

A CHRISTIAN'S DUTY

All Activity Sheets

KEY WORDS

HARVEST

SPREAD THE GOSPEL

WIN SOULS

WORKER

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

Acts 13:1-12

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To help the children understand that we are used by God to spread the gospel and win souls for Christ

MEMORY VERSE

"Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field'" (Matthew 9:37-38, NIV*).

PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

After the death of Stephen, there was great persecution against the Church in Jerusalem, and Christians scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria. The apostles remained in Jerusalem, while those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the gospel.

When the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the gospel, they sent Peter and John to pray for these new believers that they might receive the Holy Spirit. Among the transformed was Saul of Tarsus, a persecutor of the Christian church who had an encounter with God, thereby becoming a Christian. He became better known by his Roman name Paulus, which means "small" or "humble". We refer to him as Paul.

In chapter 13, the brothers pray, fast and minister. Now God, by means of the Holy Spirit, wanted to set apart Barnabas and Paul for the work to which he had called them. Barnabas preached and oversaw the congregations in Antioch, and Paul helped him. The Lord always prepares us and teaches us before he calls and sends us. Barnabas and Paul were obedient to God's call and began their first missionary journey. They prayed and fasted, searching for the Lord's guidance.

They went to Antioch, and from there sailed to the island of Cyprus, to the city of Salamis, where John Mark, the cousin of Barnabas, joined them. They were preaching in the synagogues where the people gathered to pray, read and study the Word of

God.

After crossing the island of Cyprus, they came to Paphos, where an intelligent man named Sergius Paulus sent for Barnabas and Paul because he wished to hear the gospel. While in Paphos, the first person to try to prevent the sharing of the gospel appeared. His name was Bar-Jesus (Elymas in Greek), a Jewish sorcerer and false prophet. We know that these things are forbidden by God; his Word says that any lie is sin (Matthew 5:19-21; Revelation 21:7-8).

This man accompanied the governor of the Roman city of Paphos. Elymas tried to make Paul look like a liar, because the governor was convinced that what Paul preached was the truth about God. If Sergius Paulus knew the truth, then the magician Elymas could not deceive him with lies (see John 8:32). The governor was converted to Christ.

When we talk to others about Christ, wonderful things happen, and God is always victorious. We can always trust him. Elymas was a Jew, and although he knew God, he did not do the Lord's will and opposed God's word. Anyone who does that will be punished if he does not repent. Elymas' punishment for his attitude was that he became temporarily blind.

Whoever does not seek God is spiritually blind. God wants us to come into his presence with a repentant heart, confessing our sins so he can make us his children; that is God's justice for us. Elymas did not want the governor to believe, because if he did not believe, God could not do give him justice. Elymas was an enemy of justice.

From this lesson, we have learn that:

1. God calls his children to tell others about him, whether in their home, community or another country;
2. The Word of God will be preached and people will accept Jesus as Lord and Savior, even when there is opposition from others, and
3. Those who preach the message of salvation are protected by the Holy Spirit. Let us become followers of Jesus like Barnabas and Paul.

INTRODUCE THE LESSON

Explain to your children that in the life of a Christian, there are difficult times when we feel that others will reject us because we love Jesus. Ask your children, "How would you feel if someone hated the fact that you love Jesus?" "What could you do?" (Allow them to express their views.) Explain that the Bible speaks of two men, Barnabas and Paul, who had to face this situation. Let them listen to this interview of the biblical account and see what happened.

TEACH THE LESSON

In advance assign and prepare children to be the characters. Let them set up the meeting area to look like a studio to simulate an interview (a table, four chairs and two microphones – can be made with a cardboard tube and a ball of paper).

Reporter 1: Paul and Barnabas, I am so excited to meet you! Can you tell me what you did before becoming missionaries?

Paul: I am ashamed to admit it, but I was known as Saul and I hated Christians.

Reporter 2: Are you the same Saul who arrested and beat Christians?

Paul: Yes, I am....

Barnabas: Of course he is! It was very difficult for believers in Jerusalem to imagine Paul as a Christian. At first, they thought it was a trick. And until I was sure, he was not the same, as before, I did not take him to see the other Christians.

Reporter 1: How did you become missionaries?

