

CHILDREN'S STORY HOUR

'We can't stop talking about Jesus'

By Janaan Manternach
NC News Service

Alexander was a very important person in Jerusalem. He was a member of the Sadducees. He was a priest and a relative of the high priest.

The Sadducees were part of the ruling class among the Jews.

One morning Alexander was called to a special meeting of the Jews. Everyone who was important was there. He wondered why they were all meeting.

"Two followers of Jesus of Nazareth were arrested last night," one of the other priests told him. "They were telling the people that this Jesus rose from the dead. The high priest was angry and had them put in jail."

"Why do people believe such nonsense?" Alexander asked his friend. As a Sadducee, he did not believe in a bodily resurrection. He and his Pharisee friends often argued about it.

But, before Alexander's friend could answer, the captain of the guard came in with the two prisoners.

"Who are you?" the high priest demanded. "What are your names?"

"I am Peter and this is John," Peter answered.

Alexander looked at the two. "They look like uneducated working men," he thought to himself. "They have the rough skin of fishermen."

"In whose name do you teach?" the high priest demanded. "By what power do you do the things you do?"

Peter answered proudly. "We are friends and followers of Jesus of Nazareth. He was put to death on a cross. But God raised him

up from the dead. In his name we heal people."

Alexander was amazed at Peter. "He seems so self-confident. He speaks well. Yet he is obviously uneducated and has no social standing. Where did he get such knowledge?"

"Get out!" the high priest ordered. "Wait outside while we decide your punishment." The guards took Peter and John to another room.

"What can we do with these men?" the high priest asked. "We must stop them from talking about Jesus."

"Forbid them to even mention his name," advised Alexander. "Try to scare them. They are obviously men of no character."

Peter and John were called back into the courtroom.

"We will let you go free under one condition," Annas told them. "You must not mention the name of Jesus to anyone. You may not teach."

Peter and John answered bravely. "Is it right for us to obey you rather than to obey God? We cannot stop talking about what we have seen and heard."

The court warned Peter and John but then let them go free. The court had to dismiss them because the people of Jerusalem were praising God for all the good that Peter and John were accomplishing.

Story Hour biblical quotes — this week from Acts 4:5-22 — are paraphrased.

(Ms. Manternach is the author of numerous catechetical books and articles for children.)

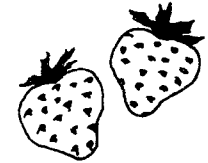
HOW ABOUT YOU?

- Peter and John believed in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. What does the word "resurrection" mean?
- How do you think Peter and John felt when they were arrested? Angry? Frustrated? Misunderstood? Confused? Frightened?

Children's Reading Corner

"Cornelius," by Leo Lionni. This is a story about a crocodile named Cornelius. He walked upright instead of crawling like the other crocodiles. Instead of trying to be like the others, Cornelius worked on walking upright. In the end, he inspired the other crocodiles to try to do what he could do.

To be looked down on by other people can be hard. However, to trust in yourself is courageous. This is what Cornelius did. How do we learn to trust ourselves so that we can use the gifts God has given us? (Pantheon Books, 201 E. 50th St., New York, N.Y. 10022. \$9.95.)



Summer Puzzler

It's June. For most of you that means just one thing, no school for the summer. Circle the 12 fun-filled vacation words, horizontally, vertically or diagonally.

I	B	S	E	L	C	I	S	P	O	P
C	N	Q	X	S	A	I	L	I	N	G
E	D	F	S	H	O	R	T	S	L	N
C	R	W	O	U	S	P	I	R	T	I
R	C	A	Z	S	N	G	N	F	O	M
E	N	U	J	N	R	B	L	J	X	M
A	M	G	G	E	S	Q	U	A	P	I
M	Z	U	U	D	H	L	I	R	K	W
M	D	S	J	R	Y	P	K	R	N	S
A	S	T	R	A	W	B	E	R	R	Y
N	J	P	I	G	S	D	K	T	U	R

SWIMMING, SAILING, ICE CREAM MAN, POPSICLES, SUNBURN, TRIPS, JUNE, JULY, AUGUST, GARDENS, STRAWBERRY, SHORTS



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