

Apostles Defend Their Faith

Acts 5:12-42

Your fifth- and sixth-graders value both fitting in and standing out. They want to be accepted by peers, but not ignored or unrecognized. They're looking for ways to be the best or the brightest—to get attention for something. Use that desire for distinction as a motivation for kids to stand firm in their faith. Share stories about how you've run into conflict and what you did to get through it.



► Bible Point

Keep following God, even when it's hard.

Key Verse

"Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance" (James 1:2-3).


Weaving Faith Into Life

Kids will learn to follow God in their everyday lives, even when it gets hard.

LESSON	WHAT KIDS DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	Take a Stand <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Agree or disagree with various issues.	masking tape, CD player Teacher Pack: CD	Create a line on the floor with a strip of masking tape. Use approximately two feet of masking tape for every student in your group.
2 Bible Exploration	Instant Drama Department <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Mime the Bible story, and discuss the apostles' persecution.	Bible, costumes	Create quick props and staging. Place chairs on one side of the room for the "members of the Sanhedrin" to sit in when they question the "apostles." Create a "jail" using chairs, desks, or boxes. On the other end of the room, have the "Temple area" where the "apostles" are teaching and healing people. Use cloth pieces or towels for simple headgear costumes, or borrow Bible costumes from your church's resource room.
	Persecuted People <i>(about 20 min.)</i> Read about various people who were persecuted, and write a prayer to God for strength during persecution.	Bibles, pens, CD player, Bible Buzz Teacher Pack: CD	Tear out the Lesson 6 pages from each Bible Buzz student book.

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.





LESSON	WHAT KIDS DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	I'll Raise a Banner <i>(about 20 min.)</i> Create a "Jesus is..." banner to display outside.	Bible Buzz, 3 feet of newsprint per student, broad-tipped markers, scissors, CD player, copies of the lyrics (at the end of this lesson) Teacher Pack: CD	
4 Lasting Impressions	Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Buzz	
	Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.





Take a Stand Supplies

masking tape

CD player

Teacher Pack

CD: “Left or Right”
(track 12)

Take a Stand Easy Prep

Create a line on the floor with a strip of masking tape. Use approximately two feet of masking tape for every student in your group.

1 GETTING STARTED

Take a Stand

What You’ll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went. After everyone has arrived, have kids line up single file on the line and stand at attention, one in front of the other. Explain that they’ll be asked to respond to a dozen statements. If they agree, they’re to take one step to the right. If they disagree, they’re to take one step to the left. Tell kids that they must step off the line in response to each statement, and they can’t change the statements or their responses.

When kids are in position, play “Left or Right” (track 12 on the CD). Each statement is separated by five seconds of silence. Pause the CD if you need more time between any statements.

After the CD’s final statement, “Rich people are usually smarter than poor people,” ask kids to form trios and discuss the following questions.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- How did it feel to take a stand on so many issues?
- How did it feel to see a friend take a stand that was different from yours?
- Would you quit being friends with someone who disagreed with you? Why or why not?
- What if you would have been beaten up for agreeing or disagreeing with any of the issues just mentioned? Would you have still taken the stand? Why or why not?

Say: **It’s tough to take a stand when someone you like—who you also want to like you—is on the other side of the issue. If you’re living as a Christian in an unchristian world, you’ll run into this often. The question to answer is, How can we**
► **KEEP FOLLOWING GOD, EVEN WHEN IT’S HARD?**





2 BIBLE
EXPLORATION

Instant Drama Department

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **When Jesus returned to heaven, he appointed special followers to carry on the work he began. Jesus called these men apostles because they were witnesses of Jesus' ministry on earth. The apostles performed miracles of healing, taught people about Jesus, and got some religious leaders very upset. Let's explore these events by performing our not-quite-yet-famous instant drama!**

After I assign your roles, I'll read the Bible story as the narrator, and you simply act out what you hear as the story unfolds.

Assign the following key roles: Peter, the crowd, a sick person, the high priest, a jail guard, the Sanhedrin, and Gamaliel. Remaining students could role-play additional apostles, people in the crowd, or members of the Sanhedrin.

Distribute costumes and have kids move to their areas of the "stage." Then read the story from Acts 5:12-42, pausing to allow kids to mime the motions. After the drama, lead a round of rousing applause. Then have students discuss the following questions.

Talk With Kids ■■■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What do you think it would've been like to experience what the apostles did?**
- **Do you think you could have acted the way they did? Why or why not?**
- **How do you think the apostles would answer the question "What should we do when it's hard to be a Christian?"**

Say: **The apostles and other followers of Jesus did suffer many times for their faith, but they kept following God, even when it got hard. Let's look into this more.**

Persecuted People

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have students find the "Hard Times" section in Bible Buzz. Form groups of three or four, and assign each group one of the four boxes in the "Hard Times" section. Distribute pens and Bibles. Have groups choose someone to be the reader, another person to record the group's answers, another to report the group's findings, and a fourth person to encourage everyone's involvement and help the group stay on task.



