

Standing Firm

By RLD Editorial Team

for use as
STEP 1

**Lesson 4****Focus:**

Following Christ
can
be tough.

Lesson 4**Bible Basis:**

Acts 14

Lesson 4**Memory Verse:**

Now it is God who makes both us
and you stand firm in Christ.
— 2 Corinthians 1:21

Students will discuss the challenges of the Christian life and will discover that God will give them the strength to stand firm.

Materials:

- Internet access

This is a busy time of year, full of hustle and bustle. Christmas is tomorrow, and New Year's is just around the corner.

Every year, Christmas gets more confusing: what is it that we celebrate? Is it Christmas or Xmas? Are we celebrating Jesus' birth or just some happy elf-ish holiday? Are the trees we decorate Christmas trees or holiday trees? Do we say "Season's Greeting" or do we remind people of the reason for the season? When did baby Jesus become politically incorrect and the focus of Christmas become all about the shopping, parties, food, and presents?

- **What limits, if any, have been placed on you by your school or community when it comes to talking about or celebrating Christmas?** (Answers will vary but may include: cards and clothing or jewelry that represent the birth of Jesus may be banned from school; Christmas songs that use the name Jesus may not be allowed; teachers may not be allowed to place manger scenes on their desks; schools may stress the use of the greeting "Happy Holidays" as opposed to "Merry Christmas," etc.)
- **Why might some people find talking about Jesus during Christmas offensive?** (Accept all reasonable answers.)
- **How does it make you feel when people criticize or try to silence Christians?** (Answers will vary; be prepared to share about your own experience.)
- **At what other times besides Christmas is it challenging to live your life as a Christian at school, in the community, or elsewhere?** (Answers will vary; when they are pressured to participate in events during church times, called names or made fun of for being a Christian or living a certain way, etc.)

➤ **When or where is it the hardest for you to stand firm for your Christian beliefs?**
(Answers will vary; students may affirm difficulty when anti-Christian theories are taught in school; when non-Christian friends make fun of standards, beliefs, or practices, etc.)

Paul and Barnabas found it challenging to live for Jesus, too. Let's find out about their circumstances and how they were able to stand firm.

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your teacher's guide; your Step 4 appears below.)

Lesson 4 / December 24, 2023

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Materials:

- Internet access
- Index cards
- Pens/pencils

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

We read that Paul and Barnabas faced some challenging situations in their ministry. People opposed and attacked them. With God’s strength, they faced those tough times and remained faithful to God.

In recent years, schools have been ordered to remove references to traditional Christian references and traditions from annual “holiday” shows, parties, décor, etc.

- **What tough situations are you facing where you need a creative response that holds true to your faith while showing respect to others? (Answers will vary.)**

It can be tough to be a Christian when those around us are finding Christianity and God “offensive,” but God will give us the strength to stand firm in Christ. We are going to make reminders for ourselves to stand firm in Christ!

Distribute supplies (or invite students to have them ready at home). On one side of the index card, have students write today’s memory verse. On the other side, have them write down ways that they can stand firm in their faith (sharing Jesus with others, respectfully sharing beliefs when others disagree, etc.). Give students a few minutes to complete this activity.

You can place this card somewhere you will see often so you can be encouraged to stand firm in Christ! Our lives are about following, and announcing, Jesus. God will give us the strength to live our lives for Jesus, regardless of the tough times—ridicule or opposition—we may face.

Close in prayer for the strength to stand firm and walk strong in the faith regardless of the opposition or ridicule.

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