesus as your Saviour, then the Holy Spirit will live in you Saved: He will help you to live the way God wants you to	"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me ..." Acts 1:8
God works through the Christian Acts 3:1-16	The Lord Jesus Christ can meet your greatest need	Unsaved: The Lord Jesus is the only One Who can take away your sin - trust Him Saved: Tell others how the Lord Jesus can meet their greatest need	"Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out ..." Acts 3:19
God cannot be fooled Acts 4:32 - 5:11 Acts 8:9-24	God knows everything	Unsaved: Part (a): You cannot hide your sin from God Part (b): You cannot fool God into thinking you are a Christian Saved: You cannot make God think that your Christian life is better than it is	"God ... knows the secrets of the heart" Psalm 44:21
God's message is for everyone Acts 10:1-48	God wants everyone to hear the Gospel	Unsaved: You have heard the Gospel - believe it Saved: God wants you to tell the Gospel to others	"And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another ..." 1 John 3:23
God's children are persecuted Acts 4:1-31 Acts 5:17 - 7:60	God's children suffer for Him	Saved: Expect to suffer, pray for God's help, and remember He will be with you	"... I will never leave you nor forsake you" Hebrews 13:5

Lesson 1

The witnesses

Scripture for teachers

Mark 16:1-15

Luke 23:47 - 24:12

Luke 24:36-53

John 19:38 - 20:23

Acts 1:1-11

Central truth

The Lord Jesus Christ is risen from the dead

Application

Unsaved: He can save you

Saved: He is always with you

Making yourself available

There is no opportunity given in this lesson text to make yourself available to any child who wants to find out more about becoming a Christian. You could do this at another point in the programme, for example after teaching the memory verse. You could say something like this.

“If you have realised that the Lord Jesus was crucified for your sin and you want to ask Him to forgive you and come into your life you can do that today. You can pray to Him where you are sitting; you can pray to Him at home in the quietness of your bedroom; or, if you are not sure what to say or do, you can wait at the end of *Good News Club*® and I will try to answer any questions you have. If you want to speak to me, stay in your seat when the others are leaving.”

Memory verse

“... The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again” Luke 24:7

It would be a good idea to teach this verse after the lesson so that you can put the verse into context. These words were originally spoken by the Lord Jesus Christ before His death (Luke 18:31-33) but in this verse the angels at the empty tomb are repeating them to the women, reminding them of what Jesus had already said.

Visual aids

- ◆ Flashcards: 1-2, 1-3, 1-4, 1-5, 1-6 and 2-1

Or

- ◆ Flannelgraph figures: 1A-3, 1A-4, 1A-5, 1A-6, 1A-7, 1A-15 and 1A-16

And

- ◆ Other pictures you could use, if you have them, are from *Life of Christ - Volume 4*. In the flannelgraph version, the figures are numbered 49 and 50 (disciples), 45 (Jesus), 48 (Jesus ascending), and 51 (men in white). In the flashcard version, use scenes 6-4, 6-5 and 6-6.
- ◆ Central truth wordstrip: You could mount this on a card silhouette of the Lord Jesus' head. Show it each time you teach the central truth.
- ◆ Other useful wordstrips: disciples, Mary Magdalene, Peter, John.
- ◆ A large card question mark with “Is the Lord Jesus always with you?” printed on it could be used to emphasise your closing challenge.
- ◆ To reinforce the teaching on the importance of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ you could also have the following printed on strips of card, backed with flocked paper for use on the flannelgraph board. Alternatively you could use a separate, unflocked board (or a wall) and attach with Blu-tac or something similar.

Because the Lord Jesus rose from the dead, we can know that:

- God accepted the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus.
- Jesus took all our punishment.
- The Lord Jesus finished paying for sin.
- There is nothing left for us to pay.

Lesson outline

Introduction

The sadness and fear of the disciples

Progression of events

- 1 Mary comes with news CT
- 2 The other women arrive CTU, CTS
- 3 Peter and John go to the tomb
CTU, CTS
- 4 Mary returns to the garden CTS
- 5 Jesus appears to the disciples in a locked
room
- 6 Jesus appears to many at various times

Climax

Jesus returns to Heaven

Conclusion

The disciples are no longer sad CTU

Lesson

★ **Introduction: The sadness and fear of the disciples.**

The disciples of the Lord Jesus were very sad. He had been such a special friend to them, and now He was dead. The Lord Jesus had been put to death on a cross and then buried in a tomb.

Place cross (1A-15) and tomb (1A-16).

Now the disciples were sad because they thought they wouldn't see Him again. They were also very afraid. They thought they might be arrested and punished too, or even put to death, because they had been special friends of the Lord Jesus. So, they hid together in a locked room, sad and afraid.

Remove cross (1A-15) and tomb (1A-16). Place disciples (1A-3, 1A-4 and 1A-5).

★ **Progression of events: Mary comes with news.**

I imagine the room was really quiet that Sunday morning. Then Mary Magdalene came running with some shocking news.

Place Mary Magdalene (1A-6).

Listen to what she had to tell them.

Read John 20:2 from your Bible.

“They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him.”

Mary and some other women had been to the tomb where they had seen Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus place the body of Jesus on Friday evening. It was too late then to put spices on the body as they usually did when someone died. The next day was the Sabbath when they obeyed God's Law to rest. So, very early on Sunday morning, the women set out for the tomb.

How do you think they felt when they discovered that the body of the Lord Jesus was not there?

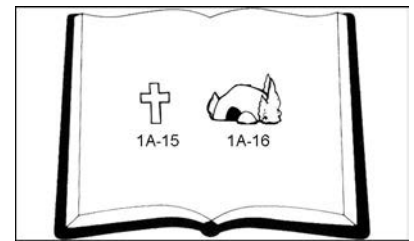
Allow children to answer. Possible answers: shocked, sad, upset.

Mary ran straight away to tell the disciples, leaving the other women behind.

Mary, the disciples, and all of Jesus' friends had forgotten what Jesus had told them while He was with them. That was why they were so sad and afraid. That was why Mary was upset that the body of the Lord Jesus was no longer in the tomb. They would not have been sad and upset if they had remembered what Jesus had said. Jesus had told them that He would rise from the dead, but they hadn't really understood what He meant. Maybe you have not yet understood what it means to you that the Lord Jesus rose from the dead. Listen to what the disciples learnt so you can understand it too.

★ **Progression of events: The other women arrive.**

Suddenly there was more noise as Joanna, Salome, Mary the mother of James and other women who had been to Jesus' tomb arrived with even



Mary Magdalene was the Mary from whom Jesus cast out seven demons (Luke 8:2 and Mark 16:9).

Flashcard 1-2

The Jewish Sabbath begins at sunset on Friday.

Discuss what the women might have been thinking and feeling. Role-play what they might have been saying.

Have young children pretend to be alarmed.

No flashcard

CT

more astonishing news. I'm sure they were so excited that they all tried to talk at once. Each of them probably wanted to be the one to tell the fantastic news. Can't you imagine what it must have sounded like?

Try to make the following statements sound like a group of excited women, all trying to tell what they had experienced.

"The stone was rolled away!"

"Jesus' body isn't there!"

"They were angels!"

"Clothes as bright as lightning!"

"We fell to the ground because we were so frightened."

"He's alive. The angels said so!"

"Jesus is risen from the dead."

Do you think the disciples believed them?

Allow some children to answer.

The Bible tells us what they thought about this news.

Read Luke 24:11 from your Bible.

"And their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them."

It seemed like nonsense to them. They didn't believe what the women were telling them.

CTU

There are many people today who do not believe what these women were saying. Even some people who claim to be Christians do not believe that Jesus rose from the dead, but God tells us clearly in His Word that He did. For example in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4 (*read from your Bible*), "Christ died for our sins ... He was buried ... He rose again the third day." If the Lord Jesus did not rise from the dead, there is no way we can be saved from the punishment we deserve for our sin. By raising Jesus from the dead, God showed that He accepted the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus' life. He showed that all our punishment had been taken by the Lord Jesus on the cross. He finished paying for our sin on the cross. There is nothing left for us to pay. If you do not believe that Jesus rose from the dead, you can not believe that He took all the punishment for all of your sin. If you do believe that He rose from the dead, and you have trusted Him to forgive your sin, then you need never worry about being punished by God after you die. Because God raised the Lord Jesus from the dead, you can know that you have nothing to pay for your sin because Jesus took all the punishment that you deserve. Do you believe that the Lord Jesus rose from the dead?

★ **Progression of events: Peter and John go to the tomb.**

The disciples didn't believe it yet. Peter and John ran out of the room to go and see the tomb for themselves.

Remove Peter and John (1A-3) and then all other figures.

Let children name some things they know are sins.

CTS

Preschoolers will enjoy this running trip. Have locations fixed in room or outdoors.

If anyone saw them on their way, I'm sure they wondered where these two grown men were running to in such a hurry.

Place tomb (1A-16).

John was faster than Peter. He got there first. He stopped at the entrance. He bent down and looked in. He saw the strips of cloth that the body of Jesus had been wrapped in, but the body had gone. Then Peter arrived probably panting for breath, rushed straight past John and went right on into the tomb where he too saw the strips of cloth, but not the body of the Lord Jesus. Listen to John 20:6-7 and put your hand up if you can tell me what Peter noticed about the cloths.

Read out the verses and allow a child to answer.

Yes, Peter noticed that the cloth that had been round the head of the Lord Jesus was folded by itself, separate from the strips of cloth that had been round the rest of His body. Then John came in behind Peter and saw these things for himself. The cloths were there, but the Lord Jesus was not.

Could the body have been stolen? No, anyone stealing the body would not have taken time to remove the cloths and anyhow the tomb had been closed up and guarded by soldiers. Peter and John were able to see for themselves that what the women had said was true. The body of the Lord Jesus was gone. They went away trying to understand what they had seen. Why was the body of the Lord Jesus not there? Why were the cloths still there?

We know why the body of the Lord Jesus was gone, don't we?

Allow a child to answer.

Yes, it was because the Lord Jesus had risen from the dead. God had raised Jesus from the dead so He could save you from being punished for your sin. A dead person can't help anybody. The Lord Jesus can forgive your sin and save you from punishment because He is alive. Do you sometimes feel as if you are fighting a battle with sin? Are you trying to fight sin to make yourself good enough for Heaven, but sin usually wins? Are you like a boy called Andy who decided to stop saying bad words because he thought it would make him a better person and then God might let him into Heaven? Andy found that he just couldn't stop using bad words, especially when he was angry. The words just seemed to slip out before he had time to stop himself saying them. Andy couldn't stop sinning by himself. You can't stop sinning by yourself, but Jesus showed that He had won the battle with sin once and for all by rising from the dead. Because He is alive, He can forgive your sin, if you depend completely on Him. Then He will change you and He will be with you to help you to say "No!" when you are tempted to do wrong.

How do we know that the Lord Jesus has won the battle with sin?

Allow a child to answer.

Flashcard 1-3

Show linen cloths.
Children can learn
through touch.



CTU, CTS

Show the card with the central truth: "The Lord Jesus Christ is risen from the dead".

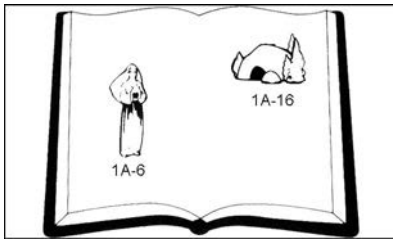
We know He has won because He rose from the dead, but His friends still hadn't understood everything. They were still not sure that He was alive.

★ **Progression of events: Mary returns to the garden.**

Mary Magdalene had come back to the garden.

Place Mary Magdalene (1A-6).

Flashcard 1-4



Perhaps she had slowly followed Peter and John. They left the garden and Mary stood alone outside the tomb, crying. She couldn't understand what had happened. She still thought that someone had taken the body of the Lord Jesus away. Mary bent down to look into the tomb once again ... and there she saw two angels, one sitting where the head of the Lord Jesus had been, the other where His feet had been!

Read what was said from John 20:13.

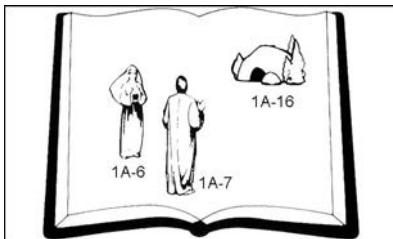
"Then they said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping?'"

"She said to them, 'Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him.'"

Mary turned away. Maybe she just couldn't bear to look at the empty tomb any longer.

Place Jesus (1A-7).

Flashcard 1-5



As she turned, someone else asked her (*read from John 20:15*), "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?"

Mary thought it was the gardener who was speaking to her.

"Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away."

"Mary!" the person said.

Flashcard 1-6

At once Mary knew. It was Jesus! He was really alive! Mary must have been bursting with joy! She had seen Jesus with her own eyes and He was alive! This was a very special happening, for the Bible tells us (*read the relevant phrase from Mark 16:9*), "He appeared first to Mary Magdalene." Mary Magdalene was the first person to see Jesus after He rose from the dead.

How different she must have felt now that she knew Jesus was alive again. She had been so sad because she thought she wouldn't see Him again, but now she was very happy because she had seen Him alive.

CTS

He is still alive today and always will be. The Lord Jesus is never going to die again. Listen to what He promised His followers.

Read part of Matthew 28:20 from your Bible.

"Lo, I am with you always ..." He is able to do that because He is alive for ever. If you are a Christian, He promises to be with you always. So, whenever you are afraid, remember He is with you and ask Him to help you. Perhaps others make fun of you because you are a Christian. Remember Jesus is with you and trust Him to help you. Maybe you lie

in bed afraid of the dark. Remember Jesus is with you and talk to Him about it. When you are tempted to do something wrong, remember Jesus is with you and can give you the strength to say “No!” to anything which would hurt Him. It was only after Andy became a Christian that he was able to stop using bad language. He often asked the Lord Jesus to help him not to say bad words. He knew that his Saviour was always with him and that doing anything wrong would be hurtful to Him. Andy didn’t want to do anything that would hurt the Lord Jesus, because he realised how much He had suffered for him on the cross. Knowing that Jesus is with you makes such a difference.

It certainly made a big difference to Mary to see the Lord Jesus alive.

Remove Jesus (1A-7) and tomb (1A-16).

Once again she went to the disciples.

Place disciples (1A-3, 1A-4 and 1A-5).

They were still crying, mourning the death of the Lord Jesus, when in came Mary full of joy and excitement to tell them that Jesus was alive. But even though she told them she had seen Him with her own eyes, they still did not believe her.

Remove Mary Magdalene (1A-6).

★ **Progression of events: Jesus appears to the disciples in a locked room.**

That same Sunday evening, the disciples were still hiding in that room, still with the door locked, still full of sadness and fear. Suddenly, Jesus was standing there!

Place Jesus (1A-7).

Read what Jesus said from John 20:19.

“Peace be with you,” He said.

He showed them His hands and His side. Now the disciples had seen Him with their own eyes. Now they believed He was alive. Their sadness was gone and they were full of joy. It was really true. Jesus had risen from the dead.

★ **Progression of events: Jesus appears to many at various times.**

After that, the Lord Jesus appeared many times to many people. Once, He appeared to a crowd of 500 people (1 Corinthians 15:6). He spent time with His disciples, teaching them and helping them to understand what had happened on the cross.

