

TRANSFORMING *the* WORLD



*Level 4, Quarter A
Teacher Guide Sample (Lesson 7)*



LOYAL HEARTS

Acts 4:32—5:42

Big Idea *The Holy Spirit encourages Christians to remain loyal to God.*

Lesson Summary

In this lesson, we see the contrast between Barnabas' selfless sharing and Ananias and Sapphira's selfish attempt to deceive the Church. Their selfish pretense indicated that their hearts were divided in loyalty—that they were honoring themselves above the Lord. God's judgment sent a chilling warning to early believers.

The witness of the early Church continued to spread in spite of difficulties and opposition. But this witness did not escape notice by the Jewish high priest and his associates. Filled with jealousy, they threw the apostles in jail and again warned them not to teach in the name of Christ. But the apostles chose to obey God's message. They never stopped proclaiming the Good News about Jesus. Today's lesson will show children what true loyalty looks like through the lives of the early believers. They'll discover that to be 100% loyal to God, He must be the most important focus of their hearts.

Bible Background

The believers gathered at Solomon's Colonnade or Porch, part of the Temple compound with a large open area. The early Christians didn't hide at all—they spoke in a very public place in the center of Judea.

In Acts 5:21, the "council" and "senate" refer to the full assembly of the 70 elders of Israel (also called the Sanhedrin). In the Sanhedrin, the Sadducees had more political power, yet they listened to Gamaliel, a Pharisee. Gamaliel was respected because he was a grandson of the founder of Israel's strongest school of religion. Paul had studied the law under Gamaliel's instruction (Acts 22:3). In his address to the Sanhedrin, Gamaliel gave wise advice, asking them to adopt a "wait-and-see" attitude.

Teacher Devotional

As you read today's Bible passage, you may think back on a time when you were loyal to obey God even though your circumstances were difficult. Maybe you recall a time when you acted selfishly instead. Each day is a new opportunity to ask the Holy Spirit to empower you to witness—whether it is easy or hard for you. Just like the early Church, you can choose to never stop serving God!

Lord, thank You for sending the Holy Spirit to encourage me. I pray that I will be found loyal to You and not let circumstances sway me away from serving You through my witness. May the children see a good example in my words and actions today. I praise You! Amen.



DISCIPLE TARGETS In this lesson, your children will...

KNOWLEDGE (truths)

- K** • The early Church enjoyed unity and freely shared their possessions with each other. (Acts 4:32)
- N** • Ananias and Sapphira wanted to honor themselves more than God. (Acts 5:1-10)
- O** • They must obey God rather than people. (Acts 5:29)

CHARACTER (emotions)

- F** • Apprehensive about lying and deceiving others.
- E** • Courageous about telling other people the Good News about Jesus.
- E** • Eager to put God first in their lives.
- L**

CONDUCT (actions)

- D** • Ask God to help them have an undivided heart that is loyal to Him.
- O** • Identify the priorities of their hearts.
- Speak encouraging words.
- DiscipleSkill: How to Walk in the Spirit—Pray to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Make Disciples

Teacher—decide where to place these elements into this lesson.

Opening Prayer

Pray for courage for the children as they begin to accept the responsibility of sharing the Good News in their world. Ask the Lord to help them remain loyal to the task whether circumstances are easy or hard.

WorldWatch

Missionary Biography 7 of 12—Amy Carmichael—Loneliness and Promise *Missionary stories can have a profound impact on children. Take 1-2 minutes to read this brief narrative. Download discussion questions at DiscipleLand.com/downloads.*

Other members of the small band of evangelistic missionaries are happily married and have children. Although Amy has made many friends, she is lonely. She wants a close friend—a husband—with whom she can spend the rest of her life. She does not want to face the future alone. This thought begins to bother Amy so much that she decides to spend a whole day in prayer. Amy finds a nearby cave to be alone with Jesus and talk to Him about her feelings.

In the cave, the Holy Spirit speaks to Amy, “Those who trust in Me shall never be lonely.” Jesus’ peace floods her heart. Amy is thankful that God promises that although she will never marry nor have children of her own, she will never be lonely as long as she trusts in Jesus. It is in Jesus, not in friends, families, and marriage, that a Christian experiences true satisfaction and joy. For the rest of her life, no one ever thinks of Amy as lonely. Even though she never marries, many people love Amy, and she is a mother to many adopted children.

Missions Education—The First Team

To add this component to the lesson, download the teacher script at DiscipleLand.com/downloads.

