

Kids' Adventure in Missions



Instructions

This sample children's ministry lesson guide is designed to help you engage kids in learning about God's work among the nations, using the story of Paul and Barnabas' first missionary journey. It's flexible—use as much or as little of the guide as works for your setting. Whether you want a full lesson plan or just some inspiration for activities, feel free to adapt it to fit your needs. The goal is to foster excitement about missions and help kids grasp the biblical call to proclaim the gospel.

Here's an overview of the lesson components and their purposes:

1. Preparation (Study the Lesson) – This section encourages teachers to review the material in advance. It helps ensure you're ready to guide kids through the story with clarity and confidence.
2. Begin the Lesson (Activity & Memory Verse) – Opening with a fun review activity or memory verse engages kids right away, helping them recall what they've learned before while setting the stage for today's story.
3. Teach the Lesson (Story & Discussion) – This part walks through the biblical account of Paul and Barnabas, emphasizing key moments like their commissioning and encounters on the journey. It's designed to make the story accessible and memorable for kids.
4. Activity (Bible Story Segments) – These creative activities, such as drawing scenes or using maps, reinforce the story while giving kids a hands-on learning experience.
5. Review the Lesson (Simplify & Discussion) – Encourages kids to distill what they've learned into simple key ideas. This helps solidify the main takeaways and ensures understanding.
6. Apply the Lesson (Team Game) – A fun, interactive game emphasizes teamwork and the importance of sharing the gospel. It reinforces the lesson's main point in a playful way.

Feel free to modify or skip parts of the guide to suit your group's size, age, and needs. The heart of this resource is to inspire kids with the truth of the gospel and God's mission to reach all nations.

Acts 13:4-14:27

Big idea: The church in Antioch sends out the first missionaries.



Study the Lesson (before class)

- Paul and Barnabas accepted the new assignment from God. They chose to bring an assistant with them, John Mark. John Mark was a cousin of Barnabas. The assignment was to take the message of the gospel to other countries.
- Their first destination was Cyprus, the home country of Barnabas. Cyprus was where Saul was first called Paul. Salamis, on the eastern coast of Cyprus, was the first stop. Evidently, there was a large Jewish population in Salamis. From Salamis, they went to Paphos, a trip of about 100 miles or 160 kilometers.
- At Paphos, they encountered Bar-Jesus, a fraudulent wizard. Paul confronted this sorcerer and the governor immediately placed his faith in Jesus Christ as a result. At this point, Paul seems to take the lead over Barnabas, except when they were in Jerusalem.
- From Cyprus, they went to Perga in Pamphilia (southern Turkey). It was here that John Mark left the team and went back to Jerusalem. Paul thought John Mark lacked courage and commitment but later came to respect him and acknowledge that he needed John Mark for the work (2 Timothy 4:11).
- From Perga, they headed north to Pisidian Antioch. When invited to speak at the synagogue, Paul read two portions of Scripture from the Old Testament. First, from Moses and then from the prophets. The result was explosive.
- On their way home, Paul and Barnabas retraced their journey to encourage new believers along the way.

TEACHER HELP

The teacher's guide is divided into five key segments. Each part of the teaching process is important and all five should be followed for effective teaching. Chronological Bible teaching is a great way to evangelize and disciple children. As children come to know the stories of the Bible, they will understand the God of the Bible and how to respond to him by faith.

Each of the five steps to teaching these lessons is a vital part of the lesson. Preparation before the lesson is extremely important and takes place in the days leading up to class. Then when class time starts, introduce the lesson with ideas or methods that will encourage students to become involved in the learning process. Teaching the story will take on several forms: through telling, through singing, through Scripture memory, and through activity. Be sure to review the lesson as well as previous lessons. Last, and probably most important, give your class something to apply or live out as a result of the lesson.



Begin the Lesson

If Scripture memory is a part of your children's ministry, ask children to help you with previous memory verses. Maybe say something like, "Who remembers what (verse) says?" If your students don't have any of these texts memorize, encourage a brave volunteer to read one or more of these verses from his or her Bible for the group.

- Matthew 26:56
- 1 Corinthians 5:7
- 1 Peter 3:18
- Luke 23:42
- Luke 24:6
- Luke 24:27
- Matthew 28:19
- Acts 1:8
- Acts 2:38
- Acts 2:42
- Isaiah 53:7
- Acts 9:15
- Acts 10:43
- Acts 11:24

TEACHER HELP

Begin the Lesson Activity: Memory Verse Relay

Using this bank of 14 memory verses, divide your class into two teams. Depending on the class size, assign each child 1-2 verses to focus on. Give the teams five minutes to study their assigned verses, working together to help each other memorize. After the time is up, have each child try to recite their verse from memory. If they do so correctly, their team earns a point.

Encourage teamwork by allowing team members to offer brief hints if someone struggles. Bonus points can be awarded if the team collectively recites more than half of the total 14 verses by the end of the activity.



Teach the Lesson

If you were going to start a missionary emphasis, who would you invite to come to your missionary emphasis? Who would you invite to be the leader or leaders of your new mission? What kind of qualities would you be looking for in this man or woman?

