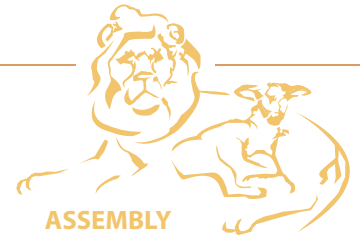


NEW BELIEVERS

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: ACTS 2:42-47



The following are some ideas for creative ways that you can present this material.

LESSON IDEAS

SHARING ALL THEY HAVE

Supplies

- pop a large quantity of popcorn, make a small bag with enough popcorn for each child to receive 2 pieces
- picnic blanket
- small table
- large bowl
- cups
- water pitcher

Set out a blanket in the middle of the room and set a small, clean table near it. When Assembly begins, keep the larger bag of popcorn hidden. Tell the children you are going to act out the sharing of the early church in the book of Acts. Read the passage and then tell them you are going to give popcorn to one child and the others can only have some if they will share. Select a child to give the small bag of popcorn.

Encourage the child with the small bag to share the popcorn with the other children. Tell the children that they can eat their popcorn as they receive it. If you see one child with three pieces of popcorn, encourage them to share the third piece with another child. After all the popcorn is eaten ask them how it felt to share. Try and draw out the fact that they really would have enjoyed having more.

Ask them why it was so easy for the early Christians to share. The answer of course is that Jesus had just poured out his Spirit on them and saved them from their sins. They now knew that Jesus was God and he could supply all their needs abundantly. Tell the children that Jesus is Lord over all and if we trust in Him, we are trusting in the one who can give us more popcorn than we could possibly eat.

That should be the cue for one of your volunteers to bring out the large bag of popcorn and empty it into a bowl on the table and invite the children to share. The goal is to amaze the children with the stark difference between the first small portion and the second huge portion of popcorn.

Talk to the children about how the early church was so grateful for the Gospel and amazed at what Jesus had done much like the children are amazed at the large amount of popcorn. (Have cups and water on hand for the children to drink.)

NEW BELIEVERS

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: ACTS 2:42-47

WHAT DID THE EARLY CHURCH DO?

See if the children can remember all the things that the early church did in response to the preaching of the Gospel. Divide the class into two teams and give them each in turn a chance to add one more thing the early church did to the list. The last team to guess correctly wins unless they guess them all correctly for a tie. Flip a coin to see which team goes first.

- Devoted themselves to the Apostles' teaching (the Bible)
- Devoted themselves to fellowship
- Devoted themselves to the breaking of bread (communion)
- Devoted themselves to prayer
- They were together
- They held all things in common
- They sold their possessions and gave to any in need
- Day by day they attended the temple together (went to church)
- They broke bread in their homes
- They received their food with glad and generous hearts
- They were praising God
- They had favor with all the people

At the end remind the children that these were some of the same people that crucified Jesus. Explain to them that the power of the Gospel preached by Peter touched the people's lives and transformed them by the Holy Spirit.

WHERE IS the Gospel?

Please use the following comments connecting today's lesson to the Gospel to help inform your understanding and serve you by aiding your preparation for class. Remember, we want to do more than present disconnected Bible stories and lessons to our young children. We want them to understand how each story in the Bible plays a part in God's greater plan of redemption.

The behavior of the early church is the fruit of the Gospel. These people were transformed from mockers of Christ, some of them participated in the crucifixion. Some were the very ones who yelled "Crucify Him!" And yet now, they are selling their possessions to share with other Christians who have need.

The Gospel takes our worldly focus and turns our gaze heavenward. These people went from God-haters to worshippers. Only the Spirit of God can change hearts this way. The Gospel continued to transform lives as each day more new converts were added.