

Intermediate Level, Block 10, Week 1—July 19, 2020
Peter Standing with the Eleven

Point to Emphasize: We can be those who support others in their endeavors.

Reference Reading: Acts 2:1-14, 36-42

Memory Verse: We therefore ought to support such ones that we may become fellow workers in the truth. (3 John 8)

Story Sample

[Note to serving ones: The emphasis of this story is not the economical spirit.]

Today, we begin stories of what happened with the followers of Jesus after He ascended.

At the time of the year that Jesus left the disciples, it was customary for Jews from every place to come to Jerusalem for a big Jewish feast called Pentecost. So, the city was crowded with people. The disciples and followers of Jesus were also there, but not to keep the Jewish feast.

SUDDENLY, there was a sound out of heaven and it brought a huge crowd which gathered around the disciples of Jesus. Then Peter, standing with the eleven, made his voice as loud as possible in speaking to the crowd. He began to boldly proclaim the gospel of Jesus to the entire crowd. What does the word "gospel" mean? The word "gospel" means good news. The gospel is news that gladdens those who hear it. This was the first time that the good news about Jesus was so boldly proclaimed! Many of those listening were touched in their hearts by Peter's speaking, and they became followers of Jesus too! What a marvelous thing! Before that, these three thousand were Jews, but on that day, due to Peter's speaking, they became Christians.

Now, let's talk about the very important start of this story. Acts 2:14 says, "But Peter, standing with the eleven..." This means that even though it was Peter who spoke so boldly to the crowd, he was not standing there by himself. He was standing with the eleven. That means twelve disciples of Jesus were together. Even though it was Peter's voice that they heard, it was all of the disciples doing it together. This means that without the eleven being there Peter could not have spoken such a word to the crowd. They were all supporting each other. And this is just how we should be.

I remember having to give an oral book report at school when I was about your age. I had drawn a picture showing what the book was about and then I had written a few sentences about the book below. We all were so nervous about giving this book report. Some of the children spoke in shaky voices and looked down at the floor while they gave their report. It was easy to feel all alone while standing in front of the class. When my turn came, I stood in front of the whole class but I only looked at my good friend. The whole time I was giving my report I kept my eyes on my friend. And my friend was looking back at me as if we were just having a normal conversation with each other. This really helped me not to feel all alone up there. *[Storyteller, tell your own story of how you or someone supported what another person was doing.]*

There are many ways we can support others in what they are doing. If your friend needs to clean up their room before they can go outside, we can help them out. If mom is carrying in groceries from the car, we can carry something in for her. If dad is doing yard work, we can offer to help. With your help and support, others will not feel alone or have to do it all by themselves. That must have been how the twelve disciples felt that day when they were there supporting each other.

Intermediate Level, Block 10, Week 2—July 26, 2020
Meeting from House to House

Point to Emphasize: We can be those who help prepare and are welcoming when others come to our home.

Reference Reading: Acts 2:46; *Life Study of Acts*, Message 12

Memory Verse: And day by day ... from house to house, they partook of their food with exultation and simplicity of heart. (Acts 2:46)

Story Sample

In the Old Testament we learned that God wanted to have a group of people who would love and worship Him, and that He wanted to dwell among them. For this, the children of Israel followed God's specific instructions and built a place where God could meet with man and man could go there to meet with God and worship Him. First, they built the tabernacle. Later, they built the temple.

In the New Testament the Jewish people were attached to their tradition and they went to the temple to worship God. However, in the second chapter of the book of Acts, we start to see something completely different! Our memory verse says, "From house to house." People started to meet in their homes. This is in contrast to meeting in the temple. It was a beautiful sight! Here we see a group of people who would get together in their homes to eat together and to worship the Lord by singing, praising, and thanking Him. The Bible says they were joyful people. They ate their food with rejoicing and simplicity of heart! This is how the habit of meeting in the homes began.

I remember when I was growing up, my parents would take me to the meeting hall for some meetings. I would stay with my mom and sit with her during the meeting. Many times I would fall asleep on my chair. Other times, my parents would drop me off at another family's home and they would go to the meeting hall for their meetings. When my parents would come and pick me up, I was already in my pajamas, and sometimes I was already asleep. They would carry me to the car and then to my bed!

