

Resource: Familiarization, Internalization, Articulation (Fia)

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Familiarization, Internalization, Articulation (Fia)

ACT

Acts 1:1–5

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 1:1–5 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Luke starts by saying, "In my first book, O Theophilus." The first book is the Gospel of Luke, which you will remember Luke also wrote to Theophilus. The name Theophilus means "friend of God." Theophilus could be an actual person or a generic reference to all Christians. Most likely, Theophilus is a man of high standing who might have provided money so Luke could write both the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts. Luke wrote this book with the expectation that Theophilus would share it with other believers.

Question: How do people in your culture express respect and honor when greeting a person of high standing?

Luke reminds Theophilus about what Luke wrote in his first book. This story is a transition from the work of God through Jesus, as recorded in the Gospel of Luke to the work of God through the Holy Spirit and the church.

Question: In your language, how do you remind people of stories you have already told them?

Luke shared in his first book that Jesus gave commands to the apostles and God took Jesus up to heaven. Luke starts this story by sharing important things Jesus taught his apostles before he left for heaven. When Luke says that he already shared "about everything Jesus began to do and teach" in his first book, Luke means he shared the important things, but not every act Jesus did or word he said.

Question: Share one of your favorite stories from the Gospel of Luke.

The apostles are the disciples Jesus chose to follow him at the beginning of Jesus' earthly ministry. Luke mostly refers to them as disciples in the Gospel of Luke, and in Acts Luke refers to them as apostles. Luke probably does this since Jesus' disciples will now be the ones Jesus sends out to make disciples of Jesus. The **apostles** are men Jesus appointed and sent out with authority as his representative.

Luke mentions Jesus' **suffering**, which includes when the Jews and Romans had beaten, mocked, and then hung Jesus to die on a cross. Luke wants people to know with assurance that Jesus did suffer and die and that he rose to life. Jesus proved beyond all doubt to his apostles for forty days that he really was alive. Jesus did not stay

with the apostles the entire time, but he appeared to them at different times during these forty days. Luke does not give the details of all Jesus told his disciples during this time, but Luke mentions Jesus taught about the kingdom of God.

The **kingdom of God** is also known as the kingdom of heaven. Jesus spoke about this Kingdom often, describing the rule and reign of God as King over everyone and everything. In the Old Testament, God's Kingdom was his people, Israel. The phrase refers to God's activity of ruling and caring for his people as their king. It does not refer to a land or country that he rules over. It refers to the relationship that he has with his people. God's Kingdom today is ruling over his people. God's people recognize God's kingship and do God's will.

Question: In your culture, what does a king, or most powerful ruler of a people, do and how do they rule their people? What are some of the expectations of the king's subjects? How do the people relate to the king or follow the king's commands?

One time when Jesus and the apostles were together, Jesus gave the apostles some important instructions. Some translations say they were eating together, but this is not clear. The important thing is that they were all together. Jesus told the apostles to stay in Jerusalem until they receive the gift God the Father has promised, the coming of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is God's Spirit which he gives to people in order to equip them with his presence, wisdom, authority, and power. God had promised Israel through several of his messengers that God would place his Spirit within believers and pour out his Spirit in powerful displays. Jesus told his disciples the night he was arrested that he would not abandon them, but he would send the Holy Spirit to the disciples.

Question: In your culture how are gifts given and received? In what ways can people understand the Holy Spirit is a gift given by God to be received by followers of Jesus?

John the Baptist's ministry also pointed to the promised Holy Spirit. You will remember that John the Baptist baptized people, or washed them in water, to show that a person had turned from their sins and decided to obey God. Jesus told the disciples that they would be baptized in or with the Holy Spirit in just a few days. Jesus is using the term "baptized" as a way to show that God would send the Holy Spirit to stay in them and help them. The phrase "in a few days" refers to a time period of about ten days or less. God the Father is the one who gives this gift of his Holy Spirit.

Question: In your culture, what do people do to show outward signs of repentance, or purification, before a deity?

In what ways is water used for ritual practices of washing in your culture? How could these practices of ritual washing cause confusion or clarification for the meaning behind biblical baptism?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has 2 scenes.

First scene: The narrator, Luke, provides the introduction to the book of Acts as a continuation of the first book, the Gospel of Luke.

Second scene: On one occasion, likely when Jesus was eating with the apostles, Jesus gave the apostles specific instructions to remain in Jerusalem until they received the Holy Spirit.

The characters in this story include:

- Luke, the narrator
- Jesus, who has been raised to life after dying on the cross
- The eleven apostles (men of Galilee)

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

Luke is writing to Theophilus and continues the story he began in the Gospel of Luke. Luke sets the scene for this story saying it takes place after Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead. Jesus appeared to the apostles many times for forty days. Jesus proved he was alive and taught them about the kingdom of God.

Luke then shares one specific time Jesus talked with his apostles. The conversation took place in or near Jerusalem. The apostles were possibly eating together when Jesus told them to "stay in Jerusalem" until they receive the promised Holy Spirit. Luke tells us just a few passages later that the apostles were staying in the upper room in Jerusalem. This upper room might have been the same place they ate the Passover meal the night Judas betrayed Jesus.

Stop here: Show a map of Jerusalem with the suggested location of the upper room and the temple.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has 2 scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Luke, the narrator or storyteller
- Jesus, who has been raised to life after dying on the cross
- The eleven apostles (Men of Galilee)

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story.

As Luke shares the introduction, make sure the team acts out Jesus appearing to the apostles and proving He is alive with Jesus showing the apostles his hands and side that had been pierced and by eating food. Jesus appeared to his apostles many times over a period of forty days teaching about the kingdom of God.

Make sure when the apostles are eating with Jesus, that Jesus says as a command, "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about." They will soon receive or be "baptized with the Holy Spirit."

