



Apostles Defend Their Faith

Acts 5:12-42

Most third- and fourth-graders are apt to give up when things get difficult or frustrating. They do not completely understand that practice and failure lead to mastery and talent. In addition to showing kids how important it is for them to stand up for their faith, you can also use this lesson to demonstrate how important it is for them to keep trying. Be honest about your own failures, making sure to highlight how you've had to start out on new projects or experiences as a beginner.



► Bible Point

Keep following God, even when it's hard.

Key Verse

"Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance" (James 1:2-3).


Weaving Faith Into Life

Kids will choose to follow God.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	Balancing Faith <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Have balancing relays.	paper, pencils	
2 Bible Exploration	Jail Break <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Try to get out of a tangled-up mess.	Bibles	
	Order in the Court <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Act out a courtroom scene that follows the Bible story.	Bibles, CD player, copies of the lyrics (at the end of this lesson) Teacher Pack: CD	

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.





LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	Don't Be a Dirt Clod <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Discover the difference between rocks and dirt clods	rocks, dirt clods	
	Pocket Reminders <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Make reminders that will help them persevere, and listen to a song about perseverance.	CD player, Bible Truth Sleuth, clear self-stick paper, scissors, glue, construction paper, small rocks, markers Teacher Pack: CD	Tear out the Lesson 6 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.
4 Lasting Impressions	Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Truth Sleuth	
	Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

***Bold text** within the lesson is spoken text.*





Balancing Faith Supplies

paper
pencils

1 GETTING STARTED

Balancing Faith

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went. Give each student a sheet of paper and a pencil. Have students fold their papers in half lengthwise (vertically) four times. Then instruct them to turn their papers so that the fold is on the left, and have them write, “faith” vertically down the front. Form four groups. Have each group line up single file at one end of the room.

Say: **This activity will be a “test of faith.” The object is to walk as quickly as you can to the other end of the room and back while balancing your “faith” on the back of your hand. If your faith falls, you must go to the back of the line. As soon as the first person returns to the line, the second person may go.**

Have kids begin the game. When kids drop their “faith,” remind them to go to the back of the line.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

After all of the groups have finished, have the kids sit in their groups and discuss the following questions.

Ask:

- **What was hard about this game?**
- **What was it like to try to balance your faith?**
- **How did you feel when you dropped your faith and had to start over?**
- **What’s hard about being a Christian in a non-Christian world?**
- **What should we do when it’s hard to be a Christian?**

After kids finish discussing their questions, say: **Sometimes being a Christian can be hard, but we can ► KEEP FOLLOWING GOD, EVEN WHEN IT’S HARD. In our Bible story today, we’ll learn about some people who knew what to do when it was hard for them to be Christians. Let’s take a look at our story.**





2 BIBLE EXPLORATION

Jail Break

What You'll Do

Have kids form a circle in the center of the room.

Say: **In our Bible story today, the high priest of the Sadducees arrested the apostles because he was jealous of them. The Sadducees were Jewish leaders who opposed the teachings of Jesus. The apostles had been performing many miracles and had led many people to faith in Jesus. The high priest didn't like this and threw the apostles in jail. Let's play a game to see what it was like for the apostles.**

Instruct the kids to take the hands of two different kids across the circle from them.

Say: **You're the apostles, and you're now in jail. Without letting go of one another's hands, you have one minute to try to untangle yourselves and be set free. You may begin when I say "go."**

After one minute, have kids freeze where they are. If they're close to becoming untangled, let them finish. If they are still very tangled, have them let go of one another's hands and re-form their circle.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What was it like to be all tangled up like you were?**
- **How was this like the apostles being thrown in jail?**

Say: **Let's look at our Bible story to see what happened to the apostles.**

Open your Bible to Acts 5:18-20, and read the passage aloud to the class. Then instruct kids to play the game again. After kids struggle for a while, tell them that you, like the angel in Acts, are there to set them free. Unclasp several of their hands until they can untangle themselves. Then have them get their Bibles, re-form their circle, and sit down. Join them in the circle, and have a volunteer read Acts 5:21-27.