Today's story is going to give us a good idea of how to start a missions emphasis and something about its leadership.





Tell the Story

The church in Antioch of Syria was the first church to send—no other church had ever sent out missionaries before, not even the church in Jerusalem. The Holy Spirit directed them to select two of their leaders to become missionaries. Paul and Barnabas would be the first missionaries while Simon, Lucius, Manaen, and perhaps others stayed back in Antioch to oversee the church.

Here is how the first missionary journey got started. Paul and Barnabas left Antioch and went to the nearest port city. From there, they sailed to the island of Cyprus. While Barnabas had been living in Jerusalem before he came to the church in Antioch, he was originally from Cyprus. So, he knew just the right places to go. Once they landed in Cyprus, they went to the synagogue at Salamis and proclaimed the Word of God. John Mark also went along as an assistant to Paul and Barnabas. It was at Cyprus, that Saul's name was changed to Paul.

From Salamis, they went to Paphos where the governor of the island wanted to hear the Word of God. One magician wanted to stop this from happening but Paul rebuked the magician. After that, the governor became a believer in Jesus Christ. Not only did he become a believer, he was full of enthusiasm over the message of hope in Jesus Christ. Then, the missionary team headed north to Perga which is the very southern part of modern day Turkey. When they got to Perga, John Mark quit and went home to Jerusalem. Paul thought he lacked courage and commitment.

Paul and Barnabas went several other places and then headed for home. They retraced their trip so that they could encourage new disciples to stay faithful to the Lord. By the grace of God, they launched out and made it home safely. Once they got back to their home church in Antioch of Syria, they reported to the believers all the good things that God was doing in the nations of the world. They told in detail how the door of faith was wide open to the peoples of the world. After their report, they stayed in Antioch for quite a while.

TEACHER HELP

Tell the Story Activity: Map

It would be good for the teacher to locate a map to show the class the general direction that Paul and Barnabas took on the first missionary journey.



Memory Verse

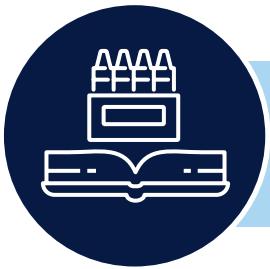
Acts 13:47 (ESV) - I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.



Praise and Worship

Praise and worship styles vary greatly around the world. It is the intent of this curriculum that praise and worship songs be selected that best fit the content of this lesson. Recommendations for praise and worship are given and this music can generally be located on sites like YouTube. However, the teacher can feel free to select a similar praise and worship song.

“Let the Nations Be Glad” by Matt Boswell and Matt Papa is recommended for this lesson.



Bible Activity

Story segments – Ahead of time, make up papers with these verses written out:

- Acts 13:1-5
- Acts 13:6-8
- Acts 13:9-12
- Acts 13:13-19
- Acts 13:20-25
- Acts 13:26-29
- Acts 13:30-37
- Acts 13:38-41
- Acts 13:48-52

Divide your class into 9 groups. Depending on the size of your class, you might have several children in each group, or if you have a small class, each child may have more than one passage to work on. Teachers or assistants may also choose to be involved, depending on the age of your students. Their job is to re-read the story and then draw a picture showing what happened in those verses. It should be very simple, no great artwork required!

TEACHER HELP

Bible Memory Activity

Review the verse a few times then divide the children into two or more teams. Have the teams form lines across from a chalk or white board or piece of paper on a chair. Place something to write with at the board in front of each team. Have the first child of each team run to the board and write the first word of the verse, then run back to the line. The next child of the team will write the next word and it will continue until the verse is completed. Allow all teams to finish before playing again.

Bible Activity

Allow the groups about 10 minutes to prepare their drawings, then 1 minute each to describe the scene to the class. Post the artwork around the room and let early arrivers to the next class try to tell the story to you by looking at the pictures.



Review the Lesson

Have children simplify the lesson into 10 words or less using their own words. What are their answers? When children simplify the story of the lesson into ten words or less, they will probably say something like these possibilities:

- Paul and Barnabas were the first missionaries.
- The first missionaries went to Cyprus then Turkey.
- The first missionaries proclaimed Jesus.
- Many non-Jewish people became believers in Christ.
- John Mark quit.
- Paul and Barnabas retraced their path when headed for home.
- The church in Antioch sent out the first missionaries.
- Saul became Paul in Cyprus.



Apply the Lesson

The teacher should have the class line up in two lines about 30 feet apart. The first team member sits cross-legged and rests hands on the ground. The second team member wraps his or her legs around the waist of the first team member. The third and the fourth members do the same. Together, they have a message that they must deliver at the finish line. That message is to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ but they must work together.

First team across the finish line wins. Work together to get the message to the finish line.

Discussion questions:

1. If you met someone new and they asked you who Jesus is and why he is important, what would you say?
2. How does our church tell people about Jesus?
3. What missionaries do we partner with who tell people about Jesus around the world?

TEACHER HELP

Review the Lesson Activity: Simplify

Simplify can be a useful game for the children. The teacher can give each team of 2 or 3 kids about 1-2 minutes to come up with the most significant 10 words of this lesson.



