Prophets & Promises Unit 2, Lesson 11 ~ Ages 8-9

Barnabas Encourages the Church

Lesson Aim: To show the importance of encouraging one another.

THE WORSHIP

Who God Is: The Spirit Who Changes Us

THE WORD

Bible Story: Acts 9:26-28; 11:22-26; 14:19-23

What He Has Done: God led Barnabas to encourage the church and its leaders.

Key Verse: Acts 11:23

THE WAY

Christ Connection: Deuteronomy 3:28

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE

“Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into His likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord.” 2 Corinthians 3:17b-18

Unit 2: The Promise of Change

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TEACHER’S ENCOURAGEMENT

This week, read Colossians 2:2-3. Please join us in praying, “Thank You, Lord, for faithful friends who honor You in each relationship. Fill us all with Your Spirit that we might be faithful friends, encouraging and building up the church. Amen.”

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**RESOURCES:** Supplemental materials are available at ResourceWell.org.
To spark anticipation, encourage arriving children to meet and greet one another with today’s question. 

Meet & Greet Question: Where is a favorite place you have gone on a trip?

GAME: PAUL’S FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY BOARD GAME

Purpose: Children will play a board game to help them visualize Paul’s first missionary journey.

Supplies: 42 paper plates or pieces of paper, marker, dice, floor tape

Prepare: Write each of the following cities on a separate paper plate: Antioch, Seleucia, Salamis, Paphos, Perga, Pisidian, Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe. Tape the paper plates on the floor using the Paul’s First Missionary Journey Board Game Map (available at ResourceWell.org) as your guide. Create extra board game spaces by adding three additional plates between each city.

Optional: Create a more elaborate game board. Draw or mark the outline of land masses, the island of Cyprus, and the Mediterranean Sea. See ResourceWell.org for a map of Paul’s First Missionary Journey which you can use as a guide.

Do you like to travel? (Children respond.) Saul and Barnabas traveled on a missionary journey together. A missionary is someone who goes to another land to tell people about Jesus. On this journey, Saul was called Paul, which is the Greek version of his name. Their journey is known as Paul’s first missionary journey.

Let’s pretend we are traveling on that journey with Paul. This huge board game on the floor is like a map for us to follow their path through the cities and regions around the Mediterranean Sea. Find a partner and we will form teams of two, just like Paul and Barnabas.

Directions:
1. Children form missionary teams of two (Paul and Barnabas).
2. Teams line up behind the paper plate labeled Antioch.
3. The first team rolls the dice and moves that number of plates along the path. For example: If a team rolls a four, they would proceed to Seleucia.
4. Teams take turns rolling the dice and moving along the path.
5. The first team to return to Antioch wins the game.
6. If time allows, continue playing until all the teams have returned to Antioch.

Limited space? Play a table top version. Print the Paul’s First Missionary Journey Board Game Map (available at ResourceWell.org). Lay the map on a table top as your game board. Use coins or small pieces of colored paper as team game pieces.
Today, we worship the Spirit who changes us. One of the ways He changes us is by encouraging us. To encourage is to give someone hope or to urge someone to do something. The Holy Spirit encourages us through people like Barnabas, through God’s Word, and through our teachers, family, and friends. Let’s encourage each other now by singing the words to our Bible Memory Verse. Sing Bible Memory Verse Song: “Where the Spirit of the Lord Is.”

Let’s pray together that God will encourage others when they receive our offering. We can thank Him for sending us all we need when He sent Jesus. Sing: “Praise the Lord, O My Soul” while collecting the offering.

Read 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17.

Perform Commander Cosmos script or read storybook: Prophets & Promises Unit 2, Lesson 11.

You may also choose to sing songs that focus on hope and encouragement.
Teacher Tip: As you move from worship to instruction, change rooms or locations within a room to help redirect the children’s focus to the Bible story. During this transition time, have each child write his or her name on a card and place it in the Golden Bowl.

Before we read God’s Word, let’s go over our Class Covenant. A covenant is an agreement. Just as God made a covenant with His people, I ask each of you to make this covenant promise with me today. Listen as I read our Class Covenant: “I will keep my eyes on my teacher, my mouth in control, my ears on God’s Word—knowing God is my goal.”

Last time, we learned the believers prayed hard for Peter when he was in prison. How did Peter escape? (God sent an angel to rescue him.)

If a Bible Timeline is available, point to Barnabas and Paul (Circa 46-48 A.D.). Soon after Saul began following Jesus, he was called Paul, which is the Greek version of his name. For a Bible Timeline Review activity, see the GOT TIME? segment of this lesson. Today, we will see how Barnabas was an encourager to Saul and to other believers. To encourage is to give someone hope or to urge someone to do something. The name Barnabas means “Son of Encouragement.”


