

Samaria and the Ends of the Earth

Bible Lesson: Acts 8:26-40a

PREPARATION

Objective

Students will understand that God loves people from all cultures and puts his followers in places where they can tell others about God.

Outcomes

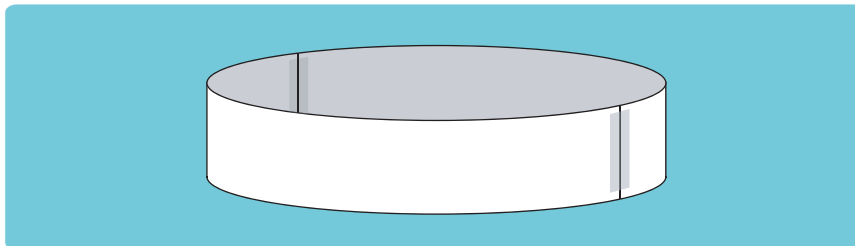
1. Students will learn how God used Philip to tell an Ethiopian man about Jesus.
2. Students will realize that God gives them opportunities to explain Jesus to people they meet in their daily lives.

Memory Verse

Acts 10:34-35 “God treats everyone the same ... He accepts people from every nation. He accepts all who have respect for him and do what is right.” (NIRV)

Directions

1. Review the words and hand motions for the song, “God Treats Everyone the Same” and for the hand clapping game, “Just Like Philip Did.”
2. Locate “God’s Story Bookmarks” #4-5 and place them in your Bible.
3. Create an Ethiopian elder’s hat from a white, 8 ½ x 11-inch piece of paper. Cut the paper in half lengthwise. Tape the two pieces together on the short side to form one long, narrow strip that measures 4 ¼ inches wide by 21 inches long. (See diagram below.) Keep tape handy to adjust the hat to fit around the head of the volunteer you choose to play the part of the Ethiopian official. The hat should rest just above the ears.



4. Create a “mock chariot.” Make this as elaborate, or simple, as your time and skills allow. Decorate cardboard with paint and glitter, or leave plain and encourage students to use their imagination. Consider one of the following:



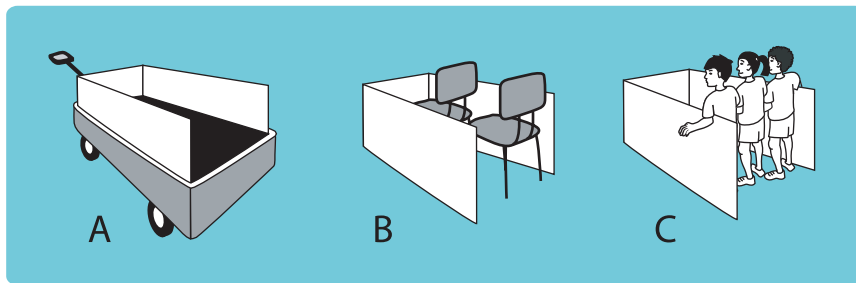
PREPARATION: 20 min.

TEACHING: 55 min.

