



The Apostles Are Persecuted

9

Key Theme

- God uses people to accomplish His plans.

Key Passages

- Acts 4:1–4, 4:7–8, 4:17–18, 4:23–24

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Describe why the apostles were persecuted.
- Describe how the apostles responded to persecution.



Lesson Overview



Come On In

Students will practice the memory verse by completing the Memory Verse Review Sheet and reciting the verse to a friend.



Activity 1: The Apostles Are Persecuted Class Notes

Students will complete The Apostles Are Persecuted Class Notes as you study the lesson.



Studying God's Word

Soon after Pentecost, the apostles began to experience persecution as they preached the truth in the name of Jesus Christ. They rejoiced that they were worthy to suffer shame in Jesus's name because of the strength they had from the promised Holy Spirit.



Activity 2: Truth Be Told Review Game

Students will review the lesson by playing the Truth Be Told Review Game.

Lesson Preparation

WHAT YOU WILL DO

WHAT YOU WILL NEED



COME ON IN

- Print the Memory Verse Review Sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student.
- Print and cut the Memory Verse Review Signs from the Resource DVD-ROM.
- Tape the signs randomly around the room at students' eye level.

- Memory Verse Poster
- Memory Verse Review Sheet for each student
- Memory Verse Signs taped around the room
- Tape
- Pencils



THE APOSTLES ARE PERSECUTED CLASS NOTES

- Print one The Apostles Are Persecuted Class Notes from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student. Keep the answer key for your use.

- The Apostles Are Persecuted Class Notes for each student
- The Apostles Are Persecuted Class Notes Answer Key
- Pencils



STUDYING GOD'S WORD

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne.

- Student Take Home Sheets



TRUTH BE TOLD REVIEW GAME

- Assemble the Truth Be Told Game Board Posters found in your curriculum kit.
- Print the Truth Be Told Game Components from the Resource DVD-ROM. Keep the Truth Be Told Question Answer Key for your use.
- Cut apart the Truth Be Told Number Cards. These will determine how many spaces to move. OR bring in dice or a game spinner to be used to move teams around the board.
- Cut apart the Truth Be Told Question Cards.
- Bring buttons or other small items to use as game pieces for each team. Bring poster putty for adhering game pieces to the game board.

- Truth Be Told Game Board
- Truth Be Told Number Cards OR use dice or a game spinner
- Truth Be Told Question Cards
- Truth Be Told Question Answer Key
- Buttons or other small items as game pieces for each team
- Poster putty



MEMORY VERSE REVIEW GAME (OPTIONAL)

- This is an optional activity to use in some or all of the lessons to review the memory verse if time allows.

- Memory Verse Poster
- Optional: popcorn snack



Memory Verse

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.



Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages listed above along with this background.

Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would come to teach all things. But He would not come until Jesus had left the earth (John 16:7). And when He did come, He would guide believers into all truth (John 16:13). The Holy Spirit would empower the disciples and make them witnesses for Jesus and the gospel from Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth (Acts 1:8).

As the church began to grow, so did the opposition to the truth about Jesus. The disciples drew on the power of the Holy Spirit for wisdom, strength, and perseverance as they stood firm to proclaim the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints (1 Corinthians 2:13; Ephesians 3:16; Jude 3).

It appeared the apostles were off to a good start by the power of the Holy Spirit. Peter's sermon at Pentecost added about 3,000 souls to the church (Acts 2:41). And the Bible tells us that Peter and John were given the power to heal a lame man at the Temple in the name of Jesus Christ. This lame man got up, and all the people saw him walking and praising God (Acts 3:1–10). The people were amazed at the miracle performed by the apostles, but Peter quickly declared that it was by faith in the name of Jesus Christ—the very Man they had denied and killed—that the lame man had been healed (Acts 3:15–16).

As their fame grew, and they continued to preach the power of Jesus Christ and His Resurrection from the dead, the priests and Jewish leaders became jealous. It wasn't long before Peter and John were arrested—but not before 5,000 more believers were added to the church (Acts 4:1–4).

A familiar scene—reminiscent of Jesus's own recent illegal trial—followed their arrest as the rulers, elders, scribes, Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, and others gathered together to question the apostles. They asked, "By what power or by what name have you done this?" (Acts 4:5–7).