★ **Climax: Jesus returns to Heaven.**

Forty days after He had risen from the dead, the Lord Jesus was with His disciples. He told them to wait in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit came. The Holy Spirit would help them to teach others about Him. Then, as the disciples watched, the Lord Jesus was taken up from them.

Remove Jesus (1A-7).

They stared as a cloud hid Him from their sight. Suddenly, two men in white (angels) were standing beside them. This is what they said.

No flashcard



Flashcard 2-1



No flashcard

If you have flannelgraph figures from the series *Life of Christ - Volume 4*, you may want to use the following figures for this section: 49 and 50 (disciples), 45 (Jesus),

48 (Jesus ascending), and 51 (men in white).

If you have the flashcard version, you could use scenes 6-4, 6-5 and 6-6.



Review game

Resurrection witness

Divide the group into two teams and ask questions, alternating between the teams.

Each time a team answers correctly, list one of the witnesses to Christ's resurrection on its side of a sheet of paper.

List witnesses in the following order: Mary (John 20:1), John (John 20:5), Peter (John 20:6), the other disciples (John 20:19), 500 people (1 Corinthians 15:6).

The team with the longest list after all the questions have been answered is the winner.

Read from Acts 1:11.

“Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.”

Had the Lord Jesus died again?

Allow a child to answer.

★ **Conclusion:** The disciples are no longer sad.

No, He was taken up alive to Heaven. The disciples weren't sad now. They knew they would be with Jesus in Heaven one day, and He had promised that, in the meantime, His Holy Spirit would come to be with them. Is the Lord Jesus always with you? Have you trusted Him as your Saviour? If your answer to these questions is “No” think carefully about what I am going to say now. The Lord Jesus took your punishment when He died on the cross, and He can forgive your sin today because He rose again and is alive. If you have realised that you are the one who deserves to be punished, thank the Lord Jesus for taking that punishment for you, tell Him how sorry you are for your sin and trust Him to save you from being punished after you die. God's Word says (*read from Romans 10:13*), “Whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” If you call on the Lord Jesus to save you now, then you can know that the promise of the risen Saviour is for you too. Your living Saviour, the Lord Jesus, will always be with you.

Remove all figures.

Review questions

- 1 Why were the disciples sad and afraid? (Sad because Jesus was dead; afraid of arrest/punishment/death.)
- 2 What did Mary Magdalene come to tell them? (The body of the Lord Jesus was not in the tomb.)
- 3 Other women came. What did the disciples think of what they said? (Thought it was nonsense; didn't believe them.)
- 4 Why is it important to believe that the Lord Jesus rose from the dead? (If He had not risen He could not forgive us.)
- 5 What would you say to someone who decided to stop sinning and be good so that they could get in to Heaven? (Can't do it by yourself; need forgiveness of sin and help to change.)
- 6 When Mary Magdalene came back to the tomb and looked in, who did she see inside? (Two angels.)
- 7 What made Mary Magdalene realise Jesus was speaking to her? (He spoke her name.)
- 8 What differences can it make to a Christian knowing Jesus is always with him/her? (Courage when afraid; help when tempted.)
- 9 When did the disciples finally believe that Jesus had risen? (When He appeared to them in the room.)

10 What happened 40 days after Jesus rose from the dead? (He went back to Heaven.)

Carry-over activity

Jesus has risen

Provide a copy of the picture of the tomb and the stone (with the long strip attached) on light card for each child (see page 63). The children can do as much of the following as time and ability allow. Prepare beforehand anything they would not have the time or the ability to do for themselves.

Cut around the tomb and the stone, remembering to keep the long strip attached to the stone. Make two slits in the tomb as marked (at “a” and “b”). Thread the long strip attached to the stone through the slits. The stone can cover the entrance, but when it is moved away (by pulling the strip) the words can be read.

You could also provide colouring pencils or crayons in appropriate colours for rock.

Carry-over activity

Witnessing kits (part 1)

Tell the children that during this series of lessons they will be putting together and decorating a “witnessing kit” - a shoe box full of materials to help them witness.

Start prayer booklets for their kits. Cut white, lined or construction paper into quarters. Staple eight of these small sheets of paper together to form a small booklet for each child.

Have the children write “Prayer booklet” on the first page to form a cover and “Family” on the second page. Under “Family” have them write the names of family members for whose salvation they will pray.

Encourage each child to take his booklet home, use it to pray daily, keep it in a shoe box witnessing kit and bring the kit to club each week.

Carry-over activity

Personal testimonies

Tell the children how you became a Christian. Explain that when you do this, you are witnessing about what Jesus has done for you.

Ask if any of the children who are Christians would like to share their testimonies. Ask their permission to tape their testimonies, then write or type each child’s testimony for him to keep in his witnessing kit and use to witness to others.

Lesson 2

God's power for the Christian

Scripture for teachers

Acts 2:1-41

Central truth

God the Holy Spirit lives in every Christian

Application

Unsaved: Trust the Lord Jesus as your Saviour, then the Holy Spirit will live in you

Saved: He will help you to live the way God wants you to

Memory verse

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me ...” Acts 1:8

The Lord Jesus spoke these words just before He went back to Heaven. God wants His children to tell others about Him. This can be a difficult thing to do, but He has not left them without help. God the Holy Spirit lives in all God's children to give them the power and the help they need to tell others about the Lord Jesus.

Visuals

◆ Flashcards: 2-2, 2-3, 2-4, 2-5 and 2-6

Or

◆ Flannelgraph figures: 1A-11, 1A-12, 1A-13, 1A-14, 1A-15, 1A-16, 1A-17, 1A-30, 1A-34 and 1A-38

And

- ◆ Central truth on a circle of card. Show this each time you teach the central truth.
- ◆ You may also find it useful to have the following wordstrips: Holy Spirit, disciples, believers, Jerusalem, repent.
- ◆ To help reinforce the teaching on the Holy Spirit, you could also have the following printed on strips of card:

Christian, the Holy Spirit will help you to:

- live to please God.
- know when you are doing wrong.
- understand God's Word.
- know you belong to Jesus.
- become more like Jesus.

Lesson outline

Introduction

Waiting for someone to keep a promise

Progression of events

- 1 Believers waiting for the Lord Jesus to keep His promise CT
- 2 The Holy Spirit comes CTS
- 3 Believers speak in different languages CTS
- 4 Peter preaches
- 5 “What shall we do?” CTU

Climax

3,000 saved

Conclusion

They believe the promise of the Holy Spirit
CTS, CTU

Teaching the memory verse

Memory verse

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me ...” Acts 1:8

Introduction

Object lesson: The ant and the sugar cube.

A little black ant found a cube of sugar on the table. He tasted it. M-m-m! It was wonderful! Not wanting to be selfish, he quickly ran down the table leg to tell his friends. Before long there was a long trail of ants following him. He led them to the sugar and they all enjoyed his wonderful discovery.

If you know the Lord Jesus as your Saviour, you should be like that ant. Go and witness to your friends - tell them what you have discovered. Bring them with you to hear and learn more about God's Word. Today's verse tells us that God gives you the courage to witness.

Presentation

Ask a child to read the verse from your Bible, then repeat the verse with the class from the visual.

Explanation

But you - Jesus was speaking to those who had believed on Him to be saved.

shall receive power - Shall receive the ability, strength and courage from God to do what He wants you to do.

when the Holy Spirit has come upon you - The Holy Spirit is sometimes called the Holy Ghost. This power or ability is given when the Holy Spirit comes into you the moment you believe on the Lord Jesus as your Saviour from sin.

and you shall be witnesses to Me - Those who have believed on the Lord Jesus are to be witnesses, telling others about Him.

Application

Unsaved: In order to tell others about the Lord Jesus, you first need to call on Him to be your Saviour from sin. During our lesson today you'll hear how you can call on the Lord Jesus and be saved. You need to do that today.

Saved: If you are a Christian, God wants you to witness. Through His Holy Spirit, He's given you the ability, strength and courage to do it. You can count on it because God always keeps His Word.

Begin and end with the reference as you say the memory verse.

Help children understand where the verse is found - in the New Testament, in the book right after the book of John. The book of Acts tells what the believers in Jesus' day did after He went back up to Heaven.

Repetition

“Guess who”

Read the verse several times with the children, beginning and ending with the reference.

Then choose a child to come to the front and turn his back to the class.

Say the verse with the class, beginning with the reference, then point to another child who says the reference at the end in a disguised voice. The first child tries to guess who said the reference.

Repeat.

Lesson

★ **Introduction:** Waiting for someone to keep a promise.

Have you ever had to wait for someone to keep a promise to you? Perhaps your grandparents have promised to come on Saturday to take you to the park, or to the toy shop, or maybe even to McDonald's. How do you feel on Saturday morning? Maybe you stand at the window watching for them. Maybe you try to watch television or play with something, but you just have to keep going to the door to see if they are coming yet. It's exciting when we know something good is coming. We wish it would hurry up and happen.

★ **Progression of events:** Believers waiting for the Lord Jesus to keep His promise.

I wonder if the disciples of the Lord Jesus felt a bit like that after He went back to Heaven. The Lord Jesus had given His disciples a promise before He left them. They were to wait in Jerusalem for Someone very special to come. Do you remember from last week (or from our memory verse today) Who it was?

Allow children to answer.

Place city (1A-11).

Yes, the Lord Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit.

Do you know Who the Holy Spirit is?

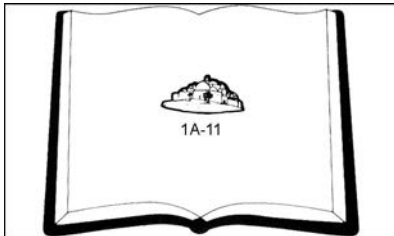
You may want to allow some children to answer.

He is God, just as the Lord Jesus is God. There is only one God, but He is one God in three Persons: God the Father, God the Son (the Lord Jesus), and God the Holy Spirit. This is something we cannot understand but we believe it because that is what the Bible teaches.

The Holy Spirit has no body. He is a spirit so He cannot be seen. How were the disciples going to know when He came?

The disciples, and other believers, were waiting together in the city of Jerusalem, just as the Lord Jesus had told them to. It was a very busy time in Jerusalem. There were so many people visiting the city for the Jewish harvest feast called Pentecost. These Jews, and others who worshipped the true God, had come from many different countries where they spoke different languages, but they all wanted to be in Jerusalem, where the temple was, to celebrate the feast of Pentecost. Many of them had probably been there since the feast of the Passover 50 days before, when the Lord Jesus had been put to death. Perhaps some of them had even seen what happened to Him.

Amongst all these people, in a house somewhere in Jerusalem, about 120 believers, including the disciples, were waiting together for the Holy Spirit to come. They were called "believers" because they believed that the Lord Jesus was the One God had promised in the Scriptures; the One Who would save His people from their sins. Now they were waiting for Him to send the Holy Spirit as He had promised. Then



CT

"The Holy Spirit" = God the Spirit, equal with the Father and the Son.

"Trinity Song" (*Growing Songs for Children 2*, number 13, published by CEF Press®) will help you in the explanation of God in three persons.

Flashcard 2-2

"Pentecost" = A Jewish feast held every year 50 days after Passover to celebrate the harvest. See Leviticus 23:15-22 for background on this day.

an amazing thing happened! Listen carefully to what God's Word tells us.

★ **Progression of events: The Holy Spirit comes.**

Read from Acts 2:2-3.

“And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them.”

The Holy Spirit had come to live in the believers! The sound of the wind and the tongues of fire were sent by God to show that the Holy Spirit had come to live in them. They could not see Him because He is a spirit, but they knew He had come because of these signs. Where was the Holy Spirit now?

Allow a child to answer.

He was living in each one of those believers.

Where is the Holy Spirit today?

Allow answers.

He is living in each person who has believed in the Lord Jesus as their Saviour. If you have turned from your sin and trusted the Lord Jesus for forgiveness, the Holy Spirit lives in you. He is there to help you to live the way God wants you to. He is the One Who makes you feel bad when you are doing something wrong. He is the One Who helps you to understand God's Word as you read it by yourself at home or listen to it in church or at *Good News Club*. He helps you to be sure deep down inside that you belong to the Lord Jesus. He changes you so that you become more like the Lord Jesus. Maybe you used to be selfish, but since you trusted the Lord Jesus as your Saviour you are more willing to share. That is the Holy Spirit changing you and helping you to live the way God wants you to. Isn't it wonderful to know that God has given the Holy Spirit to each one who believes?

When the Holy Spirit came that day, God showed in a special way that He was living in those who trusted in the Lord Jesus. Other people near the house may have heard the sound like the wind. A crowd gathered, perhaps to see where this noise was coming from.

Remove city (1A-11). Place the crowd (1A-12, 1A-17, 1A-30, 1A-34 and 1A-38) and two disciples (1A-13 and 1A-14).

★ **Progression of events: Believers speak in different languages.**

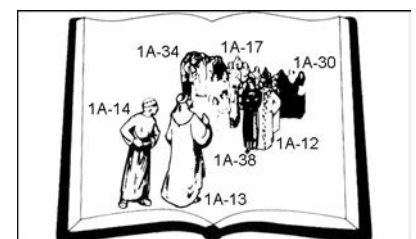
They were surprised and amazed when they heard the believers talking. Remember, there were people in Jerusalem from many different places where other languages were spoken. Each person in the crowd heard the believers talking in the language used in the country he came from. God was doing something special to show that the Holy Spirit had come to live in those who believed in the Lord Jesus. The Holy Spirit was helping the believers to speak in languages they did not know.

Flashcard 2-3

Note that Scripture says the sound of a violent/ rushing/mighty wind. We may assume that the effects of a wind were not seen or felt, but only the sound heard.

CTS

Show the card with the central truth: “God the Holy Spirit lives in every Christian”.



Flashcard 2-4

While the Jews who gathered in Jerusalem for the celebration of Pentecost probably all spoke Greek, they also

spoke languages native to their various nations.

It is these languages in which the disciples miraculously spoke as the Spirit came on them.

No flashcard

CTS

Show the card with the central truth.

Have the children think specifically of one person to witness to. Have a number of tracts available. Various tracts for children are produced by European Child Evangelism Fellowship® and are available from your CEF® National Office. If you need an address, contact the European Headquarters (address at the front of this book).

Make yourself available for personal counselling.

What a change there had been in these believers! After the Lord Jesus died, and before they knew that He had risen from the dead, remember how they hid in a locked room because they were afraid of being arrested for following the Lord Jesus. Now they were speaking about Him in the street to anyone who would listen!

What made the difference? It was the Holy Spirit living in them and giving them the courage to speak about the Lord Jesus. Christian, do you find it difficult to talk about the Lord Jesus to your friends? Perhaps some of them use the Lord Jesus' name in a bad way and you know you should explain to them why they shouldn't. Ask God to give you courage and to help you by His Holy Spirit.

Let's think for a moment about a girl called Sarah. She is a Christian, but her school friends are not. Sarah wants to live to please God and she knows that God wants her to speak to others about Him. Sarah's friends often use God's name in a wrong way.

Involve as many of the children as possible in answering the following questions.

