36. It’s Not Easy Being a Missionary

The Course

Key Verse: 2 Timothy 1:12 – What should I do when I suffer for Jesus?
Acts 13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12

The Goals

As a result of this lesson the children will:
1. Know that every believer can be a missionary.
2. Feel the need to tell others about Jesus.
3. Go and tell others about Jesus, even when it’s difficult.

The Equipment Room

For the following lesson you will need:
1. Visuals #1-8 [As PowerPoint]
2. Two coaches [Dressed like Bible times]
3. Copies of the script [Given at least two weeks in advance]
4. A coach [To run PowerPoint or to display Visuals #2-3]

The Warm-up

Activities: Have the children make cards or write letters of encouragement to missionaries that the church supports, thanking them for their service for Christ. Be sure to pray for these missionaries after this activity. [Equipment: cards or paper, envelopes, writing supplies]

Put together care packages for missionaries to be sent to them. Find out needs of the missionaries in advance and collect items through your church. You may also want to send home a note with the children the week before, explaining the project and asking parents to contribute to it. This could be done during the Big O’vent as a Christian Service. [Advanced prep needed.]

Map Game: Hang the two world maps on a wall [Make two copies of Visual #1.], low enough for the children to reach. Separate the children into two teams. [Due to time constraints, you may need to limit the number of children playing or have them go up by twos, if you have a large number of children.] Have each team stand in a single-file line, pairing the opposing children up by age. Give each team a set of missionary cards, and have a coach stand at the front of the line with the tape or sticky tack to give to the child who is up next. When they are told to “go,” the first child from each team will take his card to his team’s map. He should find the country where his missionary is from, post it there, then return to the line, and tag the next person. Continue this until all the cards have been used. The first team to finish putting all their cards on the map in the correct places wins. [Note: Have a coach with the answer key verifying that the cards are put in the appropriate places on the map as the game progresses.]

Scripture Memory Review Game: Relay Races – Divide the children into two teams. Print the verse on paper writing one word on each piece of paper. You will need one copy of the verse for each team. Cut the words of the verse apart. Mix up the papers and place them on the floor. On “Go” have the first person from
each team, run to the words and try to find the first word in the verse. Once he finds it, have him position it, run back, and tag the next team member. Continue until the completed verse is in the right order.

**Opening Ceremonies**

**Songs:** We are Saved; Be a Missionary [See Olympian CD Tracks 5 and 10.]; This Little Light of Mine; I’ll Tell the World that I’m a Christian

**Bible Lesson Review:** Have a fishing pole with a magnet tied on the end of the line. Make some fish with point values on one side and a paper clip where the mouth would be. Make a few fish with the picture of a crab on them instead of points and put them in with the others. Put the fish in a pond point side down. [Use a small swimming pool or container as the pond.] When the children answer a question correctly, they can fish. They can choose to keep fishing and get more points or they can stop at any time. If they keep going and fish out a crab, they lose all of their points for that turn and their turn is over. Whoever has the most points at the end of the game wins.

**The Coach’s Corner**

(►2) (►4)

[Begin the lesson by briefly pointing out a few missionaries that your church supports and where they live on Visual #1. Give just a very small amount of information due to time constraints.]

[Display Visuals #2-3 or have a coach hold up Visuals #2-3. Have the children practice saying “Yeah!” and “No! Let’s Go!” as the appropriate visual is displayed. Tell them to be ready to yell that when the visuals are displayed during the lesson.]

**Coach:** Turn in your Bible to Acts, chapter 13. [Display Visual #1.] Today we are going to talk about two missionaries. In Acts 13:1, the Bible says that there were several prophets and teachers in the church at Antioch. But out of all of those prophets and teachers, **God called two men for a special job.** [Read Acts 13:2.] Now what did I tell you their names were? [Allow children to respond: **Saul or Paul and Barnabas.**] **God had given Saul a new name. He is now known as Paul.** I’d like you to meet Paul and Barnabas now.

[The two coaches playing **Paul** and **Barnabas** enter. Introduce them to the children. **Paul** and **Barnabas** should interact briefly with the kids, saying hi and shaking hands.]