God's Word tells us that Peter, filled with the wisdom and knowledge of the Holy Spirit, stood and again proclaimed that it was by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom they had crucified and God had raised from the dead, that the man had been healed. Peter spoke boldly to his accusers in the name of Jesus,

and proclaimed that salvation could be found in NO other name given to men under heaven (Acts 4:8–12).

The Jewish council was perplexed. A notable miracle had been done, and no one could deny it. But they plotted to stop the spread of this gospel of Jesus Christ, and they threatened the apostles, commanding them not to speak or teach in the name of Jesus! However, Peter and John would NOT be discouraged. And they would not back down from speaking the things they had seen and heard (Acts 4:20).

The apostles were released and went back to their friends, and together they rejoiced at God's faithfulness. As they were gathered together, they prayed that the Lord would grant them boldness to speak His Word and continue to give them the power to do signs and wonders in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 4:23–30).

This would not be the end of their troubles, however. They were again imprisoned but miraculously freed by an angel of the Lord who opened the prison doors. The apostles went back to the Temple and began preaching again (Acts 5:17–21). Again they were arrested and told to STOP preaching in the name of Jesus Christ! And yet, the apostles boldly proclaimed that they were to obey God rather than men and would not stop preaching (Acts 5:29).

The persecution of the church and the apostles would only continue to grow worse. But even in spite of beatings and imprisonment, the apostles rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Jesus (Acts 5:40–41).

Later on, the Apostle Paul also suffered many trials as he was persecuted for his faith in Jesus Christ. It was Paul who penned what has come to be a cry of confidence and victory in the gospel. We read it in Romans 1:16: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek."

As Christians we, too, should boldly proclaim that we will not be ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ. For it was through its truth that we were saved and through its power that others will be saved to eternal life.

HISTORICAL/APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

In our Western world, Christians know very little of persecution. As Americans we enjoy religious freedom, freedom of assembly, and freedom of speech. There are more than 450,000 churches across the United

States where we can worship without government interference. Some of these are mega-churches with coffee bars, fitness centers, bookstores, and more. When we complain of being persecuted, it may be because someone called us a name, or we were denied a promotion at our job due to our evangelistic fervor. But compared to the early church, and much of the church today around the world, we live in very peaceful and accommodating circumstances.

The history of the church is one of persecution and martyrdom. It has been customary for church historians to count ten major periods of severe persecution in the early church, beginning with the persecution under Emperor Nero in AD 64 and ending with Emperor Diocletian in AD 305. Christians were thrown to the lions, forced into gladiatorial battles, burned alive, and crucified. In fact, all of the original apostles, except John, died unnatural deaths because of their faith. And John died while exiled to the island of Patmos. In the second century, one Christian apologist wrote the following:

Though beheaded, and crucified, and thrown to wild beasts, and chains, and fire, and all other kinds of torture, we do not give up our confession; but, the more such things happen, the more do others in larger numbers become faithful (Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho*).

And while we may be tempted to think that severe persecution is a thing of the past, the reality is that more Christians died for their faith in the twentieth century than in all of the previous centuries combined. By some counts, around 100,000 Christians are martyred for their faith each year, and there are currently over 100 million Christians being persecuted worldwide.

Indeed, the history of the church demonstrates triumph in the face of persecution and martyrdom. In many places around the world, as the persecution increased, the church grew. Under Chairman Mao and Chinese Communism, for example, professing Christians in China grew from 1.5 million in 1970 to 65 million in just twenty years, even though foreign missionaries were severely restricted.

When we survey the Bible, we quickly see that persecution is a stark reality of the Christian life. The Apostle Paul warned Timothy that everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted (2 Timothy 3:12). Jesus told His disciples to expect persecution from the world because, since they hated Him, they will hate His followers also. He said that if they persecuted Him, they would persecute His followers (John 15:18–20). Since the world is driven by the love of sin and self, it is no wonder they hate Christians

who are called to be different and separate from the world. It is this very separation from the world and the world system that provokes hatred toward us.