What do you think Sarah should do? How could she say something in a nice way? How do you think her friends might feel? What might they do/say?

Remind the children that her friends may react in an unpleasant way - angry words, no longer friendly.

Who would help Sarah? If Sarah did these things, how would God feel?

Perhaps you are a Christian and you have problems like Sarah. Sometimes you might find it hard to know what to do and you would like to know what the Bible says would help you. Remember you can come and speak to me after any of our meetings and I will help you to find what you need to know from the Bible. Perhaps you do know what God wants you to do but you find it so difficult. If you would like to tell me about it, I will pray for you, that God would help you through His Holy Spirit living in you.

The Holy Spirit will change you in many different ways.

You could involve the children by asking, "What kind of changes do you think your parents/friends/Sunday School teacher would notice?" and allow them to suggest their own answers.

Your parents will notice that you are more obedient, and more willing to do as you are told. Your friends will notice that you no longer make nasty remarks about others behind their backs. Your Sunday School teacher will notice that you really want to learn more from God's Word. The Holy Spirit can change you just like He changed the believers in Jerusalem.

The people in the crowd were asking each other (*read from Acts 2:12*), "Whatever could this mean?"

The Bible tells us that, as they listened, they heard the believers speaking about “the wonderful works of God” (Acts 2:11). I’m sure the believers were telling them how God sent the Lord Jesus to be the One Who could forgive sin and make them ready for Heaven. Some people were listening very carefully, but others in the crowd laughed and made fun of the believers for talking in so many different languages.

They said (*read from Acts 2:13*), “They are full of new wine.”

They thought that the believers were drunk.

Move Peter (1A-13) slightly towards crowd.

★ **Progression of events: Peter preaches.**

So, Peter stood up and raised his voice to explain what was happening. He told the crowd that the prophet Joel had said this would happen.

Turn your Bible to Joel, as you speak, to show the children that we have the words in the Old Testament without having to spend time explaining it.

God had told His people through the prophet Joel many years before that He would send His Spirit and that “whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Joel 2:32).

In the following section, keep referring to Acts 2 so that the children are constantly reminded of the source of your information.

Peter told them how the Lord Jesus had been put to death on a cross; that God had raised Him from the dead; and how he and many others had seen Him after God had raised Him from the dead.

You may want to briefly use visuals of cross (1A-15) and tomb (1A-16) here. If you do, it would be best to put them on a separate, small board or in a pocket chart.

Many of the Lord Jesus’ followers were there and could tell the people, “We saw Him with our own eyes.”

Peter explained that the Lord Jesus had returned to Heaven and had now sent the Holy Spirit. It was the Holy Spirit Who was making the believers able to speak in other languages and helping them to talk about the Lord Jesus.

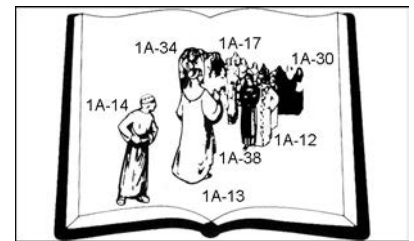
The Holy Spirit was also speaking to many people in the crowd. They had not yet trusted the Lord Jesus to forgive their sin. The Holy Spirit was not living in them, but He was speaking to them. He was making them feel really sorry for their sin. He was helping them to understand that they could only get rid of their sin by believing that the Lord Jesus took their punishment on the cross, and by trusting Him to forgive them.

★ **Progression of events: “What shall we do?”**

So they asked (*read from Acts 2:37*), “What shall we do?”

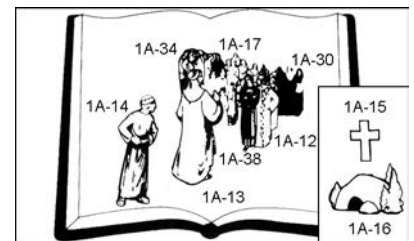
Have you been asking that question? Has the Holy Spirit shown you your sin and how terrible it is? Do you want to know how to get rid of your sin so that you can go to be with God in Heaven some day? Listen to what Peter told the people to do.

Flashcard 2-4



Joel's prophecy (Joel 2:28-32) refers primarily to Christ's Second Coming. See Matthew 24:29.

Flashcard 2-5



CTU

Read Acts 2:38 from your Bible.

He told them they must repent. "To repent" means to be so sorry for your sin that you don't want to sin against God any more. You sin against God when you disobey His commands and when you think you can have your sin forgiven in any way other than through the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus was punished by God for your sin when He died on the cross. Now you don't have to be punished for your sin, if you repent and trust in Him for forgiveness. That is the only way to have your sin forgiven. Peter told the people that, if they repented and trusted the Lord Jesus for forgiveness (*again point to Acts 2:38*), they would receive the Holy Spirit. He would live in them to help them please God. Do you put off asking the Lord Jesus for forgiveness because you don't think you could change; you don't think that you could stop sinning? Don't use that as an excuse any longer. If you trust the Lord Jesus as your Saviour, the Holy Spirit will come to live in you and He will change you. Peter told the people that the promise of the Holy Spirit was (*read from Acts 2:39*), "to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call." The promise is for all those who trust the Lord Jesus. The promise is for you today just as much as for the people on that day in Jerusalem.

★ **Climax:** 3,000 saved.

It was a very special day for about 3,000 people in that crowd. That is the number of people who trusted the Lord Jesus as their Saviour that day.

Remove the disciples (1A-13 and 1A-14) and crowd (1A-12, 1A-30, 1A-34 and 1A-38) but leave small group of people (1A-17).

★ **Conclusion:** They believe the promise of the Holy Spirit.

3,000 new believers! 3,000 more people who now had the Holy Spirit living in them to change them and to help them to live in a way that pleased God. The tongues of fire did not appear to them, but they believed the promise of God that the Holy Spirit would come to live in all who turn from sin and trust the Lord Jesus for forgiveness.

CTS

Is God the Holy Spirit living in you today? If you have trusted the Lord Jesus as your Saviour, He is. No-one else can see Him in you, but they should be able to see the changes He is making in your life. You won't suddenly be able to speak in different languages - that was something special God did so that many people could hear about the Lord Jesus all at once and so that they would know that He had sent the Holy Spirit as He had promised - but other people will see changes in your behaviour and your attitudes. Perhaps you have trusted the Lord Jesus as your Saviour but you didn't know before that the Holy Spirit was living in you. Now that you do know, you can depend on Him to help you in difficult situations. When you are tempted to do wrong, remember that He is there with you and think how much it would hurt Him if you did that wrong thing.

Flashcard 2-6

Perhaps the Holy Spirit is not yet living in you but He has been speaking to you about your sin. Are you sorry for your sin? Do you want to turn away from sin? Do you understand that the Lord Jesus is the only One Who can forgive your sin? If you can answer, "Yes," to these questions, listen to what the Holy Spirit is saying to you and do something about it. Tell God how sorry you are for sinning against Him. Thank Him that He punished the Lord Jesus instead of you. Ask Him to forgive you and believe that He will. Remember what Peter told the people. Repent of your sin and trust the Lord Jesus for forgiveness. If you do that today then the Holy Spirit will come to live in you too, because God has promised the Holy Spirit to all who trust the Lord Jesus for forgiveness.

Remove all figures.

Review questions

- 1 Who did Jesus promise to send? (The Holy Spirit.)
- 2 Who is the Holy Spirit? (God.)
- 3 What signs showed that the Holy Spirit had come to live in the 120 believers in the house in Jerusalem? (Sound of wind; tongues of fire.)
- 4 How did the people from other countries understand what the believers were saying? (The Holy Spirit made the believers able to speak other languages.)
- 5 Who does the Holy Spirit live in today? (All those who have trusted the Lord Jesus for forgiveness.)
- 6 Give one way He will help. (One from: help to live to please God; know you are doing wrong; understand God's Word; know you belong to Jesus; become more like Jesus.)
- 7 Why were the believers no longer afraid to speak about Jesus? (The Holy Spirit living in them helped them to be brave.)
- 8 Most of the people in the crowd were not believers. What was the Holy Spirit speaking to them about? (Their sin.)
- 9 What did Peter tell them they must do? (Repent.)
- 10 What promise from God did he tell them about? (If they repented and believed in Jesus they would receive the Holy Spirit.)

Carry-over activity

Things the Holy Spirit can change in our lives

You could use either of these ideas alone, or the drawing could follow the discussion with the children choosing one example from the discussion to illustrate.

- 1 Divide the children into small groups and assign a teacher or helper to each group to lead. Give each group a sheet of paper

CTU

Review game

Scrambled letters

Write the following scrambled message on a large sheet of paper:

OGD HTE LYHO RITISP
VLSIE NI VYEER
NTSHIICRA.

(God the Holy Spirit lives in every Christian.)

Draw a blank line under each letter to be filled in with the unscrambled message.

Print a number under each blank so the children can identify which blank they are attempting to fill in.

Ask questions, alternating between teams.

Each time a child answers correctly, award his team 100 points and give him a chance to guess a letter, word or the entire puzzle.

If he guesses correctly, add another 100 points to his team's score.

The team with the highest score after all questions have been asked is the winner.

and a pencil to make a list of things the Holy Spirit could change in the life of someone the same age as themselves.

- 2 Give each child a sheet of paper with a line or fold down or across the middle. The halves of the page should be labelled “before” and “after”. Each child can draw an example of how someone behaves before and after the Holy Spirit changes him/her.

Carry-over activity

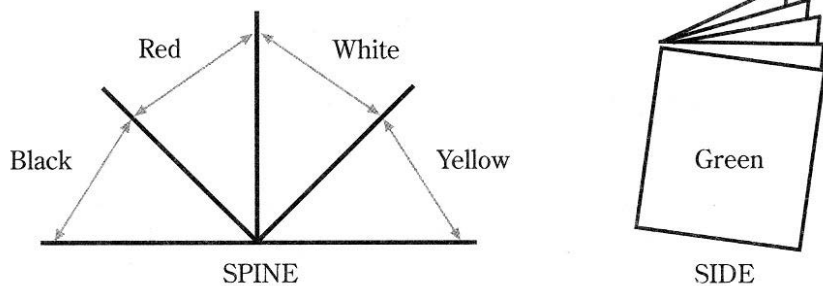
Witnessing kits (part 2)

On page 3 of the prayer booklet have the children write “Friends”, then list friends for whose salvation they will pray.

Help each child make a *Wordless Book* to use in witnessing to his family and friends. Fold small sheets of black, red, white, yellow or gold, and green paper (or felt) in half. Glue the folded sheets together back to back in the order listed above, with the green paper glued to the front of the folded black sheet and the back of the folded yellow sheet to form the cover.

Have extra shoe boxes and prayer booklets on hand for newcomers and children who forgot to bring their witnessing kits to class.

Wordless Books, instructions and tracts using *Wordless Book* colours are available from your CEF National Office. If you need an address, contact the European Headquarters (address at the front of this book).



Explain that the dark page stands for sin, the red for Jesus’ blood, the white for our clean hearts after Jesus washes our sins away, the yellow or gold for Heaven and the green for our growth as Christians after we have trusted Christ as our Saviour.

Carry-over activity

Role-play

Choose volunteers to explain the Gospel to the class using the *Wordless Book*. Then have the children choose a partner and practice explaining the *Wordless Book* to each other.

Carry-over activity

Personal testimonies

Record and write or type children’s testimonies as in lesson 1.

Lesson 3

God works through the Christian

Scripture for teachers

Acts 3:1-16

Central truth

The Lord Jesus Christ can meet your greatest need

Application

Unsaved: The Lord Jesus is the only One Who can take away your sin - trust Him

Saved: Tell others how the Lord Jesus can meet their greatest need

Memory verse

“Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out ...” Acts 3:19

Visual aids

- ◆ Flashcards: 3-1, 3-2, 3-3, 3-4 and 3-5

Or

- ◆ Flannelgraph figures: 1A-22, 1A-23, 1A-24, 1A-25, 1A-26, 1A-29, 1A-30 and 1A-41

And

- ◆ Central truth wordstrip: You may want to mount this on a card silhouette of the Lord Jesus. Show it each time you teach the central truth.
- ◆ Wordstrip: sin (mounted on a black heart shape).
- ◆ The following wordstrips may also be useful: lame, Peter, John, temple.

Lesson outline

Introduction

Description of the lame man and his life

Progression of events

- 1 Peter and John go to the temple
- 2 The lame man asks for money CTU
- 3 “Look at us” - no money CTU
- 4 “In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk”

Climax

Man jumps up and walks CTU

Conclusion

Man praises God in the temple

People amazed CTS, CTU

Lesson

★ **Introduction: Description of the lame man and his life.**

He sat there on the dusty ground beside one of the entrances to the temple which was so lovely it was known as the Beautiful Gate.

Place man (1A-24).

He had been carried there, as he was every day, to sit and ask the passers-by for money. Why did he need to be carried? He had never been able to walk; he was lame. There was something wrong with his feet and ankles. Why did he need to ask people for money? Well, he couldn't work because he was lame, and governments in those days didn't help people who couldn't work. So, this man was carried to the temple, by his family or his friends, and left to sit outside to beg for money. Near the temple was a good place to sit. Many people went there to pray every day, so there were always plenty of people to ask for money. He was sitting there as usual one day. It was almost three o'clock in the afternoon which was a special time for prayer at the temple. Many people would be coming and I'm sure the lame man was hoping that he would be given plenty of money as they went past.

★ **Progression of events: Peter and John go to the temple.**

Peter and John were on their way to the temple.

Place Peter (1A-41) and John (1A-23).

They went there every day to praise God and to pray. That day they were going in to the temple by the Beautiful Gate, so who did they see?

Allow a child to answer.

★ **Progression of events: The lame man asks for money.**

Yes, the lame man. And what do you think he asked them for?

Allow a child to answer.

He asked them for money.

CTU

What do you think the lame man needed most of all? What was his greatest need? Did he need money most of all? Did he need to be able to walk more than anything else? Yes, he needed money to buy food. Yes, if a doctor could have made him able to walk, perhaps he could have found a job to earn money. But there was something this lame man needed even more than money. He was born with an even bigger problem than not being able to walk. You were also born with that bigger problem. It is called sin.

Place word "sin" on heart shape.

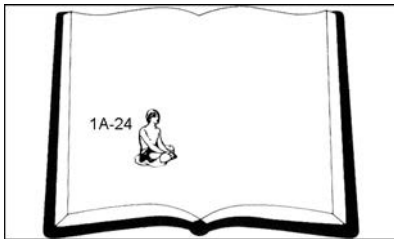
What is sin?

Allow answers.

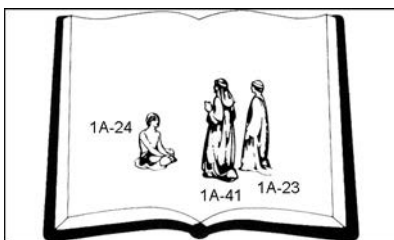
Sin is disobeying God - doing what He says not to do and not doing what He tells us to do. How do we know whether something is a sin or not?

Allow answers.

