

SKY

Knowledge
Series 2—Lesson 6

StoryTime



Sheep Will Follow The Shepherd

Primary 3–7

Bible Text:
Acts 5:12–42

Lesson Aim:

To teach children that you should obey God and do what is right even if people make fun of you and are mean to you.

Memory Verse:

“We ought to obey God rather than men”
(Acts 4:29).

Words to Learn:

- Persecuted
- Martyr
- Shepherd

Always Close in Prayer

The Teacher's Bible Study

The Bible gives us many examples of people who followed God's instructions and were persecuted for it. History gives us the story of thousands of Christians who suffered death rather than deny the faith of Jesus Christ.

There are few people who enjoy being a martyr in the true sense of the word. True pain and suffering is not something the ordinary human will seek. We instinctively go to great lengths to avoid it.

But test and trial will come in this world if we seek to obey God and follow the examples of Christ in all things. The Scriptures reveal that when confronted with the results of personal sin and trespass the mind and heart will do the following: repent and change; or deny, become angry, and commit additional (and often worse) sin.

Repentance is often not the first item of business for a heart that is calloused through sin. Only repentance and thankfulness for the forgiveness of sin can soften it.

In our story today, the healings by God through the apostles had caused a great stir. Many people from the countryside all around Jerusalem had brought their sick and diseased to be healed. Instead of feeling great joy for the miracles, the religious leaders looked for ways to silence the followers of Jesus. The chief priests and Sadducees threw the men in jail, while feverishly thinking of a way to kill them. In the night an angel unlocked the doors and told them to go back and continue to preach.

Peter and the others were again brought before these arrogant and pitiless men. The priests accused them of filling Jerusalem with this heresy and trying to urge the people into bringing charges against them for murder. (They knew they had to be careful not to incite the people because the apostles were pretty popular at this time. They didn't want an uprising on their hands.) It infuriated them that they couldn't wipe out the whole following of the man Jesus. These priests and leaders had hardened their hearts. They had to be warned by Gamaliel that if this was of God, they had better not fight against it; and if it were of men, it would come to nothing.

This didn't reassure them much. Making sure they had gotten their point across to the men they had them beaten before letting them go.

Did the beatings hurt? Sure. Did the apostles let themselves be intimidated by these powerful men? No. Do we need to remember this? Yes.

They believed in Jesus to the depths of their being. They were not ashamed or afraid.

When Christ was standing alone before His accusers, Peter, in fear, had denied knowing Jesus. He even cursed and refuted being His friend and follower. Peter now stood before the high priests and calmly delivered a solemn indictment against these men for the murder of Jesus.

We need to understand that we FOLLOW CHRIST even in the face of anger, spite, and malicious treatment.

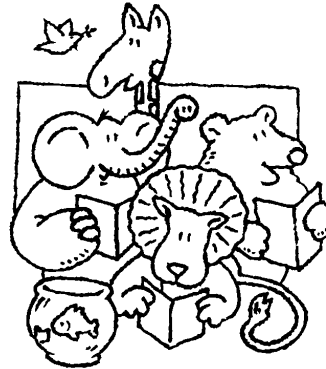
Jesus calls us His sheep; and we must follow the Good Shepherd wherever He leads us.

It is good to remember the words of Psalm 23. That even through "the valley of death," He is with us; and "in the presence of our enemies," He is with us. He feeds us, restores us, and anoints our head.

In pretty scary places He is with us, leading us, protecting us, promising His goodness and mercy to be with us all our days. Forever.

Now that's always a very GOOD place to be, and for a nice long time! Don't you think? ☐

Simple as 1,2,3...



Additional Reading for Teacher Study

Matthew 5:44; James 1:2-20; 1 John 4:4;

Romans 8:31-39; 1 Thessalonians 2:1-16;

1 Peter 3:8-17

Are You Listening?

After you read or tell the story you may ask the following questions:

1. What did the apostles do that got them arrested many times?

—*PREACHED ABOUT JESUS*

2. Did the apostles follow the orders of the chief priests?—*NO*

3. Did many people repent and believe the message the apostles preached about Jesus?—*YES*

4. Did the healing of sick people make the priests happy?—*NO*

5. *True or false:* When people are mean to us it feels good—*FALSE*

6. *True or false:* A good shepherd will run away and leave if there is danger to the sheep—*FALSE*

7. If someone wants us to do something that God says is not right to do, who should we try to please?—*GOD*

Word Definitions

These definitions were taken from *Webster's New World Dictionary*:

•**Persecute**—to treat cruelly

•**Martyr**—one willing to suffer or even die for his or her belief

•**Shepherd**—one who tends, guards, leads, and protects sheep

SKY Story Time

Sheep Will Follow The Shepherd

Peter and the other apostles went about teaching the people that Jesus is the Son of God. Our story is about the powerful witness of people who obeyed God rather than follow the easy road.