Paul: Through God's command!

Reporter 2: What do you mean?

Paul: Let me explain. We were in Antioch worshiping with other believers when the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."

Barnabas: There were many preachers and teachers in Antioch who laid their hands on us, prayed for us and sent us out to share the gospel.

Reporter 2: You were called "special agents".

Paul: I guess you could say that.

Barnabas: But that does not mean we are more important than other believers are, because God has given us all special assignments.

Reporter1: I heard that you are called "the first missionaries." How did you know what you had to do?

Paul: Actually, we did not know exactly what we were going to do. We just trusted and followed the mandate of the Holy Spirit.

Barnabas: When we went to a new city, we proclaimed the Word of God in their synagogues. We told people that Jesus was the Messiah, the Savior of the world! Only he can forgive their sins and restore their lives.

Reporter 2: How did the people respond?

Paul (to Barnabas): Barnabas, do we talk about Elymas and Sergius Paulus?

Barnabas: Sure.

Paul: We traveled across the island of Cyprus until we came to Paphos. The Roman governor Sergius Paulus lived there. He was an intelligent man who wanted to hear the Word of God. I told him I was no longer known as Saul but Paulus.

Barnabas: There we also met Elymas, the magician. He did not want Sergius Paulus to listen to us, and tried to turn him from the faith. He did not like what we had to say.

Reporter 2: What did you do?

Barnabas: The Holy Spirit gave Paul courage. He looked directly at Elymas and said, "You are a child of the devil and an enemy of everything that is right! You are full of all kinds of deceit and trickery. Will you never stop perverting the right ways of the Lord? Now the hand of the Lord is against you. You are going to be blind for a time, not even able to see the light of the sun."

Reporter1: What a dreadful rebuke! What happened next?

Paul: Darkness fell upon him immediately and he went around looking for someone to lead him by the hand.

Reporter 2: Unbelievable!

Barnabas: Amazing! It is not very wise to fight against the Holy Spirit

Paul: That gave us the opportunity to teach Sergius Paulus about Jesus.

Reporter 1. What did the Governor think of all this?

Barnabas: "When the proconsul saw what had happened, he believed, for he was amazed at the teaching about the Lord."

Reporter 2: Imagine! The Roman Governor became a believer!

Reporter 1: What an exciting experience you had on your first missionary trip! I am sure you have a lot more that you could tell us.

Paul and Barnabas: We sure do. But let us save that for another time. Thank you for allowing us to testify to you about what God did on our first missionary trip.

CONNECT THE LESSON

Review

Distribute Student Activity Sheet #283-A and #283-B and review the lesson with the group.

What kind of witness are you ?

Refer to Student Activity Sheet #283-B and tell the group that even if they do not become missionaries like Paul and Barnabas, but they will always be witnesses. People look at how we respond when they oppose our faith. Provide the following three responses: anger, denial or courage. Have the group tell in what situations a Christian could react in these ways:

Anger: Do you react violently when someone attacks you for what you believe?

Denial: Do you pretend, for the moment, NOT to be a Christian?

Courage: With a lot of courage, do you tell others that you love Jesus?

PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

[Download Additional Memory Verse Activities PDF](#)

[Download Suggestions for Bible Memorization PDF](#)

Verse of the month club

There is a certificate for the Verse of the Month Club. See Student Activity Sheet #283-C. Encourage children to join this club, and to learn the Bible verses for this. Put a star on the certificate when they have memorized each month's verse. When they have learned all the verses, they will receive their certificate, and you can put it up in the meeting area or sent it home with the student.

Activity: The Lord's workers

Give your Student Activity Sheet #283-D titled "The Lord's Workers". They need to put vowels in the blanks to complete the Bible verse - Matthew 9:37-38.

"The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." (Matthew 9:37-38)

Activity: Great missionaries!

On the same activity sheet, have your children find the section called "Great Missionaries" and have them mark the path of Barnabas and Paul's first missionary journey. It is found in Acts 13:1-6.

WRAP-UP

Pray

Do not forget to pray with your group.

Encourage

Encourage the students not to forget what they learned.

Invite

Thank your group for their attendance and announce something about the next lesson to increase their interest. Remind them that their friends are also welcome.