Flashcard 3-2



Flashcard 3-1



Flashcard 3-3

God tells us in His Word, the Bible, what is right and what is wrong. He also tells us that when you were born, you already had a sinful nature. You were born wanting to go your own way and not God's way. You find it easier to do wrong things than to do right things. You find it easier to lose your temper than to control yourself; you find it easy to tell lies to get yourself out of trouble; you find it hard to be different from your friends when they want you to do something you know is wrong. No-one had to teach you to be like that. You already had a sinful nature when you were born. Why is sin such a big problem?

Allow answers.

Because it cuts you off from God. Because, unless your sin is all taken away, you can never go to Heaven to be with God. Instead, God will have to punish you for your sin forever. Your greatest need, the thing you need most, is to have your sin taken away; but perhaps you are usually too busy thinking about other needs and wants, and you don't think of the thing you need most of all. Perhaps the lame man was usually like that too, thinking more about getting enough money than about the problem of his sin.

Peter and John stopped and looked at him. Maybe the lame man did not usually look very much at the people passing by. Perhaps he kept his head down, ashamed that he had to beg; or perhaps he was already looking at others, asking them for money.

★ **Progression of events:** "Look at us" - no money.

Peter said (*read from Acts 3:4*), "Look at us."

The lame man thought they were going to give him some money so he gave them his attention. How disappointed he must have felt when Peter began to speak.

Read from Acts 3:6.

"Silver and gold I do not have ..."

Peter and John had no money so what could they do to help this lame man?

By themselves, Peter and John could do nothing to help this man, but they knew Someone Who could. They knew that the Lord Jesus Christ could help, no matter what the need was. They knew that He could meet the greatest need this man had. What was his greatest need?

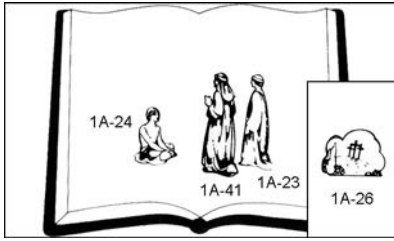
Allow a child to answer.

Yes, the need to have his sin taken away. Peter and John, and the other believers too, told people everywhere they went that the Lord Jesus could take away sin. They explained how the Lord Jesus had been punished by God for the sins of the world when He died on the cross, that He had risen from the dead and now He was able to take away the sin of those who turned from sin and trusted Him for forgiveness.

Place cross (1A-26) on a separate board or pocket chart.

Children would enjoy acting out this part of the story.

CTU
Show the card with central truth: "The Lord Jesus can meet your greatest need".



Do you believe that is your greatest need? Or are there other things you want more than that?

Let's imagine a little boy, we'll call him Alistair, who wants a new bike more than anything. He won't be happy until he gets it and he thinks that once he has a new bike, he will be happy. For his birthday he is given a new bike. He is so happy! Will he always be satisfied now? No, in a few weeks he sees something else he really wants - the latest computer game - and he feels he will not be happy until he has it. Alistair grows up always wanting something more. He gets a job, but he wants one that pays more money. He buys a car, but he wants one that can go faster and looks even better. He buys a house, but he wants a bigger one. Alistair thinks that these are important things to have. He thinks they are important to make him happy, but he is never really satisfied. The most important thing in life is not to have more money or more possessions. What is the most important thing Alistair needs?

Allow an answer.

Just like you, he needs his sin taken away more than anything else. How can that happen? Listen to what God's Word says.

Read from Acts 3:19.

"Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out ..."

Will you turn from your sin and trust the Lord Jesus to blot out your sin today? The Lord Jesus is able to meet your greatest need - forgiveness of sin - just like He was able to meet the needs of the lame man.

Peter went on speaking to the lame man (*read from Acts 3:6*), "... but what I do have I give you ..."

What could Peter have to give the lame man if he had no money?

★ **Progression of events:** "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk."

He continued (*read from Acts 3:6*), "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk."

Remove cross (1A-26). Replace Peter (1A-41) with figure 1A-22.

Peter took the man by the right hand and helped him stand up.

Replace man (1A-24) with figure 1A-25.

★ **Climax:** Man jumps up and walks.

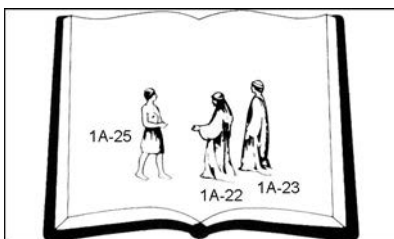
Immediately his feet and ankle bones became strong! He jumped up! He was so happy!

Why could the man do that?

Allow the children to answer.

The Lord Jesus had healed him. Peter and John couldn't do that for him. The man's friends couldn't heal him. The man couldn't do anything to help himself. But the Lord Jesus could meet his need. The Bible tells us.

Flashcard 3-4



Read Acts 3:16a from your Bible.

The man was healed through faith in Jesus. The man believed that the Lord Jesus could heal him. Do you believe that the Lord Jesus can take away your sin? No-one else can take away sin. I can't, your parents can't, a minister can't, you can't do it for yourself; but the Lord Jesus can because He was punished in your place. You can only have your sin forgiven by believing in the Lord Jesus; by believing that He took your punishment and that He is the only way to have your sin forgiven. Can you think of any other ways people try to have their sin forgiven?

Allow answers.

Some people try to be as good as they can. Some people try to do something that will make up for doing wrong. Some people repeat special prayers. None of these things will take away sin.

If you want to have your sin forgiven, but you are still not sure what to do, wait by the flannelgraph board at the end of *Good News Club*. I will know that you want to speak to me about having your sin forgiven and I will show you from God's Word how the Lord Jesus is the One Who can meet your greatest need just like He could meet the needs of the lame man.

Imagine how that man felt. He was able to walk for the first time in his life.

Replace Peter (1A-22), John (1A-23) and man (1A-25) with figure 1A-29.

★ **Conclusion: Man praises God in the temple.**

He went into the temple with Peter and John, walking and leaping and praising God. He knew Who had healed him. He praised and thanked God, not Peter and John. What an amazing miracle! I'm sure Peter and John were praising God too and thanking Him for healing the lame man.

Place people (1A-30).

★ **Conclusion: People amazed.**

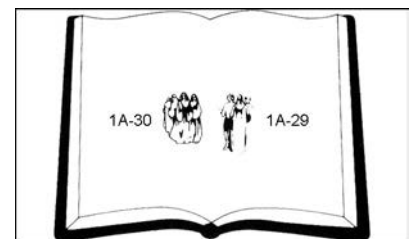
All the people saw the man, who had been lame, walking in the temple and praising God. They knew who he was. They had seen him begging every day. They saw what had happened to him and they were filled with amazement. What a change there was in this man's life!

It is an even more amazing miracle when the Lord Jesus takes away sin. It is the greatest miracle of all. If He has taken away your sin, you should be full of thanks and praise. Are you so full of thanks to God that you want to tell others what He has done for you and what He can do for them too? Do other people see the change that Jesus has made in your life? Do others know that you have trusted Him to take away your sin? This man was not afraid to praise God and to let everyone know what a change the Lord Jesus had made in his life. Peter and John had not been afraid to tell the man that the Lord Jesus could meet

CTU

Make yourself available for personal counselling.

Flashcard 3-5



CTS

Ask a saved child to read central truth: "The Lord Jesus can meet your greatest need".

CTU

Be sure to give an opportunity for the unsaved children in your class to respond to the Gospel. Don't neglect this responsibility.

Review game

Secret message

Draw blanks on a large sheet of paper as follows:

(Answer: The Lord Jesus Christ can meet your greatest need.)

Divide the group into two teams, alternating questions between the teams.

Each time a child answers correctly, award his team 100 points and let him guess one of the letters or words of the secret message or the entire message.

He may have only one guess.

If he guesses correctly, award his team an additional 100 points.

The team with the most points wins.

(Variation: Add excitement by adding zeros! Award 1,000 points for each correct answer, or even 1,000,000 points!)

his need. Will you tell your family, your friends, that the Lord Jesus can meet their greatest need? Or, if you have not yet trusted the Lord Jesus to take away your sin, will you let Him meet your greatest need today? Remember His promise, "Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out ..." (Acts 3:19). If you turn from your sin and trust the Lord Jesus for forgiveness today He will blot out your sin and you, too, will be praising and thanking God for the change He has made in your life.

Remove all figures.

Review questions

- 1 What was wrong with the man who was sitting at one of the temple gates? (Lame; couldn't walk.)
- 2 What is sin? (Disobeying God.)
- 3 Why do you find it easier to sin than to obey God? (Born with a sinful nature.)
- 4 Why is sin such a big problem? (Cuts you off from God; will keep you out of Heaven.)
- 5 What did the lame man ask Peter and John for? (Money.)
- 6 What was his greatest need? (Sin taken away/forgiven.)
- 7 Who healed the lame man? (The Lord Jesus.)
- 8 Why was the man healed? (He believed that the Lord Jesus could heal him.)
- 9 How can you have your sin forgiven? (Turn from sin and trust the Lord Jesus as your Saviour.)
- 10 If the Lord Jesus has forgiven your sin, what should you do? (Praise and thank Him; tell others.)

Carry-over activity

Wordsearch

Make a copy of the wordsquare for each child.

For older children copy the clues to the words they must find but omit the list of the actual words (see page 64).

For younger children copy the list of words and talk through the meanings of the words before they begin searching (see page 65). You may wish to include the clues/meanings so that the message also reaches their parents.

s	i	n	a	c	f	t	r
h	e	a	l	o	o	h	e
e	i	n	o	n	r	a	p
u	b	e	c	v	g	n	e
d	f	e	g	e	i	k	n
h	k	d	l	r	v	a	t
b	l	o	t	t	e	d	e
h	e	a	v	e	n	i	g
l	a	m	e	d	o	u	t

Some letters in the wordsquare are used twice. All words read across or down to help the younger children. You could choose not to make this fact known to older children in order to slightly increase the difficulty.

Carry-over activity

Witnessing kits (part 3)

On page 4 of the prayer booklet have the children write “Praise God” and list what God has done for them. Pray together, praising God for Who He is and what He has done. Then pray for the salvation of the people in the children’s booklets.

Provide scissors, glue sticks and construction paper in the colours of the *Wordless Book* for children to use in decorating their boxes. Remind them to keep their prayer booklets and *Wordless Books* in their kits and bring their kits to class each week. Encourage them to pray and witness using these tools.

Carry-over activity

Personal testimonies

Record and write or type children’s testimonies as in lesson 1.

Have extra shoe boxes and prayer booklets on hand for newcomers and children who forgot to bring their witnessing kits to class.

Lesson 4

God cannot be fooled

Scripture for teachers

Acts 4:32 - 5:11

Acts 8:9-24

Note: This lesson contains two separate stories, although the same central truth is brought out in each part. You could teach each part at a different point in your programme.

It is generally accepted that Ananias and Sapphira were believers, but Simon was not.

Central truth

God knows everything

Application

Unsaved: Part (a): You cannot hide your sin from God

Part (b): You cannot fool God into thinking you are a Christian

Saved: You cannot make God think that your Christian life is better than it is

Making yourself available

An opportunity is not included in this lesson text to make yourself available to any child who needs to talk to you. This could be done at another point in the programme, for example after singing a chorus which includes the Gospel message. You could say something like, "If you are still not sure how you can have your sin forgiven and you want to ask me about it, you can speak to me during our activity time. I will be tidying up at the front, but I can leave that until later if you want to speak to me." (Of course this would only be possible if your helpers are taking charge of the activities.)

Memory verse

"God ... knows the secrets of the heart" Psalm 44:21

Visual aids

- ◆ Flashcards: 4-2, 4-3, 4-4 and 4-5

There are no flashcard visuals for part (b).

Or

- ◆ Flannelgraph figures: 1A-31, 1A-32, 1A-33, 1A-34, 1A-35 and 1A-36

And

- ◆ The central truth on a circle of card. Show this each time you mention the truth.
- ◆ Two cloth bags, one filled with coins and the other with wordstrips ("deceit", "lies", etc) as explained on page 37.
- ◆ You may also find it useful to have the following wordstrips:

Part (a): Christians, apostles, Ananias, Sapphira, Peter

Part (b): Samaria, Simon, Philip, Peter, John

Lesson outline - part (a)

Introduction

Tom and his model plane

Progression of events

- 1 The first Christians share everything
- 2 Ananias and Sapphira make a plan CT
- 3 Ananias brings the money
- 4 Peter confronts him CTS

Climax

Death of Ananias

Conclusion

Death of Sapphira CTS, CTU

Lesson outline - part (b)

Introduction

Janine and the peach

Progression of events

- 1 "This man is the great power of God"
- 2 Philip preaches and many believe
- 3 Simon pretends to be a Christian CTU
- 4 Peter and John arrive
- 5 Simon tries to buy power
- 6 Peter's reply CTU

Conclusion

Repent and be forgiven CTU

Lesson - part (a)

★ Introduction: Tom and his model plane.

Tom's dad was helping him to build a model plane. It was really difficult with lots of tiny pieces but when it was finished it looked really well. Tom put it up on a shelf in his bedroom. One day his friend Ian came to play. Ian saw the model plane.

"Wow!" he exclaimed. "Did you make that?"

"Yes," said Tom.

"I wish I could make things as well as that," Ian sighed. "Mine always look terrible."

What did Tom not tell Ian?

Allow children to answer.

Tom didn't tell Ian the whole truth. He didn't say his dad had helped him. He was deceiving Ian, letting him think something that wasn't true. Ian thought Tom was better at making models than he really was. That is just the same as lying, isn't it? It is not telling the whole truth.

Ananias and his wife, Sapphira, made a plan not to tell the whole truth.

Place Ananias (1A-31) and Sapphira (1A-32).

We read about them in God's Word.

Show your Bible open at Acts 5 to reinforce the fact that you are now relating something from God's Word.

★ Progression of events: The first Christians share everything.

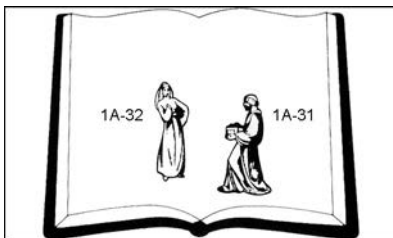
They had trusted the Lord Jesus as their Saviour. They were two of the first Christians. The first Christians shared everything they had. Some of them, who owned land or houses, sold them and brought the money to the apostles. (This is another name for the eleven men who had been Jesus' special disciples. Judas, the twelfth man, was dead). Then the apostles gave the money to whoever needed it.

★ Progression of events: Ananias and Sapphira make a plan.

Ananias and Sapphira owned some land. Perhaps they didn't really want to share all they had, but they still wanted others to think they were generous. Maybe they were afraid of being thought selfish if they didn't sell their land like others had. Now they had thought of a way to make others think they were generous, while still keeping some of their money for themselves. They sold some of their land. Then, instead of giving all the money to the apostles, they decided to keep some of it for themselves. There was nothing wrong with keeping some of the money for themselves. The sin Ananias and Sapphira committed was to pretend they were giving it all. They wouldn't tell the apostles that they had kept some of the money, they would just let them think they were bringing it all. No-one would know ...

Flashcard 4-2

To help children remember these difficult names, you could write them out on a separate piece of paper.



