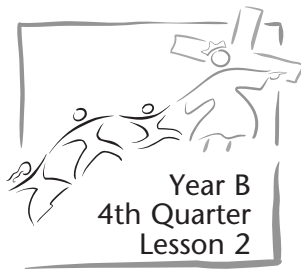


LESSON



Seven Special Helpers

COMMUNITY

We treat each other with love.

References

Acts 6:1–7; *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 87–96.

Memory Verse

“Share with God’s people who need help” (Romans 12:13, ICB).

Objectives

The children will:

Know that it takes many people working together to help those in need.

Feel a desire to be involved in helping others.

Respond by working together with others to help people in need.

The Message

God’s people work together to help others.

Getting Ready to Teach

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

The Greek believers complain that their widows are not being as well cared for as the Hebrew widows. There are so many new people joining the church and so much work to do that the disciples become too busy. They decide to choose deacons to care for people who are in need. They choose seven good men to look after those who are poor, sick, or elderly.

This is a lesson about community.

People in a Christian community help

each other. Even the youngest child can do something to help others. This is an opportunity to talk with the children about being helpers at home and in their neighborhood. They can have a part in showing love to others too.

Teacher Enrichment

“The organization of the church at Jerusalem was to serve as a model for the organization of churches in every other place where messengers of truth should win converts to the gospel. Those to whom was given the responsibility

TWO

Program Outline			
LESSON SECTION	MINUTES	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS NEEDED
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Activities	up to 10	A. <i>Balloon Pass</i> B. <i>Jigsaw Pictures</i>	large towels, balloons jigsaw pattern (see p. 141), paper, scissors, crayons
* Prayer and Praise *	up to 10	See page 23. *Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.	
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story	none
		Bible Study	Bible
		Memory Verse	Bible
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	A. <i>Scenarios</i> B. <i>Offering Help</i>	none deacon (optional)
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Official Helper Certificate</i>	Official Helper Certificate pattern (see p. 142), paper, crayons

of the general oversight of the church were not to lord it over God's heritage, but, as wise shepherds, were to 'feed the flock of God, . . . being ensamples to the flock' (1 Peter 5:2, 3); and the deacons were to be 'men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom.' These men were to take their position unitedly on the side of right and to maintain it with firmness and decision. Thus they would have a unifying influence upon the entire flock" (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 91).

"Our work in this world is to live for others' good, to bless others, to be hospitable; and frequently it may be only at some inconvenience that we can enter-

tain those who really need our care and the benefit of our society and our homes. Some avoid these necessary burdens. But someone must bear them; and because the brethren in general are not lovers of hospitality, and do not share equally in these Christian duties, a few who have willing hearts, and who cheerfully make the cases of those who need help their own, are burdened" (*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 645; *Christian Service*, p. 191).

How are you an influence for unity in your church?

Room Decorations

See Lesson 1.

Teaching the Lesson

Welcome

Welcome children at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Encourage them to share any experiences from last week's lesson study. Have them begin the readiness activity of your choice.

1

Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

A. Balloon Pass

You Need:

- large towels
- balloons

Have a large towel and an inflated balloon for each group of 10–12 children. Have the children form two lines, standing shoulder to shoulder, each line facing the other. The first pair in the line stretches out a towel between them with a balloon balanced on it. They pass the towel to the next pair without letting the balloon fall off. That pair passes it to the next and so on down the line. If the balloon falls off, they need to start from the beginning again.

Debriefing

Allow responses as you ask: **Can you do this without a partner to hold the other end of the towel?** (no) **What can we learn about helping others from this activity? Sometimes there is too much work for one person to do. They need help. Our Bible story today is about some special people who worked to help others. How can we work together to help people in need? Let's think about that as we say today's message:**



God's people work together to help others.

Say that with me.

B. Jigsaw Pictures

You Need:

- jigsaw pattern (see p. 141)
- paper
- scissors
- crayons

In advance, prepare several copies of the jigsaw pattern (see page 141). Cut all but one of the copies into quarters. Put the uncut picture on the floor or a table. As each child comes into Sabbath School, give them a quarter piece of a picture, and direct them to the crayons. Ask them to color their pictures. Children who come early may have time to color more than one. When all the pictures are colored, ask the children to match their pieces to make a picture like the uncut copy.

Debriefing

Allow responses as you ask: **Haven't you made some lovely pictures?**

Did anyone do a whole picture by themselves? (no) What lovely things for God we can do when we work together! Our Bible story is about some special people who worked together to help others. What do you think about working together to help people in need? Today's message is:



God's people work together to help others.

Say that with me.

PRAYER AND PRAISE



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study and review the memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.

Suggested Songs

"Plenty of Room in the Family" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 248)

"Our Church Is a Family" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 257)

"Something Nice" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 261)

"Care for One Another" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 262)

"Let Us Do Good" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 263)

Mission

Say: **People around the world who love Jesus work together to help others. Listen to see who the helper is in this story.** Use a story from *Children's Mission*.