Before we read, let’s stand and ask God to open our eyes, ears, hearts, and minds to His Word today. Who would like to pray that for us? Child prays aloud. Be seated. In Jerusalem, Barnabas encouraged the other believers to accept Saul after God changed his heart on the road to Damascus. Read Acts 9:26-28.

Soon the church in Jerusalem heard that the news about Jesus had spread to the town of Antioch. Let’s see what happened next. Read Acts 11:22-26.

The Holy Spirit told the prophets and teachers of the church in Antioch to set Saul and Barnabas apart for a special work. Saul and Barnabas sailed to many places to tell people about Jesus. On this journey and for the rest of his life, Saul was called Paul. This trip is known as Paul’s first missionary journey. A missionary is someone who is sent on a mission to another land. In most cities on this journey, the people who did not want to hear about Jesus would plot against Paul and Barnabas, but in each town, many believed. On their way back to Antioch, Paul and Barnabas returned to many of these places to encourage the new believers. To see what happened in Lystra and on the journey home, read Acts 14:19-23. Read Acts 14:19-23.

If a map is available (see ResourceWell.org for maps of Paul’s Journeys), point out Antioch (Antakya, Turkey on modern maps). If possible, use the map to track their first journey in the following order: Antioch, Seleucia, Salamis, Paphos, Perga, Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe.
The apostles and the other believers in Jerusalem didn’t know God had changed Saul’s heart, so they were afraid he was there to have them arrested. How did Barnabas encourage them to accept Saul? (He told them how God changed Saul’s heart on the road to Damascus and how Saul was boldly preaching about Jesus in Damascus.) Did they trust Saul then? (Yes.) Barnabas was a peacemaker by helping them trust Saul. How can you be a peacemaker this week? Is there a new person at your school or church whom you can help feel welcome as Barnabas did with Saul? (Children respond.)

Who did the church in Jerusalem send to the believers in Antioch? (Barnabas.) When Barnabas arrived, he encouraged people to believe in Jesus and he encouraged the believers there to stay true to Jesus. What does “staying true to Jesus” mean to you? (Children respond.) It means to put Him first in your life and follow His teachings. Who has encouraged you to believe in Jesus? (Children respond.) Who encourages you to stay true to Jesus? (Children respond.) Who can you encourage to stay true to Jesus? (Children respond.) Who did Barnabas bring to Antioch? (Saul.) How long did Barnabas and Saul stay in Antioch to encourage and teach people about Jesus? (One year.) What did the people of Antioch call those who follow Jesus? (Christians.)

What was Saul’s new name? (Paul.) What special work did the Holy Spirit have for Paul and Barnabas? (To take a journey sailing to different places to tell people about Jesus.) What happened to Paul in Lystra? (He was stoned and dragged out of the city.) What happened when the disciples gathered around him? (He got up and went back into Lystra.) What happened in Derbe? (They preached about Jesus and many believed.) In each town they visited, some people believed and would gather as the church. What did Paul and Barnabas do when they returned to the towns on their way back to Antioch? (They encouraged the believers. They appointed elders in each church and committed them to the Lord.)

Connecting the Old Testament, the New Testament, and Us

God’s people have always been called to encourage each other. Check out the directions God gave to Moses about Joshua.


God chose Moses to encourage Joshua. He chose Barnabas to encourage Paul. Who do you think God has chosen for you to encourage? (Children respond.)
THE WAY continued...

Revelation 5:8
GOLDEN BOWL

Teacher Tip: Write the names of classmates, local church leaders, and children in other nations or others who need prayer on small pieces of paper. Place the papers in a golden bowl.

Revelation 5:8 says our prayers are like sweet smelling incense in the golden bowls at God’s throne. I’m going to lift each one of your names to God’s throne as you pray for each person silently. Then, we will pray the Lord’s Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13) aloud together. Let’s pray.

Lord God, we lift up to Your throne the name of each child here. We trust You to watch over us and our needs, the ones we say aloud and the ones hidden in our hearts. First, we lift up to You ___ , ___ , ___ . Read names in Golden Bowl.

Now, we pray the prayer Your Son taught us: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

When only 5 minutes remain, begin this segment.

FINAL FIVE MINUTES

TREASURE TREAT: Today, your Treasure Treat is note of encouragement (available for download at ResourceWell.org). Fill in the blanks and give it to a friend to encourage him or her to do their very best as they serve the Lord.

Dear __________,

God has given you a special gift. You are very good at __________. Keep up the great work and never give up.

From __________


Teacher Tip: Collect Daily Ways in a basket or other container and periodically reward children as a group for completing the challenge.

