

Lesson Plans that Work
Year C – Easter 5
Lesson Plans for Older Children
Revised Common Lectionary Acts of the Apostles Readings – Track One

Scripture: Acts 11:1-18

Background

Easter is one big celebration! It is a time for us to remember the Resurrection and that Jesus Christ our Lord is not dead but he is alive! We do it up big on Easter Sunday, but sometimes it is easy for us to forget that the celebration keeps going right up to Pentecost. It is also a time of year when we hope for Spring, if it has not already taken root in our neighborhood. We long for new life of plants and animals. It is a time for us to remember how special the gift of life is.

A Notation for This Week's Story

Today we hear how Saint Peter was shown that all that God made was good, even people that are different from us. Sometimes it is easy to forget that everyone is good and we should respect them, especially when we do not agree with the other person. God desires for all people to know the love he has shown for us in Jesus.

Theme: God Created Everyone and Everything Good

Before Class: You will need construction paper, markers, crayons, colored pencils and other craft supplies (glue sticks, cotton balls, glitter, scissors, etc.).

Beginning: Gather the children together and welcome them.

Good morning everyone and Happy Easter! It is so good to have you with us this morning. Today we are going to hear a story about how Jesus came to a man named Saul and changed his life. After this experience Saul will get a new name. Can anyone guess what that name will be? *Paul* Let's think about some of the places that we feel Jesus with us. Allow students to share briefly (*camp, home, church, nature*)

Opening Prayer: Jesus we thank you that you are not far from us and that you come to us in special ways. Help us to know you are with us. Amen.

The Story: Acts 11:1-18

Invite a child to read the story.

Now the apostles and the believers who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also accepted the word of God. So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him, saying, "Why did you go to uncircumcised men and eat with them?" Then Peter began to explain it to them, step by step, saying, "I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. There was something like a large sheet coming down from heaven, being lowered by its four corners; and it came close to me. As I looked at it closely I saw four-footed animals, beasts of prey, reptiles, and birds of the air. I also heard a voice saying to me, 'Get up, Peter; kill and eat.' But I replied, 'By no means, Lord; for nothing profane or unclean has ever entered my mouth.' But a second time the voice answered from heaven, 'What God has made clean, you must not

call profane.' This happened three times; then everything was pulled up again to heaven. At that very moment three men, sent to me from Caesarea, arrived at the house where we were. The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man's house. He told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying, 'Send to Joppa and bring Simon, who is called Peter; he will give you a message by which you and your entire household will be saved.' And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as it had upon us at the beginning. And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' If then God gave them the same gift that he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could hinder God?" When they heard this, they were silenced. And they praised God, saying, "Then God has given even to the Gentiles the repentance that leads to life."

Reflection Questions:

- What other stories in the Bible talk about all kinds of animals? (creation, Noah & the ark)
- How do those stories describe the animals and creation? (As good)
- What does it mean to call something profane? (bad or unholy)
- What do we call bad or profane that is actually good? (someone we don't like, something we don't like such as broccoli, etc.)
- Peter's experience challenges us to be accepting to all. Is that easy? (Not always, explore how it can be difficult)

Activity:

Those were some really good answers. Peter told the people that all the animals and people are good, because that is how God created them. I wonder, if you had been in charge of creation, what kind of animal you might have created.

Invite the children to use the materials on the table to create an animal that perhaps God had forgotten to create. Tell them to be as creative as possible and remember that all creation is good.

Getting Closure: Wow, you all made some really amazing creatures! (Allow students to share their creatures if time allow.) Do you think that you might be able to help share Jesus' love with someone you might not like the best this week? How? (Allow students to share their answers) Jesus reminds us that we are all created good and all deserve God's love!

Closing Prayer: God, thank you for creating so much variety around us and for making it all good. Help us to show forth your love by being kind to everyone, even those we might find it hard to. Amen.

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