Offering

Say: **One way we can work together to help others is by giving our money to help people in need.**

Prayer

Have the children name people they know who are in need. (sick, hungry, homeless, etc.) Write these names where all can see. Pray for these people by name. Then pray for each child by name that Jesus will be with them as they help others. (Large group should form smaller prayer groups.)

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

2

Bible Lesson**Experiencing the Story**

Involve the children in the story by giving them the opportunity to discuss each part as indicated.

Read or tell the story.

"What is all that noise?" Peter asked.

Matthew sighed. "Some of the new believers are arguing again," he answered.

"What are they arguing about?" Peter asked.

"Well," Matthew explained, "some of the believers—the ones who speak the Greek language—are complaining that the widows in their group aren't getting as much food to eat as the Hebrew widows." Matthew sighed again. "It's so sad to hear them argue," he said.

[Allow responses as you ask: **How do you feel when you hear people argue? What does your mom, dad, grandparent, sister, brother, say when you argue? Let's see what Peter thinks of arguing.**]

Peter said to Matthew, "Arguing is wrong! Our Lord does not want His children arguing like this. It certainly doesn't show His love to the unbelievers! Let's call the people together and see what we can do about this problem."

[Allow responses as you ask: **What do you do when you argue? How do you fix it? Now let's see how the apostles solved their problem.**]

So the apostles brought all the believers in Jesus together. "We apostles do not want to have to stop our work of preaching and teaching the Word of God in order to serve food," they began. "We have an idea. Pick seven good men.

Men who are wise. Men who are filled with the Holy Spirit. We will put them in charge of the food. They will see that everyone gets the food they need."

The believers looked at each other and smiled. It was a good idea. It was a good way to be sure that everyone was treated fairly and that everyone would have enough food.

These new helpers were called deacons. The deacons took care of the widows. This way the apostles were able to tell more people about Jesus. We can help take care of others too. When we bring our offerings or take some food or clothing to Community Services, we are helping to care for others just as the seven deacons did.

Debriefing

Allow responses as you ask: **How do you think the widows felt about the seven deacons? What do you think about choosing people to help those who are sick or elderly and feed those who are hungry? How do you think the new deacons felt when they were chosen? Why do you think the apostles put their hands on them and prayed for them? Do you have to wait to be chosen to help others? What can you do to help widows and elderly people in our church? Do you remember our message? Let's say it together:**



God's people work together to help others.

Note: Take this opportunity to talk about junior deacons if you have some in your church. Or talk about the sig-

nificance of the “laying on of hands” in a ceremony to set aside deacons and elders today.

Bible Study

You Need:
 Bible

Open your Bible to Acts 6:1–7. Point to the verses and say: **This is where today’s story is found**

in the Bible. Read the verses aloud, paraphrasing as necessary.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **Who was arguing? Why were they arguing? How did the apostles decide to get fair treatment for all the widows? How many people were chosen to be deacons? What were they to do? What do you think about helping others? Should deacons be the only ones to help others? Who else can help? How can you help? Remember . . .**



God’s people work together to help others.

Memory Verse

Turn to Romans 12:13 and say: **This is where we find our memory verse in God’s Word, the Bible.** Read the text aloud.

You Need:
 Bible

“Share with God’s people who need help.” Then proceed to teach the memory verse as outlined below.

Share

Pretend to distribute something.



with God’s people

Point to others.



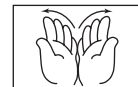
who need help.

Put hands together with sad look on face.



Romans 12:13

Palms together, then open.



3

Applying the Lesson**A. Scenarios**

Say: **Peter and the other apostles needed helpers. There was too much work to do by themselves. Does our church still need helpers today? Listen to these little stories, and tell me how that person could help.**

1. **John sees a ball of wrinkled -up paper in the hallway by his Sabbath School room. What can John do to help?** (Pick up the paper and throw it away.)
2. **A deacon is looking for someone to hold the children's offering basket for church. What can Peggy do to help?** (Offer to hold the basket.)
3. **A grandma in Sasha's church is so sick that she can't come to church anymore. What can Sasha do to help her?** (Visit her; make her a card and send it; call her on the phone and sing to her; etc.)
4. **Justin's church is asking for people to help with yard work on Sunday. What can Justin do to help?** (Rake leaves; pull weeds.)
5. **Manuel's family stayed for potluck after church. Now people are helping to clean up. What can Manuel do to help?** (Throw away trash; help put chairs away; etc.)

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **What do you think about helping at church? Can you work together to help people in the church?** Say: **Remember to look for ways you can help at church or wherever you are. Let's say our message again:**



God's people work together to help others.

B. Offering Help**You Need:**

- deacon (optional)

Plan ahead to have the children help the deacons collect the offering or distribute bulletins this week. Invite a deacon to come in and explain what deacons do, how they do it, and help organize the children for the help they will give before or during the church service.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **How do you feel about helping people at church? How can you work together to help people in church today?** Say: **Remember to look for ways you can help people all week wherever you are. Let's say our message together again:**



God's people work together to help others.