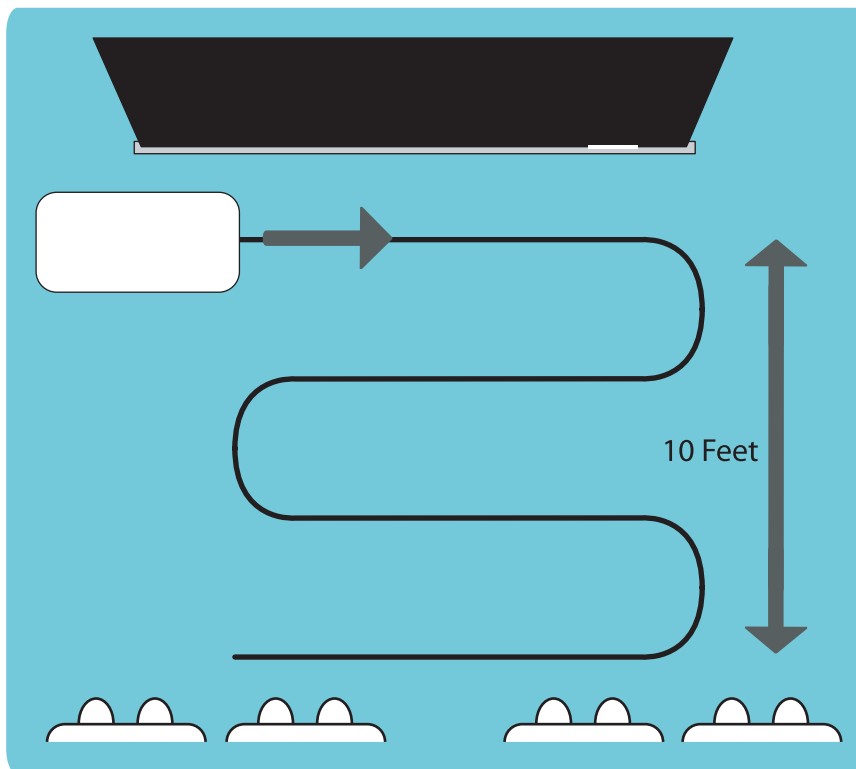
Materials

- two Bibles
- “Key Word” pictures for “Proclamation” and “People Moving” (Introduction pp. 10-11)
- world map or globe
- “God Treats Everyone the Same” song (MS)
- “Just Like Philip Did” finger play (AS)
- “God’s Story Bookmarks” #4-5 (Introduction p. 24)
- large cardboard box for mock chariot or child’s wagon for chariot
- paint and glitter for chariot (optional)
- 8 ½ x 11-inch piece of white paper
- scissors
- clear tape
- masking or duct tape
- TV/DVD
- at least one adult helper

- Fit three sides of a cardboard box (top and bottom removed) inside the front and side rims of a child's wagon, so that two students are visible when seated inside, and the back is open for entry and exit. Use masking or duct tape to secure cardboard to the wagon. (See A below.)
- Stand a three-sided cardboard box (top and bottom removed) on the floor. Place two chairs inside so that students are visible above the box when seated, and the back of the chariot is open for entry and exit. (See B below.)
- For a moving chariot without wheels, have students stand and position a three-sided piece of cardboard in a "U" shape around the front and sides of their bodies. The back of the chariot is open for entry and exit. Direct the students to hold onto opposite sides of the cardboard and walk when the chariot is moving. (See C below.)



5. Create a winding, desert road across the front of your teaching space. Mark floors with masking tape, or, if outside, mark the road with chalk. The road should take up about 10 feet of space from side to side. (See diagram below.)



TEACHING (CORE)

MEMORY VERSE SONG: GOD TREATS EVERYONE THE SAME

Acts 10:34-35 “God treats everyone the same ... He accepts people from every nation. He accepts all who have respect for him and do what is right.” (NIRV)

Directions

1. Have students sit down. Open your Bible and read Acts 10:34-35.
2. Explain that the word “realize” means “to understand or know something.”
3. Read verse 34 again and ask, “*How can we tell from this verse that God is fair?*” Let students respond. (God treats people the same.)
4. Read verse 35. Explain that the word “accepts” means “welcomes.” Have the students stand up and say with you, “*Welcome, come on in.*” Repeat several times. Then say, “*When people believe in God’s Son, Jesus, God never says, ‘Go away!’ God treats everyone who comes to him the same. He accepts, or welcomes them.*”
5. Play the memory verse song on the DVD and have students watch.
6. Sing the song through, adding motions. Explain the motion for the word “same:” “*Move your hands like you are feeling the top of a smooth table. It has no bumps, no high or low parts. The table top feels the same all the way across.*”