When the apostles heard this promise, they would likely have remembered several promises from the prophets in the Old Testament and many things Jesus taught about the Holy Spirit. Make sure the team acts out the apostles continuing to ask Jesus several times, likely over many days, if he would now free Israel and restore the kingdom of Israel. The apostles would have eagerly anticipated and hoped for that day.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

Act out Jesus appearing to the apostles after rising from the dead, proving he is alive, and teaching on the kingdom of God.

Stop the action.

Act out Jesus and the apostles eating a meal together. During this time, Jesus commands the apostles to remain in Jerusalem until the Father sends the promised Holy Spirit. Jesus has already told them about the coming Holy Spirit.

Stop the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Luke is writing this true story and historical account to **Theophilus**. The name Theophilus means "friend of God." Theophilus could be an actual person or a generic reference to all Christians. Most likely, Theophilus is a man of high standing and wealth.

Jesus appeared to the apostles, proving he was alive before going back to **heaven**. Heaven can refer to the sky, or to the place where God and his angels live, depending on the context. The word "heaven" here refers to the place where God lives. When it refers to the place where God lives, it is also the ultimate destination of believers.

Jesus gave commands to the **apostles** through the Holy Spirit. The apostles are men Jesus appointed and sent out with authority as his representatives. Their main functions are to preach the good news, to be founders of the church, to hold spiritual authority in the church, and to be witnesses to the fact that Jesus had resurrected from the dead. Use the same word for apostle that you have already used. Refer to the Master Glossary.

The **Holy Spirit** is God's Spirit, sometimes referred to as the Spirit of Christ in the New Testament. In the Old Testament, God gave his Spirit when he anointed people to be kings or to do something extraordinary. The Spirit of God gave these people special wisdom and power from God. God's Spirit equips people to do something. For example, the person may be asked to carry a message from God to someone. In the New Testament, the concept of holy refers to people or things that belong to God, are set apart for him, or are like him. Use the same term for God's Spirit that you used in the Old Testament stories. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information about the Holy Spirit.

Jesus spoke to the apostles about the **kingdom of God**. The gospels mention both the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven. These two kingdoms are the same thing.

A kingdom is a place where a king rules a group of people. In the Bible, God's Kingdom refers more to his people than to a place. In the Old Testament, God's prophets, or messengers, said that one day God would come and rule over his people in a perfect kingdom where there would be no more suffering or evil. All people everywhere, and all creation, would obey God and be in a right relationship with him. The people of Israel hoped and prayed for this perfect Kingdom to come. Jesus wanted to show that God's Kingdom is about having a good relationship with God. Translate "the kingdom of God" the same way you have before. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on the kingdom of God.

When Jesus was with the apostles, he told them that in a **few days**, or in less than ten days, they would soon be **baptized** with or in the Holy Spirit. **Baptism** is a borrowed term from the Greek "baptizo." The Greek word means "to put inside or under water," or "to wash in a spiritual sense." John baptized to show that a person wanted to stop sinning and obey God. Use the same word for baptism as you have before. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on baptism.

When Jesus told the apostles that they would be "baptized in or with the Holy Spirit," he is using the term baptize as a figure of speech to indicate that God would send the Holy Spirit to stay in the apostles and help them.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene, but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 1:1–5

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3263434 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Acts 1:6–11

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 1:6–11 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?

4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In the last passage, Jesus had risen from the dead and appeared to the apostles. Jesus proved he was alive and taught them about the kingdom of God. Jesus told the apostles to wait in Jerusalem and they would soon receive the Holy Spirit.

Jesus appeared to the apostles many times over forty days. During this time, the apostles repeatedly asked Jesus if he would now restore the kingdom to Israel. Jesus was speaking to the apostles about the kingdom of God, but the apostles apparently were thinking about the earthly kingdom of Israel which the empire of Rome currently occupied and controlled. The apostles were not wrong in asking this question, since God the Father had promised to give this nation to Israel. God told the people of Israel they would possess the land if they obeyed Him. The people of Israel continually rebelled against God so he gave the land to the control of other nations, like the Romans. God also promised through the prophets in the Old Testament, that he would restore the kingdom of Israel. The people of Israel expected the Christ, or promised savior, to establish an earthly kingdom with himself as king. It would be like King David's reign of long ago.

Jesus does not rebuke the apostles, but he kindly tells them they do not need to know when God will restore Israel. Only God the Father knows when He will do this. Instead, Jesus tells them what they need to know. Jesus promises the apostles that the Holy Spirit will give them power to witness and tell people about Jesus everywhere. The apostles would tell others about Jesus in the Jewish capital city of Jerusalem and the entire province of Judea where Jerusalem is located. Jesus says the apostles would also witness in the surrounding territory of Samaria, where Samaritans lived, and everywhere else on earth. Jesus is sending his apostles out to the entire world so all people can know God. Jesus is talking to the apostles, but Luke will soon show that the Holy Spirit and the power to witness for Jesus is meant for all believers.

Show a map of first-century Israel which includes a mark for Jerusalem, the areas of Judea, Samaria, and beyond.

God the Father then takes Jesus up to heaven, the dwelling place of God. The two men robed in white likely refer to angels, or spiritual beings from heaven that serve as messengers of God. You will remember that Luke described the angels at the empty tomb of Jesus in the same way. The angels look like men. The angels call the apostles "Men of Galilee" because they were from Israel's northern territory of Galilee. The angels ask the apostles a question they did not want them to answer. The angels ask, "Why are you standing here looking into the sky?" The angels are giving the apostles a mild rebuke, saying they do not need to stand there looking into the sky. Jesus will one day come back from heaven. Jesus is in heaven, but his power and presence through his Spirit fill the rest of the story of Acts.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has 2 scenes.

