

9

A Key Witness

Service
We follow Jesus by serving others.

POWER TEXT

"I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace" (Acts 20:24).

KEY REFERENCES

- Acts 21:17-22:29
- *The Acts of the Apostles,* chap. 38, pp. 399-418
- *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 10, pp. 106-113
- student story on page 102 of this guide.

OUR BELIEFS

- No. 13, The Remnant and Its Mission
- No. 11, Growing in Christ
- No. 4, The Son

OBJECTIVES

The students will:

- **Know** that God calls them to testify about Him to others.
- **Feel** privileged to tell others what Jesus has done for them.
- **Respond** by telling others what Jesus means to them.

POWERPOINT

We serve others by telling them what Jesus means to us.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Paul arrives in Jerusalem for the Passover. He is regarded with suspicion by some of the leaders within the church and hostility from some of the Jews from the cities where he has worked. As he tells the leaders about his work and gives them the gifts from the believers, they are convinced that God is with him and is blessing him. Meanwhile the Jews stir up the crowd against Paul, and the Roman soldiers take him prisoner. Paul uses this situation to witness about what God has done for him.

This is a lesson about service.

Paul served by bringing the gospel and his personal testimony about Jesus to the Gentiles and by building a bridge between the Jewish and Gentile Christians. No matter what his circumstances, Paul served by witnessing to the power of God's grace.

Teacher Enrichment

"We have certainly subject matter enough about which to talk. We have the great principles of salvation revealed in the word of God, which concern our eternal welfare, and our very souls should be all aglow with the love of God. We should be ready to speak forth His praises. Christ should abide in our hearts by faith, that we may learn of Him, and be laborers together with Him. We should unitedly go forth, determined, through the help of God, to bear testimony to His glory in every act of our life" (*Review and Herald*, Oct. 22, 1889).

What have I experienced about God that I can share with others? How willing am I to share my testimony, my story?

Welcome

Welcome students at the door and direct them to their seats. Ask them how their week has been. Encourage learners to study their Sabbath School lesson regularly, and use several minutes to debrief students on the previous week's lesson.

Ask: **What was the most interesting part of the Bible story? What activity did you find the most helpful? Which activity was the most fun?** Invite students to share their experiences and/or the handiworks they created for Sabbath School during the week. (The leader should be familiar with the previous lesson to be able to direct the discussion.) This is also a good time to have students recite the power text.

Have students begin the Readiness Activity of your choice. »

Program notes

LESSON SECTION	MINUTES	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS NEEDED
Welcome	Ongoing	Greet students at door. Ask about their week.	
1 Readiness	10-15	*A. My Commercial* *B. Key Witness*	Bibles, small reward (i.e., fruit, bookmark) small cards, large envelope
* Prayer and Praise	15-20	See page 97. Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.	songbooks, serving tray, world map, pushpins
2 Bible Lesson	15-20	Introducing the Bible Story Experiencing the Story Exploring the Bible	preselected guest Bibles, four to eight volunteers, Bible costume props, microphone or megaphone (optional) Bibles, white/chalkboard, markers/chalk
3 Applying the Lesson	10-15	*Know You Care*	paper, pencils
4 Sharing the Lesson	10-15	*Show You Care* *Megaphone*	paper, tape, markers, (optional: string)
* Closing		A. Prayer and Closing Comments B. Reminder to Parents C. Coming Up Next Week	

1

READINESS ACTIVITIES

Select the activity or activities that are most appropriate for your situation.

A

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ small reward (i.e., fruit, bookmark)

My Commercial

Gather the students into a circle. Ask: **Why do companies advertise? What's good about advertising? What's bad? What are some things you "advertise"?**

Say: **We all advertise. For example, someone who's a soccer fan talks about soccer, plays soccer, wears soccer clothes, reads soccer books, and hangs soccer posters in their room. That's their "commercial." Even if you didn't know that the person did all those things, you could tell by their conversation that they were soccer lovers. Think about what you talk about most.** While the students think about their commercial, model to them an example of your "commercial."

Have student volunteers sit in a circle or at the front of the room. The rest of the group will take turns guessing what their "commercial" is, based on what they talk about with their friends. The volunteers can answer only *yes* or *no* to the guesses. Each correct guess gets one point. Appoint someone to keep score. The person with the top number of correct guesses gets a small reward.