OFFERING OF ART: Until it is time to be dismissed, make an Offering of Art. For your offering, draw a picture of Barnabas encouraging Paul.

PRAYER REQUESTS: As children work on their Offering of Art, ask how you can pray for them this week. Write requests in a prayer notebook.

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE SONG: Play the Unit 2 Bible Memory Verse Song, “Where the Spirit of the Lord Is,” in the background as children wait to be dismissed.
If time remains, choose from the connected activities below.

**GOT TIME?**

**SNACK: FOOD FOR THE JOURNEY**

**Purpose:** Children will eat a snack while personally connecting to the story.

**Snack Suggestion:** Extra-virgin olive oil, bread slices or small rolls, small plates, optional: spices

**Optional:** Mix spices, such as Italian seasoning, with the olive oil before serving.

Let’s enjoy a snack that Paul and Barnabas may have eaten while traveling around the Mediterranean Sea. In Bible times, many people grew olives and pressed them to make oil. We eat the same thing today! As we dip our bread in olive oil and eat it, let’s think about how Barnabas was a faithful friend. Everywhere Barnabas traveled, he encouraged people to believe and trust in Jesus. He also encouraged people who already believe in Jesus to grow closer to Him.

**Directions:**
1. Serve bread and a spoonful of olive oil on a plate for each child. Serve drink.
2. Child prays to thank God for the snack.
3. Show children how to break the bread into pieces and dip them into the olive oil.
4. Ask each child to answer this question: “How can you encourage your friends?”

**GAME: GOING ON A TRIP**

**Purpose:** Children will play a travel-themed memory game to help them encourage each other.

**Supplies:** Small travel bag

Barnabas was a great encourager. He encouraged Paul to keep preaching about Jesus. He encouraged the churches to keep telling people about Jesus, even when people were trying to stop them.

We can encourage each other, too. What is one thing you do well? Maybe you are good at soccer, or math, being a good friend, playing a musical instrument, or reading. Let’s pretend we are going on a trip together and encourage each other in our special talents.

**Teacher Tip:** If you have a large group, you may want to divide the group in two and have each group play this game separately.

**Directions:**
1. Sit with the children in a circle. Give the travel bag to the first child.
2. The first child says, “My name is ____ and I am good at ____.” Everyone applauds for that child. The child hands the travel bag to the next child.
3. The next child says, “I am going on a trip with ____ and she/ he is good at _____. My name is ____ and I am good at _____.” Everyone applauds for that child.
4. Continue around the circle with each child repeating what the children before them have said and adding their own talent.
5. Encourage the children to help each other remember the sequence.
GOT TIME? continued…

CRAFT: SANDY CYPRUS

**Purpose:** Children will decorate a map of Cyprus to help them remember how Barnabas encouraged Paul, John Mark, and many others during their first missionary journey.

**Supplies:** Standard-size sturdy blue paper, sand, wood craft sticks or plastic knives, glue, markers, newspapers or disposable plastic tablecloths to protect the work surface

**Prepare:** On the blue paper, draw an outline of the island of Cyprus. See ResourceWell.org for a link to a free outline. Write “**God sent Barnabas and Paul to Cyprus**” where children can see and copy it.

**Optional:** Buy or make colored sand. To make colored sand, fill a paper cup half full of sand for each color you want to make. Pour enough water over the sand to just cover it. Add a generous amount of food coloring to each cup. Stir and let set for about 15 minutes or until the sand is the desired color. Drain the water from the cups. Spread the sand onto paper towels and allow it to dry completely.

Barnabas helped many people by encouraging them to follow Jesus. **How did Barnabas help the Christians at the churches they visited?** (He encouraged them to keep telling others about Jesus.) **What are some ways you can encourage your friends in following Jesus?** (Serve together, pray together, read the Bible together, talk together about God, help each other with problems and challenges, etc.)

God sent Barnabas and Paul to encourage the people of Cyprus to follow Jesus. Cyprus is an island in the Mediterranean which has many sandy beaches. Let’s make a sand art picture of Cyprus. When you see your picture, ask God where He will send you to encourage others.

**Directions:**
1. Copy “God sent Barnabas and Paul to Cyprus” above the outline of the island of Cyprus.
2. Use a wood craft stick or plastic knife to spread a thin layer of glue within the outline of Cyprus.
3. Carefully sprinkle sand on the glue. Gently shake off any extra sand.
4. Set pictures aside to dry.

DISCUSSION: PAUL, BARNABAS, AND JOHN MARK

**Purpose:** Children will learn about the disagreement between Paul and Barnabas.

**Supplies:** Bible

On their journey, Paul and Barnabas took along a young man named John Mark. John Mark left them during the trip and returned to Jerusalem. After the first trip, Paul and Barnabas disagreed about their plans for the next journey. Read Acts 15:36-41 to see how God used this disagreement to create two strong missionary teams. Read Acts 15:36-41.