First scene: Jesus rose from the dead and appeared to the apostles many times for forty days. The apostles continually asked Jesus if he would now free Israel from foreign control and restore the kingdom of Israel back to the Jewish people.

Second scene: The last scene happens immediately after Jesus speaks these final words to the apostles. God the Father, who is unseen, takes Jesus back to heaven. While the apostles stand amazed looking up into the sky, two angels tell them not to just stand there looking up. Jesus will come back to earth some time later, in power just as he left.

The characters in this story include:

- Jesus, who has been raised to life after dying on the cross
- The eleven apostles (men of Galilee)
- God the Father: He takes Jesus back to heaven
- A cloud
- The two angels

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

It is important to remember that this story takes place forty days after Jesus had risen from the dead. Jesus had appeared to the apostles several times to prove he was alive and to teach them about the kingdom of God.

This was the last time Jesus spoke to the apostles while he was on earth. Luke tells us in the next passage that Jesus spoke to the apostles on the Mount of Olives. The Mount of Olives was a tall hill just outside Jerusalem across the valley from the temple. People called it the Mount of Olives because there was a grove of olive trees and an olive press located there. The Mount of Olives is where Jesus would stay at night when he came to teach in Jerusalem. This location is where he prayed with his disciples the night the Jews and Romans arrested him.

Stop here: Show a map of Jerusalem with the Mount of Olives and the temple.

You might also show a picture of an olive and olive tree.

Jesus was teaching the apostles about the kingdom of God, but the apostles were concerned about the earthly nation and leadership of Israel. The apostles kept asking Jesus about when he would restore Israel to Jewish control. Jesus does not rebuke them, but his answer redirects the apostles' focus to what they needed to know. Jesus tells them they will have power from the Holy Spirit for a specific purpose. Jesus wants his apostles to be his witnesses, to go everywhere and tell everyone about him.

In the last scene, immediately after Jesus spoke to the apostles, God the Father took Jesus back to heaven. Jesus disappeared into a cloud. The angels who appeared to the apostles were wearing bright white clothing. In the Gospel of Luke, Luke describes the clothes of the angels as bright as lightning. The question the angels ask the men is not meant for the apostles to answer. Instead, the angels are redirecting the apostle's focus on what Jesus had already told them to do. The angels assure the apostles that Jesus will return from heaven someday later in the future.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has 2 scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Jesus, who has been raised to life after dying on the cross
- The eleven apostles (men of Galilee)
- God the Father: He takes Jesus back to heaven
- A cloud
- The two angels

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story.

In the last story, Jesus told the apostles to wait in Jerusalem and the Father would soon give them the Holy Spirit. "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about." They will soon receive or be "baptized with the Holy Spirit."

When the apostles heard this promise, they would likely have remembered several promises from the prophets in the Old Testament and many things Jesus taught about the Holy Spirit. Make sure the team acts out the apostles continuing to ask Jesus several times and days, if he would now free Israel and restore the kingdom of Israel. The apostles would have eagerly anticipated and hoped for that day.

Make sure when acting out Jesus' response to the apostles' question that Jesus does not rebuke the apostles. Jesus informs the apostles they should not be concerned when God will restore Israel. Jesus tells the apostles, "The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know."

Jesus then tells the apostles what they need to know. Jesus says the apostles "will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon them. And the apostles will be Jesus' witnesses, telling people about Jesus everywhere-in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

As soon as Jesus gives the apostles this command, God the Father takes Jesus back to heaven. Make sure the team acts out God the Father taking Jesus back into heaven as soon as Jesus says this final sentence. When Jesus is far away, a cloud hides him and the apostles can no longer see Jesus. The two angels appear standing next to the apostles after the apostles can no longer see Jesus. The apostles do not notice the angels because they are still staring into the sky trying to see Jesus. Perhaps the apostles were amazed at what just happened or they were waiting for Jesus to come back. The angels begin to speak while the apostles are still looking up.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

Act out the disciples respectfully continuing to ask Jesus about the restoration of Israel to the Jewish people and an earthly rule.

Stop the action.

Act out Jesus sharing his final words with the apostles while he was on earth. Jesus answers the apostle's question saying, "The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere-in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Stop the action.

Act out Jesus leaving for heaven as soon as he finishes speaking to the apostles. God the Father takes Jesus back to heaven as the apostles stare into the sky trying to see where Jesus went. Suddenly, two angels appear next to the apostles, but the apostles are still staring into the sky. The angels ask a question to the apostles that they did not expect the apostles to answer. The angels say, "Men of Galilee, why are you standing here staring into the sky? Jesus has been taken from you into heaven, but someday he will return from heaven in the same way you saw him go!"

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing the apostles, "After hearing the words of the angels, how do you feel?" You might hear things like, "Sad that Jesus has been taken away," "Curious when Jesus will come back one day," "Assured that Jesus will come back just as he promised," and "Encouraged to focus on what Jesus had told me to do."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

After Jesus told the apostles that they would soon receive the promised Holy Spirit, the apostles continually asked Jesus if it was now the time Jesus would **free Israel** and **restore the kingdom**. A kingdom is a place where a king rules a group of people. The apostles are referring to the kingdom of Israel in earthly terms, not to the kingdom of God.

In the Bible, God's Kingdom refers more to his people than to a place. In the Old Testament, God's Kingdom was his people Israel. God's prophets, or messengers, said that one day God would come and rule over his people in a perfect kingdom where there would be no more suffering or evil. The people of Israel hoped and prayed for this perfect Kingdom to come.

The kingdom of God in the New Testament is also about God ruling in the hearts of his people rather than in a physical place. However, the Jewish people in Jesus' day wanted God's perfect kingdom immediately. They wanted a king to come and make their nation of Israel great again. Jesus explained how God's kingdom is different than they expected. Refer to kingdom in the Master Glossary. Translate kingdom in the same way that you have in previous passages.

