

The Jerusalem Council

BIBLE PASSAGE:

Acts 15

STORY POINT:

Jesus is all we need to be saved from sin.

BIBLE VERSE:

“There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to people by which we must be saved.” Acts 4:12

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What is the Bible about? The Bible is about God’s plan to save people through Jesus.

LEADER Bible Study

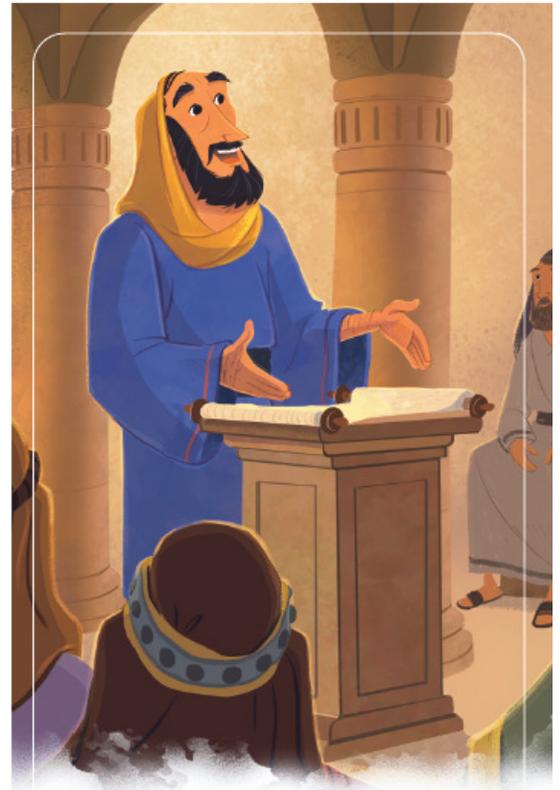
The church in Antioch praised God for His grace to Paul on his first missionary journey. Though Paul and Barnabas were strongly opposed in some places, many people heard the gospel and believed. Paul and Barnabas took the gospel to both Jews and Gentiles. But a problem arose when some Christians began saying that the new followers of Jesus—the Gentile believers—needed to obey the Law of Moses in order to be right with God.

Paul and Barnabas debated this issue with other church leaders in Jerusalem. They met together to answer a tough question: Can a person be saved by faith alone or was something more needed? When Paul addressed the council, he insisted that God saves Gentiles the same way He saves Jews: through the grace of the Lord Jesus.

Paul testified to the things God had done among the Gentiles. God had given Gentiles the Holy Spirit. James cited the prophets Amos and Isaiah in support. The group agreed that because of Jesus’ death and resurrection, He alone is all we need to be saved. They also agreed that they should not make salvation more difficult for Gentiles by adding unnecessary rules.

The church chose two men—Judas and Silas—to go with Paul and Barnabas to the church at Antioch. They wrote a letter for the Gentile believers there, encouraging them and giving them instructions for how to live as followers of Christ.

The message for the Gentile believers was important: Whether Jew or Gentile, salvation comes only through faith in Christ. No one is saved by the law but by grace alone. Emphasize to the preschoolers you teach that, while the Bible does give us plenty of instruction for how to live, sinners are made right with God only by the grace of Jesus. Salvation is a gift. To receive this gift, Jesus is all we need.



The Jerusalem Council

Acts 15

The **BIBLE** Story

The Jerusalem Council

Acts 15

Paul and Barnabas had been teaching people—Jews and Gentiles, or non-Jews,—about Jesus. Many people believed, and God’s church was growing.

But some of the people in the church began saying that Gentiles could only be saved if they first followed the same rules as the Jews.

Paul and Barnabas knew this was wrong. They had a meeting with other church leaders to talk about what was true. Peter stood up and told the leaders about the Gentiles, the non-Jews, who had believed the good news about Jesus. God had given them the Holy Spirit!

Peter said that Jews could not obey God’s law perfectly, so why should they tell non-Jews to obey perfectly? Jews and Gentiles are saved in the same way: by God’s grace.

