

=BOOKS OF THE BIBLE=

Lesson 44

Acts

Objects to have:

The sign for this new Bible book: ACTS

The First Church

A drawing of a man, cut so that there are two other men joined together like paper dolls

A drawing of a few houses next to each other with sidewalks and streets

Straight pins or thumb tacks

Your Bible.

Introducing the lesson:

I would like you to meet Mr. Witness. (Hold up the paper dolls so that just the front one shows, and so that the children are not aware that there are other “men” attached.) Mr. Witness lives in this house. (Point in your drawing at a house that could be his.) Mr. Witness has something exciting to tell. Listen, I will tell you what he would like to tell. (Attach Mr. Witness to the board in front of his home.)

Telling the story:

One day Jesus’ disciples were climbing a hill. They were hurrying to a meeting. You know how people are hurrying into our church building when it is time for Sunday school to begin! You see them coming from all directions down the street until they reach the doors of the building. Some people have stairs to climb when they come to our church building for Sunday school. Some are turning to the left and some are turning to the right into their rooms. The disciples were all hurrying up the hill to the meeting.

As they hurried up the hill to their meeting, perhaps they talked to each other about all the amazing things that had been happening. Maybe they talked about the most terrible day they had ever had. That day was the day when Jesus died. Jesus was nailed to a cross. He hung on that cross. The nails could not hold Jesus onto that cross, however. Jesus could have gotten off the cross if He had wanted. In fact, Jesus wanted to die on that cross. Jesus wanted to pay the price for our sins, and dying on the cross was the price that was needed to pay for our sins so that we would not have to pay the price ourselves.

The disciples remembered that that was the saddest day they had ever spent in their lives. It was as if the whole world was coming to an end for them, as if they could never smile again. Jesus, their best Friend, the One Who loved them more than anybody else, the One Whom they loved more than anybody else, was dying on the cross. The disciples talked about their crying and their sadness. The disciples talked about the few hours after Jesus died on the cross: how His still body was taken from the cross and put in a grave called a tomb. His body stayed in that grave-tomb for three days and three nights. Then the disciples remembered that a most wonderful thing happened. Jesus’ body came back to life again. Jesus rose from the dead!

The disciples were remembering how they saw Jesus after He had risen from the dead. They remembered that when they saw Jesus, they knew it was Jesus. They remembered touching Him, that He had skin and bones. They remembered looking at Him. There were wounds in His hands and wounds on His feet where the nails had gone through when He had hung on the cross. In many ways Jesus proved to His disciples that it was He, and that He had truly risen from the dead. Jesus was still on earth after rising from the dead.

As the disciples talked and remembered, they were climbing the hill. They reached the top of the hill; the hill is named the Mount of Olives. You know that an olive is something that you eat. Well, there were olive trees all around the Mount of Olives. When the disciples got there, there on the top of the Mount of Olives was Jesus. He was waiting to meet with them. Jesus began to talk with them there.

I do not know whether the disciples sat down and Jesus stood to talk with them, or whether they all stood around Him as He talked. I'm sure of this, however, that as Jesus talked, every disciple listened to every word that Jesus had to say.

Jesus said to them, "Tell people about Me. Tell the people who live in your own house. Then tell the people who live next door to you. Then go to every house on your street. Then go onto the next street and to every street and house on every street in your city. Then go to other cities. From other cities go to other countries. Friends," Jesus told His disciples, "I want you to start at home and then go to other places telling everybody about Me."

The disciples listened very carefully to Jesus' instruction to them. Whatever Jesus told them to do, they made up their minds they would do. Maybe the disciples were wondering how they could get people to believe what they were saying. Jesus answered that question. Jesus said, "You will receive power to make people believe what you are saying about Me. God the Holy Spirit will give you that power. You will have that power as you tell people about Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and all the way around the world." How wonderful! Not only was Jesus telling His disciples to do His work, He was also telling them that they would have God's help to do the work; God the Holy Spirit would help them make people believe what the disciples were saying.

While the disciples were listening to Jesus and deciding to obey Him, suddenly something happened to Jesus. His feet left the ground. I mean, both feet left the ground. Jesus was rising. He was not jumping. He was not jumping and then coming back down to the earth, then jumping again and back down to the earth; He was just rising from the earth. His feet were a few inches off the ground (gesture to show the children distances), then a foot, then many feet. He was going up, up, up, higher and higher. He got as high as the tallest tree. Then He was higher than the tallest buildings. He still kept going up. He got as high as the clouds, and pretty soon a cloud came between Him and the disciples. That cloud received Him out of their sight. Jesus had gone into space without the use of a space ship!

Can you imagine how surprised the disciples were? They just stood there on the Mount of Olives looking up where they had last seen Jesus. They all saw it happen. There was no mistake.

Suddenly next to the disciples were two men who were dressed completely in white. These men said to the disciples, "You men of Galilee, why are you standing here staring into Heaven? Jesus has not disappeared; He has simply gone into Heaven. Just as you have seen Him go to Heaven, someday He will come back from Heaven." Oh, how glad the disciples were to hear that good news from the angels. They were so glad that someday Jesus will come back from Heaven.

Then the disciples decided that they should go to work! They had a job to do; Jesus had given them a job to do. Jesus had told them to be witnesses. Jesus had told them to tell people all the things that they had heard and seen about Him. The disciples decided that they would start their work right away. They would be witnesses.

Let's look at Mr. Witness again. He is called Mr. Witness because with his mouth he is going to tell people what he has seen and what he has heard and what he has known.

I could tell people about Jesus because I know Him and because I know about Him. I have never seen Him with my eyes nor have I ever heard Him with my ears. Jesus, however, has spoken to my heart through the Bible, and I know Jesus in my heart. I have asked Him to be my Saviour, and I love Him. I am, therefore, supposed to be a witness for Him just as the disciples were told by Jesus to be witnesses for Him.

We said that Mr. Witness lives in this house. Maybe somebody in his house does not know that Jesus loves him. Mr. Witness tells somebody in his house that Jesus loves him. Then Mr. Witness thinks about a neighbor who lives next door. (Move Mr. Witness to the house next door.) The person in that house says, "I want Jesus to be my Saviour. I know that I am a sinner. I want to go to Heaven when I die. Yes, dear Jesus, I want You to be my Saviour." What should that person do now? That person should be a witness, too. (While saying this, take Mr. Witness from the board and expand the paper out so that the children can see the additional two witnesses.

Then fasten them all to the board with straight pins or thumb tacks.) Then he tells someone else, maybe next door to him or in his house. They accept Jesus as their Saviour and begin to be witnesses, too. Don't you see what can happen? If we tell just one person about Jesus, how many people could hear about Jesus just because of one person that we tell! What if we decide to tell two people about Jesus, or three people about Jesus? Think of how many people can get to know about Jesus if we will keep on witnessing for Him.

LEARN OUR BIBLE VERSE: Acts 1:8, "But ye shall receive power...and ye shall be witnesses...."

Do you know where I read the story about Jesus' going back to Heaven? I read it in the first chapter of the book of Acts—right here. (Show the children in Acts 1 the telling of the ascension.) This is the fifth book of the New Testament. We have already studied four books in the New Testament; that is, we have studied just a very little bit about each book. There is still a lot to know.

The story that we have heard today is from the book of Acts. Let's say all five of the books of the New Testament which we have studied thus far.