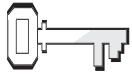


The First Skyscraper



References

Genesis 11:1-9;
Patriarchs and Prophets,
pp. 117-124



Memory Verse

"God does not show favoritism but accepts men from every nation" (Acts 10:34, 35, NIV).

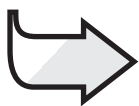


Objectives

The children will:
Know that God wants us to learn about other peoples.

Feel willing to accept differences.

Respond by trying to understand and help someone who is different.



The Message

We serve God when we help people who are different from us.

Monthly Theme

God calls us to serve others.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

After the Flood, God tells Noah and his family to have children and spread out over the earth. As time goes by, ungodly people decide to build a tower on the plain of Shinar, to protect themselves from another flood. They begin building with bricks and using tar for mortar. God stops them by confounding their language. They separate according to language and spread out around the earth.

This is a lesson about service.

Serving others requires understanding their needs. People may be different from us, but they still have needs that we can satisfy by helping them. God wants us to help others, including those who are different from us.

Teacher Enrichment

Babel means "gateway to a god." The Hebrew word for "let Us" (confuse their language) in verse 7 is the same word used in Genesis 1:26. It was God who confused their language. Today, less than 4,000 years later, there are more than 6,700 different languages spoken in 228 countries.

The builders used brick instead of stone, and tar for mortar. While both stone and brick were used as building materials in Canaan, stone was scarce in Mesopotamia. So mud bricks and tar were used. Archaeological excavations confirm that tar (or pitch) was plentiful in the Mesopotamian delta.

The people were disobeying God by building the tower. God used the language confusion to scatter them and to people the whole earth.

"While [the Babel builders] murmured against God as arbitrary and severe, they were accepting the rule of the cruelest of tyrants. Satan . . . led them to counterfeit these [sacrificial] offerings and sacrifice their own children upon the altars of their gods" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 120, 123).

Room Decorations

For this month, emphasize working together to build something. Use pictures of construction workers, tools, buildings under construction, etc. If possible, have a "building corner" where children may use boxes, blocks, etc., to construct things.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>What Am I?</i> B. <i>Walking Differences</i>	none none
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> offering container building blocks
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	Bible-times costumes (optional) Bible, 12 paper "bricks" Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Tower Power</i>	measuring stick or tape measure; building materials such as blocks, paper or Styrofoam cups and/or bowls, empty tissue or shoe boxes
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Grug</i>	none

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

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome children at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Have them begin the readiness activity of your choice.



Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

A. What Am I?

Whisper the name of an animal to each child. Make sure to name at least two of each animal. Say: **When I count to three, make a noise like your animal. There are at least two of each animal. Look for others who are making the same animal sound you make. When you find the others in your animal group, sit down together.**

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **Was it easy or hard to find the other animals in your group? Why? Why do you think God created different animals?** (He likes variety.) **What do you think about people who are different from you in some way? How do you think God feels about people who are different from you in some way?**

When we help people who are different from us, we are serving God, and that's what He wants us to do. Today's message tells us:



WE SERVE GOD WHEN WE HELP PEOPLE WHO ARE DIFFERENT FROM US.

Say that with me.

B. Walking Differences

Say: **When I give you the signal, stand up and walk like the person I name. Keep walking until I tell you to stop. Ready? Stand up.**

Call these examples one at a time:

- toddler
- person with leg in a cast
- soldier
- woman in high heels

As the children parade around the room, choose one child who imitates that walk well. Repeat the procedure for several different examples. Keep near you the child you chose for each walk; ask everyone else to sit. Have the children demonstrate one by one the walk for which they were chosen. Have the others guess which walk it was and explain why that particular example tends to walk that way.

Debriefing

Say: **People walk differently because they need to for some reason. Why do you think an elderly person walks slowly?** (afraid of falling, can't see well, etc.)

Allow response time, then say: **God wants us to notice special needs and understand them. Maybe there is something someone needs us to help them with.**

What help might the person with one leg in a cast need? Allow response time.
Today's message is:



WE SERVE GOD WHEN WE HELP PEOPLE WHO ARE DIFFERENT FROM US.

Say that with me.

Prayer and Praise

Any Time



Fellowship

Report the children's joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Review last week's memory verse and invite children who have something to share to do so at this time. Give a special warm greeting to visitors and introduce each by name. Acknowledge birthdays or special events.



Suggested Songs

"We Are His Hands" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 129)

"This Little Light of Mine" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 134)

Add verses as follows:

"These little hands of mine; I'm gonna' let them help.