Everyone listened as Paul and Barnabas talked about how they had seen God save Jews and Gentiles too. Then James showed how the words of the prophets showed that God wanted to save both Jews and Gentiles. This was God’s plan all along.

So the church leaders decided to write a letter to the Gentile believers. The letter told the believers what they should not do now that they were believers.

Paul and Barnabas delivered the letter with Judas and Silas, and the believers were encouraged.

Christ Connection: The church leaders met to answer a hard question: Can someone be saved by faith alone? Yes! The early church agreed that Jesus is all we need. Anyone who trusts in Him will be saved.

Bible Storytelling Tips

Meet in a group: Tell the children you all are meeting in a group today. Pretend you are talking to them as part of the Jerusalem council as you tell the story.

Draw it: Draw a church on a large sheet of paper or dry erase board. Write a *J* for Jews and a *G* for Gentiles inside the church. Point to each letter as you say the word while telling the Bible story. Emphasize God’s plan that both be part of the church.

10:45 Service

INTRODUCE THE STORY

Youth Directed

Jump for Jesus

Actions:

keeping my room clean
telling people about Jesus
being nice to my brothers and sisters
obeying my mom and dad

praying every day
being quiet while an adult is talking
going to church
giving food to people who don't have any

Invite the children to squat down. Explain that you will call out an action and ask if doing that action can save them. The children should say, “No,” while remaining in a squat. But when you say, “Can Jesus save you?” the children should jump up and shout, “Yes! Jesus alone!” Use the actions in the margin or create your own. Intersperse “Can Jesus save you?” throughout, as you name the actions.

Say • Those are all great actions to do. God is honored and life works best when we do those things, but they cannot save us from sin. Only Jesus can save us because He is the only one who obeyed God perfectly. **Jesus is all we need to be saved from sin.** Anyone who trusts in Him will be saved.

EXPERIENCE THE STORY

READ THE BIBLE STORY

Pull out the bible.

Ask: What is this called? *The Bible*

Ask: Why is the Bible important? *Because it is God's word. Everything in it is true. It really happened.*

Read the Bible Story while holding a bible

Form groups

Music flash drive

Invite children to move around the room while music plays. Stop the music and call out a number less than five. Children must form groups of that number.

Say • Jewish people are one group. Gentile people are another group. But when people from each of these groups trusted in Jesus, God made them one new group—His church. **Jesus is all we need to be saved from sin** and become part of God's family.

REVIEW THE STORY

BIG PICTURE REVIEW

Show the Bible story picture as you ask the following questions. Retell parts of the Bible story as needed.

- What are people who are not Jews called? (*Gentiles*)
- Whom did Paul and Barnabas meet with to talk about what was true? (*Other church leaders*)
- What were some people saying the Gentile believers needed to do? (*follow the same rules as the Jews*)
- How are Jesus and Gentiles saved? (*by God's grace*)

What is the Bible about? The Bible is about God's plan to save people through Jesus.

Practice the bible verse

“There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to people by which we must be saved.” Acts 4:12

Say • People in the church began to say that the Gentiles could only be saved if they followed the same rules as the Jews. Our bible verse reminds us that we are saved when we believe in Jesus. Only Jesus can save us because He never sinned and He died for us. Anyone who believes in Him will be saved.

Pray

God, thank You for our church leaders who help us remember what is true. Thank You that Jesus is all we need to be saved from sin. Thank You that anyone who trusts in Jesus will be saved. Help us tell others this good news. Amen.

Play

Hop the key passage

Bible verse phrase papers

Blue painters tape (found in metal Sunday school cabinet)

Tape the bible verse phrase papers in a line on the floor. Invite the children to form a line. Guide children to take turns hopping the words of the bible verse while you say it. Invite the rest of the group to say the bible verse along with you as they wait their turn.

Say • **Jesus is all we need to be saved from sin.** Our key passage reminds us there is no other way to be saved from our sin. The church leaders agreed people are saved by faith in Jesus alone. Anyone who trusts in Him will be saved.