

Lesson 8 / January 24, 2010

Jesus and Pineapples

for use as

STEP 1

Lesson 8 Focus:

Come and see Jesus
with me.

Lesson 8 Bible Basis:

John 1:35-45

Students will discuss the importance of showing love to people as they share Jesus.

Materials:




- a whole, unopened pineapple
- canned, chunk pineapple in a dish
- toothpicks (so that each student can spear a piece of pineapple)

Before your students enter, set out the unopened pineapple on a table. Make sure the canned pineapple is out of sight, then call their attention to the strange-looking fruit before them.

Do you know what this thing is?

Pass around the canned version of the fruit for them to sample. Have them taste it and tell you what they think.

Some of you like the fruit; some of you don't. But I think all of us can agree that if we didn't know what was under that hard, thorny shell, we'd never guess. Who would expect sweet yellow fruit inside? A whole pineapple looks more like a hand grenade than food.

-  What if you'd never heard of pineapples, and someone told you this ugly thing was good to eat? Would you believe them?
-  Is there anything that person could say that might convince you?
-  What if the person was a close friend of yours, and you knew they cared for you? Then would you be willing to give that thorny pineapple a try?

You might say that Jesus is like a pineapple. Because of screwed-up ideas people have about Him, they don't think He looks so great on the outside. For example, they might think Jesus is a fake, or irrelevant to modern life, or only good for religious nutcases.

But those of us who have decided to follow Jesus know better! We know that inside, Jesus is good and loving. In fact, meeting Him is the best thing that's ever happened to us.

Lesson 8
Memory Verse

I will tell of the kindnesses of the LORD, the deeds for which he is to be praised.

—Isaiah 63:7a

The problem is that when we try to tell others about Jesus, they sometimes see the twisted ideas people have plastered on the outside of Him instead of encountering the love inside. It's like the pineapple—they see thorns instead of fruit.

So when we share Jesus, the most important thing we can do is to make sure people know that we care about them first. After they trust us, they might be ready to listen.

Today, let's read from the Bible about some of the first people who decided to follow our Savior. Interestingly, they were all introduced to Him by their friends.

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your *Middle School Teacher's Guide*; your Step 4 appears below.)

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Jesus and Pineapples

for use as

STEP 4 
Lesson 8
Focus:

 Come and see Jesus
 with me.

Lesson 8
Bible Basis:

John 1:35-45

Students will plan ways to bring people to Jesus.

Materials:

- a knife to slice the fresh pineapple
- paper
- pencils

Have you ever heard of “servant evangelism”? It’s a way to introduce people to Jesus that is based on showing kindness. Like we said at the beginning of class, many people have negative ideas about Jesus. But if your friends and family know that you really care for them, they might be more open to hearing about Christ.

So servant evangelism is about showing people God’s love in a practical way. It involves doing a “random act of kindness” for someone, with no strings attached.

This week, I want you to pick out someone in your life who doesn’t know Jesus yet—a friend or family member. Make a commitment to pray for that person every day this week.

Then, your mission is to do something kind for them. It doesn’t have to be anything big—here are a few easy ideas:

- Do an extra chore at home for your parent or sibling who doesn’t know God.
- Buy your friend a gift with your own money. Or if you’re too broke for that, just buy him a snack at lunch.
- Write a note telling one of your best friends how much you appreciate her friendship.

If you and your students need more ideas, check out:
www.servantevangelism.com/matrix/matrix.htm

Many of these outreach suggestions are intended for groups, but they can be easily adapted for individuals.

You can also find good ideas at: www.actsofkindness.org/stories

If your friends ask why you’re doing something so nice for them, say, “I wanted to show you God’s love in a practical way.” You may get a chance to tell them a little about your faith in Jesus right then! Or you might not—they may shut down the conversation. But that’s okay, you’re still building a foundation for the future.

Lesson 8
Memory Verse

I will tell of the kindnesses of the Lord, the deeds for which he is to be praised.

—Isaiah 63:7a

Remember that in today's Bible reading, Andrew, Peter, Philip, and Nathaniel all found Jesus because they were introduced by friends! And an act of kindness is a terrific way to build a friendship. So this week, give someone you care about a little taste of God's love.

Pass out the paper and pencils. Ask each student to write down who they plan to pray for, and what they plan to do as an act of kindness. Pray that God will open doors for the students to talk with their friends about Jesus.

Then at the end of class, don't forget to eat the pineapple! If you need directions for cutting it, see:

<http://gourmetfood.about.com/od/cookingtechniques/ss/cutpineapple.htm>

Note: To challenge your students further, consider planning a servant evangelism outreach to your community! For example, you might hand out free sodas in a public place, or offer to rake leaves for the homeowners around your church. The important thing is that you serve people with no strings attached. For more information about the concept of servant evangelism, explore www.servantevangelism.com.

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