BIBLE LESSON: PHILIP AND THE ETHIOPIAN OFFICIAL

Directions

1. Seat students in a group facing the world map or globe. Ask for a volunteer who can show your location on the globe. You may need to give a little help here.
2. Say, “*One character in our Bible story is from the country of Ethiopia. Ethiopia is a real place.*” Show students where Ethiopia is on the globe. Say, “*Ethiopia is a country far away from where we are.*” Try to give your students perspective. For example, if you live in North America, you might tell students, “*Ethiopia is all the way on the other side of the earth. When it is daytime here, it is night there.*”
3. Open your Bible to Acts 8:26 and say, “*God wants people from all nations to hear the good news about Jesus. In this Bible lesson, God sent the good news of Jesus to a new place, the country of Ethiopia.*” Hold up the “Key Word” poster for “People Moving” and say, “*God moved an Ethiopian man to a place where he could hear about Jesus. God also moved a man who believed in Jesus onto the same road where the Ethiopian man was traveling.*”
4. Hold up the “Key Word” poster for “Proclamation” and say, “*God used Philip to proclaim the good news about Jesus. Philip explained part of the Bible to a man from Ethiopia.*”
5. Bring out your chariot, and place it near the end of the road you have

Materials

- Bible
- “God Treats Everyone the Same” song (MS)
- TV/DVD

Materials

- “Key Word” pictures for “Proclamation” and “People Moving” (Introduction pp. 10-11)
- “God’s Story Bookmarks” #4-5 (Introduction p. 24) in your Bible
- world map or globe
- Bible for the Ethiopian official to hold
- Ethiopian hat and clear tape for adjusting
- chariot
- desert road

mapped out, close to where the teacher will stand. Assign one helper to stand nearby and help the actors while you tell the Bible story. This helper will also pull the chariot if you choose to have a moveable one.

6. Point to the chariot and explain to the students, *“In Ethiopia long, long ago, important people traveled in chariots. Chariots had two wheels and were pulled by horses. People got into chariots by climbing in the back. Sometimes chariot drivers stood up while they guided their horses, but chariots also had seats inside.”*
7. *“The Ethiopian man in our Bible lesson had a very important job. He worked for the Queen of Ethiopia. The queen trusted him to take care of all of her money. He probably had a beautiful chariot and fine horses. Today, in Ethiopia, an official would probably ride in a big, black, shiny car, or maybe fly in his own jet. This Bible story happened before cars or airplanes were ever invented.”*
8. Choose a volunteer to play the Ethiopian official. Wrap the white paper strip (“Ethiopian Elder’s Hat”) around his head and tape it so that it fits snugly, resting above his ears. Have him sit or stand inside the chariot.
9. Move to the opposite end of the road near the students. Choose a student to play the part of Philip. Say, *“Philip, you are one of Jesus’ followers. When Jesus left this earth and returned to heaven in the clouds, he told you to go and make disciples. You loved Jesus and obeyed him and have been walking around from town to town, explaining to people about Jesus.”*
10. Say, *“Philip, God is going to use you to tell the Ethiopian official about Jesus. His home is in a different country. His clothes, neighborhood, foods, and activities are different from yours. Even though he is different from you, Philip, God loves him. God wants all people to know and worship him, no matter how they dress or where they live. God cares so much for this one Ethiopian man that he will do miracles to reach him. Listen to the Bible story and act out your part. When you hear that an angel is speaking to you, freeze and cup your hand behind your ear, as if you are listening very carefully. Let’s practice that once.”* Allow Philip to practice. Point to the road and say, *“The chariot is traveling on this road. When you are supposed to walk, move slowly towards the chariot. When you are supposed to run, move quickly.”*
11. Open your Bible and say, *“Philip, here’s the part about the angel.”* Direct the audience to participate, cupping one hand around their ear as they listen to the angel’s message sent from the Lord. Read Acts 8:26.
12. Say, *“Philip obeyed the Lord. He started walking down a hot, dusty desert road towards the town called Gaza.”* Tell Philip to start walking very slowly down the road you outlined.
13. *“Meanwhile, an important man who worked for the Queen of Ethiopia was riding home in his chariot on the very same road! Let’s pretend to be the horses.”* Have the students stand and gallop in place. Lead them in neighing a few times. If you have a moveable chariot, have your helper pull it slowly towards Philip. Otherwise, direct the student inside to stand and walk in place.
14. Direct your horses to sit back down and say, *“Let’s find out what happened next.”*

