

LESSON 5: PETER'S VISION OF ANIMALS

Leader Guide for Ages 3-6

Classroom: Monkeys

 Acts 10:9-43

09/20/2020

Teachers Dig In

Dig In to the Bible

- Read: Acts 10:9-43
- In This Passage: Peter has a vision of animals coming down from the sky. Although these specific animals were previously forbidden as food, God tells him to eat the animals. Later, Peter talks to a Gentile named Cornelius and realizes that his vision demonstrated that God doesn't show favoritism but welcomes anyone from any place.
- Bible Point: God is welcoming...
- Application: ...so we're welcoming.
- Summary Verse: "Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name goes all the glory for your unfailing love and faithfulness" (Psalm 115:1).

Dig Deeper

- You'll Be Teaching: *God is welcoming.* Kids often form cliques and exclude others. It's also common for girls this age to give ultimatums like "If you want to be *my* friend, you can't be *her* friend." Help kids see that God loves everyone equally and wants to welcome everyone into his family.
- Think About: Think of a place where you feel welcome. How can you help kids feel the same way at your church?

Dig In to Prayer

- Ask God to inspire your kids to be more welcoming at church, in their schools, and in their neighborhoods.

Quick Tip

- Walk into your church as if you're a family visiting for the first time. Is there clear signage directing you to the children's ministry? Would you be able to see that signage if the lobby were full of people? What about when you get to your children's ministry area? Does it make kids excited to be there? Would parents feel safe leaving their kids there? What happens when a new child enters your room? Consider all these questions, and think of how your ministry could communicate even better that God is welcoming.

This Lesson at a Glance



OPENING

Preschoolers share about a topic related to the lesson.

Supplies

- Bible



CORE BIBLE DISCOVERY

Preschoolers act out the story and play a game.

Supplies

- Bible
- bedsheet
- stuffed animals
- animal crackers (1 per child)



LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

Preschoolers practice being welcoming and pray.



OBJECT LESSON

Preschoolers mix colors and welcome a new color!

Supplies

- gallon-size resealable bags
- tempera paint in 2 primary colors (we used yellow and blue to make green)
- shaving cream
- masking tape



HIGH-ENERGY GAME

Preschoolers capture pompoms with cups.

Supplies

- multicolored pompoms (20 per person)
- 3-ounce disposable cups (1 per person)
- painter's tape
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

Easy Prep

- Place all the pompoms close together on the floor in the center of the room. Use tape to make a square around the pompoms that's a little larger than what's needed to surround them.



LOW-ENERGY GAME

Preschoolers play a parachute game with stuffed animals.

Supplies

- parachute or extra-large flat bedsheet
- stuffed animals (1 or 2 per child)
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

Easy Prep

- Spread out the parachute or sheet on the floor, and set the stuffed animals aside in a place you can access them easily when it's time for the game.



CRAFT

Preschoolers make welcome flags.

Supplies

- light-colored craft felt (one 9x12-inch piece per child)
- washable ink pads
- rubber stamps
- foam stickers
- 3-ounce cups (without a bottom ridge)
- adhesive craft foam
- paper plates
- 12-inch dowels (1 per child)
- hot glue guns (teacher use only)

Easy Prep

- Make additional stamps by putting foam stickers on the bottom of cups.
- Make one large stamp for every 5 or 6 kids that says "HI" by cutting the letters out of adhesive craft foam and sticking them on the bottom of a paper plate. (See below for an example.)
- Make a sample craft to show kids.

**Marked supplies can be reused from Core Bible Discovery*

Let's keep kids safe! You can help by using supplies as instructed for only ages 3+, purchasing child-safe items, and being aware of allergy concerns.



Supplies

- Bible

Welcome

- Thank kids for coming.
- Just for fun, have preschoolers give someone a “round” of applause by clapping in a circle in front of a friend.
- Make announcements.
- Introduce new kids.
- Celebrate birthdays by having preschoolers say “happy birthday” in robot voices.
- Collect the offering.

Introduce the Lesson

Say: **Today we'll learn that God is welcoming, and we can be welcoming, too. When we're welcoming, that means we let other people know we're glad they're here. In our Bible story, we'll hear how God used animals to show Peter to be welcoming. God actually brought animals down to Peter from the sky. That seems like a pretty silly place to see animals. Let's start today by talking about the silliest places we've seen animals.**

Share

- Share about a silly place *you've* seen an animal. Maybe you saw a cat climb a Christmas tree, a mountain goat standing on the side of a cliff, or a bird fly into your home.
- In leader-led small groups, have preschoolers share about the silliest places *they've* seen animals. They might think it was funny to see a puppy on an airplane, a lizard in their house, or a bird land on someone's head.
- After small groups have discussed, have adult or teen helpers share with the whole group what they talked about in their small groups.

