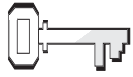


The First Skyscraper



References

Genesis 11:1-9;
Patriarchs and Prophets,
pp. 117-124



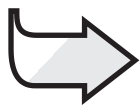
Memory Verse

"God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right" (Acts 10:34, 35).



Objectives

The children will:
Know that God wants us to learn about other peoples.
Feel willing to accept differences.
Respond by trying to understand and help someone who is different.



The Message

We serve God when we help people who are different from us.

Monthly Theme

God calls us to serve others.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

After the Flood, God tells Noah and his family to have children and spread out over the earth. As time goes by, ungodly people decide to build a tower, to protect themselves from another flood. God stops them by confounding their language. They then separate according to language and spread out around the earth.

This is a lesson about service.

Even though people sometimes choose to not listen to God, He is always there to help them so they can find their way home. Serving others requires us to understand their needs. People may be different from us, but they still need to know that God loves them and wants us to help them do what is good.

Teacher Enrichment

"God's original plan called for men to spread over the face of the earth and to cultivate the soil. The building of cities represented opposition to this plan" (*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 284). God used the language confusion to scatter them and to populate the whole earth. Today there are approximately 7,000 different languages spoken in more than 200 countries.

"The Tower of Babel represented doubt of God's Word and defiance of His will" (*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol 1, p. 285). "The dwellers on the plain of Shinar disbelieved God's covenant that He would not again bring a flood upon the earth. Many of them denied the existence of God and attributed the Flood to the operation of natural causes. . . . One object before them in the erection of the tower was to secure their own safety in case of another deluge. . . . The whole undertaking was designed to exalt still further the pride of its projectors and to turn the minds of future generations away from God and lead them into idolatry" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 119).

Room Decorations

For this month, emphasize working together to build something. Use pictures of construction workers, tools, buildings under construction, etc. If possible, have a "building corner" where children may use boxes, blocks, etc., to construct things.

Program Overview

| Lesson Section | Minutes | Activities | Materials Needed |
|------------------------------------|----------|---|--|
| Welcome | ongoing | Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled | none |
| 1 Readiness Options | up to 10 | A. <i>What Am I?</i> B. <i>Walking Differences</i> | none none |
| Any Time Prayer and Praise* | up to 10 | Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer | none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> offering container none |
| 2 Bible Lesson | up to 20 | Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study | Bible-times costumes (optional) Bible, 12 paper "bricks" Bibles |
| 3 Applying the Lesson | up to 15 | <i>Tower Power</i> | measuring stick or tape measure; building materials, such as blocks, paper or Styrofoam cups and/or bowls, empty tissue or shoe boxes |
| 4 Sharing the Lesson | up to 15 | <i>Grug</i> | none |

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

Welcome

Welcome children at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Have them begin the readiness activity of your choice.



Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

A. What Am I?

Whisper the name of an animal to each child. Make sure to name at least two of each animal. Say: **When I count to three, make a noise like your animal. There are at least two of each animal. Look for others who are making the same animal sound you make. When you find the others in your animal group, sit down together.**

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **Was it easy or hard to find the other animals in your group? Why? Why do you think God created different animals?** (He likes variety.) **What do you think about people who are different from you in some way? How do you think God feels about people who are different from you in some way?**

Say: **When we help people who are different from us, we are serving God, and that's what He wants us to do. Today's message tells us:**



WE SERVE GOD WHEN WE HELP PEOPLE WHO ARE DIFFERENT FROM US.

Say that with me.

B. Walking Differences

Say: **When I give you the signal, stand up and walk like the person I name. Keep walking until I tell you to stop. Ready? Stand up.**

Call these examples one at a time:

- toddler
- person with leg in a cast
- soldier
- woman in high heels

As the children parade around the room, choose one child who imitates that walk well. Repeat the procedure for several different examples. Keep near you the child you chose for each walk; ask everyone else to sit. Have the children demonstrate one by one the walk for which they were chosen. Have the others guess which walk it was and explain why that particular example tends to walk that way.

Debriefing

Say: **People walk differently because they need to for some reason. Why do you think an elderly person walks slowly?** (afraid of falling, can't see well, etc.)

Allow response time, then say: **God wants us to notice special needs and understand them. Maybe there is something someone needs us to help them with.**

What help might the person with one leg in a cast need? Allow response time.
Today's message is:



WE SERVE GOD WHEN WE HELP PEOPLE WHO ARE DIFFERENT FROM US.

Say that with me.