15. Read Acts 8:27-30. Direct Philip to run up to the chariot. Direct the chariot to stop. Move the chairs inside the chariot (if necessary) and have the Ethiopian official sit down.
16. Give the student in the chariot an open Bible to hold. Say, *"You are an Ethiopian official, a very important man, reading God's Word in the book of Isaiah. You have heard about God, but you do not understand whom these Bible verses are talking about. Can you run your finger over the words slowly and look confused?"*
17. Say, *"Philip saw that the Ethiopian man was reading the Bible and asked him if he understood what the words meant. The Ethiopian man invited Philip into the chariot to tell him more about God."* Direct Philip to get into the chariot and sit down next to the Ethiopian official.
18. Say, *"Philip saw that the words the Ethiopian were pointing to told about Jesus. As they rode along in the chariot, Philip told him about Jesus, God's Son. Let's all pretend to be Philip. What will we say to the Ethiopian man?"*
19. Have the students stand up. Unfold bookmark #4 from your Bible and suggest, *"Let's tell him about this part of God's story. Jesus is God's biggest blessing. Jesus takes our punishment, dying, and rising again."*
20. Lead students to review the motions for bookmark #4: Form your hands into fists, cross your arms in front of your chest. Then release your arms, extending both outward to shoulder height.
21. Unfold bookmark #5 from your Bible and ask, *"What does this bookmark tell about Jesus?"* Allow responses. Then say, *"Yes, we should tell the Ethiopian that Jesus brings back (restores) friendship with God. We should tell others."*
22. Lead students to review the motions and words for bookmark #5: Clasp shaking hands together in front of your chest again, as in number one. Release. With one hand, point to your mouth with four fingers. Then extend that hand straight out in front of your chest to denote words coming out of your mouth.
23. Have the students sit down. Read Acts 8:36-38, stopping in your reading to encourage the actors to play their parts. Point at imaginary water. Have Philip and the Ethiopian official get out of the chariot and go over to the imaginary water. Show Philip how to scoop water on the Ethiopian man. Say, *"When people are baptized, it shows that they believe that Jesus died for their sins and that they have a new friendship with God. Do you think that the Ethiopian man understands more about Jesus now?"* Allow responses.
24. Say, *"Now you two can come up out of the water and start walking back to the chariot slowly, as I read."* Read the first part of Acts 8:39 and ask Philip, *"Can you just disappear? No? Well, the Bible says that the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away and the official did not see him again. That's a pretty amazing miracle, isn't it?"* Have Philip leave the chariot and go sit down with the students.
25. Say, *"I think we will all have to use our imaginations to think what it must have been like for the Ethiopian official. One minute Philip was standing next to him, the next minute he was alone on the desert road. Let's help the*

Ethiopian official look surprised.” Direct all of the students to rub their eyes in disbelief and look around them.

26. Direct the Ethiopian official to climb back into the chariot. Finish reading Acts 8:39 and ask the Ethiopian official, *“Can you ride down the road full of great joy? How happy can you look?”* Encourage Ethiopian official to sit back down with the group. Then say, *“The Ethiopian official traveled back to his country and to his job for the queen.”*
27. Invite Philip to stand up as you read Acts 8:40. Say, *“So, Philip, God did some very amazing things today, didn’t he? First an angel of the Lord spoke to you. He sent you to explain about Jesus to that Ethiopian official. After the Ethiopian official accepted Jesus as his Savior, the Spirit of the Lord just took you away! Somehow you ended up in another town called Azotus, about twenty miles away from that desert road. God must have really wanted to reach out to that man from Ethiopia.”*
28. Have Philip sit down and ask the entire group, *“Do you think the joyful Ethiopian official told anyone about Jesus when he got back to his country?”* Allow time for responses.
29. Say, *“The Bible does not tell us, so we cannot know for sure, but many people believe that the official took what he learned about Jesus back to Ethiopia, and even told the queen about Jesus.”*

IN CLOSING: “JUST LIKE PHILIP DID” FINGER PLAY

Directions

1. Say, *“God wants us to share the good news about Jesus with the people we meet, just like Philip did.”* Allow students to share some places where they go. (school, store, library, clubs, playground, sports, etc.) Then say, *“Could you tell people you meet in these places about Jesus?”* (yes)
2. Watch the “Just Like Philip Did” finger play video. Watch a second time, having the students say the words along with the children on the DVD.
3. Divide the students into pairs, sitting opposite each other or standing face-to-face.
4. Allow students to try the hand clapping as they say the words. Let them know that they will be learning the hand clapping during the next few weeks.