**Coach:** So, Paul, tell me, what was so special about this job God called you to do?

**Paul:** Well, God wanted Barnabas and me to go on a long missionary journey. But we knew it would not be an easy trip.

**Barnabas:** That’s right. We were very excited about **telling everyone we could about Jesus.** But talking about Jesus was a dangerous thing to do back then. Just because my friend here was no longer arresting Christians and throwing them in jail doesn’t mean Christians were safe.

**Paul:** There were still plenty of people around who had it in for us.

**Coach:** These men are very brave. Throughout their journey, they met up with people who wanted to hurt them or kill them for preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ. But did that stop them?

[Display Visual #3. **Paul** and **Barnabas** should say it together with the children.]
Coach: They kept right on telling people about Jesus. Their first stop was **Cyprus**. [Display Visual #4.]

Paul: I remember Cyprus. There was a man there called Sergius Paulus, who was anxious to hear us preach.

Barnabas: But another man named Elymas, who was a sorcerer. He wanted to stop us from telling Sergius Paulus about Jesus.

Coach: [Read Acts 13:9-11.] Isn’t that interesting? God used Paul to make Elymas go blind!

Paul: Because of this miracle, people realized the power of God, and some of them accepted Jesus as their personal Savior.

[Display Visual #2.]

Coach: It would be pretty scary to stand up to a man who everyone said was a sorcerer, wouldn’t it? But did that stop Paul and Barnabas from telling people about Jesus?

[Display Visual #3.]

The next stop for Paul and Barnabas was **Antioch in Pisidia**. [Display Visual #5.] We call it “Antioch in Pisidia” because if you’ll remember, Paul and Barnabas were sent from the church at Antioch in Syria. We say Pisidia so you don’t get them confused.

Paul: Once we arrived, we preached Jesus to the people at Antioch in Pisidia, and many people asked Jesus to be their personal Savior!

[Display Visual #2.]

Barnabas: They even asked us to stay an extra week so they could hear more about Jesus. However, not everyone was happy about this.

Coach: Let’s look at Acts 13:49-52 and see what happened. [Read Acts 13:49-52.] Once again, it was the Jewish religious leaders who wanted to stop Paul and Barnabas from preaching the gospel. But did that stop them?

[Display Visual #3.]

Paul: We sure had to leave there in a hurry but it didn’t stop us from preaching about Jesus.

Coach: Next, our brave missionaries went to **Iconium** [Display Visual #6.] and here again they told everyone they could about Jesus.

Barnabas: Yes, a great many Jews and also many of the Greeks believed in Jesus as their personal Savior.

[Display Visual #2.]

Coach: Things were even worse here in Iconium. The city became divided, believer against non-believer, and a group of the non-believers wanted to stone Paul and Barnabas. But did that stop them?

[Display Visual #3.]

Paul: We found out about the plot to kill us and went very quickly to another place called **Lystra**. [Display Visual #7.]
Coach: What do you think they did in Lystra? [Allow children to respond.] They told people about Jesus! Now, something very interesting happened in Lystra. God allowed Paul to heal a man who had been crippled and unable to walk since he was born.

Barnabas: When the people of Lystra saw that, they began to worship us as though we were gods! They called Paul Mercury and me Jupiter! We very quickly stopped them. We told them that we are men, just like them! We told them we were missionaries for the one true God and Creator of all things, Jesus.

Paul: We also told them that they should be worshiping Jesus, not us.

Coach: So imagine this scene. Paul and Barnabas are in the middle of the city, and people are falling down and worshiping them, and some priest shows up trying to offer sacrifices to them. Paul and Barnabas are running around saying, “Stop!” In the middle of all this, who do you think shows up? Would you believe the same people from Iconium and Antioch in Pisidia [Display Visual #8.] who wanted to kill Paul and Barnabas? Unbelievable! After Paul and Barnabas got everyone to calm down and believe that they weren’t gods, those people from Iconium and Antioch in Pisidia were able to turn the hearts of many of the people at Lystra against them.

[Read Acts 14:19. At the end of the verse, Paul falls to the ground.]

Can you believe it? One minute they are being worshipped as gods, the next minute Paul is being stoned. (1) Do you think that stopped Paul and Barnabas?

[Display Visual #3.]

