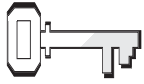


Human Gods?



References

Acts 14:8-20;
*The Acts of the
Apostles*, pp. 177–185



Memory Verse

“Carry each other’s
burdens, and . . . you will
fulfill the law of Christ”
(Galatians 6:2, NIV).



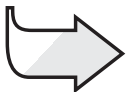
Objectives

The children will:

Know that doing good
deeds is one way
to serve God.

Feel a desire to help
others in need and
help them to learn about God.

Respond by trying to
help someone this week.



The Message

We serve God when
we help others.

Monthly Theme

Others can see Jesus in us.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

In Lystra Paul and Barnabas call upon God to heal a man who had been crippled from birth. When the crowd sees the man walk, they declare that Paul and Barnabas are gods in human form and want to offer sacrifices to them. The apostles stop them and tell them to worship only the living God. Some Jews turn the crowd against Paul and Barnabas. The people stone Paul, drag him outside the city, and leave him for dead. Paul gets up and goes back into the city. The next day he and Barnabas leave to carry the gospel to Derbe.

This is a lesson about service.

Kind words and deeds prepare people’s hearts to receive the good news about Jesus. They also are a living illustration of what happens to a life that has been touched by the gospel. Helping others in need, coupled with sharing God’s Word, is effective service for God.

Teacher Enrichment

Lystra—“A city in Lycaonia, which was a section of the Roman province of Galatia. The city was a Roman colony, founded about 6 B.C. It was peopled by Roman veterans, and its inhabitants were Roman citizens. . . . Paul and Barnabas preached there on their 1st Missionary Journey. . . . [Paul] revisited Lystra on his 2nd Missionary Journey (Acts 16:1, 2), and possibly on the 3rd journey (ch 18:23). Timothy was probably a native of Lystra (ch 16:1-3)” (*The SDA Bible Dictionary*, p. 688).

The Lystrians had a myth that Zeus and Hermes had visited that area and believed that Paul was Hermes, the speaker, and Barnabas was Zeus. Zeus in Greek mythology (or Jupiter in Roman) was the father of the gods. The name *Jupiter* literally means “fallen from heaven” (see *The SDA Bible Dictionary*, p. 1211).

Room Decorations

At the top of a bulletin board or on a banner place the phrase, “Make me a servant.”

Underneath create a collage using pictures of people helping others. (Old magazines are a good source.) This can be a pre-Sabbath School activity. When the children come early they can add to the collage by finding pictures of others serving. If available, put up ADRA posters of helping around the world.

Have each child trace around their hands on paper. Cut out the tracings and put each child's name on their hand cutout. Stick the hands around the room, or use as an attractive border. Also, place a map of Paul's journeys where all can see. Each week mark the city in the lesson for that particular Sabbath.

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. *What Is Your
God Like?*

pictures of various gods—idols people worshiped in Bible times—and modern-day idols (TV, clothes, friends, etc.), picture of Jesus or word JESUS, card for each child on which their name is written, pictures or objects symbolizing ways we can serve our God

B. *You Share, I Share*

apples or other local fruit, knife, salt water or lemon juice

Any
Time

Prayer and Praise*

up to 10

Fellowship
Songbook
Mission
Offering
Prayer

*Sing for Joy
Children's Mission*
container with handprint on it
long strip of poster board 5 inches
(13 cm) wide, clothespin

2

Bible Lesson

up to 20

Experiencing the Story

old T-shirts that can be torn, Bible-times costumes

Memory Verse
Bible Study

pen, paper, verse displayed
Bibles

3

Applying
the Lesson

up to 15

A. *Service Ideas*
B. *How High Can You
Jump?*

none

2 yards (2 meters) rope

4

Sharing
the Lesson

up to 15

Let's Do It!

copy of "Service Contract" (see
page 140) for each child, pencils,
ink pad, items to give away

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

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome students 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.

