

Sent So They Can Hear

Bible Lesson: Acts 4:36-37, 9:27-30, 11:22-26; Acts 13-14

PREPARATION

Objective

Students will understand the links between proclamation, hearing, and believing the gospel message.

Outcomes

1. Students will understand what is needed for a person to believe in Jesus.
2. Students will learn how Barnabas partnered with God to take the gospel to those who had not heard and encouraged other Christians to do so as well.

Memory Verse

Romans 10:14 “How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?”

Directions

1. Review verses for the “Bible Drill Challenge.” Consider how you will relate each to today’s theme.
2. Review the “Key Word Wheel” poster. Integrate these words as you notice them in any and all sections of today’s lesson. Suggested: “Purpose,” “People,” “Proclamation,” and “Partnership.”
3. Read the Bible story references. Pray that God will guide you as you teach and apply this lesson to your unique group of students. Locate cities Barnabas visited in the story on a New Testament Bible map.
4. Copy and cut out the “Hidden Treasure Strips.” Fold strips in half, writing the strip’s number on the outside of the slip, also.
5. Hide the cookies in an obscure or out-of-classroom location. Be sure to write the hidden location on strip #11.



PREPARATION: 25 min.

TEACHING: 32 min.

Materials

- Bibles
- “Key Word Wheel” poster (Introduction p. 6)
- “Key Word Cards” (Introduction pp. 7-8)
- “Paul’s Missionary Journeys” map (Lesson 6 – Bible p. 2)
- “Hidden Treasure Strips” (p. 2)
- brown lunch bag, small basket, or box
- cookie for each student

Hidden Treasure Strips

#1 There might be cookies somewhere in this room.

#2 Cookies are good.

#3 Cookies are sweet

#4 I'm hungry for cookies.

#5 Someone might know where the cookies are.

#6 Someone might not know where the cookies are.

#7 Someone might not want to tell us where the cookies are.

#8 How many cookies are there?

#9 Are there going to be enough cookies for all of us?

#10 I know for sure there are cookies. But I don't know where.

#11 I know where the cookies are. (Tell your friends where they are, only if you want to.)
They are _____

TEACHING (CORE)

PRE-LESSON ACTIVITY: HIDDEN TREASURE

Directions

1. Warmly welcome students to your time of better understanding God's purpose.
2. Hold the container with the "Hidden Treasure Strips." Invite students to each draw a slip, until they are all gone. Do not read them yet. (There may not be enough slips for every student.)
3. Beginning with strip #1, invite students to read their slips aloud, one at a time, in numerical order. Enjoy watching the anticipation build as students realize they might find cookies to enjoy. Strip #11 will name the hiding place, if the student who reads it is willing to share the secret. Enjoy the unfolding drama.
4. Choose a volunteer to retrieve the cookies. Pass out cookies and allow students to eat them as you discuss the activity.
5. Ask, *"How did it feel to know that there might be a treat?"* Allow responses.
6. Ask the student who had strip #11, *"How did it feel to be the one that knew where the cookies were?"* Allow response. Then ask the rest of the group, *"How did it feel not to know where the cookies were?"* Enjoy listening to student feedback.
7. Say, *"There was only one way for our group to get the truth about where the cookies were hidden – the one who knew had to tell the rest of us."*
8. *"How is this like the blessing of 'knowledge' that God has given to those of us who know the truth about God and Jesus?"* Allow comparisons. Then summarize by saying, *"We have truth that others are waiting to learn about. This is why it is important for us to share what we know about Jesus with other people. There is only one way for God's name to be known in all the earth. Those of us who know must tell them."*

BIBLE DRILL CHALLENGE

Romans 10:14 "How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?"

Directions

1. Give each student a Bible. Invite students to participate in a Bible drill. Say, *"Since the Bible has such an important purpose, we want to get more acquainted with the Bible itself. Today, and over the next several weeks, we will practice finding verses and stories in the Bible that help us understand God's purpose."* (optional: *"We will also be practicing to challenge our parents to a 'Bible Drill Challenge' on the last week of our quarter."*)
2. Instruct students to hold their Bibles in a ready position, Bibles closed and above their heads. Invite students to work in pairs if they are less familiar with their Bibles. Let students warm up for a speed competition

Materials

- "Hidden Treasure Strips" placed in bag, basket, or box (p. 2)
- cookie treats, hidden in an obscure or out-of-classroom location

Materials

- Bibles

by first looking for each item below, one at a time. As you name the item, adding theme-related questions or comments, students will lower their Bibles and quickly try to find what you have named. Say, “Ready, begin” after introducing each item.