Materials

- “Just Like Philip Did” finger play (AS)
- TV/DVD



SIMULATION: DAILY LIFE IN ETHIOPIA

Before the Activity Directions

1. To simulate huts and goat pens, choose one of the following options:
1) round, plastic tablecloths or 2) circles marked off on the floor or playground.
2. If using option #2, use masking tape, yarn, or chalk to create circles that are six to eight feet in diameter. Make one circle for every eight students you anticipate.

Directions

1. Say, *“Today we are learning about the country of Ethiopia. In our Bible story, the important man who rode in the chariot worked for Queen Candace of Ethiopia. Ethiopia is a real place.”* Locate the country of Ethiopia on a map or globe. Say, *“Ethiopia is a country in Africa.”*
2. *“Today, Ethiopia has some big cities with roads, traffic, airports, large office buildings, and neighborhoods with schools, homes, and stores. Many parts of Ethiopia are more like the country than the city. Have you ever been to rural places called ‘the country’? What kinds of things do you see there?”* Let students share their experiences.
3. Continue by saying, *“In the country areas of Ethiopia, many children help their parents by working from the time they are very young. Even boys and girls your age have important chores to do. Ethiopian children spend much of their day doing chores so they do not have much time to play games. Today instead of playing a game from Ethiopia we will pretend we are a family in Ethiopia.”*
4. *“Many families in Ethiopia keep goats. These goats are more than pets. Like cows, goats give families milk, cheese, and meat. Families also sell some goats in their herd and use the money to buy other things their family needs like food and clothing.”*
5. *“Goats are kept safe in huts at night. Parents send the children to take care of their goats during the day. Who would like to be Mother and Father in our Ethiopian family?”* Choose two volunteers and have them stand up. Ask, *“Who would like to be the oldest children, probably teenagers.”* Choose two volunteers and have them stand up. Ask, *“Who would like to be the children who are around ages eight to twelve?”* Choose two volunteers and have them stand up. Ask, *“Who would like to be the youngest children, those around your age?”* Choose two and have them stand up. Direct all the family members to go stand inside one of the circles. Say, *“This hut is your home.”*
6. Tell the rest of the students, *“You will be goats. Can you make sounds like goats like this – ‘maaaah, maaaah’?”* Let them practice. Have the goats go into the empty circles and stand. Say, *“These huts are the goat pens.”*
7. Direct the Ethiopian family to lie down and pretend to sleep. Say, *“It is night. The goats are safe in their huts. The family is sleeping in their own hut.”*



PREPARATION: 10 min.

TEACHING: 20 min.

Materials

- large spacious room, gym, or playground
- masking tape, yarn, or chalk (optional)
- one round, plastic tablecloth for every eight students (optional)
- world map or globe
- empty, plastic gallon jug

8. *“Now it is early in the morning. The sun is just coming up. Our Ethiopian family is just waking up.”* Direct the family members to stand up, stretch, and step outside their hut to see what kind of day it will be today. Say, *“It has been cool in the night, but now that the sun is rising, the day is warming up.”*
9. Say, *“Mom and Dad, send your children out to check on the goats in their huts. The goats will need to be milked.”* Allow the children in the family to go to the different goat pens. Then say, *“The goat milk is put into a special container to be taken to town to sell for a few cents. After milking the goats and drinking a few swallows of goat milk for breakfast (let the children pretend to drink milk), the children are sent off to find food for the goats, usually grass or plants.”*
10. Have the two children who are teenagers raise their hand and listen. *“The oldest children will take some of the goats on a long walk from the family’s home.”* Direct the two students to select several goats from the pens and take these goats as far as possible from the family’s hut and stay there. The goats can get down on all fours and pretend to graze.
11. Have the two children who are between eight and twelve years old raise their hand and listen. Say, *“The middle children are sent not quite so far away with their goats.”* Have these two students choose some of the goats in the huts and walk away, but not as far as the first group. Let the goats make their goat noises as they pretend to eat grass.
12. Say, *“There are still some hungry goats. Even the youngest children are sent out to take care of the goats, but they stay closer to home.”* Direct the youngest children in the family to get the rest of the goats from the huts and take them a short distance from their family’s home. Let these goats eat grass.
13. Then ask, *“What do Mom and Dad do? Mother will take the goat’s milk to the village, a small town. She will sell the milk and use the money to buy some flour and tea. When she gets back home, she will use the flour to make bread for meals.”* Show the mother how to pretend to carry a container of goat milk like she is carrying a bucket or balancing the container on her head with one hand using an empty, plastic jug.
14. *“Father will also leave to hunt or perhaps visit some friends.”* Send the mother and father away, perhaps in different directions from the children tending goats.
15. *“At the end of the day, when the sun is beginning to set, the children will start back home with their goats. Each evening, the goats must be put in their huts to keep them safe from wild animals and to keep them from running away.”* Direct the youngest children to bring their goats home first and place in the hut, then the middle children, and last the oldest children. Once the goats are in their pens, direct the children to go to their home.
16. *“Father and Mother have returned home as well.”* Have the mother and father walk back to their home. *“The family will gather around a small fire, eat some bread, drink some tea, and go to sleep very tired.”* Let the students sit down and pretend to eat dinner together and then lie down to sleep. Say, *“Tomorrow will be another busy day for this Ethiopian family.”*

17. Gather all the students together in a group and say, “*Now we are all ourselves again.*” Ask, “*How is the life of a child in Ethiopia different from your life? How is it the same? Do you think you would enjoy life in Ethiopia? Does God love this Ethiopian family? Do they need to hear about Jesus?*” Allow a short time of discussion.



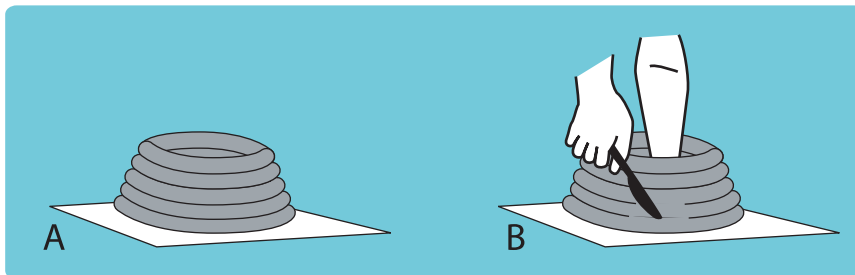
CRAFT: POTTERY BOWL

Before the Activity Directions

1. Cut cardboard into 6 x 6-inch squares, one for each student.

Directions

1. Tell students that the country of Ethiopia is famous for making and selling pottery. Today they will be making a pot out of clay.
2. Pass out a large lump of clay and a square of cardboard to each student.
3. Show the students how to make the bottom of the clay pot. Take a small piece of the clay, roll it into a ball, and then flatten it like a pancake. Place this round, flattened piece of clay in the middle of the piece of cardboard.
4. Allow students to complete this step, giving help as needed.
5. Show the students how to take another small piece of the clay and roll it into a long, snake-shaped rope.
6. Direct students to roll more rope shapes and form into coils.
7. Show students how to stack coils on top of the first one to make the sides of the pot. (See A below.)
8. Pass out a plastic knife to each student and show them how to smooth the side of their pot with the flat part of the blade. They may wish to put their hand on the inside walls of their pot to support it while they smooth the clay. (See B below.)
9. While students are working, let them think of ways that pots might be used in Ethiopia. (for carrying water, for holding food, for cooking food)
10. When the pots are finished, pass out pencils and direct students to write their name on the corner of the piece of cardboard.



Note: There is no game for this lesson.



PREPARATION: 15 min.

TEACHING: 25 min.