DISCIPLESHIP TIP

Just as Barnabas was an encourager, you can take on the role of encouraging each student. Build your relationship with each child by saying something positive. Focus on words that will go deep and touch hearts. “Great answer” is a good thing to say, yet you can make it more meaningful by saying “Great answer. It shows you understand the point of the Bible story.”

KeyVerse

Topic: The Church Speaks Out

Reference: *Acts 5:42*

Memorization Activity: The early Church didn’t stop preaching about Jesus. They obeyed the command to witness and didn’t allow anything to stop them. Write the verse on the board from your favorite translation of the Bible and explain any difficult words or phrases. Call out an activity (examples: jump on left foot, jumping jacks, march in place, etc.) for the kids to do while they read the verse. Have the children continue doing the activity until you point to a child to name a new activity. Give all the students an opportunity to name an activity. Keep practicing until the kids know the verse by memory.

Bonus Resources

Access free downloads for this lesson at DiscipleLand.com/downloads.

- Contemporary Dee Cy Paul Chip (discipleship) story
- More activity ideas
- Activity templates and downloads
- *Explore Scripture* teacher notecards

SUPPLIES

General Supplies

Bibles, Disciple Guides (pages 25-28)
Pencils, markers, crayons
Paper, notecards, scissors, tape, glue

Make Disciples

None

Spark Interest

- WHAT’S IN MY HEART: poster board
- GOOD CHOICE/BAD CHOICE: none

Explore Scripture

Teaching Picture 4A.13—Barnabas’ offering
Teaching Picture 4A.14—Apostles arrested

Inspire Action

- WHAT’S IN MY HEART pt. 2: hearts from Spark Interest
- ACCEPTANCE SPEECHES: none

Spark Interest

Teacher—Choose one activity that will involve students and grab their attention.

What's In My Heart? (10 minutes)

This object lesson invites children to think about what is the true focus of their hearts. **Supplies:** poster board, markers or crayons

If you choose this activity, you will follow it up with part two in *Inspire Action*. Before class, cut two identical very large hearts out of poster board. For the first heart, use cardboard or paper that is a different color on one side than it is on the other or create your own two-tone paper by gluing two different colors of construction paper together. Cut the two-tone heart into puzzle pieces, making sure that each child will have a piece. Put the second heart aside.

Give each child a piece of the heart. Ask your students to draw something that is very important to them on the light side of their piece (make sure everyone uses the same color side of the heart). Reassemble the heart and look at the varied items that students have drawn. Discuss why those things are important to them. Leave the heart on the floor or table and come back to it during *Inspire Action*.

OR

Good Choice/Bad Choice (10 minutes)

This game helps kids see the difference between good and bad choices.

Call out a category and ask children to tell some good choices they could make and what might happen because of their good choices. Then let them call out some bad choices and some corresponding results.

Good choice/bad choice categories:

- to do after school
- to say to your mom when she's tired
- to watch on TV
- to eat for breakfast
- to teach your little brother/sister

God wants us to make good choices, so the Bible is full of examples of people who chose well. Sometimes we read examples of people who didn't choose well, and these examples remind us not to make the same mistake. Today we will learn that Barnabas shows us a good example to follow. However, Ananias and Sapphira's choice will show us what not to do.

Disciple Guide—page 25

Help children remember a time when they encouraged someone else. Complete this page at the beginning of class or after a Spark Interest activity.

25

LOYAL HEARTS

Acts 4:32—5:42



A generous donation: Joseph of Cyprus, nicknamed Barnabas, gives the proceeds of a real estate sale to the apostles.

Read Acts 4:36-37. The name

Barnabas means “encourager.” How do you think Barnabas encouraged Peter and John?

he showed his love for God and the believers by donating money

LOCAL HERO

Where we honor your good neighbor!

BARNABAS

Real Name: Joseph

Hometown: The island of Cyprus

Jewish Tribe: Levi

Nickname: Son of Encouragement

Occupation: Missionary

Best Friends: Paul and Mark

Personality: Generous, encouraging, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith

Distinguished Deeds:

- Sold a field and gave all the money to the apostles (Acts 4:36-37).
- Introduced Saul (Paul) to the wary disciples (Acts 9:26-27).
- Directed by the Holy Spirit to go with Saul on the first missionary journey (Acts 13:2-3).

► When did you encourage someone? Write about it.

answers will vary

Explore Scripture

Teacher—Teach the Bible lesson. Include Teaching Pictures and exercises from the student Disciple Guides.