- 1 Corinthians 15:58 – “How does God encourage those who are working to help others know God?” (review verse from Lesson 7)
 - Acts 1:8 – “What (Who) did God promise to give to help believers communicate the truth about Jesus for people of all nations to understand?” (Holy Spirit)
 - Malachi 1:11 – “What is God’s purpose?” (review verse from Lesson 1)
 - Psalm 67:1-2 – “Why does God bless us?” (review verse from Lesson 3)
 - Acts 16:31 – “How can people be saved?” (believe in the Lord Jesus)
 - Romans 10:14 – “This verse tells what must happen before people can believe in Jesus.”
3. After reading the final verse aloud, discuss its meaning together. Explain that this Bible verse is part of a passage where Paul is explaining the importance of helping everyone on earth hear the truth about Jesus Christ.
 4. Paul asks some good questions. Ask, “How can people call out to Jesus and be saved, if they have never believed in him? How can they believe if they have never heard about him? How can they hear if someone doesn’t come and tell them (preach to them)?” Invite students to offer their answers to these questions.
 5. Say, “Just as the student who knew the secret hiding place for the cookies had to ‘tell the news,’ we must share the ‘news’ about God with others. God does not want this news to stay secret. He wants all people on earth to know him and honor him.”

BIBLE LESSON: BARNABAS

Directions

1. Introduce Barnabas. Say, “Barnabas was one of the leaders in the early church. However, if you look in the New Testament, there is no book or letter with his name. He did not lead a church like James or Peter. But he was a man with many gifts to share to help God’s name become known in all the earth.”
2. Continue, “Barnabas had possessions and he recognized these as blessings from God.” Point to the word “possessions” on the “Key Word Wheel” poster. “In Acts 4:36-37, we meet Barnabas after he sold a field. He gave all the money earned from the sale to the apostles to share with the new group of believers, the Church. This was a great act of generosity.”
3. “Next, we find Barnabas helping Saul, who later was re-named Paul” (Acts 9:27-30). “Since Saul had been such a terrifying man before he came to Christ, persecuting and killing Christians, the disciples were unsure about trusting him at the beginning. When Barnabas met Saul, he realized that Jesus had come into Saul’s heart. He brought Saul to the disciples and helped them to see that Saul had really changed. If Barnabas had not

Materials

- Bible
- “Key Word Wheel” poster (Introduction p. 6)
- “Paul’s Missionary Journeys” map (Lesson 6 – Bible p. 2)

helped the disciples to accept Saul, we would be missing much of the New Testament and many stories that help us understand God's purposes. God uses people like Barnabas (Point to the word "People" on the "Key Words Wheel.") to develop and prepare great leaders like Paul." Point to the word "Preparation" on the "Key Word Wheel."

4. *"In Acts 13-14, we find Barnabas going with Paul on the very first missionary journey. Together, they traveled to many cities, telling people about Jesus." Point to the words "People Moving" and "Proclamation" on the "Key Word Wheel." On the map of "Paul's Missionary Journeys," point out some of these locations from the first missionary journey: starting point of city of Antioch in Syria, the island of Cyprus, and the regions of Pamphylia and Pisidia. Say, "Paul and Barnabas returned to all the cities where they had preached before going back to the city of Antioch."*
5. *"They saw miracles happen, evidences of God's power." Point to the word "Power" on the "Key Word Wheel." "Barnabas, whose name means 'son of encouragement,' helped Paul in ministry. Barnabas was part of the New Testament movement to take the gospel to all the peoples of the earth." Point to "Passport to the World" on the "Key Word Wheel."*
6. *"On a second missionary journey, Paul gave up on a young Christian leader named John Mark, but Barnabas did not. Instead he encouraged and trained John Mark. Over time Paul and Mark became co-workers again. Barnabas always helped leaders in the new churches to work together in love and unity. Barnabas understood that partnership among Christians was important in spreading the gospel." Point to the word "Partnership" on the "Key Word Wheel."*

IN CLOSING: PRAYER

Directions

1. Say, *"There are many people like Barnabas today, who are helping God's name be known across the earth. They may not be a famous speaker, or have a television show, or write popular Christian books. However, they are working hard behind the scenes. Christians are doing many different kinds of jobs that are moving the gospel into new territories where unreached people are still waiting to hear the gospel: computer specialists, engineers, farmers, video and sound technicians, researchers, teachers, bankers and businessmen, language translators, medical workers, intercessors, etc."*
2. Ask, *"What blessing might God have given you that you can share to spread the good news about Jesus? It could be something that you are good at doing. It could be the special way you have of getting people to work together. It could be the way you encourage others to continue doing God's work, even when it gets difficult."* Allow students to share.
3. Pray that students will be willing to share their greatest blessing, the knowledge of Jesus, with those who have none.



