

But...He's Not Like Me

Lesson Scripture: Acts 10:1-28

Bible Truth: I will treat everyone with love and kindness.

Bible Story: Acts 10:1-28

Bible Verse: "...God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right." (Acts 10:34b-35, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "Prejudice"

Preparation

Prepare a snack for the children.

Write the words "prejudice," "favoritism," "Jew," and "Gentile" on a piece of poster board. You will refer back to this poster throughout the lesson.



Presentation

Before starting the class, choose a particular group of children to ignore. You can choose all boys or all girls, all those who wear glasses, or those who are wearing a specific color, etc. (DO NOT use skin color or nationality as the group to ignore.) At the beginning of the class, allow the rest of the children to have certain special privileges and opportunities such as giving them certain materials, helping them to get organized, etc. At the same time, ignore the group of children you chose. Finally, offer the snack only to the other children, ignoring the one particular group of children. Those who you chose to ignore will probably start to protest about the unfair treatment they are receiving.

Say: **You are right. I have been treating some children better than others. I've been ignoring some of you. Can you tell me why?** Allow the children to guess the characteristics that the ignored children had in common. Then, give a snack to everyone.

Say: **Was I treating everyone fairly?** Allow children to respond. **No, I was showing prejudice. PREJUDICE is a word that describes what some of you experienced. Sometimes, people are ignored or even mistreated because of the color of their skin or because they come from a**

certain part of the country. Other people may be mistreated because they are disabled or because of their religious beliefs. In today's Bible story we will discover that some Christians were prejudiced against others. Do you think that God was pleased by that? We will learn what God did to teach them a lesson about letting go of their prejudice.

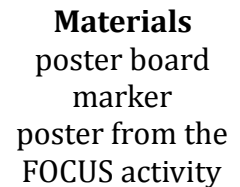
End with a prayer, asking God to help the children be kind to everyone.

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Acts 10:34b-35

Preparation

Write Acts 10:34b-35 on the poster board.

Practice saying the verse six or seven times, but make a different mistake every time you do it. You may want to write down the different ways you will say the verse to help the memorization activity go smoothly.



Materials
poster board
marker
poster from the
FOCUS activity

Explanation

Say: **We are learning some big words today.** Refer to the FOCUS activity poster as you talk. **PREJUDICE** is treating people badly because they are different from you, just like I showed prejudice toward some of you during our snack time because you were wearing the color red (or mention the group you chose to ignore). **I treated you unfairly.**

Does anyone know what the word favoritism means? Point to the word on the poster board and allow children to answer. **FAVORITISM** is what I showed to the other group. **I gave them a special treat just because they were not wearing the color red** (or mention the group you chose to ignore) **and ignored the rest of you. I showed favoritism toward them.**

God hates both PREJUDICE and FAVORITISM. He wants us to treat everyone with love and kindness, just as He does.

So what does God look at when he sees a person? Does he look at your hair color, your skin color, or your height? No! Can anyone underline the words in this verse that tell us what God is looking at when he sees us? Allow a child to underline the words "fears him" and "does what is right."

Memorization Activity

Explain to the children that you are going to read the verse several times. Ask them to jump up when they hear a mistake and allow them to correct the mistake. Then read the verse correctly all together. Do this several times until children can say the verse correctly.

INSTRUCT

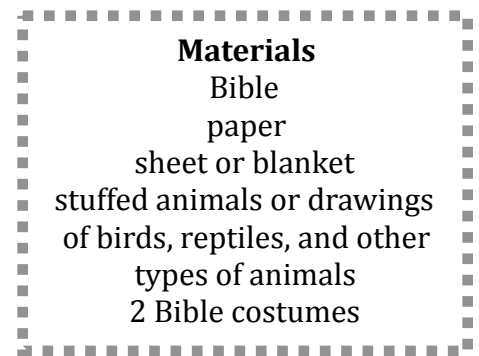
Bible Story: "Peter and Cornelius," Acts 10:1-35

Preparation

Read and study Acts 10:1-35.

Presentation

Say: In today's story you will hear two words that you might not understand—"Jews" and "Gentiles." Show children the words written on the poster from the FOCUS activity. **Who are these people? What are their differences?**



In the Old Testament, God chose to give Abraham's family a special blessing because Abraham obeyed God. God turned Abraham's family into a powerful nation called Israel. Later on, they were known as the Jewish people. All other countries and peoples in the world were called the Gentiles.