Acts 4:32—5:42

Have you ever thought about the fact that God knows your every thought? God sees everything you do in secret even if no one else is watching. The Bible says that someday He will judge and reward each person according to his or her deeds. When we are faithful to God no matter what, we please God. Let's learn about some possible awards people in the early Church could receive in heaven. Have the children open their Bibles to Acts 4. Ask for volunteers to read the different passages of Scripture.

Disciple Guide—page 26

As you teach the *Explore Scripture* section, have the children fill in the awards.



Read Acts 4:32-37. Show the Teaching Picture 4A.13 of Barnabas' offering. How did the believers prove they were of "one heart and mind?" (They shared all they had and gave money to the apostles.) Barnabas sold his property and gave all of the money to the apostles. What did this show about Barnabas' heart? Encourage responses. Let kids fill in the first award on page 26 of their Disciple Guides.

Read Acts 5:1-11. Picture the apostles with more money being placed at their feet. This time something was different. God knows a person's heart, and He sees the things we do in secret. The Holy Spirit guided Peter to discern that Ananias had lied. Why do you think Ananias and Sapphira lied about the price of their property? (They wanted to appear generous before the apostles.) Pride sometimes leads people to make poor choices. Our choices reveal what is really in our hearts; even though we try to hide the bad parts from everyone—God knows. What might Ananias and Sapphira have tried to hide from the apostles? (Possible answers: they were greedy, they really were selfish and didn't love God, etc.) It is sad to realize that Ananias and Sapphira didn't have to sell their land or give away any of the money. They pretended to be loyal followers of Jesus and tried to deceive God and the Church. Why did God punish Ananias

and Sapphira so severely? (God wanted to teach all the Church a lesson.) Explain that Ananias and Sapphira's sin was not keeping part of the money, but lying to the Holy Spirit and to the believers in the Church about it. How would you have reacted if you had seen what happened to Ananias and Sapphira? Let the kids share their reactions. Fill in the second award.

Read Acts 5:12-16 You might think life in Bible times could be boring—not for the apostles! How did the apostles spend their time? (They performed miracles.) How did people react to these miracles? (They respected the apostles, became believers, and brought their sick to be healed.) How were the apostles able to do these amazing things? (The Holy Spirit gave them power.) Fill in the third and fourth awards.



Read Acts 5:17-26. Show the Teaching Picture 4A.14 of the apostles being arrested. The apostles were following God's command to witness and they were arrested. How do you think they felt? Encourage responses. How long were they in jail? (During the night

26

NEWS One Heart and Mind

Help our presenters hand out these awards. Fill in who should receive the awards and why.

Best Encourager:
(Acts 4:36-37)
Barnabas—donated money

Worst Acting:
(Acts 5:3,8,9)
Ananias & Sapphira—lied to God

Best Reaction:
(Acts 5:11)
the Church—felt the fear of God

Best Way to Get New Believers:
(Acts 5:12)
the apostles—did miracles & wonders

Worst Reason to Arrest Someone:
(Acts 5:17-18)
the high priest and leaders—jealousy

Best Rescue:
(Acts 5:19-20)
the angel—led apostles out of jail

.....Mysterious deaths linked to greed.....Jesus-preachers arrested again after healing many.....

the angel freed them.) **When the men of the Sanhedrin wanted to talk with the apostles, where did they find them?** (The apostles were in the Temple courts teaching.) **Why did the apostles teach in public, instead of hiding from the Sadducees?** (The angel of the Lord had told them to preach.) **Fill in the fifth and sixth awards.**

Read Acts 5:27-42. **The Sanhedrin had already told the apostles they were not to teach in the name of Jesus. What was Peter's response to not obeying the Sanhedrin?** (He said he must obey God rather than man.) **Who convinced the men of the Sanhedrin not to kill the apostles?** (Gamaliel.) **What did he say that convinced them?** (If the believers were not of God, they would fail on their own.) **Why were the apostles able to rejoice after being beaten?** (Possible answers: they were proud to suffer for Jesus, the Holy Spirit filled them, they knew they were loyal to Jesus, etc.) **Fill in the seventh, eighth, and ninth awards.**

The apostles were loyal to God because they made God the focus of their hearts. They knew there would be times when they would not be able to obey both God and man. We should always obey our parents, people in authority,

and the government laws except when they are asking us to sin against God—then we must remain loyal to our Lord, Jesus Christ. If at any time you are asked to do something that displeases God, turn your back and walk away from it. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you stay loyal to God by keeping Him first in your heart.

Disciple Guide—page 27

Complete the HeartBeat, encouraging students to examine their lives for the things that are important to them.

Inspire Action

Teacher—Choose one activity that will encourage learners to apply the Bible truth to their lives.