PRAYER ACTIVITY: CHURCH PLANTING

Directions

1. Say, *“Over the past several weeks, we have been learning many things about God’s plan to help all the people of earth know him. We’ve also learned that people cannot believe in God and worship him until someone brings the good news into their culture.”*
2. *“Paul, Barnabas, William Carey, Hudson Taylor, and others were pioneer missionaries who took the gospel into places where God’s name had never been known or worshiped. Some people in those cultures became followers of Jesus. Then what?”*
3. *“God’s strategy in the book of Acts was to gather the believing families into small groups who prayed, worshiped, and read God’s Word together. They helped and encouraged each other as well. They reached out to unbelievers in their own culture and sent people to far-away places to tell people of other cultures about Jesus. These gatherings of believers were the first churches.”*
4. *“God’s strategy for spreading his Word through a culture is still the same today. It is called church planting. Let’s see why this is a good plan.”*
5. Watch Infobyte #7, “The Goal.” Discuss the good things about this strategy.
6. Pray for more pioneer missionaries to go to spread God’s Word in places where there are no believers. Pray for churches to be planted in every culture. Pray for groups of believers in every culture to worship God and make his name known to their families, friends, and neighbors.



PREPARATION: 5 min.

TEACHING: 15 min.

Materials

- Infobyte #7, “The Goal” (IB)
- TV/DVD player



HEROES OF HISTORY: CAMERON TOWNSEND

Directions

1. Set the stage for this story. Say, *“Cameron Townsend was a college student in the United States at the beginning of World War I. He did not set out to be a missionary, but through his obedience, God used him to bring the Word of God to people in many different cultures.”*
2. Introduce this vocabulary word:
Linguistics: Linguistics is the study of languages, both the sounds that make up words and how words are put together to create thoughts. In cultures without a written language, linguistics also involves creating brand new alphabets.
3. Read the story to your group.
4. Discuss the questions together or in small groups.
5. Together, discover the ways in which Cameron Townsend was a missionary pioneer in his time period.



PREPARATION: 15 min.

TEACHING: 25 min.

Materials

- “Cameron Townsend” illustration (p. 8)
- “Cameron Townsend Story” (pp. 9-11)
- “Cameron Townsend Discussion Questions” (p. 12)

Cameron Townsend



Founder of Wycliffe Bible Translators

William “Cam” Townsend, born July 9, 1896, was a skinny kid raised on a California farm. When he entered college, he didn’t know what he wanted to do with his life. However, the First World War was heating up, and he was pretty sure he would get drafted, so in 1916 he enlisted in the National Guard.

Then he met Stella Zimmerman, a missionary in Central America. “You cowards!” she scolded. “Going to war where a million other men will go and leaving us women to do the Lord’s work alone! You are needed in Central America to sell Bibles to people who walk in darkness.”

To Cam’s amazement, his National Guard captain agreed, and he was released from duty for a year’s service with the Los Angeles Bible House, selling Bibles in Guatemala. It was a year that changed Cam Townsend’s life.

Note: Introduce the following section by saying, *“Here is an account of Cam’s first attempts to share Jesus with the people of Guatemala. Think about what he discovered about himself, the Indians, and God through these initial experiences.”*

Humility: “Do You Know Señor Jesús?”

Twenty-one-year-old Cameron Townsend was both excited and nervous as he walked the streets of Antigua, a city nestled in the shadow of the volcano Agua. He had only been in Guatemala a few weeks getting used to the heat and heavy rains, the meals of beans and tortillas, and the rugged trails leading to various towns. But he was eager to get on with his mission assignment – selling Spanish New Testaments and sharing the gospel.

Today, Mr. Bishop, a veteran missionary, had encouraged Cameron to go out in the streets and do some “personal work” (sharing the gospel with others). Cameron had very little experience witnessing in English, much less in Spanish, but he was game to try.

