

INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS

Missionaries Serve God Around the World

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Leader Preparation

Today's Word

Perseverance (continuing to work hard and reaching toward a goal even when obstacles and difficulties arise)



Study focus

To help make boys and girls aware of how the Cooperative Program helps missionaries share the gospel with people all around the world; to understand some of the obstacles and difficulties that missionaries face.

Bible Passages

> Acts 13:1-5a (HCSB)

In the local church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius the Cyrenian, Manaen, a close friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work that I have called them to." Then, after they had fasted, prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them off. Being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they came down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus. Arriving in Salamis, they proclaimed God's message in the Jewish synagogues.

Things to have ready for Session 3:



Warm Up

- A world globe
- A ball 8" in diameter or larger

Huddle

- 3" diameter circles cut from colored construction paper (3 to 5 circles per child)
- hole punch
- ribbon cut in 6" lengths
- marking pens

We're a Team

- 6-inch lengths of drinking straw (1 per player)
- lightweight metal or plastic washers (1 for each team, but have several on hand)

Home Team

- Make copies of the letter to send home to parents (Resources for Session 3, Item 1)



Warm Up

(Activities for early arrivers)



Needed to play: a world globe; a ball

Warmly greet the kids as they arrive, then invite them to stand in a large circle.

Place the globe on a small table in the center of the circle.

Explain that you will toss or bounce the ball to someone in the circle. When that person catches the ball, she is to name a foreign country or a city in a foreign country.

If the players desire, they may walk to the center of the circle, spin the globe and place their finger on a land mass. The leader will help the child say the name of the country or city. (Examples: Spain, Paris, Moscow, Nigeria, Kenya, etc.)

Continue for several minutes with the last person who caught the ball tossing it to someone else in the circle.



WHAT IS THE INTERNATIONAL MISSION BOARD (IMB)?

The International Mission Board was born with the formation of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1845. Known originally as the Foreign Mission Board, the first missionaries to foreign countries were commissioned in 1846.

After Southern Baptists assumed support for some missionaries in China, the denomination's missionary efforts grew slowly. The War Between the States and the agrarian economy of the South made support difficult, and the mission board often was hampered by debt between 1861 and 1943. Significant growth in the board's overseas work did not occur until after World War II.

Empowered by the growing participation of churches in the Cooperative Program and with an enlarged worldview, Southern Baptists answered the call, sending 1,000 missionaries by 1955. Under the 25-year leadership of Dr. Baker James Cauthen, global expansion continued, sending 3,000-plus missionaries to 94 countries by 1980.

In 1976 Bold Mission Thrust was begun as a Southern Baptist effort to evangelize the world by the year 2000. From 1981 to 1992, Keith Parks led the IMB to adopt new, innovative strategies to reach restricted nations and unreached people groups.

Other initiatives brought the Missionary Associate Program in 1961 for those not qualified for career missionary appointment. The Journeyman Program for young college graduates was begun in 1965 and later expanded into the International Service Corps. Also, the number of IMB volunteers has soared, topping 30,000 in 2000.

How has God used CP and these efforts of the International Mission Board? Today through the IMB, Southern Baptists support over 5,500 missionaries who are engaging over 600 different people groups around the world.



Take the Challenge

(Large group learning)

Lead the kids to follow you to the large group area.

SAY: *That was fun! Our bouncing ball really traveled around, didn't it? Missionaries travel around a lot, too—only they don't just bounce from one place to another. They stay where they go for a while. Usually they stay in an area for several years. While they are in their assigned area, they teach others about Jesus.*

ASK for responses to these questions:

Where in the world would you like to travel to tell others about Jesus?

What could you tell someone there about Jesus?

SAY: *Today we'll be learning about how real-life missionaries serve God in places all over the world. Our missionaries from the International Mission Board travel many miles to faraway places. Often their work is not easy, and they may become discouraged. Most missionaries have a lot of perseverance! That means they continue to work hard to accomplish the mission and ministry to which God has called them.*

CONTINUE: *Being far away from home, friends, and family is sometimes difficult, too. But God helps missionaries to be strong and to keep their minds focused on the work He has called them to do.*

For new missionaries going to countries in East Africa, a special training camp has been set up to help them learn how the people there live. Called the "Forty Days, Forty Nights" training program, the new missionaries live 24 days in a tent in the African bush and live with a Kenyan family for a week.

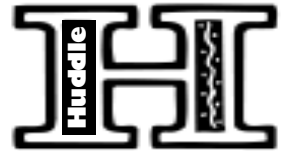
Jonathan Jamar, from Oklahoma, finished his training. After spending a week with a Kenyan family, this is what he had to say; "It's quite a bit different than Oklahoma. You have to walk two hours to the store; you bathe in the river; you walk 100 yards to the outdoor toilet. I know now how the people are living."