(8) God did not let Paul die.

Paul: We went back to those cities to teach the people who had been saved how to be more pleasing to Jesus.

Coach: [Addressing the two men] Paul and Barnabas, I want to thank you for helping me with the lesson. I especially want to thank you for all you did in faithfully bringing the Gospel to so many people, even though it was not an easy thing to do.

Paul: You’re welcome. It was our pleasure to be here and see all you.

Barnabas: Definitely! Paul and I just want you to know, we were only able to do what we did because our God and Savior, Jesus Christ, gave us the strength and the courage to be obedient to what God called us to do.

Paul: Amen to that, brother Barnabas! Praise God! He gets all the glory!

[Coach thanks them again, and says goodbye. Paul and Barnabas say goodbye and leave the area.] (9)

Coach: Do you know why Paul and Barnabas went back to those cities and risked being hurt or killed? Let’s open our Bibles to 2 Timothy 1:12 and see what Paul says about this very
Paul and Barnabas knew how important Jesus was, and they knew that they could trust Jesus no matter what. They wanted others to know about Him and live for Him. Even if it meant getting hurt or killed!

Running the Race

Jesus is the reason we are here and the reason Paul and Barnabas risked their lives. They wanted to share the good news that Jesus is God, that He came to this earth to die to pay the penalty for all the bad things that people do, that He rose again, and that they need to believe and receive Him into their lives.

Could I have you all close your eyes? I wonder if there is anyone here who has never heard of Jesus before. Maybe you have heard of Him, but you have never received Him as your personal Savior. Raise your hand, if you would like to hear more about Jesus and how you can make Him your personal Savior. [If children raise their hands ask them to come and stand with you. Have coaches ready to escort the children to an appropriate place to tell them how they can accept Jesus as their personal Savior at this time.]

Did you know you can be a missionary for Jesus right now? You might not be asked to go to a far-off land or even another city, but you can tell your friends and your family today! You can invite your friends to Olympians so they can hear the good news!

Personal Training Time

1. Who can be a missionary?
2. What do you have to tell someone in order to be a missionary?
3. Whom will you tell about Jesus this week? [Have each one pray for the person they will tell.]

The Big O’vent

Backlash [See Big O’vent Mega CD, page 28.] Just like you passed the balloons to the others on your team, pass the gospel message to your friends!
Closing Ceremonies

Paul and Barnabas shared Jesus and the gospel message everywhere they went. Share Jesus everywhere you go this week.

Paul: I’ll sure have lots more to tell you about my life. Sometimes, I find myself in real dangerous situations!

Barnabas: Yes, I remember the time when you were praising and singing songs but you were in the most awful place. You were in...

Paul: Stop, Barnabas! They need to be here next time to find out what happened and where I was!!

Lesson Adaptation Explanations

➤ 1 Extra Action: Get pieces of foam or sponge and make them look like stones by cutting them to shape. Throw them at an object like a chair. Discuss how they think they would feel if someone were throwing real stones at them.

➤ 2 Small Group: Instead of using the PowerPoint, place Visuals #1, 4-8 around different parts of the room. Have the coaches playing Paul and Barnabas move to the locations of the maps during the lesson.

➤ 4 Mostly Churched Children: At least one week before this lesson, hand out missionary letters to certain children in your group. Have the children read the missionary letters at home and come prepared to share about the missionary sometime during Olympians.

➤ 8 Champions Only: Transition the lesson from Paul and Barnabas. Briefly discuss opposition in their lives when they are telling others about Christ. Brainstorm what type of opposition may be at school, in their neighborhoods, or anything else they may bring up that is appropriate. Then brainstorm how they can handle that opposition.

➤ 9 Challengers Only: Teach them the ABC’s of receiving Jesus so that they can show their friends: A=Admit you are a sinner; B=Believe that the only way to heaven is through Jesus; C=Choose to receive Jesus as Savior.
It's Not Easy Being a Missionary – Visual #1
Yeah!
No! Let’s Go!
It's Not Easy Being a Missionary – Visual #4

New Testament Survey – 438
ANTIOCH IN PISIDIA
ICONIUM
It's Not Easy Being a Missionary – Visual #7

New Testament Survey – 441