Jesus then tells the apostles they will **receive power** when the **Holy Spirit** comes upon them. The Holy Spirit is God's Spirit, sometimes referred to as the Spirit of Christ in the New Testament. In the Old Testament, God gave his Spirit when he anointed people to be kings or to do something extraordinary. God gives His Spirit to people in order to equip them with His presence, wisdom, authority, and power. God's Spirit equips people to do something. For example, the person may be asked to carry a message from God to someone. In the New Testament, the concept of **holy** refers to people or things that belong to God, are set apart for His purposes, or are like him. Translate Holy Spirit with the same term you used in previous passages. Refer to the Holy Spirit in the Master Glossary.

The Holy Spirit does not possess a person against their will, like a demon, or cause them to do things without the person's willing participation. Later in Acts, a Christian leader, Stephen, tells the Jewish leaders rebelling against God that they "are always resisting the Holy Spirit just as your fathers did." The apostle Paul tells believers that they can "quench the Holy Spirit" and "grieve the Holy Spirit" by disobeying God. Instead, the Holy Spirit will give the apostles power and wisdom to do what Jesus has told them to do.

Jesus told the apostles that they will be his **witnesses**. The phrase **my witnesses** indicates that the apostles would tell others what they knew personally about Jesus.

The apostles would tell people about Jesus in Jerusalem, the capital of Israel then called Judea. They would continue to tell people about Jesus in all Judea and Samaria, the region north of Judea where Samaritan people lived. The apostles would also witness to people to **the ends of the earth**, which is a phrase meaning the farthest places from where the person was at the moment or to the remotest parts of the earth. Jesus used this phrase to say the apostles should tell all people about Jesus everywhere on earth.

Stop here and show a map of first-century Israel which includes a mark for Jerusalem, the areas of Judea, Samaria, and beyond.

The word **heaven** can mean both the place where God lives and it can mean the sky. God the Father took Jesus up to "heaven" to be in the dwelling place of God. And the apostles continued to look up into "heaven," or the sky, trying to see where Jesus went. People cannot physically see into heaven, the dwelling place of God, unless they are seeing a vision or dream. When the angels ask the apostles why they are standing there staring up into "heaven," the angels are likely referring to the sky. Translate heaven in the same way that you have in previous passages. Refer to the term heaven in the Master Glossary.

The two **white-robed men** are **angels**, or spiritual beings from heaven that serve as messengers of God. Translate angels the same way as you have before. See the term angels in the Master Glossary.

The angels address the apostles as **Men of Galilee**. The apostles were from Galilee, a district or province in northern Israel.

Stop here and show a map of first-century Israel with the territory of Galilee.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 1:6–11

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3740675 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
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Acts 1:12–14

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 1:12–14 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?

2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

The previous passage records the last conversation of the eleven apostles with Jesus on earth and the time he went up to heaven. The apostles asked Jesus if he would restore the kingdom to Israel. He told them they did not need to know the timings of future events which God himself decided by his own authority. However, Jesus promised the apostles that the Holy Spirit would give them power to witness and tell people about him everywhere. After this, God took Jesus up to heaven and two angels told the apostles that Jesus would come back to earth in exactly the same way he went up.

God took Jesus up to heaven from a hill called the Mount of Olives. Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem. Jerusalem was the religious capital of the Jewish people. The Mount of Olives is about 85 meters above the city of Jerusalem, as it was at that time. People called the hill the Mount of Olives because it had olive trees growing on it. Olive trees have small oval fruit with smooth skin and a hard seed inside. The Mount of Olives is about one kilometer, or about half an hour's walk, east of Jerusalem. The Bible text refers to the distance as "a Sabbath day's journey away," which is the distance of one kilometer that Jewish laws allowed people to walk on a Sabbath, a Jewish day of rest and worship.

Stop here and show the translation team a photo of the Mount of Olives.

Stop here and show the translation team a photo of an olive tree and olives.

When they arrived at the city, the apostles went upstairs to the room where they were living for a short time. The word "upstairs" indicated that this house had a large room built on top of the flat roof of the main part of the house. In Jesus' times some houses had two stories like this one. Often the room upstairs had its own staircase outside. The apostles were from Galilee, so they probably rented the room. By this time they had probably stayed there for six weeks or so. It is likely that the disciples were in this room with Jesus during the last meal Jesus had with his disciples before he died. It is likely also that the disciples were in this room when Jesus appeared to them after he came back to life.

Stop here and show the translation team a map of Jerusalem with the Mount of Olives.

Stop here and show the translation team a photograph of a house with an upper room.

Those present were Peter, also known as Simon Peter, and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas, also known as Thaddeus, the son of another James. There were two apostles with the name James and two apostles with the name Simon. In order to know which one they were talking about, people called the other James, "James son of Alphaeus." They called the other Simon, "Simon the Zealot." The word "zealot" means "someone who is zealous or passionate." At that time in Israel it referred to people zealous for Jews to be free from the control of Rome.

Stop here and discuss with the translation team how in your culture you tell apart people who have the same name and are part of one group.

The apostles, together with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers, regularly and often joined together in a group in order to pray. The apostles and the others put much time and effort in praying and they were united in purpose and agreed in many ways when they prayed. When people pray they can do two things. They can ask God for things, and they can praise or thank God for things. The women were probably those who had believed in Jesus, followed him and the apostles wherever they went, and had helped them in practical ways during Jesus' ministry. Jesus' brothers were most likely his younger brothers, sons of Mary and Joseph born after Jesus.

Stop here and tell a story of a time in your life when you met with a group of believers regularly and often to pray about something specific.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has three scenes.

First scene: After God takes Jesus up to heaven, the apostles return to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives.

Second scene: On entering the city, the apostles go to the upper room where they are staying.

Third scene: The apostles together with the women who were following Jesus, Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers meet together regularly and often to pray.