Summarize

Open a Bible, and say: **Those are all pretty silly places for animals to go! And when God brought the animals down to Peter from the sky, he might've thought it was pretty surprising, too. But God did it for a reason—God used the animals to show Peter that he's welcoming and we can be welcoming, too. Let's look in the Bible to find out more about that.**

Pray, thanking God for being welcoming.

**Supplies**

- Bible
- bedsheet
- stuffed animals
- animal crackers (1 per child)

Act It Out

Have kids sit in a circle. Say: **Today we'll find out that God is welcoming, so we're welcoming. Let's look in the Bible to find out how God showed he's welcoming.** Open the Bible. **The Bible says a man named Peter went up on the roof to pray. His roof was flat, so it was safe for him to be up there. Let's pretend to climb up to the roof.** Lead kids in pretending to climb up to a roof, and then lead them in a brief prayer to show what Peter was doing.

Say: **The Bible says it was about noon, which is lunchtime, so Peter was hungry.** Lead kids to rub their tummies. **While lunch was being made, Peter had a vision from God. A vision is like a dream.**

Share about a surprising dream *you've* had.

Ask: • **Tell about a dream *you've* had.** It's not necessary for all the kids to answer. Younger preschoolers may have a harder time recalling a dream, while older preschoolers will likely remember at least one dream they've had in the past.

Say: **A vision is when God shows you something and you feel like you're in a dream. In a vision, God gives you a very special message. Let's read what happened in Peter's vision.**

Read Acts 10:11-12. Put the stuffed animals in the middle of the sheet. Then have four adult or teen helpers each hold one corner of the bedsheet and lower the stuffed animals into the center of the kids' circle. If you have only two adults or teens, have each person hold two corners of the bedsheet to lower it.

Say: **That sounds like a surprising vision! A sheet lowered animals onto the roof where Peter was, and then the Bible says God told Peter to eat the animals. Peter was surprised because Peter thought he wasn't supposed to eat those kinds of animals. God told Peter that the animals were good for him to eat.** Give each child an animal cracker to eat.

Say: **Then God pulled the sheet back up to heaven.** Have the adult and teen helpers pull the sheet back up and then place it out of sight.

Say: **Peter saw this same thing happen three times! It confused Peter, and he didn't know what it meant. While he was still thinking about what he had seen, God told Peter that three men were coming to see him. God told Peter to go with the three men. So Peter went downstairs to look for the three men.** Lead kids to pretend to walk down steps.

Say: **Sure enough, there were three men at Peter's door. Peter welcomed them, and the next morning, Peter went with the three men.** Lead kids to pretend to travel by patting their legs for about 30 seconds.

Say: **They got to Cornelius' house, and Cornelius was so happy. God helped Peter and Cornelius be friends because God is welcoming. Peter shared with everyone that God wants to be friends with *all* of them because God is welcoming.**

Play a Game

Have kids stand in a circle. Say: **Let's play a game to help us understand what it means that God is welcoming.** Have two kids stand in the center of your group and link arms at the elbow. Lead kids in singing the following song to the tune of "The Farmer in the Dell." Have the kids in the center unlink their arms and welcome one child into their circle during the second verse. If you have a large group, have kids welcome more than one child each time. Repeat the second verse until everyone has joined the linked circle.

Our God is welcoming.

Our God is welcoming.

God loves everyone.

Our God is welcoming.

Yes, we can welcome, too.

Yes, we can welcome, too.

We can welcome [child's name in three syllables].

Our God is welcoming.

Say: **Peter learned from God that he could be welcoming even to people who weren't like him.**
And because God is welcoming, we can be welcoming, too.



Practice Welcomes

Welcome Someone

Have kids sit in small groups. Say: **Today we found out that God is welcoming, so we're welcoming, too. We can be welcoming by saying "hi," by waving at someone across the street, by shaking hands, or by giving a hug or high-five.**

Share a way you can be welcoming this week. Tell who you'll be welcoming to and a simple way you'll do it. Maybe you'll smile and wave at a new neighbor, shake a new church attendee's hand and introduce yourself, or invite a friend into your home for a cup of coffee. Choose an action that goes along with the way you'll welcome, and then initiate that action with each child. For example, if you're going to wave at a neighbor, wave at each individual child and say his or her name.