4

Sharing the Lesson**Official Helper Certificate****You Need:**

- Official Helper Certificate pattern (see p. 142)
- paper
- crayons

certificate.

In advance, prepare a copy of the Official Helper Certificate for each child (see page 142). Write in your church's name. Help the children write their name on the blank line, and have them color the border on the

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **Do you know what this paper is for?** Say: **It says you are an official helper of the** (name your church). **It's for you to take home and share with someone as you do something to help them.**

Be sure to keep your eyes open and find a way to help someone at church today or sometime during the week. Just as the deacons in our story were able to help others in need, so can we. Ask: **How do you think the people we help will feel? How will you feel?** Say: **Let's say our message together one last time:**



God's people work together to help others.

Closing

Say: **Because you are working together to help others, we want to have a special prayer for you too.** Have the teachers stand around the children and place their hands on them during the prayer. If you have a large class, form smaller groups. Say: **Thank You, Jesus, for** (name all the children). **Please bless them as they work together to help others. Amen.**

STUDENT LESSON

Seven Special Helpers

References

Acts 6:1–7; *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 87–96

Memory Verse

“Share with God’s people who need help” (Romans 12:13, ICB).

The Message

God’s people work together to help others.

Do you like working with your mom or dad while you make a cake or wash the car? It’s more fun to share the work. A long time ago some people were chosen to help the apostles in a special way.

“What is all that noise?” Peter asked. Matthew sighed. “Some of the new believers are arguing again,” he answered.

“What are they arguing about?” Peter asked.

“Well,” Matthew explained, “some of the believers who are not from our area—the ones who speak the Greek language—are complaining that the widows in their group aren’t getting as much food to eat as the Hebrew widows.” Matthew sighed again. “It’s so sad to hear them argue.”

“Well, there are better ways to solve problems than by arguing,” Peter said firmly. “Let’s call the people together and see what we can do about this.”

So that is what they did. When the believers were gathered together, the apostles stood up and spoke. “We apostles do not want to have to stop our work of preaching and teaching the Word of God in order to serve food. We have an idea,” they said. “Pick seven good men. Men who are wise. Men who are filled with the Holy Spirit. We will put them in charge of giving food to the widows.”

The believers smiled at each other. It was a good idea. It was a good solution.

So the believers set about choosing the seven men. And they chose carefully. They chose men who were wise and full of the Holy Spirit. They chose men who were honest and truthful. Then the believers brought the seven new helpers, Stephen, Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and

Nicolas, to the apostles.

The apostles were pleased. They gathered around the seven men and laid their hands on them and prayed. This meant that the seven were being set aside to do a special work for God. The apostles prayed that God would bless the men and help them take care of the widows.

So the apostles were able to con-

tinue their own special work of praying and preaching and teaching. More and more people heard the Word of God. More and more became believers in Jesus. All kinds of people believed. Shopkeepers and farmers. Weavers and sandal makers. Even some of the priests from the temple.

All the believers were important in the family of God. And the poor widows who needed food were loved and cared for. We can be God’s helpers too. What can we do to help hungry people?



Do and Say

Sabbath

Each day this week, read the lesson story and re-view the memory verse:

Share Pretend to distribute some-thing.

with God's people . . Point to others.

who need help Put hands together with sad look on face.

Romans 12:13 Palms together, then open.

Sunday

Encourage your child to share their Official Helper Certificate made in Sabbath School with a church member as they do something to care for that person (send an encouraging note, help with yard work, deliver food [accompanied by a parent], sing a song, etc.).

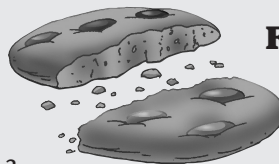
Monday

How many deacons did the apostles select to help them? (seven) Help your child list seven ways to help others.

Work with your child to do a chore. Discuss how much easier it is to do it together. Talk to them about the apostles and the deacons.

Tuesday

Ask your child: If there is only one cookie and two people want it, would there be an argument? How could you solve that problem?



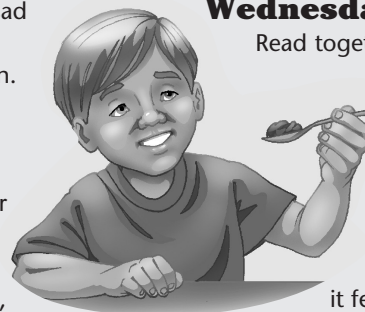
What do you argue about? (Where to sit in the car, who gets to play with a toy, etc.) Help your child solve the problem.

Before prayer, sing a caring song.

Wednesday

Read together Acts 6:1–7. Ask: What do you think about helping others? How do you think the widows felt about the seven men?

Have your child feed you some food; then you feed them. Ask: How does it feel to help someone? To be helped?



Thursday

Help your child make something for someone who is sick.

Have your child pretend that they are a health-care worker and that you are hurt. They can use strips of cloth for bandages. Talk about how the seven deacons took care of sick people too.

Pray for someone in your church who is sick.

Friday

Act out the Bible story with your family. Have seven toys represent the seven deacons. Have your child point to them one by one as you read the deacons' names.