

LESSON SNAPSHOT

BOTTOM LINE:

Don't just listen to God; obey Him.

OBJECTIVE:

Kids will learn that a hero listens to and obeys God.

KEY PASSAGE:

Acts 10:23-35, 44-48, Cornelius

MEMORY VERSE:

"So the last will be first, and the first will be last." Matthew 20:16 (NIV)

SUMMARY:

All of the first followers of Jesus had been Jewish people. Some of them believed that only certain people could believe in Jesus. But God called Cornelius to seek out Peter to prove that God's love and salvation was for everyone.

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Give us open ears and willing hearts to hear and obey You.

In Jesus' name,

Amen

MEMORY VERSE

"So those who are last will be first. And those who are first will be last." Matthew 20:16 (NirV)

"So the last will be first, and the first will be last." Matthew 20:16 (NIV)

"So those who are last now will be first then, and those who are first will be last." Matthew 20:16 (NLT)

"So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen." Matthew 20:16 (KJV)

LARGE GROUP:

Bring as many adult leaders up on stage as possible. Let the adults go first, reciting the memory verse from memory, then let the kids go. Who does the best job?

SMALL GROUP:

Challenge a nearby small group to a memory verse contest. Which group can say it the fastest without looking at it? Which group can say it the loudest?

SKIT

SIR, YES, SIR!

ITEMS NEEDED:

A “BibleCon” sign (see description below)
A table and chair set up for autographs
An autograph book
A soldier uniform for Cornelius

CHARACTER BREAKDOWN:

2M

CHARACTERS:

Ernie - A Bible fan
Cornelius - A Roman soldier

Cornelius is sitting at the autograph table. Ernie enters from stage right, walking to stage left. Cornelius stands.

CORNELIUS: Atten-TION!

Ernie stops and freezes. Cornelius walks around the table to Ernie.

CORNELIUS: Right – FACE!

Ernie turns to the right, facing the audience.

CORNELIUS: What’s your name, soldier?

ERNIE: Ernie.

CORNELIUS: Ernie what?

ERNIE: Ernie, sir!

CORNELIUS: What do you think you’re doing?

ERNIE: Getting autographs, sir!

SKIT

CORNELIUS: Present – BOOK!

Ernie holds the book up like a rifle. Cornelius takes it.

CORNELIUS: Hmm. Nehemiah. Josiah. Micaiah. Who's this Lydia?

ERNIE: Naaman's servant girl, sir!

CORNELIUS: Oh yes, I met her. Nice girl. So you like heroes, soldier?

ERNIE: Sir, yes, sir!

CORNELIUS: You learn a lot about being a hero from these people?

ERNIE: Sir, yes, sir!

CORNELIUS: Do you think you can be a hero?

ERNIE: Sir, I don't know, sir!

CORNELIUS: You don't know? Son, do you want to know what it takes to be a hero of the faith?

ERNIE: Sir, yes, sir!

CORNELIUS: A hero is someone who listens to God and obeys Him! It doesn't matter if you're young or old, rich or poor, famous or infamous, or in my particular case, a Jew or a Gentile. Jesus died so that He could have a relationship with all of us. And if we listen to His voice and do as He commands, we can be heroes. Is that clear?

ERNIE: Sir, yes, sir!

CORNELIUS: I can't hear you.

ERNIE: SIR, YES, SIR!

CORNELIUS: Good. You want me to sign your autograph book, son?

ERNIE: SIR, YES, SIR!

CORNELIUS: Oh you can cut that out now. I'm tired of barking at you.

ERNIE: *(relaxes and sighs)* Thank you.

SKIT

CORNELIUS: Ernie, right?

ERNIE: Yes, sir.

CORNELIUS: I'm Cornelius. I'm the guy God used to show Peter that Jesus really and truly died for everyone. Don't ever let anyone say that God can't make a hero out of someone. Anyone who hears God's voice and obeys Him can be a hero.

Cornelius offers Ernie the book. Ernie takes the book back.

ERNIE: Sir, yes, sir!

Cornelius pats Ernie on the shoulder.

CORNELIUS: Go be a hero, son!

OBJECT LESSON OR KIDS SERMON

ITEMS NEEDED:

A G rated movie and a PG or PG-13 movie

How old were you when you learned that not every movie is for you? Many years ago, a decision was made to rate movies so that parents would be able to make wise choices about what their children can and cannot see. Parents know that if a movie is rated PG or PG-13, like this movie, it may have things that are not appropriate for kids. But if a movie is rated G, that means there's nothing bad in it. Anyone can watch.