The Jewish people were supposed to worship God. However, on many occasions they disobeyed God. But God still loved them and kept His promise to them.

The Gentiles didn't know that there was a true and only God. Most of them worshipped idols made out of wood or stone. Some would also worship the sun or moon. Even though they didn't know or worship God, He still loved them.

But the people of God, the Jews, were prejudiced against the Gentiles. And the Gentiles were prejudiced against the Jews. How would these two different groups of people understand the love of God? How would these two different groups of people believe in Jesus and share together?

God had a marvelous plan and it started with a Gentile soldier named Cornelius and a Jewish disciple named Peter.

Ask the children to help you act out the story you are about to tell. You will need two children to be Cornelius and Peter. Give them a costume to wear if you have one. Two children will need to hold the sheet/blanket. Two children can be the messengers from Cornelius. The other children can be Cornelius' family. While you narrate the story, the children can act it out.

Say: **Cornelius was a captain in the Roman army. He and his family were good people and believed in God. Cornelius gave a large portion of his possessions to the poor and prayed frequently. One afternoon, while Cornelius was praying, he saw an angel getting closer to him. "Cornelius!" said the angel. "God has heard your prayers and has seen the gifts you give to others. Send a few of your men to Joppa. There they will find a man named Peter. Ask him to come to visit you."**

As soon as the angel left, Cornelius sent three trusted men to Joppa to find Peter.

But Peter was a Jew. He didn't talk to Gentiles. He also would never eat with a Gentile because there were several types of meat the Gentiles ate that the Jews did not eat. What was God going to do to make sure that Peter went to visit Cornelius?

It was noon time when Peter was praying. But while he was praying he became very hungry. While someone was preparing a meal for him, Peter took a nap. During that nap, he had a dream. He saw a large cloth descend from heaven that was full of all types of living creatures: **birds, animals, and reptiles**. Place stuffed animals or pictures of animals in the sheet and have two children hold it near Peter.

The Lord spoke to Peter, "Rise up, Peter, and eat!"

"Lord, I cannot eat these things. Our laws say that meat from these animals is not clean, therefore, we can't eat them."

"Peter, don't argue with God," the voice said. "If I have made them clean, then they are clean."

This happened three times, and then Peter woke up. He wondered, "What is the meaning of this dream?"

It was at that moment the men coming on behalf of Cornelius knocked at the door. The Lord spoke to Peter, "There are three men looking for you. Go with them. Don't doubt doing so. I have sent them."

So Peter traveled to Cornelius's house.

As soon as he arrived, he said, "Cornelius, you know that the Jewish laws are against me being with someone like you. But God has shown me that I don't need to be prejudiced against any person. That's why I've come to your house."

Then, Peter talked to Cornelius about Jesus who was crucified on a cross, and that He rose from the dead three days later. While Peter was talking to Cornelius and all who were at the house, the Holy Spirit came upon them. They began to speak in heavenly tongues and worshiped God.

When Peter saw what God had done, he said, "I now understand that God loves everyone. He wants both the Jews and Gentiles to hear the good news about Jesus."

Thank the children for helping with the story. Discuss the following questions:

In what ways did the Jewish people show prejudice toward the Gentiles?

What types of food did Jewish law prohibit Peter from eating?

How did God use this food to teach Peter a lesson about prejudice?

What happened when Peter stopped being prejudiced and listened to God?

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Art, "I Will Be Kind to Everyone"

Preparation

Write "I Will Be Kind to Everyone!" at the top of a piece of paper for each child.

Materials

paper
crayons

Presentation

Give each child a prepared sheet of paper. Ask them to draw pictures of several different people. The people should have different hair color, eye color, and skin color. They can also be different heights and wear different types of clothes.

Remind them that no matter the color of our skin, where we live, or what language we speak, God loves us all and wants us to be kind to one another.

Note: If magazines, newspapers, scissors, and glue are available, you can have children cut out pictures of different types of people and glue the pictures on their papers as an alternative to drawing.

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

Write the name of several different countries on pieces of paper.

Materials

globe or world map
paper
marker

Presentation

Ask a child to choose one piece of paper and read the name of the country aloud. If you have a globe or map, show the children where the country is located. Pray for the people of that country. Continue with each country you have written on a piece of paper. End with a prayer for the people of your city or country.