The characters in this story include:

- Peter
- John
- James
- Andrew
- Philip
- Thomas
- Bartholomew
- Matthew
- James the son of Alphaeus
- Simon the Zealot
- Judas, also known as Thaddeus, the son of another James
- The women who used to follow Jesus
- Mary the mother of Jesus
- Jesus' brothers

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

After God took Jesus up to heaven from a hill called the Mount of Olives, the apostles returned to Jerusalem. The Mount of Olives is about one kilometer, or about half an hour's walk, east of Jerusalem. The Bible text refers to the distance as "a Sabbath day's journey away," which is the distance of one kilometer that Jewish laws allowed people to walk on a Sabbath, a Jewish day of rest and worship. It does not indicate that Jesus went up to heaven on a Sabbath.

When the apostles arrived in Jerusalem, straight away they went to the upstairs room where they were staying. It is important to note that the Bible text says that they *entered* Jerusalem. This indicates that they would have to go through one of the city gates in the city wall surrounding Jerusalem. Then they would have walked to the upper room where they were staying. The word "staying" in the original language often means a temporary residence. The apostles were from Galilee, so they probably rented the room. By this time they had probably

stayed there for six weeks or so. This was possibly the same room where they had the last supper with Jesus and where Jesus met them after he rose from the dead.

Stop here and show the translation team a map of Jerusalem with the Mount of Olives.

Stop here and show the translation team a photograph of a house with an upper room.

Those present were Peter, also known as Simon Peter, and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas, also known as Thaddeus, the son of another James. There were two apostles with the name James and two apostles with the name Simon. In order to know which one they were talking about, people called the other James, "James son of Alphaeus." They called the other Simon, "Simon the Zealot." The Greek word "zealot" means "someone who is zealous or passionate." At that time in Israel it referred to people zealous for Jews to be free from the control of Rome. Luke organised the list of names in a certain way. He first listed four names together, then two names together, then another two names, and then three names. We don't know if there is any reason why Luke organised the names in that way.

This is the first time that the apostles are mentioned by name in Acts.

Stop here and discuss with the translation team if or how you organise names in a certain order or way when you tell a story.

The apostles, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus and his brothers, regularly and often joined together in a group in order to pray. The apostles and the others put much time and effort in praying and they were united in purpose and agreed in many ways when they prayed.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has three scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Peter
- John
- James
- Andrew
- Philip
- Thomas
- Bartholomew
- Matthew
- James the son of Alphaeus
- Simon the Zealot
- Judas, also known as Thaddeus, the son of another James
- The women who used to follow Jesus
- Mary the mother of Jesus
- Jesus' brothers

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

After God took Jesus up to heaven, the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives. The city was about half an hour's walk away.

Ask the actors playing the apostles, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Stunned and amazed at seeing Jesus go up to heaven," "Sad that Jesus is not with us any more," "What do we do while waiting? What do we do next?" and "Eager to go back to Jerusalem to wait for the Holy Spirit." [!end] Restart the action.

When the men arrived in the city they went to the upper room where they were staying. Those present were Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas, also known as Thaddeus, the son of another James.

The apostles, together with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers, met together and constantly devoted themselves to prayer.

Ask the actor playing Mary the mother of Jesus, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "My son accomplished what he came here for. Now everyone can have eternal life," "I miss Jesus so much. But may it be according to God's will, not mine," and "Praise God that I am with the other believers. We will stay encouraged when we pray together." [!end] Restart the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Then they returned to **Jerusalem** from the hill called the **Mount of Olives**, which is near Jerusalem, a **Sabbath** day's journey away.

Jerusalem is the name of the religious capital of the Jewish people. The official place where Jews went to sacrifice to God, the temple, was located in Jerusalem. This was the holiest place for Jewish people, and the place where the leaders of Jewish religious law met. Remember to use the same word you have used previously for Jerusalem. A full definition of Jerusalem can be found in the Master Glossary.

Olives are small oval fruit with a smooth skin and a hard seed inside, and they grow on trees. The olive was an essential food in ancient times. People pressed it into oil that was used in cooking and in some rituals. People used the oil as fuel for lamps and in medicine and cosmetics.

Stop here and show the translation team a photo of an olive tree and olives.

The Jewish people observed the **Sabbath** day as a day of rest and worship from the time that God gave them this command. This was considered the 7th day of the week. By the time of Jesus, strict, specific rules were in place regarding what kind of work could and could not be done on this day, and even the distance people were permitted to walk. This was also the day that people went to the synagogue to worship. Remember to use the same word you have used previously for Sabbath. A full definition of Sabbath can be found in the Master Glossary.

All these with one accord were devoting themselves to **prayer**. Prayer refers to communicating with God. Be sure that the word you use here does not refer to only ritualistic communication, but something more personal. Some languages have more than one word for prayer, depending on what kind of conversation with God is happening. Some languages have separate words for thanksgiving prayers and asking for help prayers. In this case, the apostles were probably doing both kinds of praying. Remember to use the same word you have used previously for prayer. A full definition of prayer can be found in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 1:12–14

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3068801 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

[mp3 zip](#) (5212838 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

Acts 1:15–26

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 1:15–26 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In the previous story the eleven apostles walked back to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives where they saw Jesus go up to heaven. They went to the upper room where they were staying. They often and regularly met with the other believers to pray.

In those days after Jesus went to heaven, Peter stood up in a meeting of believers and he spoke to them. There were approximately one hundred and twenty people, both men and women, in this group. They were most likely in Jerusalem, where Jesus told the apostles to wait for the Holy Spirit.