Instant Drama Department Supplies

Bible
costumes

Instant Drama Department Easy Prep

Create quick props and staging. Place chairs on one side of the room for the "members of the Sanhedrin" to sit in when they question the "apostles." Create a "jail" using chairs, desks, or boxes. On the other end of the room, have the "Temple area" where the "apostles" are teaching and healing people. Use cloth pieces or towels for simple headgear costumes, or borrow Bible costumes from your church's resource room.





Persecuted People Supplies

Bibles
pens
CD player
Bible Buzz
Teacher Pack
CD: "Reflective Music"
(track 13)

Persecuted People Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 6
pages from each Bible
Buzz student book.

Say: **Each group will read about times the apostles or other leaders were persecuted or punished for their beliefs. Some groups will explore in more detail the story we just acted out, and the rest of the groups will explore other stories. Take about 10 minutes and complete your group's assigned section.**

Allow about 10 minutes for kids to work. Give two- and one-minute warnings. When groups have finished, ask each group's reporter to share his or her group's findings with the class. Have students record the information shared for each story in the Bible Buzz.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **How were the stories that we shared similar? different?**
- **Based on these stories, how would you define persecution?**
- **When you face persecution, how is it similar to what the apostles and others faced? How is it different?**
- **What should you do when it's hard to be a Christian?**

Say: **We probably won't face the kind of persecution we've explored in the Bible today. But we can experience persecution in various ways for believing and practicing our faith. The apostles and others looked to God for strength. Let's do that now.**

Have students find the "Prayer for the Persecuted" section in Bible Buzz. Have kids find a place to work alone.

Say: **Each of you may feel certain ways that you're persecuted. Your friends may tease you, or your school may think that you're a negative example for your beliefs. Take a few minutes to write a personal prayer to God, asking him to give you strength when you face persecution of any kind.**

Allow kids a few minutes to write their prayers.

Play "Reflective Music" (track 13 on the CD) while kids write their prayers. After a few minutes, say: **Just as you have done, the apostles and others who faced persecution looked to God for strength. Then they started teaching again and living out their faith. You, too, can ► KEEP FOLLOWING GOD, EVEN WHEN IT'S HARD. Let's do that now.**



3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

I'll Raise a Banner

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have students find the Key Verse, James 1:2-3, in Bible Buzz (Lesson 6): "Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance."

Pass out copies of the lyrics, and play "Persevere!" (James 1:2-3) (track 14 on the CD). Lead the kids in singing the song a few times.



Consider it pure joy

**Whenever you face trials of many kinds,
Because you know the testing of your faith
Develops perseverance.
Persevere! Hold on!
Troubles make your faith grow strong.
Persevere! Hold on!
Troubles make your faith grow strong.**

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"Persevere!" (James 1:2-3) by Carol Smith. © 2003, 2007 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

Ask:

- How can the words of this song help you when it's hard to be a Christian?

Say: **We should ► KEEP FOLLOWING GOD, EVEN WHEN IT'S HARD. The verse in James says "to consider it pure joy." That's something the apostles did, even when they were beaten for teaching about Jesus. Let's create banners that show how we feel about Jesus. No matter how others respond to these words, if we truly believe in Jesus, we can't keep quiet about him.**

Distribute three-foot lengths of newsprint large enough to be used as a banner. Set out an assortment of broad-tipped markers, and ask kids to make banners that begin with



I'll Raise a Banner Supplies

Bible Buzz

- 3 feet of newsprint per student
- broad-tipped markers
- scissors
- CD player
- copies of the lyrics (at the end of this lesson)

Teacher Pack

- CD: "Persevere!" (James 1:2-3) (track 14)





Daily Challenges Supplies

Bible Buzz

“Jesus is...” Explain that they will have five minutes to finish their banners, and then make a banner yourself.

After the students have finished their banners, ask them to follow you outside, where you’ll hold up your banners so people can see them as they drive by. Then, on the church lawn or in the parking lot, gather students in a circle. Pray that they would have courage to be faithful when life gets tough. Dedicate your banners to be used for God’s glory.

Allow kids to take their banners home, encouraging them to hang their banners in a prominent place inside or outside their houses this week.

4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You’ll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Let’s each choose a Daily Challenge for the week to help us remember to ► KEEP FOLLOWING GOD, EVEN WHEN IT’S HARD.**

Have kids find this week’s Daily Challenges on the Bible Buzz pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- **Write the name of someone you plan to talk to about Jesus—and be sure to follow through!**
- **Tell someone in your family today’s Bible story. See how much you can remember!**
- **Each morning, pray and tell God that you’re going to follow him that day—and then go for it, even if it’s hard!**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell the kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What’s a practical way you’re going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.**

Say: **Let’s ► KEEP FOLLOWING GOD, EVEN WHEN IT’S HARD by following through on our Daily Challenges this week.**



Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about perseverance. Kids can also do the activities in the “HomeConnect” section of their Bible Buzz pages with their families.

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church’s families. Available at group.com/digital.

Close with prayer.



**Lyrics** ■■■■**Persevere! (James 1:2-3)**

Consider it pure joy
Whenever you face trials of many kinds,
Because you know the testing of your faith
Develops perseverance.
Persevere! Hold on!
Troubles make your faith grow strong.
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