Say: **The Sanhedrin was an assembly of the religious leaders of those days, and those leaders really didn't like Christians. They were ready for Peter and the apostles' trial. But when the officers went to the jail, Peter and the others were gone. Then someone came and said, "Look! The men you put in jail are standing in the temple courts teaching the people." The officers went to get Peter and the others and then brought them before the Sanhedrin for trial. We're going to pretend that we're there, with Peter and the apostles. Let's listen to the story on the CD and act out the parts as we hear them.**



Jail Break Supplies

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Bibles





Order in the Court Supplies

Bibles
CD player
copies of the lyrics (at
the end of this lesson)

Teacher Pack

CD: "Order in the
Court" (track 10),
"Persevere!" (James
1:2-3) (track 11)

Order in the Court

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Cue your CD to "Order in the Court" (track 10). In this mock trial, ask kids to volunteer to play the following parts in a courtroom scene: judge, Peter, apostles, bailiff, Gamaliel the Pharisee, jury, a male jury member, and the audience. Arrange the room like a courtroom. For example, you could arrange a table or desk and chair for the judge's bench, a separate chair for the witness stand, and a row of chairs for the jury box. Instruct kids to act out their parts as they hear them on the CD. Begin the segment on the CD. When the segment has finished, have kids form pairs to discuss the following questions.

Ask:

- How do you think the apostles felt when they heard they would be killed?
- What bad situations have you been in that you felt you couldn't get out of?
- How did you make it through the situation?
- What can you do when it's hard to be a Christian?

Ask a volunteer to read aloud Acts 5:41-42 to finish the Bible story. Then say: **The story ends with the apostles rejoicing because they had been worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name.**

Ask:

- What do you think this means?
- What are some examples of suffering disgrace for Jesus' name?

Say: **The apostles rejoiced even though they had a hard situation to face because they did what God wanted them to do. You see, not everybody will agree with us and what we believe as Christians. Some people might even hate us. But the Bible tells us to consider it pure joy when it's hard to be Christians, because that means we're learning to persevere, or keep going, just as the apostles did in the Bible story. Let's take a look at our Key Verse.**

Open your Bible to James 1:2-3, and show the passage to the kids. Then have them find the verses in their Bibles. Lead them in reading the verses aloud: **"Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance" (James 1:2-3).**

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What do you think James meant in this verse?
- What are some trials you face?
- How can you be joyful when you face trials?
- How do you feel when you've finished something that was really hard to do?

Say: **Now let's sing a song to help us remember our Key Verse.**





Pass out copies of the lyrics, and play "Persevere!" (James 1:2-3) (track 11). Lead kids in singing the song through two or three times, referring to the copies of the lyrics.



Consider it pure joy

**Whenever you face trials of many kinds,
Because you know the testing of your faith
Develops perseverance.
Persevere! Hold on!
Troubles make your faith grow strong.
Persevere! Hold on!
Troubles make your faith grow strong.**

**Consider it pure joy
Whenever you face trials of many kinds,
Because you know the testing of your faith
Develops perseverance.
Persevere! Hold on!
Troubles make your faith grow strong.
Persevere! Hold on!
Troubles make your faith grow strong.**

"Persevere!" (James 1:2-3) by Carol Smith. © 2003, 2007 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

Say: **Okay, now let's do an activity that will help us understand what it means to persevere when times are tough.**

3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Don't Be a Dirt Clod

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Take kids outside to an area with rocks and dirt. Instruct each child to find one rock and one dirt clod. If the weather prohibits you from taking kids outside, bring the outdoors in to them! Before class, gather several rocks and clumps of dirt into a large box. Have kids do the activity on newsprint or old sheets spread out on the floor. When everyone has found a rock and a dirt clod, have kids sit together in a circle. You should stand in the middle of the circle.