Peter addressed them politely as "brothers," a term he used for fellow believers, both men and women. This showed that he considered himself to be one of them. Peter said to them, "It was necessary that the events that the Jewish Scriptures talk about should happen. The Holy Spirit caused David to speak about Judas. He told ahead of time what Judas would do, this Judas who guided the men who came to arrest Jesus." David was a king who ruled Israel about a thousand years before Jesus lived on earth. There are many stories in the Scriptures

about him. David wrote some of the Scriptures called Psalms. When he wrote Psalms he wrote what the Holy Spirit told him to write. The Holy Spirit is God's Spirit, which God gives to people to equip them with his presence, wisdom, authority and power. The Holy Spirit directed David to write prophecies, or predictions of future events, about Judas long before Judas lived. The prophecies he wrote came true about Judas. But the name of Judas is not mentioned in those prophecies. David did not know that he wrote about Judas.

God revealed to Peter that certain prophecies, which David wrote, were about Judas. It was because the character and actions of Judas were similar to the character and actions of the man whom David described. The early Christians who lived just after Jesus died knew that Jesus was the Messiah, or the promised Saviour. They knew that there were many prophecies in the Jewish Scriptures about the way the Messiah would suffer and die. It is also possible that Jesus showed them those prophecies after he rose from the dead. So when they read the Jewish Scriptures they were able to tell which prophecies talked about events they witnessed during Jesus' life.

Stop here and tell a story from your culture about someone or a story that predicted events that really happened later. If someone predicted the events, how do you know that the events really happened?

Peter continued, "Because Jesus chose Judas to do God's work with us, he was a member of our group." This sentence may be explaining that Judas, who betrayed Jesus, knew where Jesus was because he was one of the apostles. It may also be the basis to what Peter is going to say next in his speech about the specific prophecies about Judas.

The following additional information isn't part of Peter's speech. Luke probably added more detail about Judas' death so that the readers can understand better Peter's comments.

"Now this man bought a field with the money, which the Jews gave him for his wicked act." Judas betrayed Jesus, and the priests gave money to Judas for doing that. That money was Judas' reward. Later Judas threw the money into the temple area. The priests bought the field using Judas' money. So the field would belong to Judas. Luke probably wrote, "Judas bought a field" because he was telling the story about Judas and wanted to keep it short and not tell that whole story.

Luke continues, saying that Judas fell head first, his body burst in the middle and his internal organs of the belly fell out. This means that his face was pointing downwards and that he fell from a height, rather than tripping as he walked. The news about Judas' death spread to all the people of Jerusalem. They called the field with a word, which in their language means an Area of Blood. This was because Judas died there and his blood spilled in this place.

Peter continued, "King David who wrote the book of Psalms said, 'Everyone must leave his house and no one must live in it' and 'someone else must do his work.'" Peter is applying the meaning of these Scriptures to Judas. The first verse expresses the wish that the house of Judas would remain empty. In other words, this is a wish that no other enemies would come to take his place. The second passage expresses the need for someone trustworthy to take his place in serving as one of the apostles.

Peter said, "Therefore we must choose a man to become one of our group of apostles who will be a witness with us that the Lord Jesus rose from the dead. This man has to be one of the disciples who was with us during the whole time when the Lord Jesus was living with us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day when God took Jesus up to heaven."

"From the baptism of John" most likely refers to the time when John the Baptist baptised Jesus. John baptised people, or washed them in water, to show that a person wanted to stop sinning and obey God. John called people to repent from their sins and be baptised so that they could prepare themselves to really listen to Jesus. Jesus asked John to baptise him too, even though he never sinned. Jesus knew that it was God's will that John should baptise him. In this way Jesus did the same as the people whom he came to save. Jesus' baptism marked the beginning of his ministry, or his official work on earth.

Israel was the first group of people on earth whom God chose to tell everyone in the world about him. When they disobeyed God, Jesus came to earth to die for the sin of all people, so all who accept the gift of salvation can know God and have eternal life. Jesus appointed the apostles to be his representatives and he picked twelve because the apostles represented the twelve tribes of Israel. The apostles were like the leaders of the new group

of God's followers. Many people believe that the twelve apostles represent the twelve tribes of Israel as a foundation for the coming of the Holy Spirit and the birth of the church.

And following Peter's speech the believers suggested the names of two men. The name of one man was Joseph, who people also called Barsabbas, which means Son of the Sabbath day of rest. They also called him Justus. The name of the other man was Matthias.

Then they prayed saying, "Lord, you know what all people think, feel, and believe." The word "Lord" here refers to Jesus. "Please show us which of these two you have chosen so that he can do the work of an apostle." The apostles' main work was to preach the good news about Jesus, to be founders of the church, to hold spiritual authority in the church, and to be witnesses to the fact that Jesus rose from the dead. They were in a position of trust and authority. This is the work that Judas left, "to go to the place where he belongs." Judas left the position Jesus gave him and stopped being an apostle when he betrayed Jesus. Because he betrayed Jesus, he belongs to a place which is separate from the apostles and other believers. This means that Judas got what he deserved. It is most likely that the leader of the group prayed those words and the people also prayed in a similar way, but not with these exact words.

Then they cast lots to see whom Jesus chose to replace Judas. The phrase "to cast lots" probably refers to putting marked objects, lots, into a bag or container. The objects were usually pebbles. They were either marked with different colours, different symbols, or each pebble had one name on it. Then a person shook the bag until one of the objects fell out. They expected the Lord to cause the right marked object to fall out. Here the leader of the group, probably Peter, cast lots. The rest of the people were approving of him doing so. The lot fell to Matthias and they added him to the eleven apostles, so there were twelve apostles again.

Stop here and show the translation team a picture showing casting lots.

Stop here and discuss with the translation team what methods people use in your culture to help them make decisions.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has four scenes.

First scene: Peter makes a speech to a group of 120 believers. He says that it was necessary that the things that the Holy Spirit spoke through King David in the Scriptures about Judas should happen.