1

Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- pictures of idols worshiped in Bible times
- pictures of modern-day idols (TV, clothes, friends, etc.)
- picture of Jesus or word JESUS
- card for each child on which their name is written
- pictures or objects symbolizing ways to serve God

A. What Is Your God Like?

Place the pictures of the idols and the picture of Jesus near the seating area. Give each child the card with their name and tell them to put it by their God. Discuss ways that we serve God (with time, money, etc.). Under the picture of Jesus or the word JESUS have the children select and place pictures depicting ways to serve Him.

Debriefing

Ask: **How do we know when something or someone is becoming an idol?** (When something or someone is more important than God.) **Which of these can become our gods?** (Allow discussion.) **Which do you want to serve? How can you serve the God of heaven? Today's message is:**



WE SERVE GOD WHEN WE HELP OTHERS.

Say that with me.

B. You Share, I Share

Cut apples (or other local fruit) into fourths beforehand, saving some uncut for demonstration. (Salt water or lemon juice keeps them fresh.) Ask the children: **How can we share a little with a lot of people? Yes, we can cut the apples.** Cut an apple to demonstrate. Have each child take a piece of apple and serve it to someone else. Make sure everyone serves and everyone is served.

Debriefing

Ask: **Which felt better? When you served or were served?** (Wait for answers.) **How would you have felt if the person refused to accept what you had to share?** (disappointed, sad, etc.) **Do you find it difficult to share?** (Wait for answers.) **In our Bible story today Paul is hurt by the people with whom he is trying to share the love of Jesus. If people refuse our help or do not want to know about Jesus, what can we do?** (Be patient with them; love them anyway; don't be pushy; don't give up on them, etc.) **How can we prepare the way for them to love Jesus?** (Help them when they need help.) **That's what today's message says.**



WE SERVE GOD WHEN WE HELP OTHERS.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- apples (or other local fruit)
- knife to cut fruit
- salt water or lemon juice

Prayer and Praise

Any
Time



Fellowship

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



Suggested Songs

- "Jesus Bids Us Shine" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 133)
- "Give Me Oil in My Lamp" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 132)
- "This Little Light of Mine" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 134)
- "We Are His Hands" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 129)



Mission

Share a story from *Children's Mission*. Talk about how people in the mission story are serving Jesus.



Offering

Glue the cutout of a child's hand to the outside of a box to symbolize hands of service. Say: **Our message for today says that WE SERVE GOD WHEN WE HELP OTHERS. One way to help others is to give money to help them have what they need. Let's collect our "helping" money now.**

You Need:

- container
- cutout of a child's hand traced on paper



Prayer

Have the class form a circle and hold hands, if they are comfortable doing so. Ask for prayer requests, then ask for three volunteers to pray. To avoid getting the same volunteers all of the time, write all of the children's names numbered vertically on a poster board 5 inches across and as long as necessary to list children's names. Move a clothespin down the poster board, giving each child a turn to pray. You may label it "Our Prayer List." Ask an adult to close prayer time, thanking God that we can be His servants and praying that we will always choose to serve Him, the only true God.

You Need:

- long strip of poster board 5 inches (13 cm) wide
- clothespin

2

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- old T-shirts that can be torn
- Bible-times costumes

Experiencing the Story

Before the story begins choose children to act out the roles of the various characters in the story. Give them the appropriate “props.”

Characters: lame man, Paul and Barnabas, crowd (the other children)

Props: ragged clothes for lame man, old T-shirts that can be torn for Paul and Barnabas

Read or tell the story.

[Paul and Barnabas walk in and sit down to rest. They make appropriate gestures as the conversation is read.]

Paul and Barnabas stopped to rest by the roadside. They looked at the city before them. “Most of the people of Lystra don’t know anything at all about the God of heaven,” Paul sighed.

“Not for long!” Barnabas replied with a smile.

Right there beside the road, the two apostles prayed. *[Paul and Barnabas kneel down.]* “Dear God, please show us how to let the people of Lystra know the good news about Jesus!”

[Paul and Barnabas start walking. They gesture at the appropriate time.] Entering the city, the two friends began to look around and talk to people. Soon several of the townspeople had gathered to listen. *[Have a few children gather around the two “men.”]* “Look around us!” Paul said. “All of the beautiful things you see are here because of the God of heaven. He made the mountains, the trees, the flowers!” As Paul continued, Barnabas watched the faces of the listening crowd. He could see that they were beginning to think about the true God.