Debriefing

Ask: **Why do you talk about the topic you chose to be your "commercial"? Do you ever talk about your faith in Jesus? Why or why not? What makes talking about your faith different from talking about anything else?** Say: **We talk about what we like and what's important to us.** Ask students to find and read Acts 20:24 aloud with you: **"I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace."** Ask: **Do you think only Paul was given the task referred to in this verse? Do we have the same task?** Today we'll learn from Paul's experience how we can talk about our faith by giving a testimony. Our power point this week is:

We serve others by telling them what Jesus means to us.

B

YOU NEED:
- ☐ small cards
- ☐ large envelope

Key Witness

Before class, write the following situations on small cards and place them all in a large envelope.

Ask the students what they think "to witness," and "to testify" mean. Encourage a variety of answers. Then explain what the dictionary says: "to witness" means to furnish proof of, to have personal or direct knowledge of; "to testify" means to make a statement based on personal knowledge or belief, to serve as evidence or proof.

Ask how many have been in a courtroom or seen a film in which a witness testified about things they knew or had seen that would help others make up their minds what to believe about a person on trial. Explain that Christians witness or testify (give their testimony) about what God has done for them or means to them. The Christian's witness helps other people decide how they are going to think about God.

Divide the students into groups of three. Ask each group to pick one card out of the large envelope. Ask each group to discuss ways they could be a witness, or testify about who Jesus is, in the situation written on the card they selected. Ask each group to share their ideas with the rest of the class.

Witnessing Situations

1. You meet a young mother playing with her little girl in the sandbox.
2. You decide to have lunch with a non-Christian classmate so you can share about Christ, but you don't know where to start.
3. Your soccer teammate wonders why you are so happy and positive. She wants to know your secret.
4. You regularly sit next to someone on the bus who smiles at you a lot.
5. You look at the exam schedule and your heart sinks. You have two exams on Sabbath. You have to talk to your teacher. You want to witness for Christ as you ask for a different test date.
6. Two of your classmates were wrongly accused of stealing. They are angry about the accusation. You want to share Jesus' love with them.

Debriefing

Ask: **What makes talking about what you know and believe about God different from talking about anything else? What are some ideas that might help make it easier?** (being friends first, listening, asking the right questions, planning what you could say) Say: **A big part of witnessing for God is just telling what we know about Him personally. Our power point this week is:**

We serve others by telling them what Jesus means to us.

Prayer and Praise

Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). If they have given you permission, share one or two special items from students' Bible study during the week. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.

Suggested Songs

"I'm Gonna Sing" (*He Is Our Song,* no. 10)
"Isn't He" (*He Is Our Song,* no. 50)
"All I Need Is You" (*He Is Our Song,* no. 59)
"King Jesus Is All" (*Praise Time,* no. 26)

Mission

YOU NEED:
- ☐ world map and push pins

Use Adventist *Mission* for youth and adults (go to www.juniorpowerpoints.org and click on MISSION) or another mission report available to you. For the mission story, have a map of the world where the students can identify the location of the mission story and compare it to where they are. You could use pushpins to mark where the mission story takes place.

Offering

YOU NEED:
- ☐ serving tray

Say: **Just now you may be too young to go as missionaries to other countries, but when we bring our offerings, we enable others to share the good news about Jesus.**

Prayer

Encourage one or two volunteers to pray asking the Lord to help each student find an opportunity to share the good news of Jesus with someone they meet.

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

2

BIBLE LESSON

YOU NEED:
- ☐ preselected guest

Introducing the Bible Story

Arrange ahead of time with an acquaintance of yours who is not known to your class to "happen" in at a cue from you. Try to select a friendly, outgoing person who can interrupt the activities and start asking questions with grace. Ask them to wear "non-Sabbath" attire for authenticity. (Don't hesitate to ask someone from another faith. The activity could end up being a two-way blessing.) Arrange with your guest (1) to tell the students that they just happened to stop in (perhaps looking for refreshments at a wedding) and (2) to start asking questions such as: What are you all doing here? What's going on in this building, a wedding or something? It's not Sunday. Do you have anything good to eat here? Why are you all dressed up? Wouldn't you rather be playing outside or watching TV? What's so great about God that you want to be cooped up in here learning about Him today?