Flashcard 4-3

... but there was Someone Who knew - Someone Who knew what they were thinking as well as what they were doing, Someone Who knows everything you think and everything you do. Yes, God knew. He knows everything there is to know. He knows what you are thinking right now. Perhaps you look as if you are listening, but you are really dreaming about scoring a goal at the next football match or wondering what will happen to your favourite characters in that television programme. You might look as if you are being good (you are not moving about or trying to whisper to the person beside you) but you are not listening just the same. You might be able to fool me, but you can never fool God. He knows the truth about everything.

God knew what Ananias and Sapphira were planning to do.

Remove Sapphira (1A-32) and place Peter and John (1A-36).

★ **Progression of events: Ananias brings the money.**

When Ananias brought the money to the apostles, God made Peter know that Ananias had not brought all the money.

★ **Progression of events: Peter confronts him.**

Peter asked Ananias (*read from Acts 5:3*), "Why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself?"

Ananias had listened to Satan, who wants Christians to disobey God. He had not just lied to other people by keeping some of the money for himself but he had also lied to God. Ananias must have thought he could deceive God as well as deceiving the other Christians.

What a foolish thing to think! No-one can keep the truth from God, because He knows everything. Christian, you cannot make God think you are studying the Bible to get to know Him better if you spend a long time reading a magazine and then quickly read a couple of Bible verses before you go to sleep. You cannot make Him think you are loving and kind if you think nasty thoughts about another person, even if you would never say those things to anyone. You cannot fool God; He knows everything. Christian, if you have been guilty of trying to deceive God, tell Him you are sorry and ask for His forgiveness. He promises in 1 John 1:9 (*read from your Bible*) "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Remember, you cannot keep secrets from God.

★ **Climax: Death of Ananias.**

When Ananias heard that his secret was out, he fell down and died! His body was taken out and buried.

Remove Ananias (1A-31).

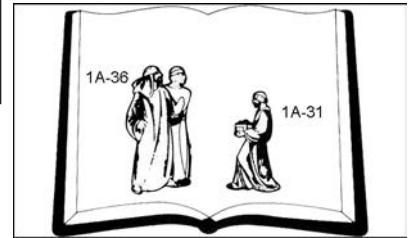
Sapphira had not come with him. She came in about three hours later, not knowing what had happened.

Place Sapphira (1A-32).

Peter asked her, "Is this the price you and Ananias got for the land?"

CT

Show the card with the central truth: "God knows everything".



Flashcard 4-4

Ananias' bag: Make a cloth bag and attach a label "Ananias' bag". Fill with coins. Use as a visual aid.

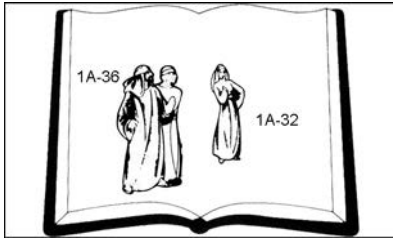
Satan's bag: Make a cloth bag and attach a label "Satan's bag of tricks". Fill with some strips of paper labelled "deceit", "lies", etc. Take out individually and show to the children as you call them out.

CTS

Point to the card with the central truth.

Emphasise the seriousness of deceit and lies.

Flashcard 4-5



“Fear” is translated “reverence and awe for God” (“The Teacher’s Commentary”, by L.O.Richards, page 771).

CTS

CTU

“Yes, that is the price,” she answered.

Was that the truth?

Allow answers.

No, Sapphira lied to Peter and the others who were there. She was also trying to lie to God. Listen to what Peter told Sapphira.

Read from Acts 5:9.

“Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out.”

★ **Conclusion: Death of Sapphira.**

Right then, Sapphira fell down and died, just like Ananias had done, and her body was carried out and buried beside her husband.

Remove Sapphira (1A-32).

Everyone who heard about this was very afraid. It showed them how serious it is to sin against God.

Remove Peter and John (1A-36).

Do you see how serious it is to sin against God? God can see all your sin. You cannot hide any of it from Him because He knows everything. Christian, you cannot make Him think you are better than you are. Have you been lying to God about how you live for Him? You might fool others, you might even fool yourself, but you cannot fool God. If you have not been living the way God wants you to live as a Christian, tell Him you are sorry and ask Him to help you to change. He wants to do that for you. Remember His promise in 1 John 1:9.

Read the verse from your Bible again.

What if you have not yet trusted the Lord Jesus as your Saviour? Do you think that you will get into Heaven if you can make God think you are good enough? He knows the details of every sin you have committed. Do you think God will be pleased with you if you do plenty of good deeds, but that it doesn’t matter what goes on in your mind? Do you imagine that you can think as many nasty, dirty thoughts as you like because no-one will ever know, not even God? God knows every thought you have ever had. You can never make God think you are good enough for Heaven. All sin is serious to God. Do you see that you are in terrible trouble before God because of your sin? Do you want to be made ready for Heaven? The Lord Jesus has already been punished for all your sin. Thank Him for doing that for you. Tell Him how sorry you are for your sin and ask Him to make you clean. God will know that you are really sorry and He promises in His Word (*read from John 6:37*), “the one who comes to Me I will by no means [certainly not] cast out.” He will never turn away anyone who is truly sorry for his sin. Don’t try to lie to God about how good you are. There is no point, because He knows everything.

Lesson - part (b)

★ **Introduction: Janine and the peach.**

Janine was on holiday in a hot country. She was feeling very thirsty. She had a lovely juicy peach that was just waiting to be eaten. It was exactly what she needed and it looked so inviting. Her mouth was already watering at the thought of it, it looked so good. Can you imagine how horrified she was to discover that inside it was full of little crawling insects? The peach looked so good on the outside, but inside it was rotten. (A true story!)

Sometimes people seem to be good, but they are full of badness inside. We read in the Bible of a man like that.

Read from Acts 8:10.

★ **Progression of events: "This man is the great power of God."**

"This man is the great power of God," the people said.

Place Simon (1A-33).

Who were the people of Samaria talking about?

Place people (1A-34).

Was it Peter or John or one of the other apostles? No! They were talking about a man called Simon. He practised magic and did such amazing things that he was able to fool the people into thinking that he was someone great. Did Simon's power come from God? No! His power came from Satan. Simon wanted others to praise him and think how wonderful he was. Simon wanted power for himself. He wanted the people of Samaria to look up to him and admire him, and they had seen him practising his magic for so long that they really did think he was the great power of God.

★ **Progression of events: Philip preaches and many believe.**

Then the apostle Philip came to Samaria.

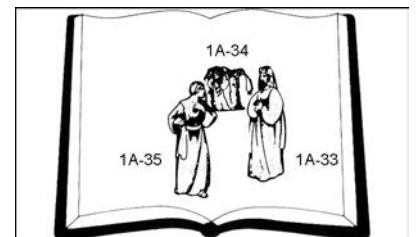
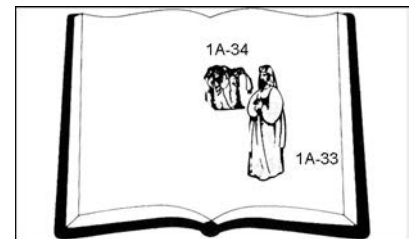
Place Philip (1A-35).

He preached to the people of Samaria and told them how the Lord Jesus had died to take the punishment for their sin, that He had risen from the dead and could forgive their sin if they repented (turned away from their sin) and trusted in Him. God also healed many people from sicknesses and disabilities through Philip. When the people of Samaria heard what Philip was saying and saw the miracles he performed, many of them trusted the Lord Jesus as their Saviour. They didn't praise Philip like they had admired Simon, but they praised God Who was saving them from the punishment for their sin and healing the sick.

★ **Progression of events: Simon pretends to be a Christian.**

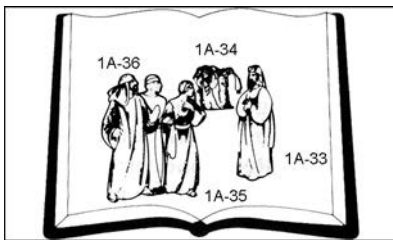
Simon heard and saw these things too. People used to listen to him and be amazed at what he did, but now he saw how people were believing what Philip said. He saw the power that God was giving to Philip, and Simon himself was amazed. He wanted to find out more about this power, so he pretended to repent of his sin and to trust the Lord Jesus.

There are no flashcard visuals for this part of the lesson



CTU

Show the card with the central truth: "God knows everything". Read the central truth together.



I wonder is there anyone here today who is pretending to be a Christian. Maybe your parents, your Sunday School teacher or even I myself believe you are a Christian, but you know deep down inside that you are not really a Christian because you have never turned from your sin and trusted the Lord Jesus for forgiveness. You can fool all of us, but don't forget that you can never fool God because He knows everything about you, all you have ever thought and done. He knows exactly what you are like and He knew the truth about Simon too.

★ **Progression of events: Peter and John arrive.**

Simon followed Philip, amazed at the miracles he performed. He was even more amazed when Peter and John arrived and he saw what they did. Simon wanted this power for himself.

Place Peter and John (1A-36).

★ **Progression of events: Simon tries to buy power.**

He offered them money and said (*read from Acts 8:19a*), "Give me this power also."

Read from Acts 8:20.

★ **Progression of events: Peter's reply.**

"Your money perish with you," Peter answered, "because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money!"

Once again God had helped Peter to know the truth. God knew what Simon was really like. He knew what Simon wanted all along. God also knows if you are pretending to be a Christian. He knows why you do that. Perhaps there is someone you wanted to please. Are you ashamed that you have pretended? You have been lying. Do you see how you really need to turn from your sin and trust the Lord Jesus to forgive you?

★ **Conclusion: Repent and be forgiven.**

Peter told Simon (*read from Acts 8:22*), "Repent therefore of this your wickedness and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you."

The sad thing is that we are not told that Simon did turn from his sin and ask God for forgiveness.

CTU

Show the card with the central truth.

CTU

Show the card with the central truth.

You know that you need to repent (turn from your sin) and ask for forgiveness. Will you do it today? You know that you cannot fool God because He knows everything. Don't be like Simon and just go on sinning. Turn from your sin and trust the Lord Jesus as your Saviour. Remember God promises in His Word (*read from John 6:37*), "the one who comes to Me I will by no means [certainly not] cast out."

Remove all figures.

Review questions

- 1 What did many of the first Christians do with land and houses they owned? (Sold them and gave the money to the apostles to be used for those in need.)

- 2 What did Ananias and Sapphira plan to do? (Pretend to give all the money but keep some for themselves.)
- 3 Why could they not hide the truth from God? (He knows everything.)
- 4 What happened to Ananias and Sapphira to show everyone how serious it is to sin against God? (They fell down dead.)
- 5 Why can you not make God think you are good enough for Heaven? (He knows everything, so He knows all the wrong things you have done.)
- 6 Where did Simon's power come from? (Satan.)
- 7 What did Philip tell the people of Samaria? (Christ died for your sin and rose again; repent and believe.)
- 8 What did many of the people of Samaria do? (Repented and believed.)
- 9 How did Simon try to get the same power that Peter and John had? (Offered them money.)
- 10 Peter told Simon he needed to repent. What does "repent" mean? (Turn from sin; be sorry for sin, so sorry you don't want to sin any more.)

Carry-over activity

Some things God knows about me

Suggestions for using the list of verses below. Choose one or more suggestions according to the time available and the ages and abilities of the children.

- 1 Have a "sword drill" where the children race to find each verse. The first child to find a given verse stands up. When you have regained everyone's attention the "winning" child reads out the verse while the others listen to find out what God knows. They will listen more intently if you tell them you will choose someone to answer, not necessarily a volunteer with his hand up!
- 2 Give each child the list of verses to look up and a sheet of paper to write down what each verse tells us (they could work individually or in small groups with a helper).
- 3 Read the verses to younger children and let them choose one to illustrate.
- 4 Make out a "match up" worksheet with a list of the verses down one side and the answers (in brackets below) down the other side but not in the same order. The children look up each verse and draw a line between the reference and the correct answer.

Psalm 44:21 (The secrets of my heart.)

Psalm 139:2 (When I sit and when I rise.)

Review game

True or false

Ananias and Sapphira learned that they couldn't fool God. But in this review game the children will get a chance to try to fool the other team!

Ask questions, alternating between teams.

Children give the correct answer or an answer that sounds correct to try to fool the other team.

The other team members close their eyes and vote on whether they think the answer given is true or false.

Count the number of correct votes and award the voting team that number of points.

If a false answer was given, announce the true answer.

Psalm 139:4 (My words, even before I speak them.)

Matthew 6:8 (What I need.)

Matthew 10:30 (The number of hairs on my head.)

John 10:3 (My name.)

Carry-over activity

Witnessing kits (part 4)

Have extra shoe boxes and prayer booklets on hand for newcomers and children who forgot to bring their witnessing kits to class.

On page 5 of the prayer booklet have the children write “Confess your sins to God”. Remind the children that even after they have become Christians they will sin against God. When this happens, they need to confess their sin (agree with God that they have sinned), thank Him for forgiving them and ask Him to help them not to sin again. Have a time of silent prayer, encouraging the children to confess their sin to God.

Have the children make Gospel bracelets to wear as witnessing tools. Children string beads on a suede strip or piece of thick wool about 10-12 cm longer than their wrist circumference in the following order: yellow or gold, black, red, white, green. Tie a knot on either side of the row of beads to centre them on the bracelet. To make the bracelet adjustable, thread both ends of the suede/wool in opposite directions through a single clear bead and knot each end.

Carry-over activity

Deception dilemmas

Describe situations in which children may be tempted to deceive. Read possible responses and ask children to raise their hands when they hear the response they think is correct.

- 1 Your mum tells you to make your bed before you leave school. If you take time to do it you'll miss the bus. You should ...
 - (a) run out the door without doing it.
 - (b) hurriedly throw the top blanket over the bed and run out the door.
 - (c) ask your mum if you can make your bed after school, then do it. Get up earlier the following morning so you have time to make your bed before school.
- 2 Your friend is wearing a shirt you don't like and asks how you like it. You should ...
 - (a) say you like it.
 - (b) find something about it you can honestly compliment (eg “I really like the colour”).
 - (c) say you don't like it.

- 3 A classmate you don't like asks you to spend the night at her house. You should ...
 - (a) say "yes" and then don't go.
 - (b) tell her you have to go to your grandma's house, even if you don't.
 - (c) say "yes" and ask Jesus to help you be a friend to her.
- 4 Your teacher asks where your homework is. You should ...
 - (a) admit that you didn't do it and ask if you can stay in at breaktime to do it.
 - (b) tell her you didn't know you had a homework assignment, even if you knew.
 - (c) tell her your baby sister tore it up, even if she didn't.

Carry-over activity

Personal testimonies

Record and write or type testimonies as in lesson 1.

Lesson 5

God's message is for everyone

Scripture for teachers

Acts 10:1-48

Central truth

God wants everyone to hear the Gospel

Application

Unsaved: You have heard the Gospel - believe it

Saved: God wants you to tell the Gospel to others

Memory verse

“And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another ...” 1 John 3:23

This is a commandment from God. First we should believe (trust, completely depend on) the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour from sin. Then, in His strength, we can carry out the second command to love others, even those who do not love us. Love for the unsaved should result in telling them the Gospel message.