These little hands of mine; I'm gonna' let them help.

Let them help, let them help, let them help."

"Gonna' help those who are diff-er-ent; I'm gonna' be a help.

Gonna' help those who are diff-er-ent, I'm gonna' be a help.

Gonna' help, gonna' help, gonna' help."

"Give Me Oil in My Lamp" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 132)

Add the following verse:

"Give me oil in my lamp, keep me helping,

Give me oil in my lamp, I pray.

Give me oil in my lamp, keep me helping,

Keep me helping others every day."



Mission

Use *Children's Mission*. Say: **All over the world, people in other countries are helping others too. Today's mission story tells about helpers in one part of the world.**



Offering

Say: **Jesus has made us all different. One way we can serve Him is by giving our money to help people who are different from us learn more about Him.**

You Need:

- offering container



Prayer

Give each child a block. Invite the children to name someone who is different from them in some way, then add their block to help build a tower. Pray for those they mention. Keep their "building" for next week.

You Need:

- building blocks

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- Bible-times costumes (optional)

Experiencing the Story

Introduce the story by saying: **Do you know why people speak different languages? It all started with the Tower of Babel. Today we are going to pretend that you are old enough to help build the tower.**

If you choose to have the children dress up, help them put on the Bible-times costumes.

Form four groups. The children will pretend to work with all the other groups to build a tower. Assign one of the words (see below) to each group. When they hear you say their word, they make the appropriate sound and/or do the action described. To begin, all the children are together in one large group.

Words:	Actions:
hammers	Tap sticks on an empty box, or pound their fists together.
bricks	Shake gravel or beans in a box, or tap two pieces of brick (or two rocks) together.
tar	Clap or use quarterlies as "brushes" on chair.
shovel(s)	Shout, "Pass the shovel!" and bump elbows with the person next to them.

Read or tell the story.

A long time ago, some people thought they needed to build a tower that would reach way up into the sky. So they made some **bricks**. They collected **tar** in big buckets. They gathered all the **hammers** they could find, and asked everyone to bring a **shovel** to the building place. And they went to work!

God saw what they were doing and it made Him sad. After the Flood, He had told them to spread out to live all over the earth. So He did something about it. He mixed up their language. When the people tried to talk to one another, their words got mixed up. They couldn't understand each other.

"I need more **bricks**," a worker may have called to someone nearby. His helper, not understanding, may have called to the men on the ground, "Send up a load of **tar!**"

"Right! **Shovels!**" the men on the ground may have replied. "We're sending up some **shovels!**"

When the **shovels** arrive, the boss's helper is puzzled. "I didn't ask for **shovels**," he yells. "The boss wants **tar**. Don't you understand? **Tar!** The black stuff." And he jabs his finger into the black **tar**.

"Oh, **hammers**," the carrier says. "Why didn't you say so! We'll be right back with **hammers**." And the carrier turns and runs to the edge of the tower. Leaning way out he calls to the men on the ground. "Be quick down there, and send up two loads of **hammers!**"

When the **hammers** arrive, the workers throw down the **shovels** and **bricks** and **tar**. Can you imagine how upset the workers felt? Each one must have thought the others were going crazy. Soon all the workers are arguing.

"But I said **bricks!**"

"No, you said **tar!**"

"I did not!"

"Yes, you did! I heard it myself. You said **tar!**"

"I thought he said **shovels!**"

"No, I heard him say **hammers**."

Finally, they figure it out. Those who agree that **tar** means **bricks** come together. They all gather around to figure

out what to do. (*Children who have been assigned “tar” get together in a group.*)

“Let them build the tower by themselves!” they say, pointing at the other people. “We’re sick of this. It’s so crowded on that pile of **bricks!** There’s a nice, quiet valley just over the mountains. Let’s load up our stuff and our families and go there!”

Soon all the **shovels** people gather together and decide to leave, too. (*“Shovels” group walks away from larger group.*)

Then all the **hammers** people get together and do the same. And so do the **bricks** people.

(*The children form groups and walk away.*)

And so before long, everyone has gone. The tower is just a big reminder of their mistake. When they find new places to live, they settle down.

(*Children sit on the floor in groups.*)

And they become new nations, each with a different language and different ways of living.

And God knows where they are. He understands their language. He knows what they need. God still helps the people of every nation—even those who are different from others. And (*say the message together*) . . .



WE SERVE GOD WHEN WE HELP PEOPLE WHO ARE DIFFERENT FROM US.