As Christians, we must learn to recognize the spiritual value persecution offers and even to rejoice in it. Persecution allows us to share in a unique fellowship with our Lord. Paul, in his letter to the Philippians, listed a number of things he surrendered for the cause of Christ. Such losses, however, he viewed as “rubbish” (Philippians 3:8) that he might share in the “fellowship of [Christ’s] sufferings” (Philippians 3:10). Peter wrote that the church should not think it strange to come upon trials, but they should rejoice that they can partake in Christ’s sufferings. And, when the time comes for His glory to be revealed, those who suffered for His sake may also be glad with exceeding joy (1 Peter 4:13).

Persecution is good for our spiritual growth, whether we like to think of it that way or not. James instructs us to count it all joy when we fall into trials, knowing that the testing of our faith produces patience, endurance, and maturity (James 1:2–4). Jesus also addressed this topic during His famous Sermon on the Mount when He said that His followers would be blessed when people insult and persecute them. In fact, He said we should rejoice at persecution, for our reward will be great in heaven (Matthew 5:11–12).

It is hard to say just when we will fall into life-threatening trials for the sake of the gospel. But when it happens, we can be confident that if we are truly saved and indwelt by the Holy Spirit, His power in us will enable us to stand firm for our faith.

For more information on this topic, see the Online Resource Page.



BEFORE THE THRONE

Praise your name, Lord Jesus! Thank you for the examples you give us in Scripture of apostles who boldly proclaimed your Word. The persecution they suffered because of your name did not deter them. Help all Christians to follow their example. Please keep those who profess the name of Jesus from the fear of man. Give us strength to look to you and your Word for wisdom and courage that we may always be ready to defend the reason for the hope that we have. Holy Spirit, bring boldness. Move in the hearts of my students to believe the gospel. Change them into new creations who long to proclaim the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.



COME ON IN

As students arrive . . .

- They will complete the Memory Verse Review Sheet. If time allows, have the students recite the verse together, to each other, or to you.

This time at the beginning of class should be used to review the memory verse. We have provided an activity sheet on the Resource DVD-ROM for you to use. You may have other ideas and ways to encourage your students to memorize the verse.



After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.



REVIEW

Using the Lesson Theme Posters provided with each lesson, quickly review the previous lesson(s) with your students. Take 5 to 10 minutes to reinforce the important truths the students have heard so far in your class.

Ask the children questions about the previous lessons as you display the Lesson Theme Posters. Reflect briefly on the passages you read, bringing the objectives and themes back into focus. This will refresh the truths in your students' minds and maintain continuity as you teach through the lessons.



The Apostles Are Persecuted Class Notes

MATERIALS

- The Apostles Are Persecuted Class Notes for each student
- The Apostles Are Persecuted Class Notes Answer Key
- Pencils

INSTRUCTIONS

Print the class notes for each student. Pass them out at the beginning of class. Have students fill in the crossword puzzle as you study the lesson.

The class notes are designed and written simply. Please encourage and help your students to read them as the class progresses. They are an excellent means to review important lesson principles.

We will be using the answers on the class notes to do a crossword puzzle as we study the Bible verses. Do not work ahead. I will tell you when to fill in the answers during the lesson.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

As we work on the class notes today, we will see what happened when the apostles started preaching the gospel.



Studying God's Word

READ THE WORD

- ? Refer to Lesson 8 Lesson Theme Poster. Jesus had promised that God would send someone to His followers as a helper. Who is the Helper? *The Holy Spirit.*

Right! The Holy Spirit helps believers understand God's truth. And He also gives them strength and courage.

Persecute: To bring trouble or suffering to someone because of his faith.

Acts 4:1-2

? Refer to Lesson 6 Lesson Theme Poster. Why would they need strength and courage? What did Jesus tell them to go and do? I'll give you a hint: it was from our memory verse, **Matthew 28:19**. *To fulfill the Great Commission—to preach the gospel and make disciples for Jesus in all the nations.*

Yes. Jesus told His disciples to go and tell others all about the gospel with the help of the Holy Spirit. And on the Jewish holiday Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came to Jesus's followers. And it didn't take long before they could see that this was not something they could do alone.

They needed power and courage from the Holy Spirit because some people who heard them speak of Jesus were not happy about it. And these people began to persecute the apostles.

? Now, what does that word persecute mean? Do you know? *Allow discussion. To bring trouble or suffering to someone because of his faith.*

? And who did the apostles have faith in? *Jesus. God.*

Right. The apostles were the men who went with Jesus everywhere. They saw what He did and heard what He taught.

