

Beginning Level, Block 10, Week 1—July 19, 2020
Peter—Boldly Honoring and Acknowledging God

Point to Emphasize: We can be those who honor and acknowledge God and those around us.

Reading Reference: Acts 3:1-16; Matthew 4:18

Memory Verse: ...Not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think... (Romans 12:3b)

Story Sample

During these past weeks we have had really good stories about Jesus. Now we shall have some stories about some who followed Him. Peter was one of these.

Peter was probably in his late teenage years when he began to follow Jesus. He was among the first disciples to be called by Him. And within a number of years Peter was speaking boldly about Jesus, causing people to turn their hearts to God and follow Him. In the city where he lived, big crowds had heard Peter share about God.

One day Peter along with John (another follower of Jesus) were going to a prayer time in the temple, which was the custom of the Jews. At the gate of the temple was a man who was lame from birth. That means his legs had never worked. This man was being carried to the door of the temple by someone day by day. Since he could not do any kind of work, he was there at the gate asking people to give him money. He was there when Peter and John walked by, and he asked them for some money.

Now, neither Peter or John had any money to give him, but Peter looked at him and said, "Silver and gold I do not possess, but...this I give to you: In the name of Jesus Christ...rise up and walk" (Acts 3:6). Peter seized him by the right hand and raised him up, and that man instantly rose on his feet. This lame man was so excited that he started leaping about. He had never been able to move his legs before, but now he was walking and leaping and praising God!

Of course, this excitement drew a crowd. People were amazed to see this lame man walking and leaping about. They were running to see Peter who they were starting to think of as a HERO! And surely Peter could have used this occasion to lift up himself in the eyes of others.

Many do that today. They make themselves famous because they can put a basketball through a hoop or sing a song in a certain way. But Peter was not that way. As the crowd was trying to exalt him and make him a HERO he simply told them that it was not his power that healed the man. He told them boldly that it was the name of Jesus and the faith in His name that had made the lame man to walk. Peter would not take any credit for what had happened. He truthfully and boldly told them that it was all due to faith in the name of Jesus. And he went on to tell them more about Jesus. He turned their attention away from himself and the man who was healed. He honored and acknowledged God.

Wow, this makes me want to be like Peter! What a marvelous young man Peter was. In boldness he honored and acknowledged God. In many ways we can be like Peter today. Even in something as small as someone saying, "You look so nice today." We can acknowledge others' help by replying, "I look nice because my mom bought me this outfit or my dad brushed my hair today." There are so many ways to acknowledge others and not take the credit ourselves. What other ways can we be like Peter who helped the lame man and chose to honor and acknowledge God? *[Storyteller, end the time with this kind of discussion with the children.]*

Beginning Level, Block 10, Week 2—July 26, 2020
Philip—Sharing the Good News

Point to Emphasize: We can be those who share things about God with others, and as we grow up we will be able to share the Word of God with others.

Reference Reading: Acts 8:4-13

Memory Verse: His name will be forever; / As long as the sun endures, His name will spread...
(Psalm 72:17a)

Sample Story

When you have some good news, don't you like to tell others about it? Of course, you do! There was an auntie whose nieces and nephews were learning about growing seeds. These children were SO excited to see how a little seed when put inside the soil and given water and sunlight can grow into a plant or even a big tree! They were so excited that they started planting spinach and watermelons in their backyard! Oh, they wanted ALL of their family to hear the exciting news! When you have good news, don't you like to tell others about it?

In the Bible there was a man named Philip. Philip heard the good news about Jesus, and right away he became one who wanted to speak about Jesus to everyone he met. Philip must have been so excited to share this good news. In those days, some of the ones who were with Philip were scattered throughout the land. This meant that some of them went north, some went south, some went east and some went west. *[Point to the different directions.]* Well...what was so good about that? It meant that the good news was spread in every direction to people who might never have heard it! The Word of God spread out all over. It was wonderful!