Debriefing

As helpers remove costumes (if used), ask:

How do you think the people felt when they could no longer understand one another? (troubled, confused, upset, unsure of what to do, etc.) **How do you feel when you don’t understand what someone is saying to you?** (uncertain, upset, etc.) **What do you think you**

should do when people don’t understand each other? (Help them. Get things for them. Be kind to them.)

You’re right. Let’s remember our message for today:



WE SERVE GOD WHEN WE HELP PEOPLE WHO ARE DIFFERENT FROM US.

Memory Verse

In advance, write one word of the memory verse on each paper “brick.” Don’t forget the text.

Open your Bible to Acts 10:34, 35 and read the verse aloud. “**God does not show favoritism but accepts men from every nation**” (Acts 10:34, 35, NIV).

Mix up the paper “bricks” and have the children try to put them in the right order, then read the verse. Remove one brick and have the children read or say the verse again. Continue removing one brick until all are removed and the children know the verse.

Or mix up the bricks several times and have the children place them in the correct order until they know the verse.

Or use the following motions as you teach the verse:

God	Point upward.
does not	Shake your head.
show favoritism	Beckon to the children.
but accepts	Open arms wide.
men from every nation.	Point to several children in turn.
Acts 10:34, 35	Palms together, then open.

You Need:

- Bible
- 12 paper “bricks”

You Need:

- Bibles

Bible Study

Help the children find Genesis 9:1. Have someone read the text aloud. Ask: **What did God tell Noah and his family to do after the Flood?** (be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth)

Help the children turn to Genesis 11:1-9. Ask the children to follow along as you (or someone else) read the verses. Read the text in its entirety, then ask:

Why did the people want to build a tower? (to make a name for themselves; for protection; so they wouldn't be scattered all over the earth)

Explain: **The people were Noah's relatives—maybe his grandchildren or great-grandchildren. What did God**

want them to do? (fill the earth with people) **Were they doing as God had asked?** (No. They had many children, but they were all staying in the same place.) **What did God do about that?** (mixed up their speech, caused them to form groups and move away from each other) **And that is why we have many different nations and languages today. But God loves all the people in the world and He still wants us to work together, to help each other.** (Say the message together.)



WE SERVE GOD WHEN WE HELP PEOPLE WHO ARE DIFFERENT FROM US.

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- measuring stick or tape measure
- building materials such as blocks, paper or Styrofoam cups and/or bowls, empty tissue or shoe boxes

Tower Power

Form groups of not more than four. Say: **When you receive the materials, your group will have four minutes to build the tallest possible tower. You may not say any words, but you may make other sounds. Remember, no talking!** Distribute materials.

When time is up, make a big display of measuring their structures and give a round of applause for each.

Debriefing

Ask: **What happened when you tried to build without talking to one another?** (couldn't understand each other; confusion; hard to help each other) **How did you feel when you couldn't understand one another?** (didn't like it; frustrated; confused; uncertain; etc.) **What does this teach us about people who are different from us?** (might get frustrated with us; don't always understand each other; have to find a way to communicate, etc.) **How might God want you to treat people who are different from you this week?** Allow response time, then say the message together:



WE SERVE GOD WHEN WE HELP PEOPLE WHO ARE DIFFERENT FROM US.

4

Sharing the Lesson

Grug

(A grug is a group hug.)

In one large group or several smaller ones, have children gather in a circle and join hands.

Join them in the circle, then say: **I am going to count to three. On three, take one step toward the center of the circle. Ready? One-two-three! Now, put your hands on the shoulders of the people standing on either side of you and take another step. One-two-three.**

Keep repeating until everyone is squeezed into a grug. Then ask the children to move back or sit down.

Debriefing

Say: **How do you feel about a grug?** (silly, OK, liked it, didn't like it, etc.)

I liked the feeling that everyone included me in the group. It's no fun being left out. Think for a minute of someone you know who might feel left out. What can you do to help them feel like they belong?

Have children share their thoughts with a partner. Then ask three people to share their ideas with the whole group. Encourage children to follow through by helping that person during the week.

Closing

Close with prayer, asking God to help the children as they try to make people feel included.

Remind the children to use their Bible Study Guides every day and to do the daily activities.

The First Skyscraper

References

Genesis 11:1-9;
*Patriarchs and
Prophets*,
pp. 117-124

Memory Verse

“God does not show favoritism but accepts men from every nation” (Acts 10:34, 35, NIV).

The Message

We serve God when we help people who are different from us.

Have you ever watched workers build a tall building? Or gone in an elevator to the top of one? A long time ago some people tried to build a tower to reach the sky. But God had other plans.