We are going to read from the book of Acts today. We'll start with Acts 4:1-2. This tells us about some of the persecution the disciples faced. Peter and John had just healed a man who could not walk, and now they were talking to the people who saw that miracle. *Read Acts 4:1-2.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

Let's answer a few questions about those verses, so we can understand them better.

Observe the Text

? We read that Peter and John were speaking to the people. Who do you think they were speaking about? *Allow discussion.*

They were telling them about the power of Jesus and His gospel!

? Who came up to them as they were talking? *Re-read Acts 4:1. The priests, the captain of the Temple guard, and the Sadducees.*

They were in the Temple speaking, and the Temple leaders came to them.

? Verse 2 tells us these Temple leaders were disturbed, or upset, about something. Why were they upset? *Re-read Acts 4:2. The apostles were teaching the people and preaching Jesus and His Resurrection from the dead.*

? That's right. They were upset that Peter and John were teaching about Jesus. So what did these leaders do to the apostles? Listen to Acts 4:3-4. *Read the verses. They laid hands on them and put them in custody!*

That means they grabbed Peter and John and took them to jail!

► Re-read the verses or the portion of the verse(s) that answer the questions you are asking of the text.

Acts 4:3-4

? But what happened to the people who had heard them preach? *Allow discussion.*

Listen as I read Acts 4:4 again. *Re-read Acts 4:4. Many who heard believed.*

? What was it these people believed? *Allow discussion. The gospel.*

They believed the truth about Jesus Christ. They were becoming believers!

? And how many people believed? Did you hear that? *Re-read Acts 4:4. 5,000 men.*

Wow! The church of believers was growing fast! The power of the Holy Spirit was with the apostles—the men who had been with Jesus. They were telling everyone about Jesus and the gospel! Telling about His life, His death, and His Resurrection from the grave. And the religious leaders did not like it. The apostles were becoming popular. People were listening to them.

? Let's work on some of the class notes. Now this is a crossword puzzle. So you will put the answers to the questions where they belong on the puzzle. Will someone read #1 there? Who was giving the men courage to preach about Jesus? *Assign a reader. Spirit. Have students complete #1 across on the class notes.*

? OK. And #2? What was happening to the church? *Assign a reader. Growing. Have students complete #2 down on the class notes.*

? Will someone read #3? The leaders didn't like what was happening. What did they do? *Assign a reader. Jail. Have students complete #3 down on the class notes.*

Do you wonder why these religious leaders were so angry? One reason was they noticed that the apostles had very special powers. They could even heal people who were sick in the name of Jesus.

? Where did this special power come from? Who helped them do these miracles? *God. The Holy Spirit.*

Yes! The Bible tells us that Peter and John were on their way into the Temple when a man, who could not walk, called out to them. He wanted to be healed so he could walk again! Well, Peter and John DID heal the man! And everyone who saw it was astonished! It was amazing! That's when the leaders came and put them in jail.

The next day, the leaders who put Peter and John in jail asked them some questions. They knew Peter and John had healed the crippled man at the Temple. Listen to Acts 4:7. This is what they said to them. *Read Acts 4:7 emphasizing "by what power or what name."*

? What did they ask? *By what power or by what name have you done this?*

So, now they wanted to know where the apostles got their power to heal.

? Peter answered bravely. The Bible tells us Peter was filled with something? What was it? Listen carefully. *Read Acts 4:8. The Holy Spirit.*

➤ Use the New Testament History Poster included with your teacher kit as you teach the lesson. Emphasize that Jesus ministered only 3 years, and He lived only about 35 years. Yet His life changed the world forever and brought eternal life to all who believe.

➤ Because of the age and ability of 1st and 2nd graders to read and comprehend, we have written these lessons for you to read the Scriptures to the students. However, please encourage your students to bring Bibles to class. And if you have strong readers, by all means have them participate by reading God's Word.

Acts 4:7

Acts 4:8

Yes! Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit. He needed the courage of the Holy Spirit now to talk to these leaders. *Refer to Lesson 3 Lesson Theme Poster.* Remember earlier, how Peter was so scared that he denied even knowing Jesus? But he wasn't going to do that again!

Peter spoke boldly to the leaders this time. And he told them that he was teaching and healing in the name of Jesus.