Visual aids

◆ Flashcards: 5-2, 5-3, 5-4, 5-5 and 5-6

Or

◆ Flannelgraph figures: 1A-37, 1A-38, 1A-39, 1A-40, 1A-41 and 1A-42

And

- ◆ Pictures of clean and unclean animals, or toy animals in a cloth.
- ◆ Map of Palestine showing Joppa and Caesarea.
- ◆ Central truth on a circle of card. You may want to make the circle look like a globe. Show this each time you teach the central truth.
- ◆ You may also find it useful to have some or all of the following wordstrips: Jews, clean, unclean, Gentiles, Joppa, Simon, Cornelius, centurion and Caesarea.

Note: It would be good to briefly show what we

mean by the word “Gospel” at an earlier point in the programme, perhaps by using the *Wordless Book*, or through a chorus (“G-O-S-P-E-L means good news” would be a good choice).

Lesson outline

Introduction

Do you ever have special rules to keep?

Progression of events

- 1 God's special rules for His special people CTS
- 2 Peter's vision
- 3 Three men arrive CTS
- 4 Why the men come
- 5 Peter invites the men inside CTS
- 6 Peter and others go to Cornelius
- 7 Peter preaches

Climax

Gentiles saved

Conclusion

Believe and be saved CTU

Teaching the memory verse

Memory verse

“And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another ...”
1 John 3:23

Introduction

Why do we need rules to play a game?

Allow answers (eg they tell how to play the game, help everyone play the same way, make games fair).

God has rules also. The Bible often uses the words “commandments” when it speaks of God’s rules.

Place wordstrip “commandments”.

Today we want to look at two of God’s rules.

Presentation

Ask a child to read the verse from your Bible, then have children read with you from the verse visual.

Explanation

His commandment - In this verse God has given us two special rules to follow. Since they are His rules, we must follow them to be truly happy.

we should believe - This is rule number one. “Believe” means to trust, to depend on, to accept as true. It means to believe with all your heart, not just your head.

on the name of His Son Jesus Christ - We are to believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is God the Son and that He came to die and rise again because of our sins. He is the only One Who can forgive sin and save from sin’s punishment.

and love one another - This is rule number two. Remember, rule number one must be obeyed before we can obey rule number two. Those who have believed on the Lord Jesus are to have a special kind of love for others. You can show God’s love to others by being kind.

Application

Unsaved: If you have not obeyed rule number one by believing on Jesus Christ to save you from your sins, you can do that today.

Saved: If you have already put your trust in Jesus Christ to save you from your sins, you need to obey the second part of this verse. Think of the many ways you can show God’s

“Commandments” =
God’s rules.

Begin and end with the reference. The reference is like an address - it tells where the verse “lives”.

Near the end of the second part of the Bible, the New Testament, is where we find our memory verse. John, the disciple of Jesus, wrote three letters. Our verse is in the first letter - 1 John, chapter 3, verse 23.

love to others, especially others who are different from you. The most important way is to tell them about the Lord Jesus. We'll talk more about this in our lesson.

Repetition

“Sign language”

Read the verse with the children, then demonstrate the verse using sign language for the following words:



Commandment
“C” + law



believe
mind + clasp
trust



Jesus
nail prints



love*

* Artwork from *Sign Language Made Simple* by Edgar D. Lawrence, Gospel Publishing House, Springfield, MO 65802. Used by permission.

Teach one sign at a time, repeating verse with that sign until children can correctly form the word. Add other signs, one at a time, as children are ready.

Repeat the verse several times using all signs, remembering to quote the reference before and after.

Lesson

★ **Introduction:** Do you ever have special rules to keep?

Do you ever have special rules to keep? Maybe for a school trip or when visitors come to your home?

★ **Progression of events:** God's special rules for His special people.

In the Bible we read many special rules that God made for the Jews. These rules were to show to others that the Jews were God's special people; that they were different because they were God's special people.

Some of the rules were about things they could eat. God only allowed them to eat some kinds of animals and not others. The ones they were allowed to eat they called "clean" animals and the ones they were not allowed to eat they called "unclean". God's special people, the Jews, would not eat a meal made by someone who wasn't a Jew in case they ate something they shouldn't. In fact, they wouldn't even go into the house of someone who wasn't a Jew. They were different from everyone else because they were God's special people. The Jews called everyone else Gentiles, no matter what country they came from or what they believed. God's people were special, and different from everybody else.

The Lord Jesus was born into a Jewish family, but He treated everyone the same whether they were Jew or Gentile. This surprised His fellow Jews and made some of them very angry with Him. All the disciples of the Lord Jesus were Jews. The first Christians were all Jews as well. Peter and the other apostles were preaching to Jews about the Lord Jesus wherever they went and many Jews were trusting the Lord Jesus as their Saviour.

Do you think God only wanted the Jews to know that the Lord Jesus had died so they could have their sins forgiven?

Allow answers.

No, God wanted everyone to know the Gospel, and He still does today. If you are a Christian, God wants you to tell others that the Lord Jesus is the only One Who can make them ready for Heaven. Perhaps there are people in your family who think that as long as they do more good things than bad they will get to Heaven. God wants you to tell them that they need to be sorry for their sin and trust the Lord Jesus for forgiveness. They need to trust Jesus to get them to Heaven, not trust the number of good things they do. God wants your family to hear the Gospel. He wants everyone to hear the Gospel, and He was going to show this to the Jewish Christians in a very special way, starting with Peter.

★ **Progression of events:** Peter's vision.

Peter was now staying in a town called Joppa.

He was staying at the house of a man called Simon who was a tanner (a leather-maker). One day, while Peter was waiting for the midday

You may want to gather or draw two sets of pictures to display here. Label one set "clean" and the other "unclean". See Leviticus 11 for the rules God gave. Do not take time to go into detail or talk about the rules at this point. Interested children could take a closer look at the end of the club or class.

"Jews" = God's chosen people.
"Gentiles" = People who are foreigners or not Jews.

CTS

Show the card with the central truth: "God wants everyone to hear the Gospel".

Let the children add examples which they have seen or known.

Show a map if you have one large enough to be easily seen.

meal to be made, he went up on to the flat roof of the house so that he could be alone to pray.

Place Peter (1A-41).

While he was there God gave him a vision, a special dream. In this vision, Peter saw something that looked like a sheet being let down from Heaven by its four corners.

Place sheet with animals (1A-42).

In the sheet there were all kinds of animals, “clean” ones and “unclean” ones.

Show the animal pictures again briefly.

Then Peter heard a voice saying (*read from Acts 10:13*), “Rise, Peter; kill and eat.”

Peter was shocked!

Read from Acts 10:14.

“Not so, Lord!” he said. “I have never eaten anything common or unclean.”

He couldn’t understand. Was God telling him he could eat any animal, even ones the Jews thought of as unclean?

God spoke to Peter again (*read from Acts 10:15*). “What God has cleansed you must not call common [unclean].”

This happened three times and then the sheet was taken back to Heaven.

Remove sheet with animals (1A-42).

★ **Progression of events: Three men arrive.**

Peter was still wondering what this vision meant, when the Holy Spirit said to him (*read from Acts 10:19-20*), “Three men are seeking you ... go down and go with them ... for I have sent them.”

Peter went down and saw that the men were already there.

Place servants (1A-39).

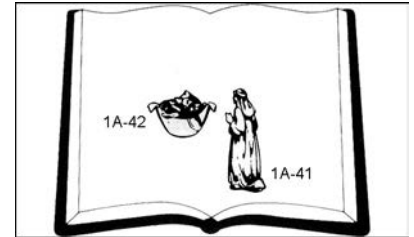
He said to them (*read from Acts 10:21*), “I am he whom you seek. For what reason have you come?”

Peter didn’t know who these men were or where they had come from, but God knew. It was all part of His plan to show the Jewish Christians that He wanted the Gentiles to hear the Gospel. He wanted them to know that the Lord Jesus had been punished for their sin and could forgive them if they trusted in Him. Then, when they died, God would not punish them for ever but would take them to Heaven. God wants everyone today to know that too. Listen to His command to all His children in Mark 16:15.

Read from your Bible.

“... Preach the Gospel to every creature.”

Flashcard 5-3



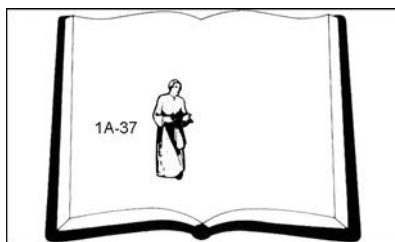
As a variation, try recording this section of the lesson. Then play the recording in class while an older child mimes the action. You could use some toy animals in a cloth. (Leviticus 11 lists unclean animals - eg camels, rabbits, pigs, owls, lizards, snakes.)

Flashcard 5-4



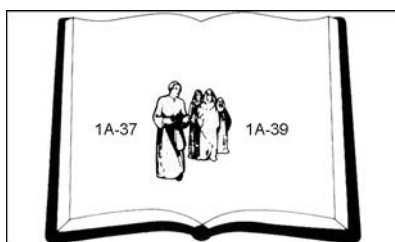
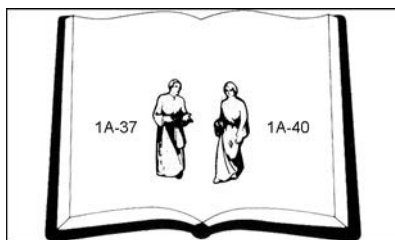
CTS

Show the card with the central truth.



Show Caesarea on the map.

Flashcard 5-2



Mention two places the children would know which are about the same distance apart as Joppa and Caesarea.

That means to every person. Christian, are you obeying this command? When God says “every person” He means just what He says. “Everyone” includes even the people who make life hard for you because they know you are a Christian. It includes that person in your class who is so annoying that nobody has made friends with them. God wants them all to hear the Gospel. Are you willing to tell them? God wanted Peter to be willing to tell Gentiles the Gospel, so He had spoken to Peter in the vision, but Peter still didn’t know exactly what God was going to show him.

So, who were these men?

Remove Peter (1A-41).

★ **Progression of events: Why the men come.**

Two of the men were servants and one was a Roman soldier. They were not Jews, they were Gentiles.

Remove servants (1A-39) and place Cornelius (1A-37).

Their master was also a Gentile. His name was Cornelius and he was in the Roman army. He was a centurion in the army. That means he was in charge of 100 men. He believed in God and worshipped with the Jews in the town of Caesarea where he lived. He prayed to God every day and he showed how much he loved God by giving money to the poor. He and his family and his servants feared God (they realised how great and holy God is) and worshipped Him. The day before Peter had the vision of the animals in the sheet, Cornelius also had a vision.

About three o’clock in the afternoon when he was praying, an angel appeared to him and said, “Cornelius!”

Place angel (1A-40).

How do you think Cornelius felt?

Allow answers.

Cornelius was afraid when he saw the angel! The angel told him to send men to the town of Joppa to get Peter.

Read from Acts 10:6.

“He is lodging with Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea,” the angel told Cornelius.

Remove angel (1A-40) and place servants (1A-39).

So, Cornelius called two of his servants and a soldier who was one of his personal attendants. They also believed in God and worshipped Him. Cornelius explained to them what the angel had said and then sent them straightaway to Joppa to get Peter.

Remove Cornelius (1A-37).

Joppa was 51 km (32 miles) from Caesarea. Imagine walking from ___ to ___! The men walked for the rest of that day and then the next morning they must have set off again early and arrived at Simon the tanner’s house about midday.

Place Peter (1A-41).

★ **Progression of events: Peter invites the men inside.**

When the men told Peter that an angel had told Cornelius to send for him, he invited them in. Imagine! Peter, a Jew, was inviting Gentiles to come in to the house where he was staying! Peter was already learning that God loved the Gentiles as well as the Jews. He was beginning to understand what God had been saying to him in his vision. God had been showing him that he was not to think of the Gentiles as unclean, as people not to bother with, but he didn't realise just yet that he was going to tell them the Gospel, the good news about Jesus.

Christian, are there some people you wouldn't think of telling the Gospel to? Perhaps you know people who believe something different to you. Perhaps there is a Jehovah's Witness in your class at school. Do you think that you should not try to tell him the Gospel because he already believes something else? What do you think God wants? Yes, God wants everyone to hear the Gospel, even those people who already believe something else. In other countries there are millions of people who believe many different things. God wants those people to hear the Gospel too. You cannot go and tell them all yourself, but you can pray for missionaries who have gone to tell them and you can give some of your money to help.

Cornelius and his family and his servants needed someone to come and tell them the Gospel. They knew some things about God, but they did not know that they needed to trust the Lord Jesus as their Saviour.

Perhaps you have not yet asked the Lord Jesus to forgive your sin; you would like to, but there are things you would like explained some more. Stay seated on the mat when the others are leaving and I will know that you want to speak to me about trusting the Lord Jesus as your Saviour.

God wanted Cornelius and his family and friends to have the Gospel explained to them, and that is why these men were now speaking with Peter.

★ **Progression of events: Peter and others go to Cornelius.**

The men Cornelius had sent stayed overnight at Simon the tanner's house and then, the next day, Peter and some other Christians from Joppa left with the servants to walk to Cornelius' house at Caesarea. When they arrived there the following day, Cornelius was waiting for them.

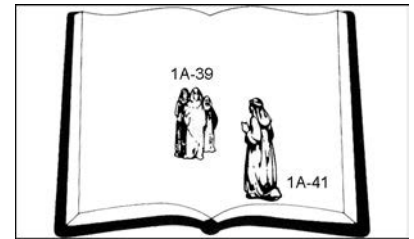
Place Cornelius (1A-37).

He had gathered together all his relatives and his close friends to hear what Peter had to say.

Place relatives and friends (1A-38).

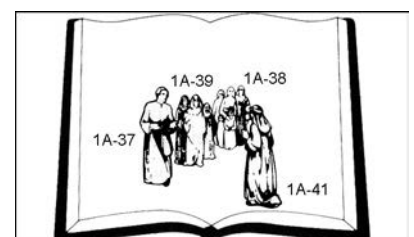
Cornelius met Peter as he was coming in and fell down before him and worshipped him, but Peter said (*read from Acts 10:26*), "Stand up, I myself am also a man."

No flashcard



CTS

Make yourself available for personal counselling.



Flashcard 5-5

★ Progression of events: Peter preaches.

They went inside and Peter saw all the people waiting to hear what he had to say.

He told the people, "You know that our law forbids me to come in to a Gentile home, but God has shown me not to call any man common or unclean."

Cornelius told Peter exactly what the angel had said, and then Peter began to preach the Gospel to them. He told them that he now realised that God would forgive the sins of anyone who trusted in the Lord Jesus, whether they were a Jew or a Gentile.

He told them (*read from Acts 10:43*), "Through His name [the name of the Lord Jesus] whoever believes in Him will receive remission [forgiveness] of sins."

★ Climax: Gentiles saved.

When Cornelius, and all the people he had gathered, heard the Gospel, every one of them trusted the Lord Jesus as Saviour! The Jewish Christians who had come with Peter were amazed. Now they knew that God wanted everyone to hear the Gospel, even the Gentiles.