Tell the guest ahead of time when to draw their questions to a close and to apologize for interrupting and let themselves out as naturally as possible.

Debriefing

Say: **Imagine that. You all had a chance to witness and testify about Jesus without even having to go look for an opportunity.** Ask: **How did it feel to suddenly have the opportunity right in front of you? How do you think you did?**

Say: **Today our story is about Paul seizing a rather difficult opportunity to tell his entire story about what Jesus had done for him to people who were trying to hurt him.**

Accommodation for students with special needs: Consider involving the students with special needs in observing, discussion, answering questions, if they cannot participate physically in the play.

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ four to eight volunteers
- ☐ Bible costume props
- ☐ microphone OR megaphone (optional)

Experiencing the Story

Prepare and practice for the following play ahead of time. On Sabbath morning, gather your actors (Paul, two traveling companions [optional], two soldiers, commander, voice of Jesus, Ananias—some may play more than one part). Have the commander walk on stage, followed by two soldiers walking Paul in chains. Paul turns and addresses the commander (Acts 21:37-39). They converse. Then Paul begins his soliloquy/testimony (Acts 22:1-7) as the soldiers and commander go backstage. The voice of Jesus comes from an actor offstage (can be one of the people who played the soldiers or commander) using a microphone, megaphone, or speaking loudly. Paul and Jesus converse (verses 7-10). One of Paul's companions (optional, can use one of the other actors) leads him to another part of the stage (representing the house where he was sent). An actor playing Ananias (can be the other soldier or commander) comes to Paul and they converse (verses 14-16). Ananias leaves. Paul again converses with the voice of Jesus (verses 17-21).

Note: A variation would be also to have Luke, seated at a table pretending to write, reading all the narrative part, beginning the story at Acts 21:27 and continuing, except for the parts assigned above, to Acts 22:29. If you have a small class, you may ask volunteers from among the church members who are not in the class to help play the roles. The students would then answer the questions in the debriefing portion of the lesson.

Debriefing

Ask: **Why did Paul ask to speak to the commander?** (to get permission to address the crowd) **Why did he want to speak to the people?** (He never missed an opportunity to witness about Jesus.) **How many times do you think Paul had already told this story? Do you think he ever got tired of telling it? Why or why not? How effective was telling his story at this point?** Have the students read Acts 22:22. **According to our power text, Acts 20:24, Paul considered his life worth nothing if he couldn't do the task the Lord Jesus gave him—"the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace." It didn't matter if the people responded positively or not. Paul's mission was to tell everyone about Jesus whether they decided to believe in Him or not. Let's repeat the power point:**

We serve others by telling them what Jesus means to us.

3

APPLYING THE LESSON

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ white/chalkboard
- ☐ markers/chalk

Exploring the Bible

Write the following questions where all can see. Have the students read Acts 9:1-18 aloud with volunteers each taking a verse or two. Divide the students into two groups. Assign one to read Acts 22:1-10 and the other to read Acts 26:4-18. Have the groups compare these passages to the Acts 9 passage and answer the questions you listed.

Who was Paul talking to?
Who else is listening?
Where is Paul?
What situation is Paul in?
What is different about this story from the other versions?
Why do you think it was told differently?

When everyone is finished, each group should appoint a spokesperson to report back to the class.

Debriefing

Ask: **What was Paul's main strategy in witnessing?** (to appeal to the interests, understanding, background, religion, education, biases, culture of his listeners) **In another passage (1 Cor. 9:19-23) Paul explains that he becomes a servant to everyone to win as many as possible. How do our relationships with people make a difference in how willing they are to listen to what we have to say about Jesus?** (If we don't treat them right, or if we act as if we're better than they are, our actions will be our witness and they might not even listen to what we say.) **What is our power point?**

We serve others by telling them what Jesus means to us.

Accommodation for students with special needs: Use the Bibles with tabs to help students who don't know all the books of the Bible to become familiarized with them.

YOU NEED:
- ☐ paper
- ☐ pencils

Know You Care

Say: **Someone has said that people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care. How does this relate to our power point?** Encourage discussion. Say: **Make a list of people in your world who "know how much you care."** Give them time to create their lists. **Now create another list of those who don't know how much you care.** Ask: **To which people will you be the most effective with your witness?** Say: **Let's repeat together Paul's words as found in our power text this week:**

"I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace" (Acts 20:24).