Does that sound familiar to you? I'm sure it does! Even today, we hear about families moving to other parts of the country or even other parts of the world to bring the good news of Jesus to other people. Recently, a family I know moved to a new place. The children of that family had the practice of having their friends come each Friday to their house for a family time of singing, listening to a story, and having a snack together. At their new place, they decided they would make new friends so that they could invite them over to their house to join their family times! These boys had something fun to share with their new friends. They realized that moving was a good thing because now they could make new friends and invite them to come to their home! *[Storyteller, please share a personal example of migrating or talking to new people about God.]* Whether you always live in the same place, or whether your family moves to a different city or even a different country, I hope you all will be like Philip, sharing things about God with others wherever you are!

Today, during your family times or during children's meetings, you learn songs, memorize Bible verses and listen to a lot of wonderful stories! You can share what you learn about God with others. And because of what you are learning today as a child, by the time you are a teenager, you will be able to share the Word of God with others. Then, as you continue to grow into a young person, you will be just like Philip who spoke to others about Jesus.

You can start today! Wouldn't it be great if you could recite a Bible verse to a friend and make them so happy? Wouldn't it be great if you and your parents could call a friend or invite them over to your home and have fun times of singing children songs together? *[We can't encourage physical visitations currently, because of the pandemic; however, we can encourage the children to call others via Zoom or Facetime, etc. to share what they have learned about God.]*

Beginning Level, Block 10, Week 3—August 2, 2020
Stephen—Being Well-Attested

Point to Emphasize: We can all be well-attested and happy to do any task assigned to us.

Reference Reading: Acts 6:1-7

Memory Verse: But brothers, look for seven well-attested men from among you... (Acts 6:3a)

Story Sample

We have heard about Peter who acknowledged God and then Philip who was eager to share the good news of Jesus with others. Today we will hear a story about Stephen who was well-attested.

Our verse today says that they were looking for seven well-attested men. To be well-attested means that when others consider what you do and say, they think and speak of you highly. There was a boy in my folks' neighborhood who would see my dad out doing yard work and would come over to help. He was happy to do whatever my dad was doing. He would gladly rake up the leaves and grass cuttings into a neat pile. When my parents were away, he liked to help them out by watering the lawn and collecting the mail. He carried out his duty each day and he was so glad to do it even though his parents would not let him get paid for it. This made my parents think highly of him. *[Storyteller, please tell your own story of a child whose conduct made him well-attested.]*

Now, back to our verse. Why do you think that they were looking for seven well-attested men? *[Let the children guess—maybe it was for a very important job that needed to be done.]* They were looking for men who were known to be diligent in taking care of things for others. Sometimes it may be difficult to be dependable, trustworthy, and consistent. But when we are this way, like always picking up our toys, always helping to set the table, doing our chores, or helping others when there is a need, we become well-attested. Do you think you can become this kind of person in only one day? No, being well-attested takes time, because you need to prove that you can be found faithful in a number of different things.

Well, Stephen was chosen for a certain task along with six others! Stephen had proved (by how he took care of things) that he was just right for the task. These seven well-attested men were to take care of the daily distribution of food to the widows among them. You see, these widows did not have any family to provide meals for them and they were too old to go and work for themselves. So, Stephen along with six others were to make sure that the widows received the daily provisions that they needed. Stephen was quite happy to do this. He was always willing and glad to help out.

You know, sometimes we have been happy to do things for others because we liked the task. But maybe, if it is something we didn't like to do... Well, we were not so happy about it. We frown instead of smiling if we are asked to clean up our younger sister's toys. Maybe we shook our head when our dad asked us to do something we didn't like. We did it, of course, because dad asked us to, but we were not happy about it.

But, you know, we can all be like Stephen! Whether he was asked to do something small or something important he was willing to help out. Stephen was a fine person to be around, and he was always glad to help out. I hope all of us would remember Stephen this week when we are asked to do something. We can all be just like him and become well-attested, too!

Beginning Level, Block 10, Week 4—August 9, 2020
Peter—Being with Others who are Different than Himself

Point to Emphasize: We can be with many different kinds of people and know that God loves us all the same.

