

Children's Message

Key concept: being a witness to good news

Props: A sign with the word WITNESS printed on it.

This morning I want to talk with you about a special word . *(Hold up sign.)*

Who can read my special word? *(Child responds.)*

Now it is one thing to know what word these letters spell.

But does anyone understand what this special word WITNESS might mean?

(Invite responses from children that may include various ways the word is used.

If not provide some examples...)

When we see something happen, like an accident, we might call ourselves a witness to that accident. When we stand on the sidewalk with other people and watch a parade go by we are a part of a crowd of witnesses watching that parade go along the street. Perhaps one day you run into the house and you see your mother or father making a great big pot of spaghetti for supper. When you go and tell your brothers or sisters what you are having for supper, you are witnessing to what you have just seen.

Being a witness means seeing something happen and then being able to tell others about what you've seen. Sometimes we are a witness to something all by ourselves. Other times we are part of a group of people and we see something all together, so we witness that special event all together.

(What follows are two examples of witnessing something positive in the church we've experienced in working with children. These examples could be adapted for the specific situation and leader.)

Sometimes here in the church we are witnesses to special things, like ways in which we show friendship and care for others. One day after Sunday School I heard two girls talking. Jenna, one of the girls, had a really sick grandmother and Jenna was really worried about her. The other girl, Sara, told Jenna she was sorry to hear about her grandmother. Sara told Jenna that she would pray for Jenna's grandmother and for Jenna, that she wouldn't worry too much. I was glad to be a witness to this conversation that showed friendship and caring between two people. Sometimes here at church we have girls and boys that come here for the very first time. Because this is a new and different place for them, sometimes it can seem a little scary at first. But I've been a witness to something very good. Sometimes one of you will notice the new boy or girl. You will go and sit beside them. Or when our time together here has ended sometimes one of you will take their hand and walk with them to your Sunday School class. In doing that, you show thoughtfulness and that they are welcome here in this church with us.

Long ago, Jesus used the word WITNESS when he was with his friends and helpers. Jesus told them they had seen many things while he had been with them and now it was their turn to tell others about God's love and care. He wanted his friends to be "good

news witnesses” wherever they went. A “good news witness” is someone who can say to another person “God is with you even when you are afraid or all alone”. A “good news witness” is someone who, when they’ve made a mistake that has hurt somebody, can say, “I’m sorry. Please forgive me.” A “good news witness” is someone who goes and helps other people. A “good news witness” is someone who is willing to share what they have with others. Jesus was a “good news witness” about God’s love and care for everybody. He invited his friends to be one too. And today, as friends of Jesus, he also invites us to be a “good news witness”...here at church, at home in our families, at school, when we are outside playing...wherever we may be!

Prayer:

Dear God,

We thank you for the many ways Jesus showed Your love to others.

*We thank you for all the different things he taught his friends and helpers
to help them tell others about Your presence and care.*

Help us to be “good news witnesses” in our lives today.

May we speak kind words to others.

May our actions be caring and thoughtful of others.

May we remember that we are never alone, that You are always with us.

We pray in Jesus’ name. AMEN