

Children's Message:

A Neighbour's a Neighbour!

(No Matter How Small)



Theme: Love of Neighbour

Resource: *Horton Hears a Who!* by Dr. Seuss

Scripture: The Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37)

Who here is a fan of Dr. Seuss? Do you have a favourite book by Dr. Seuss? Today I'd like to share with you the story of Horton the Elephant. Horton is such a kind and compassionate character. I think we all could learn a lot from Horton about what it means to be a good neighbour. A neighbour is somebody who lives near where you live. They may be in a house down the street, or a person who you might see at school or at church. If you were an elephant, who do you think would be your neighbours?

In the beginning of the story, Horton the Elephant is spending the day splashing around in his favourite summer jungle pool when he hears a small voice crying for help. He looks all around, but he does not see anyone. All he finds is a tiny speck of dust floating through the air. Horton realizes that there is someone on that speck of dust who was calling for help. As it turns out, there was a whole town of people on that little speck of dust. They were calling out for help because they were afraid that the speck of dust would fall into the pool of water and they would drown. They were scared because they thought they were too small to be noticed. Do you ever feel like that? Do you ever feel so small that you're invisible?

There were other animals in the neighbourhood besides Horton who could help. Any one of those animals could be a neighbour to the people on that speck of dust. But none of these animals noticed them. How do you think the people felt? Guess what, even though the people on the speck of dust were so small that he couldn't even see them, Horton made up his mind that he was going to help them. "After all," he said, "A person's a person, no matter how small."

All of the other animals in the jungle thought Horton was crazy. First, a kangaroo, then some monkeys, and finally an eagle, all made fun of Horton for wanting to help the people on the speck of dust. Why, they even tried to put Horton in a cage.

Even though none of the other animals would help him, Horton refused to give up. He remained faithful to the task of saving the tiny people who needed his help. Because of his faithfulness, the tiny people were saved. In the end, the other animals realized that just as Horton had said, "A person's a person, no matter how small."

The story of Horton reminds me a little bit of the story of the Good Samaritan. That's a story that Jesus told about a man who was badly beaten by robbers and was helped by the most unlikely person, a Samaritan. Jews and Samaritans were enemies but the good Samaritan didn't seem to notice. He simply saw someone who was hurting and needed his help. Jesus wants us to love our neighbour just like the good Samaritan. And just like Horton the elephant who cared about those tiny people on that speck of dust, Jesus wants us to know that it is important to help everyone, from the biggest to the smallest. Everyone is important—even if you are so small that you think others don't even notice you.

If you have trouble knowing who your neighbour is, just remember the story of *Horton Hears a Who!* and the story of the Good Samaritan. Then you will know that every person is your neighbour, because "a neighbor's a neighbour, no matter how small!"

Dear God, Thank you for giving us Jesus to show us that you love all people, no matter how small. Help us to love you with all our hearts and to love our neighbour as we love ourselves. Amen.