This experience really helped Jonathan to learn how the people in East Africa live. "Living with them gave me a whole new understanding of their daily lives. Nothing is easy—everything is hard. For example, you can't just pop something in the microwave to eat; it's an all day event just to cook one meal." (from an article published in the *Oklahoma Baptist Messenger*, December 18, 2003, written by Clinton Wolf, IMB, East Africa region)

ASK the kids to list some of the things missionaries like Jonathan might have difficulty with.

- The list may include: being such a long distance from home, family, and friends; not having all of the comforts of an American home; having to learn a new language; getting used to new foods, different clothing, no TV, etc.

Lead the group in a prayer for Jonathan and other Southern Baptist missionaries who leave their homes to go to a foreign country to tell others about Jesus.



Huddle

(Small group learning)

Prayer Reminder Chain

Supplies needed: 3" diameter circles cut from colored construction paper (3 to 5 circles per child), hole punch, ribbon cut in 6" lengths, marking pens.

Remind the children in your small group that missionaries need our prayers. Many of them serve in areas of the world where living conditions are much different than those in the United States. Today we want to make a prayer reminder chain to encourage us to pray daily that God will give our missionaries perseverance when their work becomes difficult.

Give each child 3 to 5 pre-cut circles. Ask them to think about words or phrases that would remind them of things to pray for on behalf of our international missionaries. Some suggestions are: good health, language skills, good food, local customs, new friends, etc.

Instruct the kids to write one word or phrase on each circle. As they finish, assist them with punching a hole in the top and bottom of each circle. Give the boys and girls lengths of ribbon to join the circles.

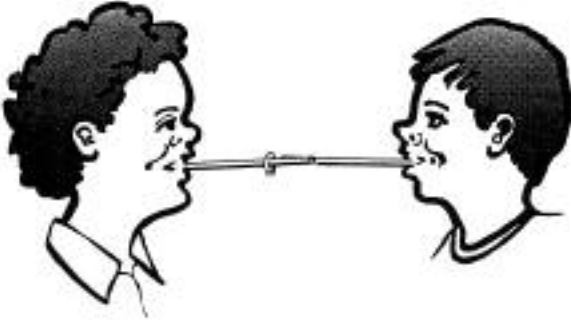
Remind the children to take the prayer reminder chains home and add them to the Teamwork Center made in the first session. Encourage them to spend a few minutes each day at the Teamwork Center reading the Bible, praying for missionaries, and reviewing things learned in this study.

Close the small group time with a prayer for missionaries like Jonathan Jamar, the missionary we learned about in the large group time today.



We're a Team

(Recreational activities)



Straw Relay

(from *Missions Games and Activities for Children Grades 1-6*, published by the North American Mission Board, SBC, p. 61)

Needed to play:

- > 6-inch lengths of straw (one for each player)
- > 1 lightweight metal washer for each team

Minimum of four players per team

Divide group into two teams (equal in age and ability).

Each team forms a straight line.

The first person on each team is given a washer.

At the signal, team members pass the washer down the line by slipping it onto the straw in the mouth of the next player without using their hands.

If the washer falls, it must be started again at the front of the line.

The first team to get the washer down the line is the winner.



Finish Line

(Closing)



After the winner of the relay game is declared, ask the kids how they felt while playing the game. Answers will include various words to describe frustration and disappointment. Remind them these words could also describe how missionaries feel about the work in foreign countries. Commend the group for having perseverance to finish the game even though it was difficult at times.

Lead the group in prayer for the Cooperative Program, the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, and the missionaries they support in countries around the world.



Home Team

(From learning to action)

This activity is suggested to be done at home to reinforce what was learned in this session about working together. Make copies of Item 1: Letter to Parents to send home with each child.

Resources for Session 3, Item 1. Duplicate one per child. Send home with child at end of Session 3.

Dear Parent,

In this session we learned how the Cooperative Program helps send missionaries who serve in countries around the world. To help you continue your child's interest in international missions, encourage daily prayer for missionaries. Assist your child in placing a toll free telephone call to the Prayer Line for International Missions at 1-800-395-PRAY (1-800-395-7729). The Prayer Line is available 24 hours a day.

If you have Internet access, spend some time with your child at www.kidsonmission.org. There are games, videos, and other exciting activities for your child. Remember, if you do not have Internet access at home, most public libraries have the service available at no charge to users.



COOPERATIVE PROGRAM

Love In Action

www.sbc.net/cp