Lesson 3: Integrity

Today's Bible Story

In those days, a lot of people were joining the disciples. Believers took care of each other, and made sure each person in the church had enough to eat. Some older women in the church were widows, which meant they had no family to take care of them. So their church family stepped in to help them out.

As this was happening, some of the Greek members of the church began to complain. When food was passed out to people in need, the Greeks felt that their widows weren't receiving as much food as the Hebrew widows were. This wasn't fair. It is important that we take care of all God's children who are in need.

So the twelve apostles got everyone together. They said: "It isn't right that we should give up preaching the Word in order to serve tables. Therefore, pick out seven good people, full of the Holy Spirit. We'll give them the job of serving, so that we can devote ourselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word."

Everyone agreed with this idea. So, they chose Stephen, a man of faith, along with Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolaus. The apostles laid their hands on the heads of these helpers and prayed for them. Those first seven took up this job.

Later, as more people were needed to help serve, the apostles picked more men and women to do this job. They were called "deacons" — a word that means "one who serves." Even in our churches today, we have many people who serve as deacons. Some are volunteers. Others do this work as their job in the church. All believers are meant to work together to serve God and show love to our neighbors.



From Acts 6:1-15

Bible Rhyme

"Help us!" the disciples said.
"Who will hand out food and bread?"
"We need people who will feed
the widows who are most in need."

So they prayed to find some more
leaders who would serve the poor.
All their prayers were answered when
they put forth Philip and Stephen.

There were others on the list:
Prochorus and two named Nic.
Parmenas and Timon, too,
helped as they were asked to do!

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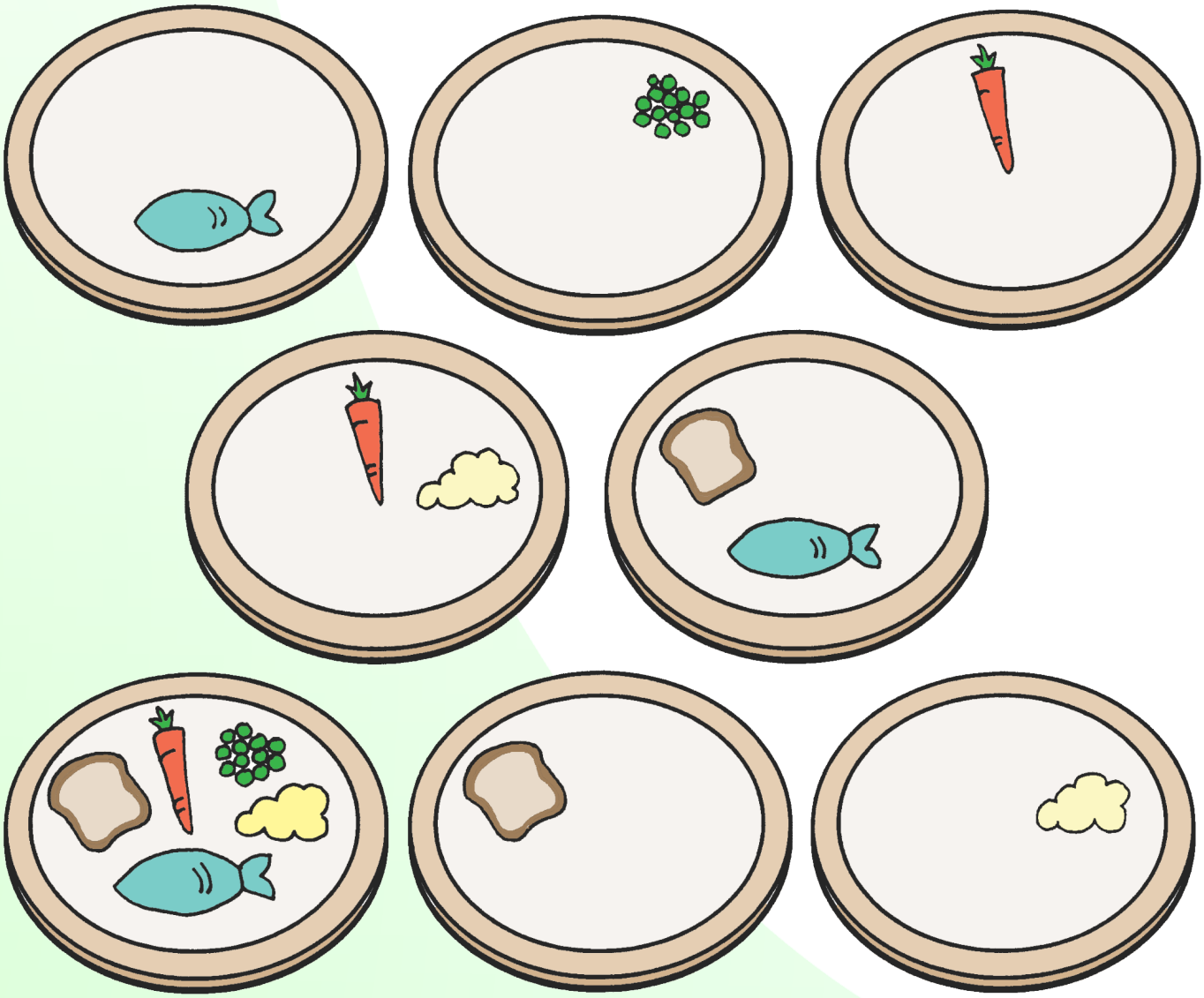
The disciples wanted to make sure everyone to have the same amount of food.

Study the plates below. Even things out by drawing whatever is missing on each one, so that each plate has the same food on it.



Math at Mealtime:

How many plates of food do you see? _____

How many different items of food do you see on the fullest plate? _____

Add both of those numbers together to find the sum: _____

Now subtract 6 from the last number, and you get: _____

That's how many people were chosen to be the first deacons in the early church!

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