Say: **Look at the two things I've asked you to gather, the rock and the dirt clod. Now let's see what happens when we put some pressure on our rocks and dirt clods. Let's first stand on our dirt clods.**

Lead kids in standing on their dirt clods.



Don't Be a Dirt Clod Supplies

- rocks
- dirt clods





Say: **Now let's stand on our rocks.** Lead kids in standing on their rocks.

Talk With Kids

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What happened to your dirt clod when you stood on it?
- What happened to your rock when you stood on it?
- How are we like these dirt clods and rocks under pressure?
- What should we do when it's hard to be a Christian?

Say: **God wants us to be rocks, not dirt clods. We should ► KEEP FOLLOWING GOD, EVEN WHEN IT'S HARD. When times are tough and it's hard to be Christians, he wants us to stand firm and be solid in our faith, like a rock. He doesn't want us to crumble under the pressure of a difficult time, like a dirt clod. Remember the apostles. They stood strong and continued to tell others about Jesus, even when their lives were at stake. They were rocks! Let's make something to help us remember to be rocks in hard times.**

Instruct kids to leave their rocks outside and to each find a smaller rock, the size of a pea, to bring inside with them.

Pocket Reminders

Pocket Reminders Supplies

CD player
Bible Truth Sleuth
clear self-stick paper
scissors
glue
construction paper
small rocks
markers

Teacher Pack

CD: "Persevere!"
(James 1:2-3) (track
11)

Pocket Reminders Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 6
pages from each Bible
Truth Sleuth student
book.

What You'll Do

Say: **We're going to make something that you can keep in your pocket to remind you of our Key Verse.**

Distribute the Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and have kids turn to the "When Being a Christian Is Tough" section. Give each student one half sheet of clear self-stick paper, a pair of scissors, glue, construction paper, a small rock, and markers. Instruct kids to cut out the "When Being a Christian Is Tough" poem along the dotted lines and cut their self-stick paper in half. Then have them cut some construction paper a little larger than the poems and glue the construction paper to the back of the poems. Then have kids glue their small rocks in the bottom right corner of the poems. Next have them decorate the perimeter of their poems with their markers and place them between the sheets of clear self-stick paper. Finally, have students trim the edges of the clear self-stick paper to approximately ¼ inch.

Cue your CD to "Persevere!" (James 1:2-3) (track 11), and play the song while kids work. Give kids enough time to finish their pocket reminders.

Say: **This poem is a special reminder for you to keep in your pocket. When you have a hard time being a Christian, you can simply pull out your poem, read it, and remember that God will help you stand strong, just as he did for the apostles. Let's read our poems out loud together.**



4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Let's each choose a Daily Challenge for the week to help us remember to ► KEEP FOLLOWING GOD, EVEN WHEN IT'S HARD.**

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on the Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- **Write the name of someone you can tell about Jesus—and be sure to follow through!**
- **Tell someone in your family today's Bible story. See how much you can remember!**
- **Each morning, pray and tell God that you're going to follow him that day!**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell the kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.**

Say: **The apostles showed us how to ► KEEP FOLLOWING GOD, EVEN WHEN IT'S HARD. Let's persevere by following through on our Daily Challenges this week.**

Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about perseverance. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at group.com/digital.

Lead kids in a prayer, asking God to help them persevere when being Christians is difficult.



Daily Challenges Supplies

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Bible Truth Sleuth





Lyrics

Persevere! (James 1:2-3)

Consider it pure joy
 Whenever you face trials of many kinds,
 Because you know the testing of your faith
 Develops perseverance.
 Persevere! Hold on!
 Troubles make your faith grow strong.
 Persevere! Hold on!
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"Persevere!" (James 1:2-3) by Carol Smith. © 2003, 2007 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

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TO COPY**

Spring Quarter

Lesson 6  Grades 3 & 4