But other times the meetings were not at the hall, but right in our living room. We would make sure our house was ready to receive guests. I would tidy up all of my things and help my mom to clean the house. During the meetings, there was a lot of singing and praying to God. I am still very close to many of those who met with us then, and they are just like moms and dads to me. They love me, and I love them! I am so happy my parents opened our home to have meetings. *[Storyteller, share an example of opening your home to home meetings or going to home meetings.]*

I hope that when you get older, you will be the ones who open your homes to eat with others. You can enjoy a simple life of coming together with others to worship God by singing, praising and thanking Him. In the meantime, you can be those who help your parents to get the house ready for the ones who are coming! As they walk in, you can welcome them with a big smile and make yourself available to help your parents with anything they need!

[Now, because of this pandemic, we can't really meet together in the meeting hall or in our homes. So, you may have seen your parents meeting with others on the Internet. We shouldn't stop meeting with others, rejoicing together by singing, praying, and praising God. This is your parent's way of living, and I hope it will be yours as well!]

Intermediate Level, Block 10, Week 3—August 2, 2020

Giving

Point to Emphasize: We can be those who give for the needs of others

Reference Reading: Acts 4:33-37; *Life-Study of Acts*, Message 17

Memory Verse: ...But the righteous man gives and does not hold back. (Proverbs 21:26b)

Story Sample

There were many changes that took place after the good news concerning Jesus began to spread. Those who believed in Jesus now gathered together in homes. Their thoughts about their possessions also changed. They began to care for the needs of one another spontaneously. Believing in Jesus had changed them. They were willing to sell what they had to take care of the needs of the whole group. They would bring their possessions to the apostles, who were the 12 disciples of Jesus. Then the apostles would distribute it according to those who had need.

For example, there was a man named Joseph, whose family name was Barnabas. The name Barnabas was translated into the "Son of encouragement". He owned a field of land. He sold this field and brought the money from the sale to the apostles. He gave the money to help others, so that no one would be in need. Isn't that wonderful? His act of giving was a real encouragement to all.

When I was in school, one of my friends would sometimes come without her lunch. She would say she had forgotten to bring it. But we knew that her family did not have very much money, and sometimes they just didn't have enough food to send with her to school. So everyone at the lunch table would give her something from their lunch boxes, so that she would not have to go without lunch. She was always so encouraged that we would do that for her. *[Storyteller, tell how you gave or shared something you had with someone else.]*

There is also another story about two boys who were in second and fourth grade. They would ask their mom for extra food for their lunch every day. Their mom would say, "Wow, you boys must be really hungry!" Later she found out that the boys were taking the extra food and giving it to someone who could not afford lunch. Because the boys saw a need and took action, they prompted their parents to talk with the principal. From that time on, this boy was provided a lunch every day for the rest of the year.

Here's another example of giving. One year there was a need to buy a bigger place to hold meetings for thousands of people. It was going to cost a lot of money, and no one had enough money to buy the property. But all gave just what they could. Some gave up their vacation money, some sold tamales. And there were many other stories of ways people contributed. Do you know what happened? There was more than enough money to buy the property. Because of the larger capacity of the new place, so many more people were able to come together to meet. It was an encouragement to all who gave.

In the Old Testament there was a law about giving. Everyone was required to give 10% of what they received back to the Lord. Although it is no longer a law, it is still a very good principle. We should all have a habit to give a portion of what we have back to God. If we don't have money to give, we can give our time, perhaps by going to help clean the meeting hall, or visiting someone who is sick, or giving toys we no longer use to someone who doesn't have any. It is good to give whatever we have. *[Storyteller, lead the children to discuss their own giving.]*

Intermediate Level, Block 10, Week 4—August 9, 2020

Taking Care of All the Widows

Point to Emphasize: We can learn how to solve a problem so everyone is cared for.

Reference Reading: Acts 6:1-7

Memory Verse: Listen to counsel, and receive instruction, / That you may be wise at the end of your days. (Proverbs 19:20)

Story Sample

At this time in Jerusalem there were thousands of new believers. Peter and the other apostles were trying to make sure that all the widows among them were given a daily dispensing of food. That was quite a difficult undertaking, because there were a good number of widows among the thousands of new believers. Some of them spoke Greek because they came from Greek regions, and others spoke Hebrew. Due to the two different languages, some widows who spoke Greek were not being cared for. This was a complicated problem that needed to be solved. Let's look at the facts.

- 1) Over 10,000 new believers.
- 2) Lots of widows who needed to be cared for.
- 3) Twelve apostles desiring to care for them all.
- 4) Two different language groups that can't understand each other's language.