Well, this made those leaders really angry! But they didn't know what to do! They knew the man had been healed. And they knew that lots of people were beginning to follow the apostles and believe in Jesus. But they wanted to stop them! The leaders had brought the apostles in, had put them in jail, and had asked them questions. Now what would they do to the apostles?

The leaders knew that a lot of people saw the miracle. The lame man was healed! He was walking around now! They knew they couldn't cover that up. But they didn't want the good news of Jesus to keep spreading.

These leaders gave some very serious orders to Peter and John. Listen as I read Acts 4:17–18. *Read Acts 4:17–18 emphasizing the answers to the questions below.*

? So, what did the leaders do to stop Peter and John? *Acts 4:18. They commanded them not to speak in the name of Jesus any longer.*

They commanded the apostles NOT to speak at all or teach in the name of Jesus! These religious leaders did not want the truth to spread any further to the people.

? Do you think the threats worked with the apostles? *Allow discussion.*

No! They knew the truth about Jesus. These leaders were telling them to disobey God. Jesus Himself had commanded them to tell people about all the things they had heard from Him and seen Him do. They had to obey God. They could not stop talking about Jesus.

? Take a look at your class notes again. Who can read #4 for us? What is the answer? *Assign a reader. Jesus. Have students complete #4 down on the class notes.*

? How did the religious leaders try to stop the apostles? Who can read #5? How will you finish that? *Warned. Have students complete #5 across on the class notes.*

? Good. And how about #6? The leaders were telling the apostles to disobey Jesus. What did they know they must do? *Assign a reader. Obey. Have students complete #6 down on the class notes.*

? And who will read #7? What had Jesus told His apostles to do? *Assign a reader. Gospel. Have students complete #7 across on the class notes.*

Discover the Truth

This was just the beginning of the persecution that happened to the apostles as they preached the truth about Jesus. They were taken to jail

Acts 4:17–18

and commanded NOT to speak in the name of Jesus Christ. Yet they knew in their hearts that they had to tell others about Him. Jesus IS the truth! They could not stop because they knew that Jesus is the only way anyone could have forgiveness of sins and eternal life in heaven.



READ THE WORD

- ? What do you think the apostles did after the leaders let them go? Were they really sad and discouraged? Were they afraid? *Allow discussion.*

The Bible tells us what they did after being arrested, threatened, and put in jail. Listen to this! I'm going to read Acts 4:23–24. *Read the verses.*

Acts 4:23–24

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

- ? Where did they go? *Re-read Acts 4:23. Back to their companions.*

That's right. They went back to their friends and told them what had happened—that they had been arrested and told to stop preaching about Jesus and His truth!

- ? What did the apostles and their friends do about it? *Re-read Acts 4:24. They praised God and prayed!*

Yes! The apostles praised God! And they prayed to God. Only God would bring them the wisdom and the courage to keep speaking boldly about Jesus.

- ? Where would that wisdom and courage come from? Who was helping the believers? *The Holy Spirit.*

The Helper—the Holy Spirit—was helping them. The apostles and the other believers continued to teach about Jesus even though they were being persecuted. They knew it was right to obey God.

- ? Let's finish the class notes now. Who will read #8? What did the apostles do after they had been persecuted? *Assign a reader. Praised. Have students complete #8 across on the class notes.*

Discover the Truth

The truth of Jesus Christ—His life, His death, and His Resurrection—was spreading across the whole country! Many people believed the truth about Jesus. The religious leaders were jealous and wanted to stop them! They put the apostles in jail, warned them to stop, and even beat them. But they were so filled with joy and the Holy Spirit that they kept on preaching the gospel, praising God, rejoicing, and praying. They were not afraid, and they would not stop!



➤ If time allows, do a quick review of each point on the class notes.



Truth Be Told Review Game

MATERIALS

- Truth Be Told Game Board
- Truth Be Told Question Cards
- Truth Be Told Question Answer Key
- Truth Be Told Number Cards (or dice or game spinner)
- Buttons or other small items as game pieces for each team
- Poster putty

INSTRUCTIONS

Divide your class into teams. Teams will take turns drawing a Truth Be Told Question Card. Team members will take turns answering the questions. They will quickly determine an answer and give it. If they are correct, they will draw a Truth Be Told Number Card and move that number of spaces on the game board. As play proceeds, follow the directions on the game board. Alternate between teams as long as time permits.