Say: **You can practice being welcoming right now, too. You can be welcoming this week by giving a hug to someone new.** Have all the kids give a hug to someone else in the group who they don't know very well. Make sure every child gets a hug.

Talk With God

Say: **Great job practicing being welcoming! God loves to welcome others, and we can be welcoming, too. Let's thank God for welcoming us into a friendship with him and ask him to help us welcome others—whether they're new neighbors, our best friends, or even someone who's different from us.** Lead kids in a brief prayer, thanking God for being welcoming with us and asking him to help you all be welcoming with others.

Thank the kids for coming to class and then say: **I hope you'll come back next week—you're always welcome here at church!**



OBJECT LESSON

[10 min]

Welcome, Green!

Supplies

- gallon-size resealable bags
- tempera paint in 2 primary colors (we used yellow and blue to make green)
- shaving cream
- masking tape

Tip

- If you have a large class, save time by prepping bags ahead of time. You'll also need less paint and shaving cream if you use quart-size instead of gallon-size bags.

Put Paint and Shaving Cream in Bags

Say: **Today we learned that Peter and Cornelius welcomed one another—they became friends. This was special because Peter's and Cornelius' friends didn't like one another. God did something very special when Peter and Cornelius became friends—he helped them welcome even more people into a friendship with God.**

Show kids your two colors of paint. Say: **Let's pretend these colors are Peter and Cornelius. Let's pretend they're welcoming each other by putting them together, the way Peter came to be with Cornelius at his house.**

- Give each child a resealable bag.
- Have kids hold their bags open while you or an adult or teen helper squeezes one paint color into one corner and the other color into the other corner.
- Have an adult or teen helper add some shaving cream to the middle of each bag.
- Have an adult or teen helper help kids lay their bags flat on a table, press down to push out extra air, and then seal the bag. You can also add masking tape to make sure the top doesn't open.

Mix Paint

Say: **Now let's bring Peter** (point to one color of paint) **and Cornelius** (point to the other color of paint) **together!**

- Have kids hold the bags and smash, twist, and flatten the bags to move the paint colors together in the shaving cream. After some coaxing, the two colors will mix to create a new color!
- Have kids lay their bags flat on a table and spread the paint out inside the bags.
- Have kids each draw on the outside of their bags a happy face in their new paint color!

Talk About It

Say: **We brought two different colors together to create a new color! We're happy to welcome a new color into our bags. And God brought Peter and Cornelius together to become new friends.**

Ask: • **When have you welcomed a new friend?** Share an example to begin the conversation. Perhaps you invited a friend to your house for dinner or you invited a new friend to play a game with you.

Say: **God wanted Peter to welcome Cornelius to be a part of God's family. God is welcoming. He brings people together to make new friends! We can be welcoming, too!**



HIGH-ENERGY GAME

Welcoming All

[10 min]

Supplies

- multicolored pompoms (20 per person)
- 3-ounce disposable cups (1 per person)
- painter's tape
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

Easy Prep

- Place all the pompoms close together on the floor in the center of the room. Use tape to make a square around the pompoms that's a little larger than what's needed to surround them.

Tips

- If you used the Music Video block, consider repeating the songs from today's lesson during the game. You can find the downloadable album [here](#).
- Encourage kids to crawl *quickly* back and forth from the pile of pompoms to keep this game more high-energy.

Capture Pompoms With Cups

Say: **We're learning today that God is welcoming. God loves all people, not just some people, and that makes God welcoming! Let's play a fun game where you'll see the difference between welcoming only some and welcoming all.**

- Give each child a cup, and have everyone gather around the square on the floor, about 8 feet away.
- Have everyone get on hands and knees and get ready to crawl while holding a cup in one hand.
- Explain that you will call out a specific color and kids will be "welcoming" the pompoms of that color back to where the kids were originally seated, which you'll call "home." For example, if you call out "blue," kids will crawl to the square and use their cups to "welcome" only the blue pompoms.
- At your cue everyone can *quickly* crawl to the square and use a cup to capture pompoms by placing the cup over the pompoms and then dragging the cup and the pompoms back to home. The pompoms can't be picked up or touched with hands, only captured using the cup. Demonstrate how to do this, and kids will have it down in a snap!
- As preschoolers get back to home, have them sort out any pompoms that weren't the color you called out and set them aside. Point out that when not all the pompoms were welcomed, some got left behind.
- Then reset all the pompoms in the center.
- Repeat the same process for a few more rounds, calling out other specific colors.
- For the last round, invite kids to welcome all the pompoms back to home.
- If you'd like, play upbeat music while kids play.

Talk About It

Ask: • **What did you like about the last round we played?**

• **How do you feel when you're welcomed and not left behind?**

Say: **It's so much better for everyone and more fun when we're welcoming because then no one gets left behind and sad.**

Share an example of a way *you've* been welcoming to others so no one got left out, such as asking a new person at work to go to lunch instead of inviting only the people you know.

Ask: • **What are ways you can welcome people?** Preschoolers might share about saying hi to new friends on the playground or inviting siblings to play with them and not just their friends.

Say: **God is welcoming, and with God's help, we're welcoming, too. It's an awesome way we can show God's love to everyone!**



LOW-ENERGY GAME

[10 min]

Animal Flip-Flop

Supplies

- parachute or extra-large flat bedsheet
- stuffed animals (1 or 2 per child)
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

Easy Prep

- Spread out the parachute or sheet on the floor, and set the stuffed animals aside in a place you can access them easily when it's time for the game.

Tip

- If you used the Music Video block, consider repeating the songs from today's lesson during the game. You can find the downloadable album [here](#).

Bounce Stuffed Animals on a Parachute

Say: **Today we read about how God gave Peter a cool message about how God is welcoming. God showed Peter animals on a giant sheet lowered out of the sky as a way to help Peter understand how to welcome everyone. Let's play a fun game with animals on a big sheet!**

- Have everyone gather around the parachute and pick it up together, holding it at the preschoolers' waist level.
- Then toss all the stuffed animals onto the parachute.
- Have everyone wiggle the parachute to move all the animals into the center.
- Once the animals are in the center, everyone will pull up on the parachute at the count of three to make the animals bounce high into the air.
- Then everyone will work together to try to catch all the animals on the parachute. If any fall off, invite a nearby preschooler to pick them up and put them back on the parachute.
- Repeat the wiggle, toss, and catch for as many fun rounds as time allows.
- If you'd like, play upbeat music while kids play.

Talk About It

Say: **You did great welcoming all the animals in the game! You played with all of them as they bounced on the parachute, and if any fell off, you didn't leave them behind but you helped them get back on the parachute. That reminds me of how we can be welcoming friends with people, too. God is welcoming, and when we're friends with God, he'll make our hearts more and more like his so we're welcoming, too.**



CRAFT

Welcome Flag

[20 min]

Supplies

- light-colored craft felt (one 9x12-inch piece per child)
- washable ink pads
- rubber stamps
- foam stickers
- 3-ounce cups (without a bottom ridge)
- adhesive craft foam
- paper plates
- 12-inch dowels (1 per child)
- hot glue guns (teacher use only)

Easy Prep

- Make additional stamps by putting foam stickers on the bottom of cups.
- Make one large stamp for every 5 or 6 kids that says “HI” by cutting the letters out of adhesive craft foam and sticking them on the bottom of a paper plate. (See below for an example.)
- Make a sample craft to show kids.



Tip

- Use capital letters to spell “HI” on your stamp so kids can’t stamp it upside down. They will, however, be able to stamp the letters backward, so have adult and teen helpers guide kids when they’re using the stamp.

Explain

Say: **In our Bible story, we heard how God is welcoming, so we’re welcoming.**

Ask: • **What do you do to welcome someone who visits your home?**

Say: **Let’s make flags to welcome people who visit us!**

Make Welcome Flags

- Give each child a piece of craft felt.
- Let kids decorate their felt with stamps.
- Make sure each child gets a turn to use the “HI” stamp so kids’ flags have a welcoming message. Have adult or teen helpers guide preschoolers so they don’t stamp the word backwards. You do this by flipping the plate up or down

rather than side-to-side. Tell kids what the word says.

- As kids finish, adult or teen helpers can use hot glue guns to attach a 12-inch dowel as a flag pole. (Just make sure the word "HI" faces the right direction.)

Wave the Flags

Say: **Let's practice being welcoming with our welcome flags.**

Have adult or teen helpers take turns leaving the room for a few seconds. When they come back in, preschoolers can wave their flags and say "Welcome!"

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