

Giving It Back to God

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Upper Elementary

- Lesson 5
- Winter 2023-24
- By: RLD Editorial Team
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Lesson Focus:

Share your faith and leave the results to God.

Bible Basis:

Acts 17

Materials Needed:

Step 1:

Internet access

Step 4:

- Index cards
- Pens/pencils

Summary & Links:

Students will learn how people react differently to the same thing as they explore sharing their faith and letting God take care of the outcome.

Memory Verse:

“So is my word that goes out from my mouth; It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.”

—Isaiah 55:11

Echoes Memory Verse

For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.

Step 1:

Students will learn how people react differently to the same thing as they explore sharing their faith and letting God take care of the outcome.

Imagine that as you drive home from church today, your family witnesses a car accident. Your family stops to help and make sure that everyone is okay; other drivers who witnessed the accident stop as well. When the police arrive, they interview you, your family members, and the other drivers on scene. The officer asks the exact same questions of each person who saw the accident happen, but some of the answers the officer receives are different.

- **Why would the police officer get different answers from witnesses who saw the same accident?** *(The witnesses' answers are dependent on their view of the accident and where they were/what they saw when it happened.)*
- **Does the fact that the officer received different answers to his questions mean that someone is lying?** *(Not necessarily; just because one witness saw something that another didn't does not mean that a witness is being dishonest.)*

Eyewitness testimony, while helpful, is not always reliable. Why? Let's check it out:
Neil deGrasse Tyson on Eyewitness Testimony.

Much as we might try to be fully objective, there will always be things that influence the way we perceive a situation, such as our beliefs or memory. Our perception is unique to us.

Every day, all day long, you make choices and decisions that guide your actions, your words, and your thoughts. The choices that you make may be completely different than someone else's, or they might be exactly the same. Our lives are filled with situations in which our reactions may be very different than someone else's.

People can respond differently to something as simple as food. Take a second to think about your favorite fast food restaurant.

- **In your opinion, what's the best fast food meal? What's the worst?** *(Answers will vary. Make sure that your students understand that not everyone responds the same way to the same thing.)*
- **Can you think of a time in your life when you experienced several people reacting in different ways to the same situation?** *(Student responses will vary, but may include sporting events with a winning team [and happy fans] and a losing team [with unhappy fans], different reactions to a new food served for dinner, a movie or TV show that is liked by some but disliked by others.)*

- **Is it easy or hard to predict how others are going to respond to our actions?**
(Answers will vary—we are all different, we can't expect to know how someone is going to react, especially if they have had a bad day or are in a bad mood.)

We can only be responsible for what we do and the choices we make; we can't control what others will say or do. As we continue to learn about Paul, we'll see in today's lesson what happened when Paul shared his faith and got very different reactions from the people who were listening.

Step 4:

If your class is meeting online, invite them to bring supplies with them to class.

Today's lesson showed us how differently people may respond to the message of Jesus. Some people, like those in Berea, may eagerly listen and soak up every word spoken about the love and grace of Jesus. Others may respond like the people of Athens with resistance. Paul didn't know how his message was going to be received, but he faithfully shared it anyway. He trusted that God would use his words according to His plan. Paul didn't let the fear or uncertainty of how someone might respond affect his desire to share the love of Jesus with others.

We can follow Paul's example and share Jesus with people in our lives who don't know Him as their Lord and Savior. At times, however, that is easier said than done.

What concerns might cause us to hesitate in being like Paul and telling others about Jesus? *(We don't know how someone might respond—they could show anger or resentment. They might make fun of us. We might lose their friendship; they might tell others to be angry with us.)*

Instead of worrying about how someone might respond to us, we need to instead focus on doing what God asks of us, knowing that in the end, the results are completely up to God. He is the One who changes hearts and makes lives new; we are simply the messenger. We need to share the love of Jesus with those who need Him, and then we need to give that person back to God, trusting Him for the results.

Distribute supplies (or invite students to have them ready at home). **On this card, write the name of someone in your life you have told about Jesus—someone who has not yet given their heart to Him. If you haven't told anyone about Jesus, think of someone who needs to hear about the good news of the Gospel and the eternal life we are promised through a relationship with Jesus. If God is putting more than one name on your heart, feel free to write each of those names.**

Give the students a few minutes to think and write on their cards. When they've finished, instruct them to put their card somewhere they can see it regularly and be reminded to pray. They can also use the card as a reminder to share Jesus' love with that person.

I encourage you to place this little box in a place where it can be a reminder to you to pray for the person inside who heard the Gospel. We need to share Jesus with those who don't know Him. And what a blessing to know that even if it seems that they did not respond favorably, the rest is up to God; He will guide and direct their hearts according to His perfect plan.

Close in prayer.