After the trial, crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus, the disciples testified about all they had been taught by Jesus and all they had seen, and shared it with anyone who would listen. It was too wonderful to keep hidden!

Peter was a leader of the twelve disciples. Peter and the other disciples went about teaching that Jesus is the Son of God. God healed many people during this time.

The sick people from the surrounding countryside were being brought into Jerusalem. Many searched for the disciples of the man Jesus to be healed.

The good news of the miraculous healings spread like fire driven by a strong wind.

Bah, Humbug!

The religious leaders were jealous of the converts to the message. Their minds and hearts were not happy with this good news. They didn't feel like repenting! They didn't rejoice at the healing of people! Their

hearts didn't leap with happiness and thankfulness at the message of salvation. They wanted the message about that troublemaker Jesus completely wiped out!

The news about Jesus continued to spread. His followers just wouldn't shut up!

The chief priests put the apostles in prison. "That should shut them up," they thought. "You can't preach behind locked doors. You won't have an audience. Ha!"

Guards were put on the outside of the prison doors to be sure no one could come try to help them.

Know What Saw!

Peter and the others didn't fret or fuss. They knew what they had SEEN; they knew what they had been taught by JESUS. They knew who JESUS WAS! They trusted God to help them endure what they needed to endure, even to death.

Trusting and obeying God can sometimes make people mad at us. But God is very strong and He will give us just enough of His strength to get us through persecution.

The disciples were not in prison long that night. God sent an angel to give them a message and to open the prison door and lead the men out. The angel said

to them, "Go stand in the Temple and speak to the people ALL THE WORDS OF THIS LIFE."

Early the next morning when the religious rulers went to the jail, the guards were still standing at the doors and the doors were locked. When they opened the doors, the prison was empty!

Guess where the disciples were? Had they run away and hid?

NO! They were found in the Temple teaching the people! They did what God had asked.

Again they were arrested. The rulers were very upset and demanded to know why they would not follow their orders. Peter and the others answered, "We ought to obey God rather than men."

The priests were furious and wanted to kill the disciples. However, a man named Gamaliel warned the rulers against killing them. He said, "If their teachings are just the ideas of men, the following will die. If it is of God, NO ONE WILL BE ABLE TO STOP THEM." The council of rulers took his advice grudgingly.

"We'll give them a beating at least," they decided. The men were then beaten and strongly warned again not to talk about Jesus. They were finally set free.

Let's Talk About †

A shepherd is someone who guards, protects, and watches over sheep. Jesus is called the Good Shepherd and He calls us His sheep. We follow Him.

Sheep trust their shepherd so completely they will follow him anywhere. Just think! If Jesus is with us, what should we worry about?

Remember, when others are mean to us or make fun of us, do not become discouraged or be afraid. We are not alone; Jesus is watching over us.

Someone's anger toward us hurts a lot less than our own guilty conscience caused from our disobedience. God knows it is not pleasant when someone is mean and spiteful toward us.

Remember Peter and what he said to the hateful priests: "We ought to obey God rather than men."

The End

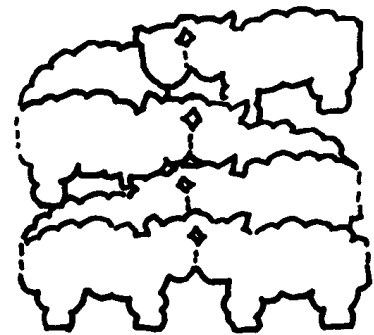
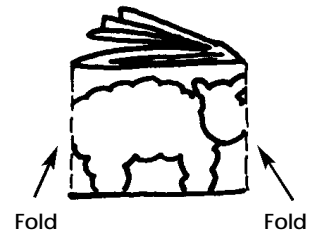
Crafty Ideas

Holding two sheets of paper together, fold in half (along the 11-inch length). Cut along this fold creating two long rectangles per sheet (4 1/4"x11"). Tape the eight pieces together at the 4 1/4" side (this will create a long strip). Fold the strip in half; fold in half again; and fold once more (this will create eight folded panels).

Draw a little sheep pattern on the uppermost panel. Cut along the sheep's lines, leaving the sheep joined at the ears, cheeks, and tails by the folds. Paste on cotton balls for topknots on each little sheep. Draw the eyes and noses on each little sheep. Use your imagination. Each sheep looks a little different.

Crafty Ideas

Eight Little Betty Lambs



Materials To Use:

- 2 sheets of 8 1/2 x 11 paper.
- Crayons or markers
 - a e
 - s do s
- cotton balls