Materials

- modeling clay, any color
- plastic knives
- cardboard
- pencils



SNACK: INJERA

(in-**jeer**-ah, pancake), an Ethiopian staple

Makes 10 servings (one serving = one half pancake)

Before the Activity Directions

1. Prepare this snack before class by following the directions below.
2. Combine flour, baking soda, and water in a blender or mixing bowl.
3. Blend ingredients into a thin pancake-like mixture.
4. Lightly oil the bottom of an 8- or 9-inch frying pan and heat on medium.
5. Pour ½-cup portion to cover the bottom of the frying pan.
6. Cook until lightly browned. Flip over and cook the other side.
7. Remove to a platter and keep warm.

Directions

1. Announce that today's snack is something that families in Ethiopia eat with every meal. It is a pancake-like bread called *injera* (in-**jeer**-ah). Have students say the word "*injera*" with you.
2. Say, "*The flour we put in our bread and pancakes usually comes from wheat.*" Ask, "*What grain do you think is used to make cornbread or corn tortillas?*" (corn) Say, "*Injera is made from a grain that grows in Ethiopia called teff.*"
3. "*After mixing the batter for injera, the mom pours the thin batter into a pan and cooks it over an open fire.*"
4. "*Sometimes families use a piece of injera like a spoon to scoop up pieces of meat or vegetables in their stew. Ethiopians only use their right hand when they eat injera and other foods.*"
5. Cut pancakes in half and put one piece on each plate.
6. Pass out the plates and napkins. Challenge any left-handed students to try to eat *injera* with their right hand instead.
7. End snack time by praying that more Ethiopian families will come to know and worship God.



PREPARATION: 30 min.

TEACHING: 10 min.

Materials

- 2 cups self-rising flour
- 2 cups water
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1-2 tablespoons cooking oil
- 8- or 9-inch frying pan
- platter
- blender (or whisk and mixing bowl)
- spatula
- knife
- small paper plates
- napkins



PRAYER ACTIVITY: PRAY FOR ETHIOPIANS

Directions

1. Have the students sit in a circle.
2. Show students the soccer ball and tell them that in Ethiopia, boys and girls love to play soccer. Have those students who like to play soccer raise their hands. If any are on teams, let them share the name of their team.
3. Show students the soccer ball and tell them they will use the ball to pray for Ethiopian families.
4. Hand the ball to one student. Tell students that when the music starts, they should pass the ball around the circle. When the music stops, the student with the ball should hold it and walk to the middle of the circle.
5. Begin the music and stop it after about one minute. Let the student with the ball bring it to the middle.
6. Read one prayer request. (See “Suggested Prayer Requests” at the end of this activity.)
7. Let the student with the ball pray or choose another student in the circle to pray.
8. Have the student in the middle return to the circle.
9. Hand the soccer ball to a different student in the circle and start the music again.
10. Continue in the same manner until you have finished praying for all the requests.

Suggested Prayer Requests

- Pray for poor families in Ethiopia. When the mother goes to the store, she does not have enough money to buy food for her children. They cry because they are so hungry that their stomachs hurt.
- Some families in Ethiopia get sick because they do not understand how to stay well. Children might not wash their hands before dinner. A sister might eat out of the same dish as her sick brother. Mom might get water for her family to drink from the same river where people have washed their dirty clothes or taken a bath. Pray for Christian doctors and nurses to teach families ways to be healthy.
- Pray for wars near Ethiopia to end. Homes, schools, and towns are destroyed when soldiers fight each other. People are killed by guns and explosions.
- Pray for Muslim families in Ethiopia. They do not know that God loves them and sent his Son Jesus to die on the cross for their sins. Remind students that the “M” in “THUMB” stands for “Muslims.”
- Ethiopia does not have many schools where people can learn how to preach in a church. Pray for more Bible schools.
- Many people in Ethiopia do not have a Bible. Pray for workers who are helping to translate the Bible into the many languages that people speak in Ethiopia.



PREPARATION: 5 min.

TEACHING: 15 min.

Materials

- soccer ball
- CD or cassette player
- praise song (your choice)