It would take us weeks to come up with a solution. And since this is such a complicated problem, the solution we have probably won't be good enough. Sometimes we don't even know how to solve little problems. We may have a problem, and instead of going to our mom or dad or teacher to work out the solution, we sometimes try to solve the problem by ourselves. This may end up making a big mess.

I knew a young girl who spilled her vegetable soup all over the floor. To solve her problem, she took her mom's vacuum and tried to clean up the mess. As she did it, the broth on the floor sprayed all over the place. When her mom got home, she had to clean up the mess her daughter had made. Someone older and wiser would have known never to try that. *[Storyteller, insert your own story.]*

Now, let's see what the apostles did to make sure all the widows were cared for. They asked the multitude of believers to look for seven well-attested men among them who could be appointed over this matter. If they were well-attested, they would be able to bear responsibility and be counted on to get the job done. These seven also had to be wise to know how to carry things out. This plan pleased everyone. Very soon they chose seven from among them to take care of the daily dispensing of food to those in need, and of course, this solved the problem. Everyone was pleased with the daily distribution of food being able to meet the needs of the widows who spoke Hebrew, as well as those who spoke Greek.

We too, can learn how to solve a problem so that everyone is taken care of. Let's see how we might resolve the following situations.

- 1) There are 3 friends but only 2 bikes.
- 2) No one wants to get off the swing and give those who are waiting a turn.

- 3) You are in a store with your mom and see someone putting a small item from the store into their pocket.
- 4) You see a classmate look at your math test on your desk and change their answer.
- 5) There is someone new in class who does not speak much English. Most of the children ignore or even make fun of this new one, and the new person is left alone during lunch and recess.

[Help the children to come up with good solutions as they discuss these five situations. Make sure to encourage the children that they should go to parents and responsible adults to help solve the problems.]

Intermediate Level, Block 10, Week 5—August 16, 2020
Sharing the Good News about Jesus

Point to Emphasize: We can be those who follow our parents as they share the good news about Jesus wherever they go.

Reference Reading: Acts 6, 8, 11

Memory Verse: Those therefore who were scattered went throughout the land announcing the word as the gospel. (Acts 8:4)

Story Sample

In the book of Acts, we learned many things that had happened with the first believers. They were Jews who practiced all the Jewish things, just like everyone else. But once they heard the good news about Jesus and became believers in Jesus, they were no longer the same. These new believers began another kind of living and began gathering together with the others who had received the good news. This made the ones who were still Jews really angry! The ones who did not follow Jesus decided to treat the new believers badly. Sometimes these unbelieving Jews were cruel to the believers.

It became very difficult for the new believers to live in the city of Jerusalem, so they began to move away. They scattered and moved to other cities and other countries. As they moved away, what do you think they were bringing with them and giving to others? The good news about Jesus! They started out being followers of Jesus, and then they became sent ones to bring the good news about Jesus to the whole earth! So, they were willing to leave their own country. They were willing to give their all, to go to other places, so that the good news about Jesus would be heard throughout the entire known world.

The same is happening among us today. Recently, there were a lot of people being forced to leave their own countries and to live in Germany. These people's hearts were open to hear the good news about Jesus. A lot of them wanted to receive Bibles and wanted to hear more about Jesus. A family I know that lived here in the states heard what was happening in Germany, and they felt they needed to move to Germany. So they sold their house, their cars, and their furniture and they only took with them what would fit in their suitcases. They also started to learn German and to study the culture and way of living there. At first, the children were sad to leave their other family members and friends behind, but soon they were happy they could go with their parents. *[Share a personal story of migrating or a story from a family you know.]*

Have you heard of some families that have moved? If your parents decide to move to other countries to share the good news about Jesus to others, will you be willing to go with them? The process of moving to a different city or country is not always easy. It might involve leaving your friends and family, selling a lot of the things your family owns, learning to eat different foods, or learning a new language. It's really not so easy. On the other hand, children of the families that have moved would tell you what a great experience it was to have grown up in a different country.

Without a doubt, for those who are willing to move, God is always with them every step of the way. It is awesome to see that those who are willing to move are doing exactly what the followers of Jesus had done 2,000 years ago. It is a privilege to follow our parents when they decide to move to different cities, states, and even countries to bring the good news about Jesus to others. In this way, even as children, we can participate in what was started in the book of Acts!