We serve others by telling them what Jesus means to us.

4

SHARING THE LESSON

YOU NEED:
- ☐ paper
- ☐ tape
- ☐ markers
- ☐ string (optional)

Show You Care

Say: **Choose one person from your second list in Applying the Lesson.** Ask: **How can you begin this week to show them that you care?** Discuss. Say: **You can start by finding ways to build a friendship that will make it easier to share the good news with them.**

Megaphone

Distribute the paper and markers. Tell the students to write GOOD NEWS and the power point diagonally on it. When finished they should roll the paper into a cone shape, leaving a little hole at the smallest end to make a megaphone. Show them a model of how you have done this. They may want to punch two holes on opposite sides of the megaphone to attach string so it can be hung up. Ask: **Whom do you tell when you get good grades at school, win a prize, or go on a special trip? Does this person know Jesus? How could you share with them what Jesus means to you even if they don't already know Him? What could you say if they do already know Him? Which is easier?** Help each student choose a person to whom they can talk to or show Jesus' love to this week. Make sure that each student has chosen a definite person and knows how they are going to approach them.

Debriefing

Say**: Take your megaphones home, and put them somewhere to remind you to share the good news this week**. **Remember this week's power point**.

We serve others by telling them what Jesus means to us.

Closing

Prayer and closing comments:

Say: **Paul was brave and witnessed for Jesus, no matter what the circumstances. We may not be asked to witness in front of crowds, but each of us can serve by telling those with whom we come in contact how much Jesus loves them. Let's pray and ask God to lead us in serving others by sharing what He means to us.**

Reminder to parents:

Say: **Check out the student Bible study guide to find Parents' Pages for your use in family worship, or however you wish to use them to spiritually guide your children. You may listen to the podcast of the lesson online at www.juniorpowerpoints.org/podcast.php ?channel=1.**

Coming up next week:

Say: **Paul shares words of encouragement in a letter to Timothy. We also can encourage others to serve God.**

Notes

Student lesson

A Key Witness

Have you ever had to give a talk in front of your class or read something in church? Imagine that you had to stand in front of an angry mob and tell them why you loved Jesus. How do you think you would feel? Would you trust that God would let you know what to say?

Paul's last missionary trip had come to an end. He had reached Jerusalem at Passover time. The first morning, Paul and his fellow travelers reported to James and the other elders. They wanted to share the news of God's blessings on their work in the many cities they had visited. They also had offerings from the believers in those cities to help the work in Jerusalem.

One day as Paul was visiting in the Temple, some Jews from another city recognized him. "Men of Israel!" they shouted. "Help! This is the man who talks against the people of Israel, the law, and the Temple. He does it everywhere he goes. He has even brought Gentiles into the Temple to defile it." A crowd gathered quickly. Angry hands dragged Paul out of the Temple.

The crowd grew angrier and angrier as they hauled Paul away as if to stone him. They drew the attention of Roman guards, who rushed to find out what was happening. As the Roman soldiers got close to Paul, the people drew back from him. The captain ordered the soldiers to carry Paul to the Roman headquarters until he could figure out what was going on.

"May I speak to you?" Paul spoke calmly and politely to the captain in perfect Greek as they entered the headquarters building.

The captain replied with surprise. "Aren't you the Egyptian terrorist who has taken 4,000 men out into the desert to overthrow the government?"

"No," Paul smiled, "I am a Jew from the well-respected city of Tarsus in Cilicia. Could I please speak to the people outside?" The captain, surprised, granted his request, and they stopped on the stairs. Paul turned toward the crowd. The people started to quiet.

Paul now talked in Aramaic to the people who had been trying to kill him.

"I am a fellow Jew," he began. "I was educated right here in Jerusalem. I became a member of the Sanhedrin and persecuted the followers of Jesus."

He told them how he had been converted, how his own proud heart had been won by the crucified Messiah. There was a power to the story of his personal experience. The people listened to this key witness for Jesus, the Messiah.

Paul continued with the story. When he finally got to the place where God had given him a vision to take the message about the Messiah to the Gentiles, the listening Jews erupted. "Take him away. Kill him. He doesn't deserve to live," they screamed.

