

CHANGING PATHS

All Activity Sheets

KEY WORDS

OBEY COMMAND HARVEST WORKER INSTRUMENT

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

Acts 16:6-15

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To help children understand the importance of obeying God's command and to know that we are instruments in his hands

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

Have you ever been told to do something that you thought was strange? Maybe you did not understand why you received that request, but if it was God who made the request, it is important to obey him.

This is what happened to Paul, he did not understand why the Holy Spirit forbade him to share the gospel in Asia, where he wanted to continue preaching. He left Galatia to Bithynia but again the Holy Spirit forbade him to speak.

He continued his journey to Troas. Once there, he had a vision during the night: A man from Macedonia was standing there begging him, saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." Macedonia was in Europe. Now Paul understood why the Holy Spirit had not allowed him to speak in Asia. God needed him urgently in this providence.

In Philippi (the first city in the province of Macedonia), there were no synagogues. People gathered on the riverbank to pray (Acts 16:13). To establish a synagogue, according to rabbinic law, there had to be at least ten men. Paul and his friends spoke to women who believed in God. Among them was a woman named Lydia. She sold purple cloth. In the ancient world, purple cloth was highly valued. The Bible says that Lydia worshiped God. She received the Lord as her Savior and was baptized. She begged Paul and his companion to stay at her home while they were in Philippi.

What can we learn from the direction of the Holy Spirit in the life of Paul? He was a man who sought to obey and please God. Through prayer and studying God's Word, we can know the Lord's will for our lives so we can obey him. It is beautiful to see how God takes care of us when we obey.

INTRODUCE THE LESSON

What would you think if God commanded you to build an ark that you would enter with only your family and two of every kind of animal? (Genesis 6) Or, if you had a vision in which God told you to kill and eat animals that were unclean? (Acts 11) These men of God received a mandate from God, and obeyed even though they did not understand the purpose. The result of their obedience was that the gospel was proclaimed and many people received salvation.

Noah and Peter were instruments in God's hands. Do you know someone who has been an instrument in the hands of the Lord? Could you be an instrument of God? (Yes) What should you do to be an instrument of God? (Obey God.)

It was Saturday afternoon; Mary was looking forward to going shopping with her friends. She wanted to have fun, but her mother asked her to go to her grandfather's house to take him some food.

"But Mom! Why do I have to go to grandpa's house? I want to go with my friends to have fun!"

"I need you to go," her mom said. "Maybe you can be helpful to your grandpa."

Mary thought, "I'll go to grandpa's house early and then I'll have time to meet up with my friends. I love my mom and I learned from the Bible that we must obey our parents like we must obey God."

Upon arriving at her grandpa's house, Mary called out, but no one answered the door. She walked into the house and found her grandpa lying on the floor. He had fainted. With Mary's help, the old man recovered quickly.

Ask the children, "How do you think Mary felt when her mother asked her to go to her grandpa's house?" (Angry) "What did Mary want to do?" (Go have fun with her friends.) "Why did she decide to obey her mother?" (Because she loved her and had learned that we must obey God and our parents.) "What was the result of her obedience?" (She was there to help her grandpa.) "How do you think Mary felt after seeing what had happened?" (Happy to know the result of her obedience.)

TEACH THE LESSON

Narrate the following story. Some words are hard to pronounce. Help your children learn how to say each of the names using the pronunciation key. List the names several times. Then, ask the children to look in the story until they find the names, draw a circle around them and then repeat the pronunciation of them. Do this with each name to help them feel confident that they can read the story. Let volunteers read aloud, or you can read to them.

American English pronunciation key:

Bithynia - Bih-thin-ee-uh

Macedonia - Mas-i-doh-nee-uh

Mysia - Mish-ee-uh

Troas - Troh-as

Philippi - Fil-uh-pie

"I wish I knew why the Holy Spirit did not allow us to preach in Asia," said Paul.