Prayer and Praise

Any Time



Fellowship

Report the children's joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Review last week's memory verse and invite children who have something to share to do so at this time. Give a special, warm greeting to visitors and introduce each by name. Acknowledge birthdays or special events.



Suggested Songs

"We Are His Hands" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 129)

"This Little Light of Mine" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 134)

Add verses as follows:

"These little hands of mine; I'm gonna let them help.

These little hands of mine; I'm gonna let them help.

Let them help, let them help, let them help.

Gonna help those who are diff-er-ent; I'm gonna be a help.

Gonna help those who are diff-er-ent, I'm gonna be a help.

Gonna help, gonna help, gonna help."

"Give Me Oil in My Lamp" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 132)

Add the following verse:

"Give me oil in my lamp, keep me helping,

Give me oil in my lamp, I pray.

Give me oil in my lamp, keep me helping,

Keep me helping others every day."



Mission

Use *Children's Mission*. Say: **All over the world, people in other countries are helping others too. Today's mission story tells about helpers in one part of the world.**



Offering

Say: **Jesus has made us all different. One way we can serve Him is by giving our money to help people who are different from us learn more about Him.**

You Need:

- offering container



Prayer

Invite the children to name someone who is different from them in some way, then pray for those they mention.

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- Bible-times costumes (optional)

Experiencing the Story

Introduce the story by saying: **Do you know why people speak different languages? It all started with the Tower of Babel. Today we are going to pretend that you are old enough to help build the tower.**

If you choose to have the children dress up, help them put on the Bible-times costumes.

Form four groups. The children will pretend to work with all the other groups to build a tower. Assign one of the words (see below) to each group. When they hear you say their word, they make the appropriate sound and/or do the action described. To begin, all the children are together in one large group.

| Words: | Actions: |
|----------------|---|
| hammers | Tap sticks on an empty box, or pound their fists together. |
| bricks | Shake gravel or beans in a box, or tap two pieces of brick (or two rocks) together. |
| tar | Clap or use quarterlies as "brushes" on chair. |
| water | Shout, "Splish, Splash." |

Read or tell the story.

A long time ago some people thought they needed to build a tower that would reach way up into the sky. So they made some **bricks**. They collected **tar** in big buckets. They gathered all the **hammers** they could find, and asked some people to collect water and bring it to the building place. And they went to work! They thought that if they built a city, they wouldn't be scattered or separated.

God saw what they were doing, and it made Him sad. After the Flood, He had told them to spread out to live all over the earth. So He did something about it. He mixed up their language. When the people tried to talk to one another, their words got mixed up. They couldn't understand each other.

"I need more **bricks**," a worker may have called to someone nearby. His helper, not understanding, may have called to the men on the ground, "Send up a load of **tar**!"

"Right! **Water!**" the men on the ground may have replied. "We're sending up some **water!**"

When the **water** arrives, the boss's helper is puzzled. "I didn't ask for **water**," he yells. "The boss wants **tar**. Don't you understand? **Tar!** The black stuff." And he jabs his finger into the black **tar**.

"Oh, **hammers**," the carrier says. "Why didn't you say so! We'll be right back with **hammers**." And the carrier turns and runs to the edge of the tower. Leaning way out, he calls to the men on the ground. "Be quick down there, and send up two loads of **hammers!**"

When the **hammers** arrive, the workers are even more puzzled. Can you imagine how upset the workers felt? Each one must have thought the others were going crazy. Soon all the workers are arguing.

"But I said **bricks!**"

"No, you said **tar!**"

"I did not!"

"Yes, you did! I heard it myself. You said **tar!**"

"I thought he said **water!**"

"No, I heard him say **hammers**."

Finally, they figure it out. Those who agree that **tar** means **bricks** come together. They all gather around to figure

out what to do. (*Children who have been assigned "tar" get together in a group.*)

"Let them build the tower by themselves!" they say, pointing at the other people. "We're sick of this. It's so crowded on that pile of **bricks!** There's a nice, quiet valley just over the mountains. Let's load up our stuff and our families and go there!"

Soon all the **water** people gather together and decide to leave too. (*"Water" group walks away from larger group.*)

Then all the **hammers** people get together and do the same. And so do the **bricks** people.

(*The children form groups and walk away.*)

And so before long, everyone has gone. The tower is just a big reminder of their mistake. When they find new places to live, they settle down.

(*Children sit on the floor in groups.*)

And they become new nations, each with a different language and different ways of living.

And God knows where they are. He understands their language. He knows what they need. God still helps the different people of every nation. And (*say the message together*) . . .