The good news we have today is that anyone can be a hero of the faith. It doesn't matter how old or young you are, what your nationality may be, or anything. The only thing that matters is that we listen to God and obey His commands. If we listen to and obey God, He can make heroes of us. He can use us to spread His love to others.

Anyone with open ears and an obedient heart can be a hero. If you're ready to become a hero, it's time to take the first step. Give your heart to Jesus, and start listening. You'll be amazed at the things you can do in Jesus' name!

LARGE GROUP GAME

SHOE SCRAMBLE

ITEMS NEEDED:

None

INSTRUCTIONS:

This is a game for everyone. Split the group into two groups (or more, if you have a large number). Have the kids stand in a circle, and have everyone take off their shoes and toss them in a pile. Have the adults stir the piles, then say, "Go!" The first group to have everyone find and put their own shoes back on wins.

VARIATION:

To really scramble the shoes, toss them all into an empty rubbermaid bin and have the adults shake them up before tossing them on the floor. Yahtzee!

WHAT'S THE POINT?

Just as this game is for everyone, everyone can be a hero if they obey God.

LARGE GROUP LESSON

BOTTOM LINE:

Don't just listen to God; obey Him.

OBJECTIVE:

Kids will learn that a hero listens to and obeys God.

KEY PASSAGE:

Acts 10:23-35, 44-48, Cornelius

INTRO:

Imagine a world where everyone is the same as Superman. If everyone had his DNA, if everyone had his abilities, would Superman really be so super? Of course not! Superman is, actually, an alien from another world, and everyone from his home planet was just like him. Here on Earth, however, Superman is unique. He is special because he is different. He is special because he has super powers ordinary humans do not have.

Believe it or not, Superman is based on an older science fiction character, a man named John Carter. John Carter was a Civil War soldier from Earth who ended up on the planet Mars. Mars has less gravity than Earth, which means that on Mars, it appeared as if John Carter had special abilities. He could leap high and far in the air. He was stronger than the Martians, too, because the gravity on Mars was so much lighter. To the Martians, John Carter was special. He was a super-man because he had super strength and super jumping abilities.

No one wants to read comic books about Jim Smith, ordinary guy. We want to read about people who are special. We love to read about people who have special powers because deep down – we aspire to be special too! For those of you who have been following this series the last seven weeks, I have good news. You can be a hero, and you don't need super powers from above to become one. You need ears that listen to God, and you need a heart that is willing to obey God's Word.

In the early days of the church, many of Jesus' followers only preached the good news to their fellow Jews. Jesus was a Jew himself, and the Jews were God's chosen people. God had long ago promised a Messiah who would save "His people," and Jesus was that Messiah. That means Jesus only came to save the Jews, right?

LARGE GROUP LESSON

That's what many people believed. Then Peter, a disciple of Christ and a Jew, met a man named Cornelius. Cornelius was about as far from a Jew as you could get. He was a soldier in the Roman army! He's also a hero of the faith for the very reasons we just mentioned.

READ ACTS 10:23-35, 44-48

MAIN POINT:

Cornelius was a Roman, but he believed in the same God as the Jews. He had heard stories about Jesus, and he wanted to know more. God gave a vision to Cornelius that a man would come to see him. He gave a similar vision to Peter, urging him to go and see Cornelius. What happened next was an eye-opening experience for them both.

Cornelius became a Christian because he became convinced that Jesus was the Christ. Jesus died not just for the Jews but for all people – including him and his family! Peter was just as changed by this encounter as well. The faith of this Roman centurion convinced him that the good news of Jesus was for all people. Anyone can become a follower of Christ. Anyone can become a hero of faith if we listen to God and obey Him!

DRIVE IT HOME:

Kids, right now around the world, there are millions of heroes living out their faith. Many are right here in America, celebrating Christ in their churches the same as us, but many more are overseas. There are men and women serving God on the mission field, sharing Jesus with people who have never heard about Christianity. These people left their comfortable homes, learned a new language, and traveled far away to be heroes, sharing the good news of Jesus.

There are other heroes who are worshipping God in secret. They meet not in buildings like ours, but in houses and basements. They must hide because they live in countries where believing in Jesus is actually a crime. Some of these countries ban Christianity because they favor another religion. Some ban it because they do not believe in God at all. They routinely arrest and punish people for being Christians, and yet, in spite of this oppression, more and more people in these dark and unfriendly places believe in Jesus because of the faith of those heroes.