Little by little, day after day, Paul and

Barnabas were able to share the story of Jesus. One day Paul told how Jesus loved to heal people. As he spoke, he noticed a man who had never been able to walk.

[The lame man is sitting there, wearing his ragged clothes.] “Look at him, Jesus!” Paul silently prayed. “He believes in You! You can make him well!” Then Paul said, “Stand up on your feet.” The man jumped up and walked! *[The lame man jumps up and walks.]* Paul and Barnabas went on their way.

[The rest of the children gesture excitedly.] When the crowd saw what had happened, they started saying, “The gods have come to visit us!” *[Have the crowd repeat that.]* They believed in many gods, gods who could help them. After seeing the lame man healed, they were sure that Paul and Barnabas were gods.

The people became so excited that they said, “Let’s have a celebration! We can offer sacrifices to these gods and give them gifts!” *[The rest of the class again gestures excitedly.]*

Paul and Barnabas had gone to find a place to rest. They had no idea of the plans that were being made! Before long, the sounds of the excited crowd reached them. They heard what the people said. Paul and Barnabas ran among the people. *[Paul and Barnabas run among the class group ripping their clothes (the old T-shirts).]* “No, no, you don’t understand! We’re people just like you! We’ve come to tell you the good news that you can know the real God, the LIVING God!” But the people were determined to worship Paul and Barnabas. The apostles had a hard time stopping them from offering sacrifices.

About that time, some Hebrews who wanted to stop the work of Paul and Barnabas came to see about the excitement. Because the townspeople were so

upset that their party had been stopped, it wasn't hard to turn them against God's men! Very quickly, the same people who had wanted to worship the apostles just a short time before, now wanted to kill them! In fact, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, thinking he was dead. *[Paul falls to the ground. The crowd gathers around him.]* The Christian believers of Lystra gathered sadly around Paul. He was bruised and bleeding, but he lifted up his head and stood up! *[Paul gets up slowly and starts walking.]* As they helped him back to the city, he said, "We will travel to Derbe for a little while, but we will come back soon to encourage you and help you!"

Paul and Barnabas were willing to show God's love to others by their acts of kindness. How about you? How can your actions say, "Jesus loves you" to someone this week?

Debriefing

Ask: **What do you do when you see someone in need?** (I try to help and/or pray for them.) **What would you say if people praised you for helping someone?** (I am glad to help; God helped me to do it.)

Why do you think Paul and Barnabas served God even when people tried to hurt them and stop them? (They loved God and people. They wanted to help others and teach them to know God.) **Let's say our message:**



WE SERVE GOD WHEN WE HELP OTHERS.

Memory Verse

Write each word of the memory verse on separate pieces of paper. Mix them up and have the children arrange them in the proper order. Repeat until all know the verse.

Bible Study

Have the children find Acts 14:8-20 in their Bibles. Divide the children into groups of 2-3 (with a reader in each group). Ask each group to look for and read the verse that tells about:

- the lame man
- people calling Paul a god
- the jealous Jews who caused the disturbance
- where Paul was beaten
- when Paul returned to the city

Debriefing

Ask: **How do you think you would feel if you were the lame man before Paul healed him?** (depressed, looking for something better in life) **After Paul healed him?** (thrilled, wanting to praise and follow Paul's God)

Do you think that Paul and Barnabas felt honored when the people tried to worship them? Why? (Paul and Barnabas were not pleased to receive worship that belonged only to God.)

How were Paul and Barnabas able to serve God when people tried to stop or hurt them? (They loved Jesus and were willing to do whatever it took to share Him with others. They knew that He would be with them always.)

If you meet someone in need, what do you want to do? (Help them any way I can.) **Let's say our message for today again:**



WE SERVE GOD WHEN WE HELP OTHERS.