★ Conclusion: Believe and be saved

You have heard the Gospel today. Some of you have heard it many times before. What have you done about it? Have you turned from your sin? Have you told God how sorry you are? Have you trusted Him to forgive you? Cornelius and his family and friends didn't say, "Thank you, Peter, for telling us that. We'll think about it and maybe some time we'll trust the Lord Jesus." This was what they had been waiting to hear. Now they knew how they could be made right with God and they trusted the Lord Jesus right then. Will you do the same today? What Peter told Cornelius and his family is true for you too.

Read Acts 10:43 from your Bible.

"Through His name [the name of the Lord Jesus] whoever believes in Him will receive remission [forgiveness] of sins."

If you believe on or trust the Lord Jesus as your Saviour today then you too can begin to tell others what God has done for you, because God wants everyone to hear the Gospel.

Remove all figures.

Flashcard 5-6

CTU

Show the card with the central truth.

Review game

Pigs and chickens

Tell the children that according to Jewish law, chickens were clean animals and pigs were unclean animals.

Provide two kinds of small objects that can be designated "chickens" and

Review questions

- 1 What name did Jews give to anyone who was not a Jew? (Gentile.)
- 2 Who does God want to hear the Gospel? (Everyone.)
- 3 Why did Peter go up to the flat roof of the house? (To be alone to pray.)
- 4 What special thing did God do for Peter while he was praying? (Gave him a vision, a special dream.)

- 5 What did God tell Peter in the vision? (Do not call anything unclean that God has made clean.)
- 6 What was God teaching Peter? (He wanted the Gentiles to hear the Gospel.)
- 7 What kind of a man was Cornelius? (Gentile; centurion; feared and worshipped God, gave money to the poor.)
- 8 What did Cornelius and his family and friends still need to hear? (The Gospel, the good news about Jesus.)
- 9 Why did Cornelius decide to send for Peter? (An angel told him to.)
- 10 What happened when Peter preached the Gospel to Cornelius, his family and friends? (They all believed on/trusted Christ as Saviour.)

Carry-over activity

Witnessing kits (part 5)

On page 6 of the prayer booklet have the children write “People who are different from me” and list people in this category for whose salvation they will pray.

Encourage them to continue praying for and witnessing to the people in their booklets. Give each child a tract to use in witnessing.

Various tracts for children are produced by European *Child Evangelism Fellowship* and are available from your *CEF* National Office. If you need an address, contact the European Headquarters (address at the front of this book).

Carry-over activity

Witnessing maths

Ask the children if they know how many people should be Christians if each Christian led just one other person to the Lord each year.

(First year - 2; second year - 4; third year - 8; fourth year - 16; fifth year - 32; sixth year - 64; and so on.)

Carry-over activity

Showing God’s love

Discuss ways people differ (eg race; physical, mental, artistic, creative activity; economic and social level) and list specific ways we can show God’s love to those who are different from us. Be sure to include “Tell them about Jesus.”

Carry-over activity

Personal testimonies

Record and write or type children’s testimonies as in lesson 1.

“pigs” (animal models, pictures of animals, pennies, pebbles, dry beans, etc).

Divide the class into two teams and provide a “farmyard” (a box or basket) for each team.

Alternate questions between the two teams.

For each question answered correctly, place a chicken in that team’s farmyard.

For a question answered incorrectly, place a pig in that team’s farmyard.

When all questions have been asked, count the animals in each team’s farmyard, subtracting the pigs from the chickens to reach each team’s final score.

The team with the highest score wins.

Have extra shoe boxes and prayer booklets on hand for newcomers and children who forgot to bring their witnessing kits to class.

Lesson 6

God's children are persecuted

Scripture for teachers

Acts 4:1-31

Acts 5:17 - 7:60

Central truth

God's children suffer for Him

Application

Unsaved: See note below

Saved: Expect to suffer, pray for God's help, and remember He will be with you

As there is no application to the unsaved in this lesson, it would be a good idea to bring a Gospel challenge at another point in the programme. You could do this through teaching you give on a Gospel chorus or through a short object lesson.

For example, you could use a stopped watch to illustrate how an unsaved person needs new life from the Lord Jesus Christ. The stopped watch may look nice, but it is no use until it has a battery installed (or until it is wound up). It does not do what it was meant to do. You cannot be the kind of person you were meant to be without new life from the Lord Jesus, no matter how hard you try to be good, kind ... The person who made the watch knew the best way to put it together so that it would work well.

God is your Maker so He knows what is best for you. He says in His Word, "He who believes in the Son has everlasting life ..." (John 3:36). You must believe in the Lord Jesus as the only One Who can take away your sin. Then He will give you new life and you will be able to live as God meant you to, with His help.

Memory verse

"... I will never leave you nor forsake you" Hebrews 13:5

A promise for God's children. He will never abandon them in times of difficulty. Even when they feel alone, He is there with them.

Visual aids

- ◆ Flashcards: 6-2, 6-3, 6-4 and 6-5

Or

- ◆ Flannelgraph figures: 1A-12, 1A-30, 1A-38, 1A-46, 1A-47, 1A-48, 1A-49, 1A-50, 1A-51, 1A-52, 1A-53, 1A-54, 1A-55 and 1A-56

And

- ◆ The central truth on a piece of card. You may want to shape the card as a silhouette of a child's head or a sword. Show this each time you teach the central truth.
- ◆ Other wordstrips you could use: Peter, John, apostles, Gamaliel and Stephen.
- ◆ You could also print, "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5) on the shape of an open Bible, or use the same visual you have for the memory verse.

Lesson outline

Introduction

What happened when Peter and John met a lame man at the temple?

Progression of events

- 1 Peter preaches
- 2 Peter and John arrested
- 3 Commanded not to speak in Jesus' name
CTS
- 4 Prayer meeting leads to preaching with boldness
CTS
- 5 Apostles imprisoned
- 6 Freed by angel
- 7 Brought before the rulers and flogged, but go rejoicing
CTS
- 8 Stephen's trial

Climax

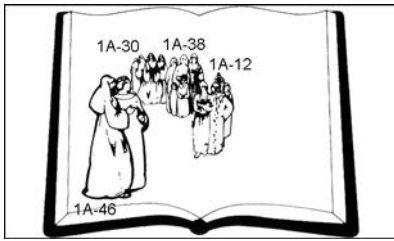
Stephen's death
CTS

Conclusion

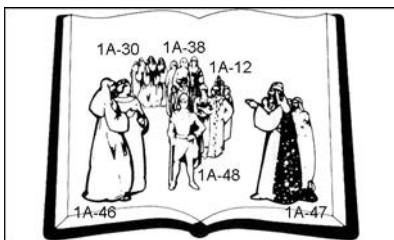
"I will never leave you ..."

You may wish to use the visuals from lesson 3 for the introduction.

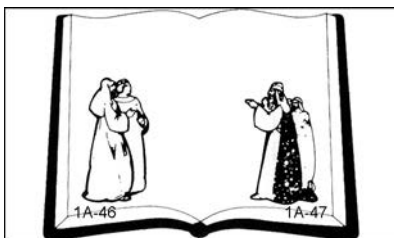
There are many situations in this lesson which lend themselves to role-play. You may want to choose "actors" before club and prepare them so they can say the words themselves. Alternatively choose them during the lesson and have them mime the action while you tell the story or involve them in dialogue while you take the lead to ensure essential elements of the story are included.



Role-play: Religious leaders discuss how they can stop the disciples from preaching.



Role-play: Temple guards arrest the disciples and put them in jail.



Lesson

★ **Introduction: What happened when Peter and John met a lame man at the temple?**

Place Peter and John (1A-46).

Do you remember what happened when Peter and John met a lame man on their way in to the temple?

Allow some children to answer.

Yes, God healed the man. Where did they go as soon as the man was healed?

Allow a child to answer.

That's right. They went into the temple. What did they do in the temple?

Again allow children to answer.

They praised and thanked God for healing the man.

All the people who were there were astonished at what had happened and came running to Peter and John and the man.

Place crowd (1A-12, 1A-30 and 1A-38).

★ **Progression of events: Peter preaches.**

When Peter saw them all gathered there, he began to preach to them about the Lord Jesus. While he was still speaking, the temple priests, the captain of the temple guard and other Jewish rulers came up.

Place leaders (1A-47) and temple guard (1A-48).

★ **Progression of events: Peter and John arrested.**

They did not like what Peter and John were teaching. They did not believe that the Lord Jesus had risen from the dead and they didn't want Peter and John, or anyone else, to teach the people that He had. So, they seized Peter and John and put them in jail overnight.

Remove crowd (1A-12, 1A-30 and 1A-38) and temple guard (1A-48).

The next day Peter and John were brought before the rulers and elders of the Jews to be questioned.

The rulers asked them (*read from Acts 4:7*), "By what power or by what name have you done this?"

Peter told them (*read from Acts 4:10*), "By the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth."

★ **Progression of events: Commanded not to speak in Jesus' name.**

He even told the rulers that they could only be saved through the Lord Jesus. The rulers didn't want the people to believe what Peter and John were teaching, so they commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus.

Peter and John replied (*read from Acts 4:19*), "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge."

“We cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard,” they said.

The rulers couldn’t decide how to punish them because everyone was praising God for what had happened so they just threatened them some more and then let them go.

If you had been Peter or John, what would you have done? Christian, if someone threatened to harm you if you ever spoke about the Lord Jesus again, what would you do? Would you stop talking about the Lord Jesus? The Lord Jesus had told His followers to expect to suffer because they believed in Him. That applies to Christians today too. You may not be put in prison for believing in the Lord Jesus, or for telling others about Him, but perhaps some of your friends will laugh at you if you try to tell them that they need to trust the Lord Jesus for forgiveness. Some people may not be friendly with you any more because you do not want to watch certain videos with them. You may feel very left out and alone, like a girl called Pauline whose friends went to see a film without even telling her. They left her out because they knew she wouldn’t think it was right to watch some of the things that were done in the film. That is suffering for the sake of the Lord Jesus. Would you stop talking about the Lord Jesus so that others don’t laugh, or would you keep on talking because you know that is what the Lord Jesus wants? Would you watch those bad videos just so that you don’t get left out, or would you please God by keeping your mind clean? What did Peter and John do?

Remove leaders (1A-47).

★ **Progression of events: Prayer meeting leads to preaching with boldness.**

They went to the other believers and told them what the rulers had said. Then they all prayed and asked God to help them to speak to others with great boldness. God answered their prayer and helped them to do just that. If they had obeyed the Jewish rulers, they would have been disobeying God. They obeyed God with His help. They didn’t have to do it in their own strength. God helped them by His Holy Spirit to obey Him even though they knew it could lead to trouble and suffering.

Christian, God will help you to be strong and brave enough to obey Him even when you know others will tease you or ignore you. Don’t give in to the temptation to do what everyone else does just to avoid being teased or left out. That is what Satan wants you to do. He wants to spoil your witness. He wants you to be like everyone else so that others will say there is no point in being a Christian because it hasn’t made you any different. Pray every day that God will help you to do what is right no matter what others say or do to you. When difficulties come up, pray in your heart right then and ask God to help you. He will be with you and He will help you. Listen to what He has promised in Hebrews 13:5.

CTS

Show the card with the central truth: “God’s children suffer for Him”.

Ask the children to share times when they have been persecuted. (“Persecuted” = to hurt someone with words or actions.)



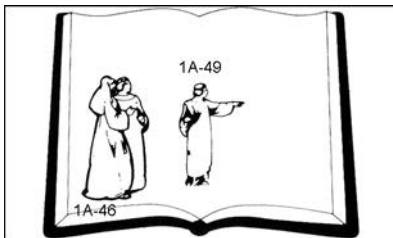
CTS

If you have taught Hebrews 13:5 as a memory verse before the

lesson, ask the children, "Can you think of a Bible verse where God promises to always be with His children?"

Flashcard 6-2

Role-play: An angel frees Peter and the other disciples from jail.



Flashcard 6-3

Role-play: Guards discover that the apostles are not in jail and tell the religious leaders. Show the variety of emotions described in the story - surprise, fear, hesitancy, perplexity.

Flashcard 6-4

Role-play: High priest orders disciples to stop preaching; Peter's response; Gamaliel's advice.

Read Hebrews 13:5b from your Bible.

"... I will never leave you nor forsake you."

The first Christians knew that and they were not going to stop speaking about the Lord Jesus just because they were being threatened.

★ **Progression of events: Apostles imprisoned.**

Peter and John and the other apostles went on preaching about the Lord Jesus. They also healed many more people in His name. People who used to listen to the Jewish rulers and obey the things they taught, were now following the teaching of the apostles. When the rulers realised this they became very jealous. So, they arrested the apostles and put them in jail.

★ **Progression of events: Freed by angel.**

But, during the night, an angel of the Lord opened the doors of the jail and brought them out.

Place angel (1A-49).

What do you think the angel told them to do? To hide?

Allow answers.

No! The angel told them to go back to the temple and preach about how to have eternal life through the Lord Jesus.

Remove angel (1A-49).

Just as it was getting light, they went in to the temple and did exactly what they had been told.

Remove Peter and John (1A-46).

Meanwhile, the High Priest and all the other Jewish rulers were gathering together.

Place leaders (1A-47).

They sent some officers to the jail to bring the apostles to them. When the officers arrived at the jail, they found that it was securely locked and the guards were standing at the doors, but when the doors were opened, there was no-one inside! They went back and reported this strange news.

Place temple guard (1A-48).

Everyone was very puzzled. Then someone came in and announced, "The men you put in jail are in the temple teaching the people!"

★ **Progression of events: Brought before the rulers and flogged, but go rejoicing.**

Once again the apostles were arrested and brought before the rulers.

Place Peter and John (1A-46).

They told the rulers (*read from Acts 5:29*), "We ought to obey God rather than men," and they explained that sins could be forgiven through the Lord Jesus.

When the rulers heard this they were furious! They didn't believe that the Lord Jesus is God the Son, so they thought it was a terrible thing to say that He could forgive sins - something only God could do. They were so angry that they wanted to put the apostles to death.

Then one of the rulers, called Gamaliel, stood up and asked for the apostles to be taken outside for a while.

Remove Peter and John (1A-46).

He told the other rulers (*read Acts 5:38-39 directly from your Bible*), "And now I say to you, keep away from these men and let them alone; for if this plan or this work is of men, it will come to nothing; but if it is of God, you cannot overthrow it - lest you even be found to fight against God."

This persuaded the rulers not to kill the apostles. Instead, they brought them back in and had them flogged (whipped). Then they ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus and let them go.

Remove all figures.

How do you think the apostles felt? I'm sure their backs were very sore and probably bleeding from the flogging (whipping). Do you think they were groaning and complaining that God had let this happen to them?

Allow answers.

Listen to what the Bible tells us.

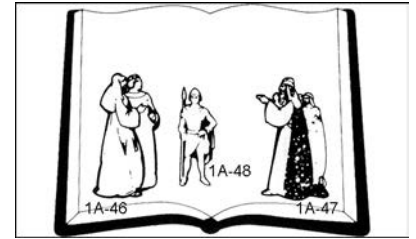
Read from Acts 5:41.

"So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name."

They felt honoured that God had allowed them to suffer in Jesus' name!