Long ago, after God created the earth, everyone spoke the same language. They used the same names for everything they had or did. No matter where they lived or where they moved, they could talk to one another and understand each other.

After the Flood people lived together in peace and harmony. Then some of the people began to forget what God had done for them. They disliked living close to those who served God. The ungodly people decided to go to live in the beautiful plain of Shinar.

As time passed, the people of Shinar began to think they knew more than anyone—even God. They felt they could do just about anything.



One day someone said, “Let’s build a tower. We will make it of bricks, and we will bake them until they are hard. We will use them to build the top of the tower high into the sky.”

“Let’s build ourselves a strong city to live in too,” others said.

Someone said, “People will come to see our tower and we will become famous. We will be able to live in our city forever.”

So people began to gather the materials they needed. Some mixed mud and straw and shaped them into bricks. Others collected tar to hold the bricks together. And they began to build.

All day the people worked hard. They passed the bricks and tar from worker to worker until they reached the bricklayers at the top. Soon the tower grew higher and higher. The people felt very clever.

God watched them build. He was not pleased. At Creation He had told Adam and Eve, “Have many children. Fill the earth.” But these people were not filling the earth. They were crowding together in one city. What could God do to stop them? How could He get them to make their homes in quiet, safe places?

God said, “These people are selfish and stubborn. If they are allowed to continue, they will do great harm. They will cause each other pain.”

But even though the people were disobeying God, He did not stop caring about them. Each one was still special to Him.

And because He loved them so much, God made a plan to help them do the right thing. He caused the people to use different words for the same thing. He changed their one language to many languages.

“I need more bricks,” a workman may have called. His helper, not understanding him, may have called to the men on the ground, “Send up a load of tar.”

“Shovels!” the men on the ground may have replied. “We’re sending up shovels!”

Can you imagine how angry the workers at the top were when the shovels arrived?

Soon all the workers began to argue and fight. They could not finish their tower. In fact, they couldn’t get along well enough to live in the same city.

So, just as God planned, some people moved to the east and some to the west. Some went north and others south. They spread out all over the world. They lived in families and enjoyed the good things God continued to give them.

“God does not show favoritism” (Acts 10:34, NIV). He loves and helps everyone!

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- With a family member, go near a very tall building, if possible. Find a quiet place and read the lesson story together. Imagine that you are looking up at the Tower of Babel. Together, read the memory verse from the Bible (Acts 10:34, 35, NIV).

Sunday

- In your Bible, find Genesis 11:1-9 and read about the Tower of Babel. If all those people had been allowed to live in the tower, what problems might they have had with food, water, cleanliness, and daily living?
- Look through a newspaper or magazine and cut out pictures of tall buildings. Glue them across the bottom of a big piece of paper. Save the paper for tomorrow.
- Say your memory verse to an adult.

Monday

- Ask a family member to read Acts 17:26. Tell in your own words what this verse means. Tell an adult how you might feel if someone spoke another language in front of you.
- Look through a newspaper or magazine and cut out pictures of people who might speak a language different from yours. Glue the pictures to the paper you started yesterday. Show your picture to someone in your family and tell them about it.

Tuesday

- Imagine what the Tower of Babel looked like. Make one Tower of Babel cutout for each word of the memory verse. Write each word of the memory verse on a different cutout. Mix the cutouts and put them in order. Save them.
- With a family member, read Isaiah 58:10. Tell

what this verse means. Then take a walk in your community. Think of some things people in your neighborhood need. Decide how you and your family can help with one of those needs. Ask God to help you do it this week.

Wednesday

- As you think about your plan to help someone in your community, sing, hum, play, or listen to “We Are His Hands” (*Sing for Joy*, No. 129).
- Using your memory verse cutouts, say your memory verse to your family.
- Find some empty boxes, blocks, or cartons and build a tower. How high can you make it before it falls? When you finish, measure its height. With a family member, read Genesis 11:4. How high did the builders plan to build their tower?

Thursday

- At what other time in the Bible did people suddenly start to speak in other languages? See Acts 2:4. Ask an adult to explain this verse.
- Try to say Hello in at least one foreign language.
- Say your memory verse to at least two people.

Friday

- At worship, do a charade of the Tower of Babel story. Say your memory verse.
- Ask a family member to read or tell a story about a missionary in a country where your language is not spoken.
- Read together 1 John 4:8. With your family, decide how you might tell someone who speaks another language about Jesus and His love. How might you say “Jesus loves you” without actually saying anything?
- Tell how it made you feel to help someone this week. Together, sing a song about God’s love.