Barnabas wanted to give John Mark a second chance, just as he did with Paul. Even though they disagreed, they did what was right in God’s eyes. **What did they decide to do?** (They went on separate trips. Barnabas took John Mark, and Paul took Silas.)

Paul went on other missionary journeys and wrote many books of the Bible. John Mark went on to serve with Barnabas and he wrote the book of Mark. Barnabas encouraged them both!

There will be times when Christians disagree. When you disagree, it’s important to treat the other person with respect and to make godly choices. Pray God will use the disagreement to bring you both closer to Him and to build His kingdom.
GOT TIME? continued…

**BIBLE MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITIES**

“Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into His likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord.” 2 Corinthians 3:17b-18

**Teacher Tip:** During both activities, review the meaning of each phrase in the Bible Memory Verse.

**Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.** (The Holy Spirit frees us to follow Jesus.)

**And we, who with unveiled faces** (As believers, we can see Jesus is the Lord.)

**all reflect the Lord’s glory,** (Our lives show others His greatness.)

**are being transformed into His likeness** (We are being changed to be even more like Jesus.)

**with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord.** (We will keeping showing more and more of His greatness because His Spirit is in us.)

**GAME: ERASE IT, THEN SAY IT**

**Purpose:** Children learn the Unit 2 Bible Memory Verse.

**Supplies:** Chalkboard and chalk or dry erase board and marker

**Directions:**
1. Write the words of 2 Corinthians 3:17b-18 on the board. As you write each word, lead the children in saying it with you.
2. Say the whole verse together.
3. Review the meaning of the Bible Memory Verse as explained in the Teacher Tip above.
4. Choose a volunteer to erase one word. Children say the verse again, filling in the erased word.
5. Continue having children erase words and recite the verse until all the words are erased.
6. Choose a few volunteers to say the verse from memory by themselves or as a small group.
7. Say the whole verse together, one more time.

**GAME: BALLOON TOSS**

**Purpose:** Children learn the Unit 2 Bible Memory Verse.

**Supplies:** Inflated non-helium balloon, Bible Memory Verse poster

**Directions:**
1. Review the meaning of the Bible Memory Verse as explained in the Teacher Tip above.
2. Divide children into five teams.
3. Assign each team one of the following five phrases: Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into His likeness with ever-increasing glory which comes from the Lord.
4. Give the teams time to memorize their phrase.
5. Children stand in a circle. Teams should be spread out within the circle.
6. The team with the first phrase tosses a balloon high into the air. They must recite their phrase before the balloon touches the floor.
7. As soon as the team completes its phrase, a member of the next team taps the balloon as high as possible. That team recites their phrase before the balloon touches the floor.
8. Continue until all five phrases have been recited.
9. Play again, as time allows.
Prophets & Promises Part One studies the miracles and stories of the Bible from Acts through Revelation. Specific dates and a confirmed chronological order of all events covered in Lessons 1-21 are not available. Events will be ordered as they appear in the Bible. Review recent Bible stories to see the continuing story of who God is and what He has done.

**Peter Visits Cornelius (Circa 38 A.D.)** God gave Peter a vision to show Jesus came to save all who believe in Him—Jews and Gentiles (non-Jews). God has no favorites. At the same time, an angel told a Gentile named Cornelius to invite Peter to his home. What happened when Peter spoke to everyone there? (Cornelius’ friends and family believed in Jesus and were baptized.)

**Peter Escapes from Prison (Circa 41-44 A.D.)** When King Herod put Peter in prison, what did the believers do? (They gathered to pray.) A bright light shone in the prison cell and an angel appeared. What happened to the chains around Peter's wrists? (They fell to the ground.) The angel led Peter out of the prison. What happened when Peter knocked on the door where the believers were praying? (At first they didn't believe it was Peter. They were very surprised to see him.)

**Barnabas and Paul (Circa 46-47 A.D.)** Barnabas was an encourager to Paul and to many others. What did he encourage Paul to do? (To come to Antioch, to keep preaching.) Barnabas traveled with Paul on his first missionary journey. Barnabas risked his life to encourage non-believers to believe and new believers to stay true to Jesus.

How to create a Bible Timeline from Acts through Revelation:
1. Download and print the Bible Timeline for Prophets & Promises (available at www.resourcewell.org).
2. Print each scroll on sturdy paper.
3. Choose a wall or other visible location to display the timeline.
4. Before each lesson, add the scroll for that lesson to the Bible Timeline using the list below.
5. To review, ask the corresponding questions as you point to the associated scroll.