Reference Reading: Acts 10—11

Memory Verse: ...In truth I perceive that God is not a respecter of persons. (Acts 10:34b)

Story Sample

When I was in kindergarten two of my best friends were twins and we had such a good time on the playground! We would swing, go on the merry-go-round, and play ball every recess. Sometimes our classmates would make fun of us because we were so different. We had different skin colors, we were different sizes, and they were boys and I was a girl. But we had such a good time together! I never noticed the differences. *[Storyteller, share a personal story about a friend you had that was different than you.]*

Peter was one who could be with other people. Let me tell you the story of how this happened. One day Peter was on the roof praying to God. While doing this God showed him that he should accept everyone, no matter how different, because God accepts everyone. In Acts 10:34, Peter was able to say, "In truth I perceive that God is not a respecter of persons". It would be wonderful if we could memorize this verse and always remember this. What does it mean that God is not a respecter of persons? It means that God accepts every kind of person! Peter realized that to God all people are acceptable no matter how different they are, and that all people need to hear the good news about Jesus. Then he began to speak the good news to EVERYONE.

This may not always be the way we live. Sometimes, it seems easier for us to be with people who are more like us, who like the food we like, or who look like us. It's also easy to be with those who speak the same language we do or think the same way we do. But Peter realized that to God everyone is the same. This means that everyone should also be the same to us.

In children's meeting, isn't it good that we can all be together from different families? Some families speak Chinese and eat with chopsticks. Others are from families where they speak mostly Spanish. We are all different. Some of you are girls, some are boys; some of you are tall, some are short; some of you are very quiet and some are very talkative. Yet, in God's eyes you are all the same and he loves you very much! It's so good to be with those who are different than we are and know that God loves us all the same!

[Use the rest of the time to let the children discuss who they play with that is different than them in some way and what is so good about this difference.]

Beginning Level, Block 10, Week 5—August 16, 2020

Saul of Tarsus—Taking the Opportunity to Learn

Point to Emphasize: We must take the opportunity and spend time to learn.

Reference Reading: Acts 22:3; 26:4-5

Memory Verse: The plans of the diligent lead only to plentifulness... (Proverbs 21:5a)

Story Sample

Today our story is about a man named Saul, who lived in an important city, Tarsus. While Saul was growing up, he learned a few languages. He learned Hebrew since that was probably what his family spoke. He learned to read and to write in Hebrew. He was able to read and study the Old Testament in Hebrew. The situation in Tarsus was different than most Jewish communities, so he also had the opportunity to learn to speak, read, and write Greek—this was the language used by the Greek people. He was probably taught Greek at school in Tarsus.

Some of you may already speak two or even more languages. You speak English at school, but at home you may speak Chinese, Korean, Spanish or Vietnamese with your family. This is just like Saul who studied Greek in school and spoke Hebrew at home. But Saul didn't just speak his language. He was diligent to study the Hebrew and Greek languages, learning to read it, write it, and speak it. How many of us can both read and write in our "home" language? [*Ask 1 or 2 of the children.*] Wouldn't it be fantastic if we could learn to read, write, and speak in our home language as well as English?

For many in the United States the "home" language is English. But when we were in school, many of us had the opportunity to learn another language. If we were not too diligent, perhaps now we can only remember a little bit of the other language that we began to learn. But if we would have been very diligent to study and to practice reading, writing, and speaking other languages when we were children, maybe now we could speak to you in your "home" language also. It would be so wonderful to sing children's songs in different languages and to speak with people from all over the world in their "home" language! [*Storyteller, give your example of success or failure at learning another language.*]

While you are young and learning to read and write, you still have time to learn more than one language. You even have time to learn several other languages! While you are young, it is the best time to learn another language, because your brain is learning how to communicate with others all the time. It would be wonderful if you all grew up to speak more than one language. You could take care of so many different people. As we grow up, we should have a goal to speak, read, and write in at least two languages. We need to be diligent to read and write in more than one language like Saul did. He probably learned Hebrew and Greek by practicing every day. We can do that also! If we practice learning another language every day, we too will eventually be able to speak another language. That would be wonderful!

[*Use the remaining time to talk about making a Language Journal. They could call someone who speaks another language and ask them how to say something in that language – e.g. "May I have a snack?", "Can you play with me?", etc. Write it in the journal. Then you will practice using that sentence every day.*]