You Need:

- small pieces of paper
- pen
- memory verse written where all may see

You Need:

- Bibles

3

Applying the Lesson

A. Service Ideas

Either divide the children into small groups or allow them to work alone to develop a list of service ideas, ways in which they can serve others in their home, school, neighborhood, or church. Encourage the small groups to role play some of their ideas with the larger group (or do charades). Make a list of their ideas where all can see. Save this list for use in "Sharing the Lesson."

Debriefing

Ask: **What are some things that you have already done to help people and serve God?** (Take answers.) **What is your favorite way to serve God?** (Take answers.) **How do you feel when you help someone?** (happy to make God and that person happy, too) **Let's remember today's message:**



WE SERVE GOD WHEN WE HELP OTHERS.

B. How High Can You Jump?

Have two helpers (adults or older children) hold the rope taut. Say: **What did the lame man do when he was healed?** (He jumped up and walked.)

That's right, he jumped and walked. Who would like to jump over our "high jump"? Each time someone jumps, they are to name something we can do to help others. And each time, we will raise our rope a little higher. Allow time.

After each child jumps and names something, ask: **What might stop us from trying to do that?** Encourage the children to express fears such as, maybe the person won't accept their help; maybe the person will be unkind like people were to Paul, etc. Stop when the rope is too high to jump.

Debriefing

Review the ways of helping mentioned by the children. Ask: **Do you think that Paul and Barnabas experienced some of these same concerns or fears?** (Yes, no, don't know.) **I suspect they did, but they were still willing to help people. Why do you think they continued to help people when they were treated wrongly?** (Because they loved God and wanted to serve Him.) **We can do that too. Let's remember that we show our love for God when we serve others. Let's say our message together.**



WE SERVE GOD WHEN WE HELP OTHERS.

You Need:

- 2 yards (2 meters) rope

4

Sharing the Lesson

Let's Do It!

Have the children choose a service activity from those they suggested during Applying the Lesson. Invite the children to choose a person or family to help. Encourage them to choose someone who does not go to your church. Then help children complete a "service contract." (See page 140.) They may use words or pictures to illustrate their plan. Then they can sign their name and "seal" their contract by placing their thumb on an ink pad and applying their thumb print on the page.

Also provide some take-home *Primary Treasures* or other witnessing item to give away to the person(s) that the children choose to help.

Debriefing

Ask: **Whom do you plan to help this week?** (Take answers.) **What do you plan to do to help them?** (Take answers.) **How do you think they will feel?** (happy, surprised, etc.) **How will you feel?**

When is a good time to give them a *Primary Treasure* or other paper that tells about Jesus? (after I help them)

Let's say our message again:



WE SERVE GOD WHEN WE HELP OTHERS.

Closing

Ask a child to pray, asking Jesus to help us joyfully to serve others in the coming week. Sing "We Are His Hands" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 129) after the prayer.

You Need:

- copy of "Service Contract" for each child (see page 140)
- pencils
- ink pad
- items to give to people who don't go to church

Human Gods?

References

Acts 14:8-20; *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 177-185

Memory Verse

“Carry each other’s burdens, and . . . you will fulfill the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2, NIV).

The Message

We serve God when we help others.

Do you remember how you felt on your first day at school? Did you feel strange going into a new place? Did you know many people? How do you think Paul and Barnabas might have felt about going to a strange town where they didn’t know anyone?

Paul and Barnabas stopped to rest by the roadside. They looked at the city before them. “Most of the people of Lystra don’t know anything at all about the God of heaven,” Paul sighed.

“Not for long!” Barnabas replied with a smile.

Right there beside the road, the two apostles prayed. “Show us, Lord, how to let the people of Lystra know the good news about Jesus!”

They walked on and soon entered the city. The two friends began to talk to people. Soon several of the townspeople had gathered. “Look around us!” Paul said to the crowd. “All of the beautiful things you see are here because of the God of heaven. He made the mountains, the trees, the flowers!”

Little by little, day after day, Paul and Barnabas shared the story of Jesus. One day Paul told how Jesus loved to heal

people. As he spoke, he noticed a man who had never been able to walk. “Look at him, Jesus!” Paul silently prayed. “He believes in You! You can make him well!” Then Paul said to the man, “Stand up on your feet.” And the man jumped up and walked!