27

Best Speech to the Sanhedrin:
(Acts 5:29)
Peter—we must obey God, not men

Best Response to a Beating:
(Acts 5:41)
the apostles—rejoiced to be worthy

Best Way to Spend Life:
(Acts 5:42)
the apostles—spreading Good News

The Holy Spirit encourages Christians to remain loyal to God. This means God is always first in your heart (you let Him be more important than anything or anyone else).

What is in your heart? Write down the three most important things in your life. List them in order of importance.

answers will vary

2.
3.

Now look again at your list.
Is God on your list?
How important is God to you?

BEAT

Jailbirds seen next day in courtyards.....Council split on appropriate action..... **DNEWS**

What's In My Heart pt. 2 (10 minutes)

This follow-up activity expands the children's understanding about loyalty to God. Supplies: hearts from Spark Interest

If you did the “What’s in My Heart?” activity, look again at the heart puzzle that the students assembled. Probably all the things represented are good things as long as they are kept in perspective. Talk about the different things represented on the puzzle pieces. **What happens when something takes first place above everything else in your life?** Encourage responses. **The things that fill your heart are the things that occupy your time. It is hard to remain loyal to God when you are spending all your time on other things.**

We want to be loyal to God and let Him be the most important focus of our hearts. Lay the second uncut heart on top of the first one. Write “GOD” in large letters across the middle of the heart. Draw arrows from edges of the heart inward toward the word “GOD.” How can we keep God the focus of our hearts and stay loyal to Him? Write the children’s suggestions on each arrow.



Acceptance Speech (10-15 minutes)

This speech activity allows students to creatively express their knowledge of the Bible story.

Have the children refer to pages 26-27 of their Disciple Guides. Let each child choose an award winner from the activity and pretend to give an acceptance speech for that person. Remind the kids to think about how that person felt and to use their knowledge of Bible times to give an appropriate acceptance speech.

Closing Prayer

Lead the students in a prayer, dedicating their hearts to God so that they can always be loyal to Him. Ask for God to give them opportunities to witness throughout the week.

Closing Words

The believers seemed to be getting along well, sharing and teaching others about Jesus. They chose to loyally serve Jesus. Next time, we'll discover how the early Church dealt with the familiar statement, "But that's not fair!"



Teacher—Children should complete this page on their own or at home with a parent.

DiscipleSkill How to Walk in the Spirit

Spirit-Filled—Use this prayer as a model for your kids: **Heavenly Father, Your ways are perfect. But I often do not listen to You or obey You. I now choose to leave my sinful ways and return to You. Thank You for forgiving me through Jesus Christ's death on the cross. I give You control of my life. In faith, I ask You to fill me now with the Holy Spirit. Thank You for loving me. Thank You for directing my life through Your Spirit's power. In Jesus' name, amen.**

DiscipleZone.com

Direct children to DiscipleZone.com/4A7 for:

XploreMore Discover more about the early Church.

SwordWork Read Acts 6:1-7.

WorldWatch Discover where most Dalits live.

Dee-Cy-Paul Live! Cy learns that his father is very sick.

KeyVerse Memorize Acts 5:42.

HymnNotes Learn "The Church's One Foundation."

Lesson 7

DiscipleSkill How to Walk in the Spirit

SPirit-FILLED

Christians who thirst, repent, trust, and obey can receive the Holy Spirit's fullness. They can live the full and meaningful life that Jesus promised (John 10:10).

The Holy Spirit fills the lives of Christians who:

1. hsrTti: **thirst** Strongly desire to be filled with God's Spirit (John 7:37-39).
2. petneR: **repent** Confess your sins and turn to God (1 John 1:9).
3. sTurt: **trust** In faith, ask God to fill you with the Holy Spirit (Luke 11:13).
4. eybO: **obey** Submit to the Lordship of God's Spirit (Galatians 5:16).

Are you filled with the Holy Spirit right now? YES / NO / **NOT SURE**

Do you want to be filled with God's Spirit? **YES** / NO / NOT SURE

You can receive the Holy Spirit's filling through genuine faith and heartfelt prayer. Use the four steps above to guide your words.

28

The Church Speaks Out **Yes** Acts 5:42

Class Code

seven

How many deacons were chosen to serve?

Find the answer at DiscipleZone.com/4A7

Disciple Guide—page 28

Encourage kids to complete DiscipleZone before the next lesson. Explain that activities are available at a special website—

DiscipleZone.com—where kids go to grow! Children should visit the website with their parents to complete the online activities.