WE SERVE GOD WHEN WE HELP PEOPLE WHO ARE DIFFERENT FROM US.

Debriefing

As helpers remove costumes (if used), ask:

How do you think the people felt when they could no longer understand one another? (troubled, confused, upset, unsure of what to do, etc.) **How do you feel when you don't understand what someone is saying to you?** (uncertain, upset, etc.) **What do you think you should do when people don't understand each other?** (Help

them. Get things for them. Be kind to them.)

You're right. Let's remember our message for today:



WE SERVE GOD WHEN WE HELP PEOPLE WHO ARE DIFFERENT FROM US.

Memory Verse

In advance, write one word of the memory verse on each paper "brick." Don't forget the reference.

Open your Bible to Acts 10:34, 35 and read the verse aloud. "**God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right**" (Acts 10:34, 35).

Mix up the paper "bricks" and have the children try to put them in the right order, then read the verse. Remove one brick and have the children read or say the verse again. Continue removing one brick until all are removed and the children know the verse.

Or mix up the bricks several times and have the children place them in the correct order until they know the verse.

Or use the following motions as you teach the verse:

| | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| God | Point upward. |
| does not | Shake your head. |
| show favoritism | Beckon to the children. |
| but accepts | Open arms wide. |
| from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right. | Point to several children in turn. |
| Acts 10:34, 35 | Palms together, then open. |

You Need:

- Bible
- 12 paper "bricks"

You Need:

- Bibles

Bible Study

Help the children find Genesis 9:1. Have someone read the text aloud. Ask: **What did God tell Noah and his family to do after the Flood?** (be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth)

Help the children turn to Genesis 11:1-9. Ask the children to follow along as you read (or someone else reads) the verses. Read the text in its entirety, then ask:

Why did the people want to build a tower? (to make a name for themselves; so they wouldn't be scattered all over the earth)

Explain: **The people were Noah's relatives—maybe his grandchildren**

or great-grandchildren. What did God want them to do? (fill the earth with people) **Were they doing as God had asked?** (No. They had many children, but they were all staying in the same place.) **What did God do about that?** (mixed up their speech, caused them to form groups and move away from each other) **And that is why we have many different nations and languages today. But God loves all the people in the world and He still wants us to work together, to help each other.** (Say the message together.)



WE SERVE GOD WHEN WE HELP PEOPLE WHO ARE DIFFERENT FROM US.

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- measuring stick or tape measure
- building materials, such as blocks, paper or Styrofoam cups and/or bowls, empty tissue or shoe boxes

Tower Power

Form groups of not more than four. Say: **When you receive the materials, your group will have four minutes to build the tallest possible tower. You may not say any words, but you may make other sounds. Remember, no talking!** Distribute materials.

When time is up, make a big display of measuring their structures and give a round of applause for each.

Debriefing

Ask: **What happened when you tried to build without talking to one another?** (couldn't understand each other; confusion; hard to help each other) **How did you feel when you couldn't understand one another?** (didn't like it; frustrated; confused; uncertain; etc.) **What does this teach us about people who are different from us?** (might get frustrated with us; don't always understand each other; have to find a way to communicate, etc.) **How might God want you to treat people who are different from you this week?** Allow response time, then say the message together:



WE SERVE GOD WHEN WE HELP PEOPLE WHO ARE DIFFERENT FROM US.

4

Sharing the Lesson

Grug

(A grug is a group hug.)

In one large group or several smaller ones, have children gather in a circle and join hands.

Join them in the circle, then say: **I am going to count to three. On three, take one step toward the center of the circle. Ready? One–two–three! Now, put your hands on the shoulders of the people standing on either side of you and take another step. One–two–three.**

Keep repeating until everyone is squeezed into a grug. Then ask the children to move back or sit down.

Debriefing

Ask: **How do you feel about a grug?** (silly, OK, liked it, didn't like it, etc.)

I liked the feeling that everyone included me in the group. It's no fun being left out. Think for a minute of someone you know who might feel left out. What can you do to help them feel like they belong?

Have children share their thoughts with a partner. Then ask three people to share their ideas with the whole group. Encourage children to follow through by helping that person during the week.

Closing

Close with prayer, asking God to help the children as they try to make people feel included.

Remind the children to use their Bible study guides every day and to do the daily activities.

The First Skyscraper

References

Genesis 11:1-9;
*Patriarchs and
Prophets*,
pp. 117-124

Memory Verse

"God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right" (Acts 10:34, 35).

The Message

We serve God when we help people who are different from us.