“Amazing! Unbelievable!” people began to shout. “How can this be?”

Someone in the crowd shouted, “The gods have come down to visit us!” Others agreed. They believed that their gods sometimes came to help them in miraculous ways. After seeing the lame man healed, they were sure that Paul and Barnabas were gods, too.

The people became so excited. They shouted, “Let’s have a celebration! We can offer sacrifices to these gods and give them gifts!”

Paul and Barnabas had gone to find a place to rest. They had no idea of the plans that were being made! Before long, the sounds of the excited crowd reached them. “This can’t happen,” they said.

Paul and Barnabas moved among the people. “No, no,” they said. “You don’t understand! We’re people just like you! We’ve come to tell you the good news about the real God, the LIVING God!” But the people were determined to worship Paul and Barnabas.

About that time, some Jews heard about the excitement. They came to see it for themselves. These men wanted to stop the work of Paul and Barnabas. They saw that the townspeople were upset because Paul and Barnabas had stopped their celebration. So it wasn’t hard to make them turn against God’s men! Very quickly, the same people who had wanted to worship the apostles, now wanted to kill them! In fact, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, thinking he was dead. The Christian believers of Lystra



sadly gathered around Paul. He was bruised and bleeding, but he lifted his head and stood up! They helped him back to the city where they could care for him. But Paul and Barnabas decided to leave that place. "We will travel to Derbe for a little while. But we will come back soon to encourage you and help you!"

Paul and Barnabas were willing to show God's love to others. Their words and kind actions led others to know Jesus. How about you? How can your actions say "Jesus loves you" to someone this week?

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- With your family, read your lesson story. Then take a walk together. Look for someone you can help.
- Find and read Galatians 6:2. What does it mean to carry someone's burdens?
- Sing a "helping" song. Ask God to help you help others.

Sunday

- With your family, read Acts 14:8-10. What is your favorite part of the story?
- Trace around one of your shoes on a piece of paper. Cut it out. Copy on it the words of your memory verse. Cut between each word, making a puzzle. Mix the pieces and try to put them in order. Pray with your family that your feet will take you to people who need you.

Monday

- During family worship, read and discuss Acts 14:11-17. Who should get the glory when people praise us for helping them? _____
- In Sabbath School you signed a contract to help someone this week. Talk about your contract with your family. Put your plans into action.
- Mix up your shoe puzzle and put it in order.
- For prayer, sing together "Be Like Jesus" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 115).

Tuesday

- For family worship, read Acts 14:18-20. Discuss: Paul was hurt by rocks thrown at him. God helped him to get up and continue to serve. Has anyone in your family gone through a scary time while serving God? How did God help?
- Trace around your hand on paper. Inside your hand drawing write or draw one way you will serve others today. Write "We Are His Hands" on your hand drawing.

- Sing "We Are His Hands" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 129).
- Say your memory verse. Tell your family how you served God yesterday.

Wednesday

- Before family worship, find some pictures of people in need (a child in rags, a starving child, homeless people, a sick person, etc.). During worship talk with your family about what you could do for these people. What does Jesus say about helping others? Read together Matthew 25:40. Tell what this verse means.
- Try to make up a tune for your memory verse. Sing it together. Then ask Jesus to help you ease someone's burden today.

Thursday

- During worship, talk about the meanest child you know. Would Jesus want you to help that child if he or she ever needed help? Read Romans 12:20, 21 together. Show your family how you could live out this verse.
- Sing your memory verse, using the tune you made up yesterday. Ask Jesus to lead you to someone you can help today.

Friday

- Ask your parents how you can help get ready for Sabbath. Or surprise them by cleaning your room and putting things away without being asked. Sing a happy song such as "I Have the Joy" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 109) while you work.
- During worship act out your lesson story with members of your family. Talk about ways you helped others this week. Read Ephesians 6:7. Put your memory verse foot puzzle together without help. (See Sunday's activity.)
- Sing "Give Me Oil in My Lamp" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 132). Pray that God will help you to serve Him every day.