A middle-aged man was coming toward him. Cameron’s heart started beating very fast. By the time the man was close enough to speak to, Cameron’s heart was beating so hard he couldn’t get any words out. Frustrated with himself, he turned around and tried to catch up to the man. But as soon as he got close, again he was unable to speak. After passing the man a third time, Cameron gave up.

“Oh, Lord, you’re going to have to help me here,” he begged silently. He remembered being told that asking someone, “Do you know the Lord Jesus?” was a good way to start a conversation. Cameron reviewed his weak Spanish: “Lord” in Spanish is “Señor.” “Jesús” is pronounced “Hay-soos.”

Turning a corner, Cameron saw a young man about his own age. Gathering his courage, he approached the young man and asked, “Do you know Señor Jesús?”

The young Guatemalan shook his head. “I’m sorry. I can’t help you,” he said politely to the young American. “I am a stranger in town, too, and do not know this man.” He gave an apologetic shrug and moved on.

Cameron stood there, dumbfounded. “Jesús” was a common name in Spanish-speaking countries ... and the word “Señor” was also the word for “Mister.” So that was it. The young man thought Cam was asking if he knew how to find a Mr. Jesus living in Antigua!

Embarrassed, Cameron walked back to the mission. Not a very bright beginning, he admitted to himself. But not for a moment did he consider giving up. He would just have to practice his Spanish and learn from the other missionaries. After all, God had called him here, so he knew God would help him learn.

It certainly wasn’t the last time Cameron Townsend felt weak and powerless to share the gospel. Even though his Spanish improved, he realized that many of the Indians he spoke to couldn’t speak or understand Spanish, much less read a Spanish New Testament. Many of the native Indians had their own language – not just one, but hundreds of different tribal languages. Instead of getting discouraged, however, Cameron prayed and asked God to help him know how to reach these Indians with the gospel.

God answered by giving him a Christian Indian friend named Francisco Diaz. “Frisco,” as he was called, became Cam’s partner, teaching him the Cakchiquel (kah-**chee**-kehl) language. Even though Frisco died two years later of malaria, Cameron Townsend was able to translate the New Testament into the Cakchiquel language!

Humility is recognizing your own limits and relying on God’s strength to get the job done.

Note: Introduce the last section by saying, “Cam relied on God and God blessed his efforts in translation. Cam passed on this vision for Bible translation to the generations that followed.”

A Ministry is Born: Cameron Townsend's Legacy

Once in Guatemala, Cam realized that not everyone spoke Spanish or could read the Spanish Bibles he was selling. There were hundreds of Indian languages that had never been written down. At the age of twenty-three, he and his new wife, Elvira, settled in a cornstalk house in a Cakchiquel Indian village to teach school and study the language. Twelve years later, Cam's translation of the New Testament in the Cakchiquel language was published.

But there were so many more Indian languages throughout Central and South America! Cam Townsend's vision to put the Scriptures into the Indians' own languages led him to start the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) to train Bible translators. He also began Wycliffe Bible Translators to raise funds and promote the work.

In 1944, Elvira Townsend died. A short while later, Cam married a second time. Together, the Townsends continued to spread the work of Wycliffe around the world. Shortly after his death in 1982, the number of Wycliffe/SIL workers reached six thousand, working with a thousand different language groups. Cameron Townsend's passion in life – to “translate the Scriptures into every language” – is being carried forward by Wycliffe Bible Translators even today.

FROM GOD'S WORD

Read the following verse to your students: *“But he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weakness, so that Christ’s power may rest on me’ (2 Corinthians 12:9).*

Cameron Townsend Discussion Questions

CAMERON TOWNSEND, PART 1, 2, & 3

Let's Talk About It

1. What were some of Cameron Townsend's limits and weaknesses when he first went to Guatemala?
Cam was nervous and afraid of approaching strangers. He did not have much experience in sharing his faith, even in English. Cam did not speak Spanish fluently or know any of the Indian languages.
2. What were some of the ways God overcame these weaknesses?
As Cam went to God in prayer and asked for the things he needed, God supplied. God gave him ideas for how to begin conversations with people. Cam got help from other missionaries and practiced his Spanish. God gave Cam a Christian Indian friend and partner who spoke the Cakchiquel language and helped Cam learn it.
3. How does admitting our own limitations or weaknesses help us use God's power?
Answers will vary. Allow students to give personal examples to illustrate this concept.