"Maybe we should go anyway", said one of his companions. That seemed like a good idea to everyone and they began to make their way to that city. They tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit did not allow it. Then, they passed Mysia, and continued down to Troas. Paul told Silas, "I'm tired; we should rest when we reach Troas." "I'll be ready to rest then too." Silas agreed.

When they arrived at Troas, Silas, Timothy, and Luke laid down to sleep.

That night, Paul had a vision. A man was standing, begging him saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us."

"Silas! Luke! Wake up!" Paul exclaimed. "I know where God wants us to go."

While the others woke up, Paul explained his vision: "God wants us to go to Macedonia."

"Macedonia? But it is so far away!" someone said.

"Yes, Macedonia! In my vision, I saw a man there. The man said, 'Come over to Macedonia and help us.'"

Paul and his friends packed up their things, went down to the port, and arranged for their trip. When they arrived in Macedonia, the missionaries continued on to Philippi.

"Why did we come to Philippi?"

It was the main city in that part of Macedonia. But there was no synagogue. "Why did the Holy Spirit bring us here?"

"How are we going to find people to talk to about Jesus if there is not a synagogue?"

"We must start one!" Paul suggested, "Why do not we go outside the city? Many times when there is no synagogue, people meet at the river to pray. We should go to the river and see if anyone is there."

The missionaries did not have to look for long; they quickly found a group of women who gathered there every Saturday to pray and encourage one another. Along the river, Paul, Silas, Timothy and Luke sat down and began to talk to the women about Jesus. One of the women was named Lydia. She sold purple cloth. God had opened her heart so that she was attentive to Paul's message. "I believe. I want to be Christian!" Lydia said.

Paul baptized Lydia and all of her household. Lydia was very happy because these missionaries had come to Macedonia. She invited them to her home. She said to them, "If you consider me a believer in the Lord, come and stay at my house."

CONNECT THE LESSON

Review

Distribute Student Activity Sheet #284-A and review the lesson.

When, Where, How?

Give each one Student Activity Sheet #284-B entitled "When, Where, How". Have the children help James find the shortest route to Lake Beautiful. Challenge children to see who makes it to the finish line first.

PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

[Download Additional Memory Verse Activities PDF](#)

[Download Suggestions for Bible Memorization PDF](#)

Remind group that they must learn the memory verse so they can receive a star on their certificate.

Activity: Whom did God call?

Distribute Student Activity Sheet #284-C and #284-D. Tell the children to match the Bible character with the calling they received from God.

"Have seven priests carry trumpets of rams' horns in front of the ark. On the seventh day, march around the city seven times... then the wall of the city will collapse." (Joshua) (Joshua 6:4-5)

"Get up, Peter, kill and eat ... Do not call anything impure that God has made clean." (Peter) (Acts 11: 4-15)

"...make yourself an ark of cypress wood ... you will enter the ark—you and your sons and your wife and your sons' wives ... bring into the ark two of all living creatures, male and female,..." (Noah) (Genesis 6:13-22)

"Raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea to divide the water so that the Israelites can go through the sea on dry ground." (Moses) (Exodus 14:16)

"Come over to Macedonia and help us." (Paul) (Acts 16:6-10)

Activity: Lesson review

Give each child the work sheet entitled "Lesson Review". Children need to cross out the words that should not be part of the following sentences:

1. We were allowed - forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the gospel in Asia.
2. A man of Macedonia standing and begging Paul to go to Macedonia and not help us - help us.

3. After Paul had the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had - had not called us to proclaim the gospel there.

Activity: Does it please God?

Have your children write YES or NO to indicate what does or does not please God.

- a. I tell a lie.
- b. I obey my parents.
- c. I read the Bible.
- d. I take what does not belong to me.
- e. I help the needy.
- f. I talk to others about Christ.
- g. I make fun of the elderly.
- h. I pray to God every day
- i. I obey the law.
- j. I destroy other people's property.

WRAP-UP

Pray

Ask the group to tell their prayer needs. Then pray with them.

Encourage

Thank your students for their attendance and ask them not to forget what they learned.

Invite

Announce something about the next lesson to increase their interest, and remind them to invite friends.