We are going to review now by playing “Truth Be Told.” I’ll put you into teams. Teams will take turns picking a question card

and answering the question. If the answer is correct, you will draw a number card and move your game piece that many spaces. All directions on the board must be followed. **Place used cards underneath the stacks.**

Answers to the questions are provided on the Truth Be Told Question Answer Key on the Resource DVD-ROM.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Soon after Pentecost, the apostles began to be persecuted because of their faith in Jesus. But the promised Holy Spirit helped them be strong and brave. And they even rejoiced when they suffered for Jesus because they knew Jesus is the only way to have eternal life.

If you find you have extra time, please consider reviewing the memory verse with your class using the activity below.





Memory Verse Review Game (Optional)

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

MATERIALS

- Memory Verse Poster
- Popcorn snack (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

Divide students into two or more groups. Have them all squat down so they can stand up quickly. Each group will say a word in the memory verse. Have each group “pop” up as they say the next word, then squat back down. Repeat.

We’re going to see if we all remember the words to our memory verse. We’ll divide into groups. Now all of you squat down like this. *Show example of squatting down so you can pop up quickly, then back down.* We’re going to pretend that we are popcorn getting ready

to pop! The first group will start by saying the first word in our memory verse together while they all “pop” up then go back down quickly. Then the other group will say the next word in the verse and “pop” up. And we’ll keep going back and forth, popping like popcorn, until we are done with the verse. Okay, are you ready?

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

We may feel a little scared or ashamed sometimes when we want to share the gospel with somebody.

? Who should we trust in to help us have courage so we can speak boldly? *The Holy Spirit.*

That’s right! It’s important to share the gospel of Jesus, and God will help you do it. Trust in Him.



Applying God’s Word

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

Refer to Lesson 9 Lesson Theme Poster. The apostles were persecuted because they were preaching and doing miracles in the name of Jesus. They were boldly telling everyone that Jesus was the Messiah and that He was crucified and had risen from the dead. But the Jewish leaders didn’t like that at all!

So they arrested the apostles, beat them, and threatened them. But that didn’t stop the apostles from talking about Jesus. In fact, Peter and John said it was better for them to obey God instead of these men who told them to stop.

Remember, earlier the apostles had run away when Jesus was arrested and crucified. But now they proclaimed the gospel with boldness and courage. And even though they were beaten and warned to stop, the apostles rejoiced, prayed, glorified God, and continued to speak the Word of God.

➤ You may want to have a popcorn snack during the Applying God’s Word review section.

It was the Holy Spirit who was in them that made all the difference. He gave them the courage to keep preaching the good news of Jesus!

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

? Do you think believers today need the Holy Spirit? *Allow discussion.*

Of course they do! And Jesus promised that all believers would have the Holy Spirit—the Helper. Believers should not be afraid to tell people how Jesus died and rose again to make a way for sinners to have eternal life. Jesus commanded believers to share the gospel. The Holy Spirit gives believers the courage they need to obey Jesus's command to make disciples of all nations.

? *Refer to Memory Verse Poster.* Let's all say the memory verse together. *Recite Romans 1:16 together.*

? We should not be ashamed of the gospel of Christ. Why is that? Whose power is in the gospel? *It is the power of God.*

? And what does the gospel give to those who believe? *Salvation.*

That's right! The gospel is truly good news. And Jesus commanded all believers to share the good news with others. It is a matter of eternal life! It is only through Jesus Christ that anyone can have his sins forgiven and have the hope of eternal life in heaven forever with God!

You may not think you can do what Peter and John and the other disciples did. You may think you would never have the courage to face some of those things. But remember, God didn't tell you to proclaim the gospel all alone. If you're a believer, the Holy Spirit is in you, and He will give you strength and help you to tell others who Jesus is and what He has done. Don't be ashamed of the gospel—trust in God to help you.



► Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind the children to practice the memory verse this week.



MEMORY VERSE

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.



GROUP PRAYER TIME

- Praise God because, through Jesus, He provided the way to have eternal life.
- Thank God for His Holy Spirit who promises to help believers to stand for their faith.
- Ask God to open the hearts of your students to desire eternal life, believe the gospel, and live a life as new creations, unashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ.