

LESSON



Two Men and a Strange Message

COMMUNITY

We treat each other with love.

References

Acts 10; *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 132-142.

Memory Verse

“God does not show favoritism” (Acts 10:34, NIV).

Objectives

The children will:

Know that God accepts everyone and wants children to welcome new people as friends.

Feel happy that God made everyone unique.

Respond by being friends with children in our church family and those from other cultures.

The Message

God’s children can be friends to everyone.

Getting Ready to Teach

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

God sends to Cornelius an angel who tells him to send for the apostle Peter. Cornelius does so, but before the men reach Peter, God sends a vision to Peter. Peter is puzzled. When the men sent by Cornelius arrive, Peter realizes what the dream means, and he goes with them. Cornelius and his family and friends hear the message and are visited by the Holy Spirit. They praise God. Peter baptizes them, then stays with them for a few days

to continue teaching them about Jesus.

This is a lesson about community.

God loves and accepts all people, no matter how they look, where they come from, or which language they speak. God sent Peter to teach some people from another culture about His love. We can share God’s love with others too.

Teacher Enrichment

“Christ tears away the wall of parti-

THREE

Program Outline			
LESSON SECTION	MINUTES	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS NEEDED
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>Cultural Awareness</i> B. <i>God's Children</i>	items (or pictures) from different countries and cultures chair, bright light, black paper, scissors, marker
* Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	See page 33. *Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.	
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story	sheet hanging from ceiling, toy stuffed animals, adult storyteller dressed as Peter
		Bible Study	Bible
		Memory Verse	Bible
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Sabbath School Members</i>	none
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Animal Masks</i>	paper plates, string/yarn, construction paper, glue, crayons, craft materials

tion, the dividing prejudice of nationality, and teaches a love for all the human family. He lifts men from the narrow circle which their selfishness prescribes; He abolishes all territorial lines and artificial distinctions of society. He makes no difference between neighbors and strangers, friends and enemies" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 823).

"Cornelius implicitly obeyed the instruction, and the same angel went to Peter, and gave him his instructions. This chapter [Acts 10] has much precious counsel in it for us, and we should study it with humble attention. . . . Both Cornelius and Peter were instructed what they were to do, and they

obeyed the angel's word. Cornelius gathered his household together to hear the message of light from Peter. If he had said, I will not be taught of any man, the angel of God would have left him to himself; but this was not his attitude (*Review and Herald*, Oct. 10, 1893)" (*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Ellen G. White Comments, vol. 6, p. 1060).

How is God using you to teach children to love others without prejudice?

Room Decorations

See Lesson 1. Add to the house a sheet hanging from the ceiling and filled with toy stuffed or plastic animals.

Teaching the Lesson

Welcome

Welcome children at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Encourage them to share any experiences from last week’s lesson study. Have them begin the readiness activity of your choice.



Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

A. Cultural Awareness

You Need:

- items (or pictures) from different countries and cultures

Create a learning center about different cultures. Place items on a table for the children to see. Explain the different items to them. If you do not have access to many objects, collect pictures. Or invite someone from a different country or culture to come and share information.

Debriefing

Allow responses as you ask: **What did you learn about** (name a few of the cultures represented)? **What would it be like to be a member of** (name of culture)? **Do you think people who wear clothes that are different from yours feel bad when they are sick? Do you think they are happy when they get a gift? Do you think children of other cultures love their families? All God’s children are loved by God. Our Bible story is about a dream Peter had that helped him understand that God loves everyone the same, regardless of their looks or the language they speak. Today’s message is:**



God’s children can be friends to everyone.

Say that with me.

B. God’s Children

You Need:

- chair
- bright light
- black paper
- scissors
- marker

In advance, tape black paper to the wall. Place a chair in front of the paper. Have a child sit in the chair, and shine a light on the side of the child’s head, creating a profile outline on the black paper. Trace the profile; then cut along the line, creating a silhouette of the child. Place the silhouette on a bulletin board with the words “God’s Kids.” Repeat the activity for each child. You might also write the child’s name and birth date near each silhouette. (This activity works best if you use it during another activity, inviting one child at a time from the other activity.)

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **Did you like getting your picture made this way? Can you tell which picture is you? Do we all look the same? We are all different, but we are all God's children, and He loves us all. Our Bible story is about a time when Peter learned that God loves everyone the same, regardless of their looks or the language they speak. Today's message is:**



God's children can be friends to everyone.

Say that with me.

PRAYER AND PRAISE

**Fellowship**

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study and review the memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special warm greeting to all visitors.

Suggested Songs

- "Jesus Loves Even Me" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, No. 101)
- "Jesus Loves the Children" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, No. 106)
- "Buddies" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, No. 256)
- "Our Church Is a Family" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, No. 257)
- "Let Us Do Good to All Men" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, No. 265)

Mission

Use a story from *Children's Mission*. Discuss the culture of the children in the story.