Second scene: Peter quotes prophecies, which King David wrote in Psalms about Judas. One scripture is a prayer to God asking that Judas' place as a traitor to be empty forever. Another scripture says someone should replace Judas serving as an apostle.

Third scene: Peter says that the apostles must replace Judas with another believer who together with them can be a witness to Jesus rising from the dead. This man had to be with the disciples from the time of Jesus' baptism to the time God took him up to heaven.

Fourth scene: The disciples select two men, Joseph also called Barsabbas or Justus, and Matthias. The disciples cast lots to see which one of them Jesus chose to replace Judas. The lot falls on Matthias and he joins the eleven apostles.

The characters in this story include:

- Peter
- The eleven apostles
- The believers in Jesus
- Joseph, also called Barsabbas or Justus
- Matthias

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

In those days Peter stood up among about 120 believers and made a speech. In the original language Luke says that Peter is talking to 120 brothers, which means believers. It is important to note that Luke uses the phrase "in those days" to mark the beginning of a new story. The phrase does not specify how long the period of time was. They were most likely in Jerusalem at that time waiting for the Holy Spirit to come on them. Peter addressed them politely as "brothers," a term he used for fellow believers, both men and women. This showed that he considered himself to be one of them.

The following additional information isn't part of Peter's speech. Luke probably added more detail about Judas' death so that the readers can understand Peter's speech better. "Now this man bought a field with the money, which the Jews gave him for his wicked act." It is important to note that Luke uses the word "now" to mark a change from the previous part of the story, and to show that this is additional information to give the reader more background. Luke continues, saying that Judas fell headfirst, his body burst in the middle, and his internal organs of the belly fell out. This means that his face was pointing downwards and that he fell from a height, rather than tripping as he walked. The news about Judas' death spread to all the people of Jerusalem. They called the field with a word, which in their language means an "Area of Blood." This was because Judas died there and his blood spilled in this place.

Stop and discuss with the translation team how you indicate additional background information in your language.

Peter continued his speech by saying, "It is written in the book of Psalms," and quoting two Scriptures, which king David wrote and he is applying them to Judas. The phrase "it is written" introduces a quote from the Old Testament scriptures. Here the quote is from the book of Psalms. King David wrote both of the Psalms that Peter quoted here. God inspired David to write Psalms. You can translate this phrase like this: "David wrote" or "God wrote through David." The first scripture said, "Everyone must leave his house and no one must live in it." The verse expresses a prayer to God that the house of Judas would remain empty. This is a wish that no other enemies would come to take his place. The second Scripture says, "Someone else must do his work." This passage expresses the need for someone to replace Judas serving as an apostle.

Peter said that because of what the scriptures said they needed to choose a man to replace Judas who would serve as one of the apostles together with the others. And he would also be a witness to Jesus rising from the dead. This man had to be one of the disciples who were with the apostles during the whole time when Jesus was living with them, beginning from the time when John the Baptist baptised him until the day when God took Jesus up to heaven.

And following Peter's speech the believers suggested the names of two men. The name of one man was Joseph, who people also called Barsabbas and Justus. The name of the other man was Matthias.

Then they prayed saying, "Lord Jesus, you know what all people think, feel and believe. Please show us which of these two you have chosen so that he can do the work of an apostle. This is the work that Judas left, to go to the place where he belongs." It is most likely that the leader of the group prayed those words and the people also prayed in a similar way, but not with these exact words.

Then they cast lots to see whom Jesus chose to replace Judas. The lot "fell to Matthias," which means that the lot or pebble with Matthias' name fell out. Then Matthias joined the group of the 11 apostles as the 12th apostle.

Stop here and show the translation team a picture showing casting lots.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has four scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Peter
- The eleven apostles
- The believers in Jesus
- Joseph, also called Barsabbas or Justus
- Matthias

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

In those days Peter stood up among about 120 believers and made a speech.

Peter said, "Brothers, it was necessary that the events that the Jewish Scriptures talk about should happen. The Holy Spirit caused David to speak about Judas. He told ahead of time what Judas would do, this Judas who guided the men who came to arrest Jesus."

Peter continued, "Because Jesus chose Judas to do God's work with us, he was a member of our group."

Peter continued, "King David who wrote the book of Psalms said, 'Everyone must leave his house and no one must live in it' and 'someone else must do his work.'"

Stop the action.

Peter said that because of what the scriptures said, the apostles needed to choose a man to replace Judas who would serve as one of the apostles together with the others. And he would also be a witness to Jesus rising from the dead. This man had to be one of the disciples who were with the apostles during the whole time when Jesus was living with them, beginning from the time when John the Baptist baptised him until the day when God took Jesus up to heaven.

And following Peter's speech the believers suggested the names of two men. The name of one man was Joseph, who people also called Barsabbas and Justus. The name of the other man was Matthias.

Then they prayed saying, "Lord Jesus, you know what all people think, feel and believe. Please show us which of these two you have chosen so that he can do the work of an apostle. This is the work that Judas left, to go to the place where he belongs."

Then they cast lots to see which of these men Jesus chose to replace Judas. The lot with Matthias' name fell out and they added him to the eleven apostles.

Stop the action. Stop the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Peter said to the believers, "Brothers, the **Scripture** had to be fulfilled, which the **Holy Spirit** spoke beforehand by the mouth of David concerning Judas."

Remember to use the same word you have used previously for **Scripture**. A full definition of Scripture can be found in the Master Glossary.

Remember to use the same word you have used previously for **Holy Spirit**. A full definition of Holy Spirit can be found in the Master Glossary.

The news of Judas' death spread throughout **Jerusalem**. Remember to use the same word you have used previously for Jerusalem. A full definition of Jerusalem can be found in the Master Glossary.