Have you ever met someone and could not understand the words they were speaking? That may be because they were speaking a different language. A long time ago, everyone spoke the same language. Then some people disobeyed God. That changed everything.

Long ago, after God created the earth, everyone spoke the same language. They used the same names for everything they had or did. No matter where they lived or where they moved, they could talk to one another and understand each other. As some people moved farther away, they found a beautiful plain called Shinar and decided to live there.

The people of Shinar made bricks and baked them to make them hard. So they used bricks for building instead of stones and tar to hold the bricks together.

One day someone said, "Let's build for ourselves a city and a tower. And let's

make the top of the tower reach high into the sky."

Someone else may have said, "We will become famous. We will be able to live in our city forever and will not be scattered all over the earth."

So people began to gather the materials they needed. They got the bricks and the tar, and they began to build.

All day the people worked hard. They passed the bricks and tar from worker to worker until they reached the bricklayers at the top. Soon the tower grew higher and higher. The people felt very clever.

God watched them build. He was not pleased. At Creation He had told Adam and Eve and He told Noah after the Flood, "Have many children. Fill the earth." This meant He wanted their descendants to live all over the earth and not just in one place. But the people at Shinar weren't listening to God. They wanted to live in one place. They wanted to do their own thing. They thought they knew better than God, so they disobeyed.

But even though the people were disobeying God, He still cared about them. Each one was still special to Him.

And because He loved them so much, God made a plan to help them do the right thing. He caused the people to use different words for the same thing. He changed their one language to many languages.

"I need more bricks," a workman may have called. His helper, not understanding him, may have called to the men on the ground, "Send up a load of tar."

"Water!" the men on the ground may have replied. "We're sending up water!"

Can you imagine how angry the workers at the top were when the water arrived?

Soon all the workers began to argue and fight. They could not finish their tower. In fact, they couldn't understand each other well enough to live in the same city.



So some people moved to the east and some to the west. Some went north and others south. They spread out all over the world in groups that could understand each other. And that is how people speaking different languages came to be. Today there are many different people all over the world. But:

“God does not show favoritism” (Acts 10:34). He loves and helps everyone, and we should too!

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- With a family member, go near a very tall building, if possible. Or with adult supervision, climb up a ladder or a tree. Imagine that you are looking up at the Tower of Babel. Later, find a quiet place and read the lesson story together. Also, read the memory verse from the Bible (Acts 10:34, 35).

Sunday

- In your Bible, find Genesis 11:1-9 and read about the Tower of Babel. If all those people had been allowed to live in the tower, what problems might they have had with food, water, cleanliness, and daily living?
- Look through a newspaper or magazine and cut out pictures of tall buildings. Glue them across the bottom of a big piece of paper. Save the paper for tomorrow.
- Say your memory verse to an adult.

Monday

- Ask a family member to read Acts 17:26. Tell in your own words what this verse means. Tell an adult how you might feel if someone spoke another language in front of you.
- Look through a newspaper or magazine and cut out pictures of people who might speak a language different from yours. Glue the pictures to the paper you started yesterday. Show your picture to someone in your family and tell them about it.

Tuesday

- Imagine what the Tower of Babel looked like. Make one Tower of Babel cutout for each word of the memory verse. Write each word of the memory verse on a different cutout. Mix the cutouts and put them in order. Save them.

- With a family member, read Isaiah 58:10. Tell what this verse means. Then take a walk in your community. Think of some things people in your neighborhood need. Decide how you and your family can help with one of those needs. Ask God to help you do it this week.

Wednesday

- As you think about your plan to help someone in your community, sing, hum, play, or listen to “We Are His Hands” (*Sing for Joy*, no. 129).
- Using your memory verse cutouts, say your memory verse to your family.
- Find some empty boxes, blocks, or cartons and build a tower. How high can you make it before it falls? When you finish, measure its height. With a family member, read Genesis 11:4. How high did the builders plan to build their tower?

Thursday

- At what other time in the Bible did people suddenly start to speak in other languages? See Acts 2:4. Ask an adult to explain this verse.
- Try to say Hello in at least one foreign language.
- Say your memory verse to at least two people.

Friday

- At worship, do a charade of the Tower of Babel story. Say your memory verse.
- Ask a family member to read or tell a story about a missionary in a country where your language is not spoken.
- Read together 1 John 4:8. With your family, decide how you might tell someone who speaks another language about Jesus and His love. How might you say “Jesus loves you” without actually saying anything?
- Tell how it made you feel to help someone this week. Together, sing a song about God’s love.