Offering

Say: **One way we can show love to people from other cultures is to give our money to help them have Sabbath Schools too.**

Prayer

Let each child choose a picture or felt of a house, child, or object from another culture. Briefly talk about what country it represents. Then have the children pray for the children in the culture they chose. You may have to ask them to repeat after you. Say: **God bless the children in** (name of country) **or God bless the** (name of people group) **children.** End with: **Thank You, Jesus, for hearing our prayer. Amen.**

You Need:

- felts or pictures or objects from another culture

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

2

Bible Lesson

Experiencing the Story

You Need:

- sheet hanging from ceiling
- toy stuffed animals
- adult storyteller dressed as Peter

Have a sheet hanging from the ceiling with toy stuffed or plastic animals in it. Have the children make a face of an animal whenever you talk about animals (elephant: put arm up to face like trunk; dog: pant with tongue out, hands up on chest begging; rabbit: put hands on top of head like ears; pig: squish nose up with finger to make snout; bird: flap arms; rhino: stick hand out from forehead for tusk; etc.).

Have an adult male dressed as Peter in Bible-times costume tell the story.

Read or tell the story.

Children, I have the most exciting story to tell you today. Oh, by the way, my name is Peter, and I had a vision about animals. Do you like animals? Animals such as pigs and donkeys and snakes? Every time I talk about animals, I want you to silently pretend you are an animal for a minute.

One day I was visiting some friends in Joppa, a city by the sea. I went up on the roof of the house to pray. I was getting very hungry, and lunch was almost ready. I decided to pray until it was time to eat. But something wonderful happened! Right in the middle of my prayer I had a vision!

Do you know what a vision is? Visions are a bit like dreams. But visions give a message from God to a person.

In this vision I saw a big sheet coming down from heaven. It was full of all kinds of **animals and birds**. [Point to the room decorations.] Then I heard a voice say, "Kill the **animals** and eat them, Peter." I said, "I can't do that, Lord! I've never eaten unclean food!" I heard the voice again. "Do not call unclean what God has made clean."

I saw this vision of the **animals** two more times! I was very confused. Then the Holy Spirit interrupted my thinking and told me I was to go downstairs because three men were looking for me. I was to take a trip with them and not to worry about it.

The next day I took six of my friends with me, and we walked with the messengers to Cornelius's house. Cornelius lived about 30 miles away. That was a long walk. On the way I found out that Cornelius prayed to learn more about God. An angel had come and told him where to find me, and to send some people to get me.

I am a Jew. And when I lived, a long time ago, Jews would not go into the house of a person who was not a Jew—they thought it would make them unclean, or dirty. Well, I soon learned what the vision meant. God wanted me to go into Cornelius's house even though he was not Jewish. I learned that God loves all people. And He wants His children to learn to love all people too.

When I went into Cornelius's house, I found it full of people—his friends and all of his family. He was so glad to see me and to learn about Jesus. After I told them about Jesus, Cornelius and his family decided to follow Jesus and be baptized.

I learned something very important at that time. I learned that God loves everybody, no matter what language they speak or what color their skin is or where in the world they live. And God wants you and me to love them too.

Debriefing

Allow responses as you ask: **How do you think Peter felt when he saw the vision about animals? What did Peter see in the vision? What was God telling Peter? Did Peter listen**

to God? Did Cornelius listen to God?

Both Peter and Cornelius listened to God, and they learned to love each other even though they came from different countries. Do you remember our message? Let's say it together:



God's children can be friends to everyone.

Bible Study

You Need:

Bible

Open your Bible to Acts 10. Point to the text and say: **This is where today's story is found in the Bible.** Read selected verses aloud, paraphrasing as necessary.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask:

What two men were visited by an angel? (Cornelius and Peter)

What did Peter see in his vision? (He saw a sheet being let down to earth with all kinds of animals in it.) **What did God tell Peter to do?** (Kill and eat the animals.) **What did this mean?** (Peter should love all kinds of people, even those of different nationalities and cultures.)

What did Peter do at Cornelius's house? (He preached about Jesus and baptized Cornelius, his relatives, and his friends.)

What does God want you to do? (Love everybody, including people from other cultures.) **Remember . . .**



God's children can be friends to everyone.

Memory Verse

Turn to Acts 10:34 and say: **This is where we find our memory verse in God's Word, the Bible.** Read the verse aloud. **"God does not show favoritism."** Then teach the memory verse as outlined below.

You Need:

Bible

God Point upward.



does not Shake head "no" and wag finger.



show favoritism. Touch middle finger to chin.



Acts 10:34 Palms together, then open.



3

Applying the Lesson**Sabbath School Members**

Ask the children the following questions, and have the children raise their hands if they can answer yes to any of your questions. Say: **Who:**

1. Plays a musical instrument?
2. Likes spinach (or other green vegetable)?
3. Was born in January?
4. Sleeps with a favorite toy stuffed animal?
5. Lives in an apartment?
6. Likes to play in the dirt?
7. Has a pet?
8. Likes purple?
9. Has an older brother?
10. Can count to 20?

Debriefing

Allow responses as you ask: **Did everybody say yes to all these**

questions? Do we all like the same things? Can we all do the same things? Are we all alike? (No.)