Christians come from all countries, all nationalities. They are young and old, rich and poor. Some are leaders. Many are followers. All have the ability to become heroes. They read the Word of God. They listen for God's teachings to instruct them. Then they obey what God commands. They are not afraid to stand up to the authorities that try to stop them because they know their eternal future is secure. They challenge us by their example to become heroes as well, to give our lives to Jesus and to follow Him.

LARGE GROUP LESSON

It all starts when we take the first step Cornelius took in our scripture. We must give our hearts to Jesus and receive the Holy Spirit. We can listen to God through the Holy Spirit, and He will guide us, showing us how we can serve and meet the needs of others. All are welcome in God's family. Anyone with a willing heart can become a Christian. If you're ready to accept that invitation, today is your day. Let Jesus in, and start your hero's journey today.

CLOSE WITH A SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Give us open ears and willing hearts to hear and obey You.

In Jesus' name,

Amen

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (K-2ND)

ICEBREAKER:

If you were in the military, would you rather be in a tank, in a plane, or on a boat?

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY:

Matthew 20:16

Challenge a nearby small group to a memory verse contest. Which group can say it the fastest without looking at it? Which group can say it the loudest?

SMALL GROUP GAME/ACTIVITY:

Play a game of Red Light/ Green Light to let the kids move around a bit.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Read Acts 10:23-35, 44-48

Who was Cornelius?

Who went to see Cornelius?

What were the visions Cornelius and Peter have?

What did God show Peter through Cornelius?

Can anyone who obeys God become a believer and a faith hero?

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Give us a faith like Cornelius!

In Jesus' name,

Amen

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (3-5TH)

ICEBREAKER:

If you were in the military, would you rather be in a tank, in a plane, or on a boat?

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY:

Matthew 20:16

Challenge a nearby small group to a memory verse contest. Which group can say it the fastest without looking at it? Which group can say it the loudest?

SMALL GROUP GAME/ACTIVITY:

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

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What were the visions Cornelius and Peter have?

What did God show Peter through Cornelius?

Can anyone who obeys God become a believer and a faith hero?

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God,

Give us a faith like Cornelius!

*In Jesus' name,
Amen*

POWERPOINT REVIEW GAME

TRUE OR FALSE.

Cornelius was a Roman soldier.

TRUE

Jews like Peter were not supposed to associate with Romans like Cornelius.

TRUE

Peter was warned in a vision not to see Cornelius.

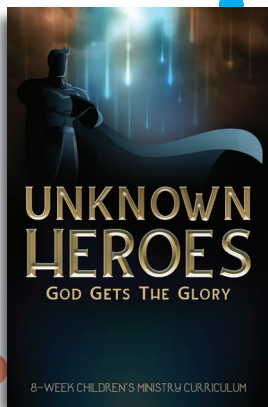
FALSE

Cornelius refused to listen to God and obey Him.

FALSE

Cornelius shows us that anyone can be saved and become a follower of Jesus.

TRUE



MAKE IT STICK

5 Simple Ways You Can Make This Lesson Stick With your Kids

Unknown Heroes Lesson 7

THIS WEEK'S LESSON: CORNELIUS



IN THE CAR:

Ask your child what they learned about this week on the drive home:

All of the first followers of Jesus had been Jewish people. Some of them believed that only certain people could believe in Jesus. But God called Cornelius to seek out Peter to prove that God's love and salvation was for everyone. Acts 10:23-35, 44-48, Cornelius



HANGING OUT:

Make this week's lesson real:

Point out all the traffic signs and signals as you drive around this week. Ask your kids why it's important to obey these signs. Then ask them why it's important to obey God's Word.



AT DINNER:

Here are some great discussion starters:

- Who was Cornelius?
- Why is Cornelius a hero?
- Why is it important that we not only listen to but obey God?



AT BEDTIME:

Quiz your child on this week's memory verse:

"So the last will be first, and the first will be last." Matthew 20:16 NIV



PARENT TIME:

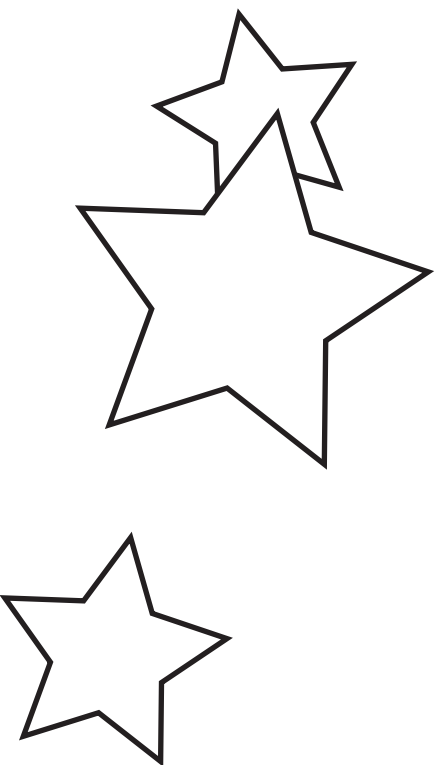
What you need to know:

The conversion of Cornelius was a huge moment in the new church. It was the moment when Peter realized Jesus had truly died for everyone, not just the Jews. If Peter had not listened, the church's growth would have been stunted. Ask God to help you and your kids to be good listeners so that you will hear and obey God's direction for your lives.

CRAFT ACTIVITY

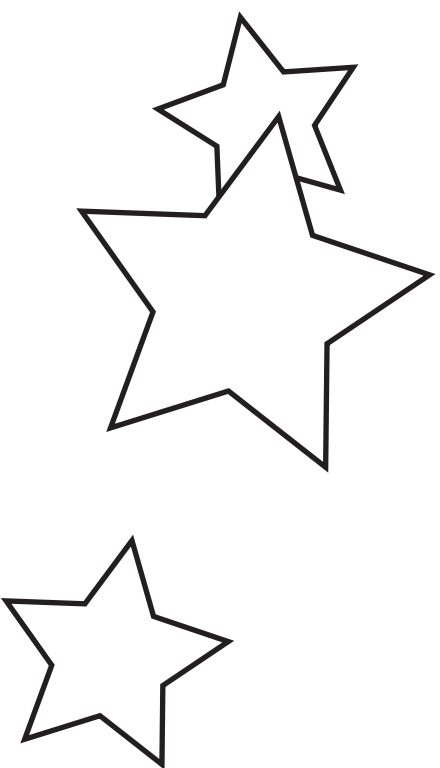
Have the kids draw and color Cornelius as a super hero. You can give them templates of a human shape to start with, or let them do it freehanded.

As an option to weekly drawings, you can have the kids work on one piece of artwork for eight weeks, in which they will draw all 8 heroes onto a comic book cover of their own design.



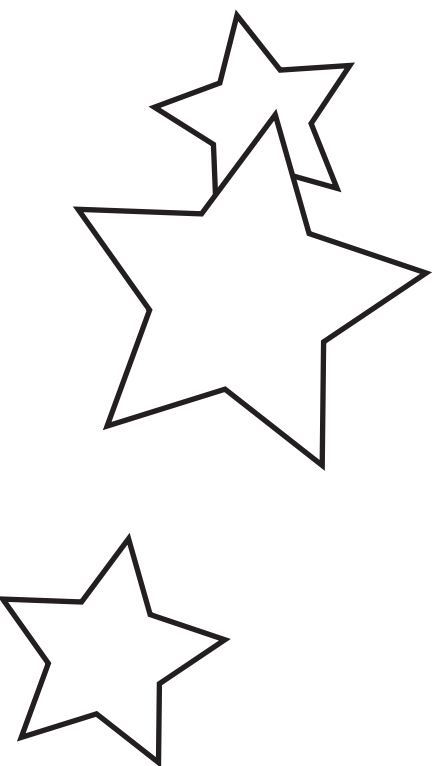
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- Matthew 20:16 (NIV)



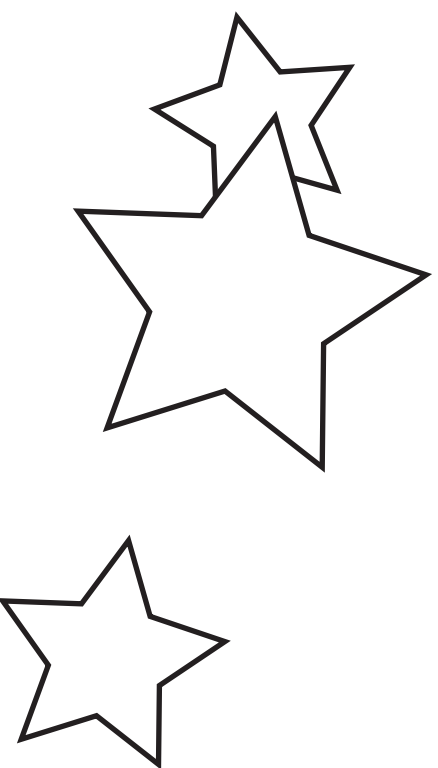
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