Christian, how do you feel when others make fun of you because you have trusted the Lord Jesus? Do you feel ashamed of Him? Do you feel angry that God has allowed this to happen to you? When you are left out of others' fun and games because you are seen as a spoil-sport or a goody-goody, do you feel sorry for yourself? Ask God to forgive you for feeling like that and to help you to feel like the apostles did, to feel happy that you have been allowed to suffer even a little bit for Jesus' sake. Ask Him to help you to always remember His promise, "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5).

Perhaps you have been having problems with friends who are not Christians. Perhaps you are not sure what to say to them, or you are not sure about something they want you to do. Come and wait beside the table when the others are leaving today and I will know you want to speak to me. You can tell me about it and I will try to show you what God's Word says. Or perhaps you know what to do, but you find it so difficult. If you would like to tell me about it I will pray for



Gamaliel had been Paul's teacher (Acts 22:3).

We are to obey those in authority over us (Colossians 3:22, Titus 3:1, Hebrews 13:17), except when we are ordered to do something contrary to God's will. Have children think of situations in which they might be ordered to disobey a clear command of God. How should they respond? (Refuse respectfully, ask God to help them accomplish the objective of the authority while not conflicting with God's will.)

CTS

Make yourself available for personal counselling.

you during the week that God will give you the strength to do what pleases Him.

Do you feel tempted to give up? To stop saying what you believe or explaining why you won't do this or that? To just keep quiet and say nothing to make life easier? Listen to what the apostles did.

Read Acts 5:42 directly from your Bible.

“And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease [stop] teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.”

Because the apostles went on preaching, many people were trusting in the Lord Jesus for forgiveness of sins. There was so much work for the apostles to do, looking after all the people as well as preaching. Seven other men were chosen to help look after the people so that the apostles could spend their time preaching about the Lord Jesus and teaching the believers.

★ **Progression of events: Stephen's trial.**

One of these men was called Stephen.

Place Stephen (1A-50).

Some of the Jews began to argue with him about what he said and did, but they could never win an argument with him, because the Holy Spirit was helping him know what to say. So these Jews persuaded some men to spread lies about what Stephen had said. He was brought before the rulers and they were told these lies.

Place leaders (1A-47) and people (1A-51).

Stephen began to preach to the rulers. He told them that Jesus was the One God had promised to send to be the Saviour. This made them so angry that they gnashed their teeth at him.

Show what “gnashed” means by making an angry face with clenched teeth as you say this.

But Stephen looked up to Heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. He told the rulers what he could see. They began to shout at him and covered their ears so they could not hear him. Remember, they did not believe that Jesus is God the Son, so they thought it was a really terrible thing to say that He was at God's right hand in Heaven.

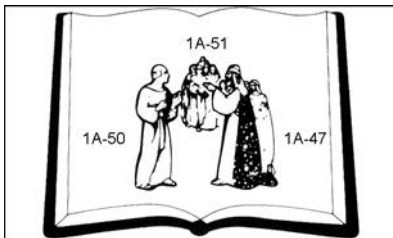
★ **Climax: Stephen's death.**

They were so furious that they all ran at him, dragged him out of the city, and began to stone him.

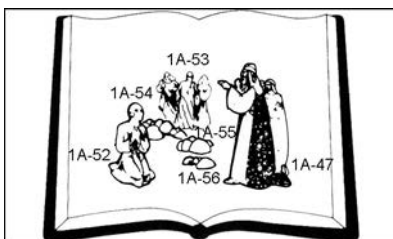
Replace Stephen (1A-50) with figure 1A-52 and people (1A-51) with figure 1A-53. Place stones (1A-54, 1A-55 and 1A-56).

How do you think Stephen felt? Do you think he was angry with those who were stoning him? Do you think he shouted nasty things at them or even just thought angry thoughts about them?

Allow some children to suggest answers.



Flashcard 6-5



Listen to what he prayed out loud while he was being stoned.

Read from Acts 7:60.

“Lord, do not charge them with this sin.”

He was asking God to forgive these people even though he must have been in great pain! After he prayed this, he died.

Christian, you may never have to die because of what you believe, but there are Christians in other countries who are in danger of being put to death for believing in the Lord Jesus. There are many who are in prison, many who have been rejected by their families, many who have been beaten, all because they have trusted the Lord Jesus as their Saviour. If you are a Christian, these people are your brothers and sisters in God’s family. Will you pray for them in your Quiet Time?

★ **Conclusion:** “I will never leave you ...”

Ask God to help them to know His promise is true, “I will never leave you nor forsake you” (Hebrews 13:5). You can also thank God that in this country you are free to believe in the Lord Jesus. You will have to suffer in smaller ways if you obey God, living the way He wants you to and speaking out for Him. Be ready for that. Be prepared to be different. Pray for God’s help before suffering comes and when it comes, and be glad that you have been allowed to suffer, even in a small way, for Jesus’ sake. Remember you are not alone because God has promised, “I will never leave you nor forsake you” (Hebrews 13:5).

Remove all figures.

Note to teacher

It would be appropriate to follow the lesson with prayer by a leader or by involving the children. Short prayers or ideas for prayer could be written out beforehand to help the children. Pray for the children in your club in difficult situations they face and for Christians around the world who are suffering because of what they believe. It would be good to have an up-to-date example from another country. Look out for examples in missionary magazines and other Christian literature.

Review questions

- 1 What did the Jewish rulers do when they heard Peter and John preaching about the Lord Jesus? (Put them in jail overnight.)
- 2 What did the rulers command Peter and John? (Not to speak or teach in the name of Jesus.)
- 3 Why did Peter and John not obey the rulers? (To obey the rulers would have been disobeying God; more important to obey God.)
- 4 What kind of things might happen to you if you are a Christian obeying God at home and school? (Accept any reasonable answers.)
- 5 When Peter and John told the believers what had happened, what did they do? (Prayed for boldness.)

CTS

Ask a saved child to read the central truth.

Review game

Free the disciples

Place a strand of wool down the middle of your flannelboard.

Place five strands of wool vertically on each side of the flannelboard to represent jail cells. (You may want to pin the top of each strand to the flannelboard.)

If desired place a flannelgraph figure behind each set of “bars”.

Ask questions, alternating between the teams.

Each time a child answers correctly, remove a bar from the jail cell on his team's side of the board.

If a child answers incorrectly, allow the other team to answer.

First team to remove all five bars on their jail cell and free their disciple(s) is the winner.

- 6 What has God promised His children in Hebrews 13:5? ("I will never leave you nor forsake you.")
- 7 How did the apostles escape from prison? (An angel came and led them out.)
- 8 The apostles were arrested again and flogged/whipped. How did they feel after that? (Rejoiced that they had been allowed to suffer for Jesus' sake.)
- 9 What did the rulers do to Stephen because of what he said? (Stoned him to death.)
- 10 How did Stephen feel towards these men? (Asked God to forgive them.)

Carry-over activity

Bookmark

Make a copy of the bookmark (page 66) on light card for each child. Punch a hole at the top and show them how to thread strands of wool through to make a tassel.

Older children could also colour the lettering with pencils or fine felt-tips. Younger children will need you to read over the words with them.

Encourage them all to use the bookmark in their Bibles so they are often reminded of its message.

Carry-over activity

Witnessing kits (part 6)

On page 7 of the prayer booklet have the children write "People who persecute me" and list people in this category for whose salvation they will pray.

Carry-over activity

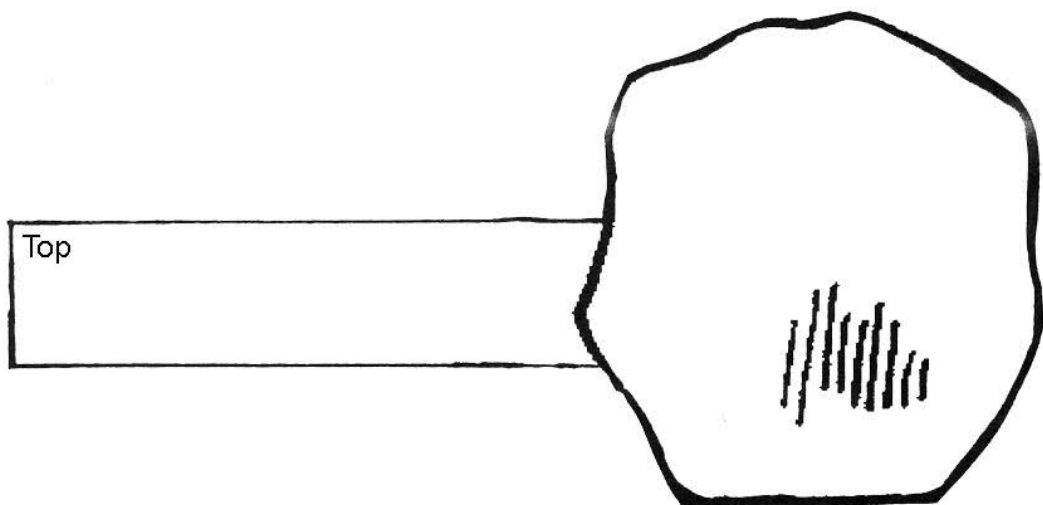
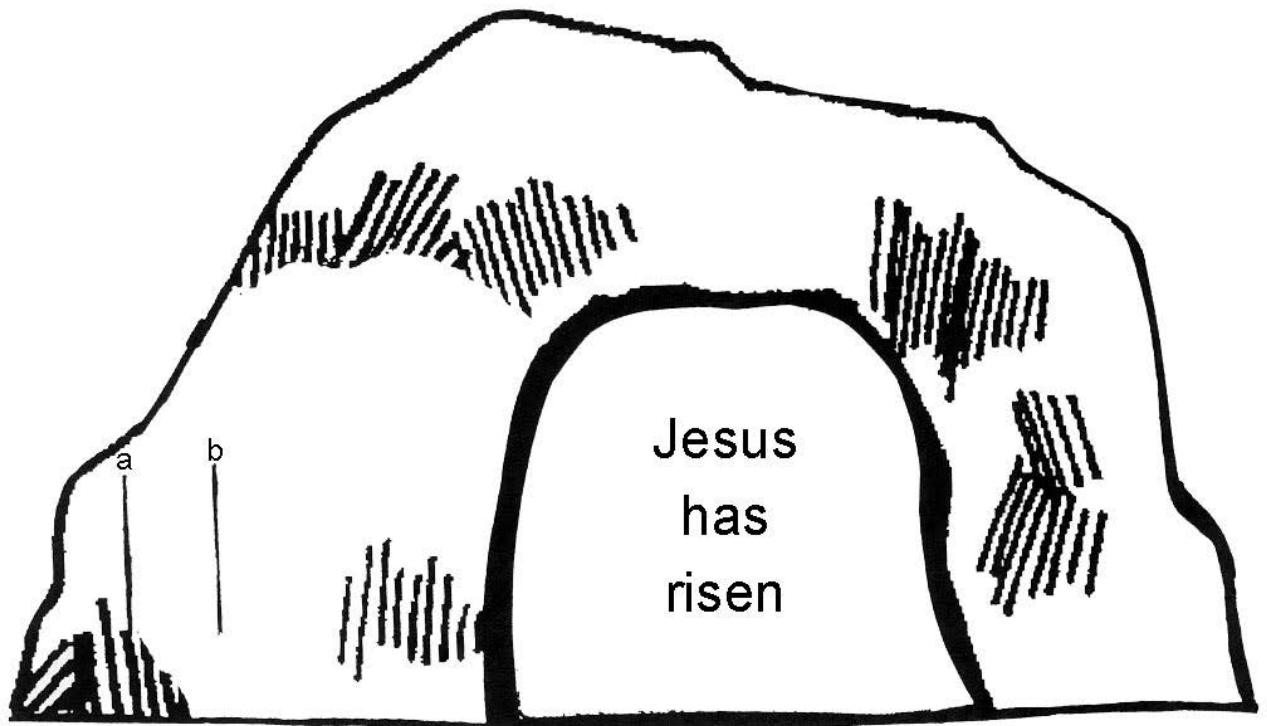
Personal testimonies

Record and write or type children's testimonies as in lesson 1.

Have extra shoe boxes and prayer booklets on hand for newcomers and children who forgot to bring their witnessing kits to class.

Jesus has risen

Carry-over activity - lesson 1



Wordsearch 1

Carry-over activity - lesson 3

s i n a c f t r
h e a l o o h e
e i n o n r a p
u b e c v g n e
d f e g e i k n
h k d l r v a t
b l o t t e d e
h e a v e n i g
l a m e d o u t

-
- Clues**
- Disobeying God.
 - Turned away from sin to God.
 - The Lord Jesus can meet your greatest _____.
 - Make a sickness or injury better.
 - Say how grateful you are.
 - Be so sorry for sin that you don't want to sin any more.
 - God promises that if anyone turns from sin to Him, that person's sin will be _____ out.
 - Your greatest need is to have your sin _____.
 - You cannot go here without having your sin forgiven.
 - Not able to walk.

Wordsearch 2


Carry-over activity - lesson 3

s i n a c f t r
 h e a l o o h e
 e i n o n r a p
 u b e c v g n e
 d f e g e i k n
 h k d l r v a t
 b l o t t e d e
 h e a v e n i g
 l a m e d o u t


Words to find	sin	Disobeying God.
	converted	Turned away from sin to God.
	need	The Lord Jesus can meet your greatest need.
	heal	Make a sickness or injury better.
	thank	Say how grateful you are.
	repent	Be so sorry for sin that you don't want to sin any more.
	blotted	God promises that if anyone turns from sin to Him, that person's sin will be blotted out.
	forgiven	Your greatest need is to have your sin forgiven.
	heaven	You cannot go here without having your sin forgiven.
	lame	Not able to walk.

Bookmark


Carry-over activity - lesson 6




“I will
never
leave
you, nor
forsake
you.”
Hebrews
13:5



“I will
never
leave
you, nor
forsake
you.”
Hebrews
13:5



“I will
never
leave
you, nor
forsake
you.”
Hebrews
13:5



“I will
never
leave
you, nor
forsake
you.”
Hebrews
13:5

Copy, cut out and keep in your Bible



Summary of steps for counselling the child who wants to come to Christ

Make sure the child understands about

God

Who is God?
God made us. He speaks to us through the Bible.
God is holy and pure. He loves us.

Sin

What is sin?
Sin is disobeying God's commands. It is against God.
Speak about specific sins.
The child is a sinner by nature and act. (We sin because we are sinners.)
Sin deserves punishment.

The Saviour

Who alone can take away your sin?
God the Son died on the cross for sinners.
The Lord Jesus rose again from the dead.
He is Lord of all.

Explain how to be saved

Explain what the Lord wants us to do, and what He will do.
Use a Bible verse (*John 1:12; 3:16; 6:37; Acts 16:31; Romans 6:23 or 10:13*).
What does the Lord want you to do?
What will the Lord do?
Warn about difficulties.
Ask: "Do you want to trust Christ, or would you rather wait?"
Encourage the child to pray audibly (if ready).

Speak about assurance of salvation

Go back to the Bible verse you used.
Speak about a changed life.
Tell him what the person who is truly trusting in Christ can know.

Give (later) some advice about the Christian life

Read and obey your Bible.
Talk to God, our Heavenly Father.
Tell others what the Lord has done for you.
Ask God to forgive you when you sin.
Meet with other Christians.
Remember the Lord promises: "*I will never leave you*" (*Heb 13:5*).