God knows we are all different, and He loves us just as we are. He asks us to love one another as He loves us.

Others may dress differently, speak a different language, look different from us, or eat different foods than we do. But God loves them! And He wants us to understand and love them too.

We are all different, but we can still love one another. Whom does God love? So whom should we love? Let's say our message together again:



God's children can be friends to everyone.

4

Sharing the Lesson

Animal Masks

You Need:

- paper plates
- string/yarn
- construction paper
- glue
- crayons
- craft materials (buttons, sequins, etc.)

Have the children make animal masks.

Depending on the abilities of the children, you may want to prepare the masks ahead of time and let the children color/decorate them.

Make the masks from paper plates. Cut eyes out, and punch holes on the edges to fasten string or yarn.

Cut out ears ahead of

time for children to glue onto the plate. Examples of animals: horse, dog, cat. (See illustration.)



Debriefing

Say: **You can take your animal mask home with you to help you remember the vision God gave to Peter. It had animals in it, but it really wasn't about animals. Who can tell me what it was about?** (God made all people; God loves all the people He made; He treats everyone equally.)

Yes, God made all His children different and special, and He loves them. God doesn't love some people more than others because of how they look or talk or dress.

God loves all the people He made, and He wants us to love them as He does. Tell the Bible story and that special message from God to someone this week as you share the animal mask you made.

Let's say our message together one last time:



God's children can be friends to everyone.

Closing

Ask God to help us love one another and to show that love to everyone.

STUDENT LESSON

Two Men and a Strange Message

References

Acts 10; *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 132-142

Memory Verse

"God does not show favoritism" (Acts 10:34, NIV).

The Message

God's children can be friends to everyone.

Who preaches in your church each Sabbath? Peter was used to preaching about Jesus to only the Jews. But God had other plans for him.

One afternoon a good man, Cornelius, knelt in prayer in his room. Although he was not Jewish, he believed in God and prayed often. Suddenly an angel stood in front of him. Cornelius was frightened. "What do you want?" he whispered.

"God has heard your prayers," the angel said kindly. "And God wants you to send to Joppa to find a man named Simon Peter. Ask him to come and visit you." Then the angel disappeared.

Cornelius immediately obeyed.

The next day, as Cornelius's servants neared Joppa, Peter climbed to the flat rooftop of the house where he was staying. Peter was hungry. He decided to pray until it was time to eat. But suddenly Peter had a vision. He saw a big sheet coming down from heaven, filled with all kinds of animals and birds. A voice said, "Kill the animals and eat them, Peter."

"I can't do that, Lord!" Peter exclaimed. "I have never eaten unclean food."

Peter heard the voice again. "God has made these things clean. Don't call them unclean."

Peter saw the same vision two more

times, and he was puzzled. Then the Holy Spirit interrupted his thoughts. "Three men are downstairs looking for you. Go with them. I have sent them to you."

Peter went right downstairs and met Cornelius's three messengers. "I am the man you want," he said.

So the next day Peter, some friends, and the messengers journeyed to Cornelius's house. As he walked, Peter thought about his vision. He finally understood what it meant.

When they arrived, they found a house

full of people. Peter said to Cornelius, "God has shown me that He loves all people. And He has sent me to tell you the good news about Jesus."

Peter then taught the people everything he knew about Jesus. And they believed. As Peter was talking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all the people, and they began to praise God loudly. Cornelius, his family, and his friends were soon baptized.

Peter had learned something very important: God loves everybody, no matter what language they speak or what color their skin is or where they live. And that is what God wants us to know too.



Do and Say

Sabbath

Each day this week, read the lesson story, and re-view the memory verse:

GodPoint upward.

does notShake head no and wag finger.

show favoritism. . . .Touch middle finger to chin.

Acts 10:34Palms together, then open.

Sunday

Read selected parts of Acts 10 with your child. Ask: What would you think if you saw a sheet with animals in it? Who was happy at the end of the story? Why? Whom does God love? Whom can we love?

Before prayer, sing "Jesus Loves the Little Children."

Monday

Make a collage (lots of old magazine pictures glued together on a piece of paper) of faces of people from around the world. Or look at pictures from a book. Talk to your child about God's love for all people, no matter what they look like or where they live.

Tuesday

Together, plan and make a special supper with a food theme from another country (Chinese, Italian, Mexican, Indian, etc.).

Wednesday

Encourage your child to share the animal mask made in Sabbath School with someone and tell them about Peter and Cornelius. (Or help them make a mask from a paper plate [ideas: horse, cat, dog, etc.].)



Thursday

Take a 15-minute walk, and explain that it took Peter all day to walk 33 miles from Joppa to Cornelius's house. Talk about the difference between one mile and 33 miles. (Relate the distance to something they know.) Ask: Would you like to walk that far?

Friday

As a family, act out the Bible story. Gather toy stuffed or plastic animals and a sheet. Have your child tell about the animals.

Remember to have Peter and Cornelius greet each other with open arms as an act of friendship and acceptance.

Ask Jesus to help you and your family love everyone.