The surprised Roman captain ordered the soldiers to take Paul up the stairs and beat him until they could find out what he had done. Almost instantly the soldiers had Paul upstairs, stripped from the waist up, tied to posts, and ready to be flogged.

Finally Paul got the attention of the centurion. "Isn't it against the law for you to flog a Roman citizen who hasn't been convicted of a crime?" he asked politely.

"Stop!" cried the centurion, running for the captain.

"This man claims to be a Roman citizen," he gasped. "We'd better be careful what we do to him."

The captain joined the centurion and returned to where Paul was tied. "Are you really a Roman citizen?" he asked.

"Yes, I am," Paul replied.

"It cost me a lot of money to buy my citizenship," the captain confided as he handed Paul back his outer robe.

"I was born a citizen," Paul answered again.

The captain called a guard. "Remove his ropes and show him to one of the rooms downstairs. I've got to find out what this is all about."

Alone in a guarded room, Paul thought over the events that had taken place since he had arrived back in Jerusalem. He didn't know exactly how this would turn out in the end. But he was glad that, once again, God had given him an opportunity to share his story with so many different people. He knew that what God had done for Him had made him a key witness of God's goodness in sending Jesus as the Messiah. He would continue to testify about God's grace as long as he could, in Aramaic, in Greek, and in chains, if necessary.

KEY REFERENCES

- Acts 21:17-22:29
- *The Acts of the Apostles,* chap. 38, pp. 399-418
- *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 10, pp.106-110 ("Sermon on the Stairs"); vol. 10, pp. 111-113 ("Boy With a Secret")
- Our Beliefs, nos. 13, 11, 4

POWER TEXT

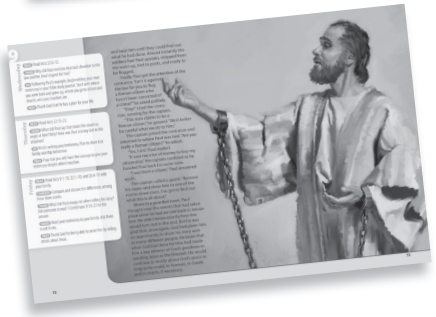
"I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace" (Acts 20:24).

POWER POINT

We serve others by telling them what Jesus means to us.







Sabbath

DO Do this week's activity on page 74.

Sunday

READ Read Acts 21:17-36 and this week's story, "A Key Witness."

REPORT Write or record the story of Paul's arrest as if you were a news reporter.

LEARN Begin to learn the power text, Acts 20:24.

PRAY Pray that you will be willing to witness in difficult circumstances.

Monday

READ Read Acts 21:37-40.

THINK Why did Paul want to address the crowd? Why did he ask permission first? Why did he speak to the soldiers in Greek and to the crowd in Aramaic?

DISCOVER Find out ways to say "Praise the Lord" in more than one language.

PRAY Pray for opportunities to witness.

Tuesday

READ Read Acts 22:1-5.

THINK Why did Paul talk about his background first? Why is Gamaliel important?

CREATE Read Philippians 3:20. Create a passport to reflect your heavenly citizenship.

DISCOVER Find Tarsus of Cilicia on a New Testament map. Where would it be today?

PRAY Pray for your country and its leaders.

Wednesday

READ Read Acts 22:6-12.

THINK Why did Paul mention Ananias's devotion to the law and the Jews' respect for him?

DO Following Paul's example, begin writing your own testimony in your Bible study journal. Start with where you were born and grew up, where you go to school and church, who your teachers are.

PRAY Thank God that He has a plan for your life.

Thursday

READ Read Acts 22:13-22.

THINK What did Paul say that made the crowd so angry at him? Why? How was Paul serving God in this situation?

DO Finish writing your testimony. Plan to share it in family worship tomorrow.

PRAY Pray that you will have the courage to give your testimony despite others' reactions.

Friday

READ Read Acts 9:1-18; Acts 22:1-10; and Acts 26:4-18 with your family.

COMPARE Compare and discuss the differences among these three stories.

THINK What did Paul always do when telling his story? Ask someone to read 1 Corinthians 9:19-23 for the answer.

SHARE Read your testimony to your family. Ask them to tell theirs.

PRAY Thank God for being able to serve Him by telling others about Jesus.