Peter said, "For it is written in the **Book of Psalms**, 'May his camp become desolate, and let there be no one to dwell in it'; and 'Let another take his office.'" **Psalms** is the name of the book of Jewish Scripture that David wrote much of. Psalms is a collection of poems and largely consist of prayers and songs praising God, encouraging belief in God, or expressing human emotions like sadness, fear, and joy. David and a few other authors wrote Psalms about 1,000 years before Jesus' birth.

And they prayed and said, "You, **Lord**, who know the hearts of all, show which one of these two you have chosen." **Lord** here refers to Jesus. Remember to use the same word you have used previously for Lord. A full definition of Lord can be found in the Master Glossary.

And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven **apostles**. Remember to use the same word you have used previously for apostles. A full definition of apostles can be found in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 1:15–26

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (4502992 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

[mp3 zip](#) (7631859 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

Acts 2:1–13

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Acts 2:1–13 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Acts 2:1–13 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Acts 2:1–13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

As you remember, after Jesus returned to heaven, about 120 of his followers returned to Jerusalem and met together in the upper room of a house. On the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit comes to the believers who are praying and gives them power to speak different languages. We do not know if this was in the same house or a different location. The crowd in Jerusalem reacts in different ways.

The word Pentecost means "fiftieth" and refers to the feast the Jews celebrated in Jerusalem 50 days after the feast of Passover. So this was about 50 days after the Romans crucified Jesus. Jews came from different places to Jerusalem to celebrate this festival, also known as the Harvest Feast or the Feast of Weeks. During this time, the people offered the first of their wheat harvest as a sacrifice to God.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What kind of festivals do you celebrate where you live? Describe what happens at those festivals and how far people travel to come to them. Pause this audio here.

Jesus' followers are meeting together and praying. We know from previous passages that the group of believers included his 12 apostles, or his chosen representatives, and his mother and brothers. Suddenly, a sound like a mighty wind came from heaven, or the place where God lives. Many times in scripture, wind symbolizes the Spirit of God. The believers sitting in the house saw tongues of fire, or something that appeared to be flames of fire. The cluster of flames then separated and rested on each believer, most likely on their head.

The Holy Spirit, or God's Spirit, filled every believer. This means that the Holy Spirit will guide the believers and give them the power to do what God wants them to do. As you remember, John the Baptist predicted that the Promised Savior would baptize with wind, or the Holy Spirit, and fire. That kind of baptism, a spiritual baptism, is happening to the disciples while they are together in the house. One of the things the Holy Spirit gave the believers power to do is to praise God in other tongues, or in different languages. These were languages the believers had not learned.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people act when God's power fills them? Tell a story of a time you or someone you know acted with God's power in a situation. Pause this audio here.

Luke uses the word "now" both as a time word and to introduce a fact that was true. In Jerusalem, there were Jews who spoke different languages because they lived in every nation under heaven. This phrase means that people in the crowd were from a large number of different countries. "Under heaven" means "in the world." They grew up speaking the languages of those different countries. Some of them moved to Jerusalem because it was the religious capital of the Jews. Other Jews were only in Jerusalem to celebrate the festival. These Jews were God-fearing, or devout followers of God's law.

These Jews hear a loud sound and run to the house to see what is happening. The loud sound can refer to the sound of strong wind or to the sound of the believers speaking many languages at one time. It is best to leave your translation open to either interpretation. A crowd gathers around the believers who had come out of the house. The crowd was bewildered, or confused and amazed. The believers were speaking in languages they had not learned before. Each of the Jews in the crowd heard some of the believers speaking in their home language. When they ask, "Are not these men Galileans?" they did not expect their question to be answered. They use the word "men" in a general sense to mean both men and women. Instead, the crowd assumed all of the believers were from the region of Galilee, and that people who lived in Galilee did not know how to speak other languages.

Luke then gives a list of all the places the Jews were from. These regions included Parthia, Media, Elam, Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, parts of Libya, and Rome.

Stop here and look at a map showing the areas of Parthia, Media, Elam, Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, the province of Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, parts of Libya, and Rome in relation to Jerusalem as a group. Pause this audio here.

Some of the Jews in the crowd lived in these places but were visiting Jerusalem for the festival. Converts to Judaism refers to non-Jewish people, most likely Romans, who stopped following their religion and became Jews by following the Jewish law and performing Jewish rites. Every person heard a believer speaking in their own language about the wonders or great things God had done. Most likely they were speaking about God sending Jesus as the Promised Savior.

The crowd reacts in different ways. Some people are amazed while others are puzzled. They understand they have seen a miracle, or an act of God, but they do not know what it means. Other Jews make fun of, or mock, the believers saying they are drunk on wine. Wine is an alcoholic drink made from the juice of grapes. They probably mocked the believers because they could only understand one of the languages and the rest sounded like nonsense.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Acts 2:1-13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has two scenes.

In the first scene: Jesus' disciples are gathered together in a house praying in Jerusalem during a Jewish festival. Suddenly, there is a sound of loud wind and flames of fire appear over each believer's head. The Holy Spirit fills them.

In the second scene: The believers begin to praise God in languages they do not know. They exit the house and a crowd of Jews gathers around them. Every person in the crowd hears their own language. The crowd reacts in different ways.

The characters in this passage are:

- Believers in Jesus
- The 12 apostles including Peter
- Jesus' family, including Mary
- Holy Spirit
- Crowd of God-fearing Jews from many countries

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Jesus' followers are meeting and praying together in Jerusalem in a house. It was the Pentecost, so that means it was 50 days after the Passover. It was the beginning of the Feast of Weeks. Jerusalem would have been crowded with Jews from different countries because they came to celebrate at the temple.

Jesus' followers are all sitting in the house and praying together. We know from a previous passage that Jesus' 12 apostles, his mother, and his brothers were present. There were probably about 120 people. As you know, Jesus promised he would send them the Holy Spirit and that they should wait in Jerusalem until he did.

It's important to remember that many times, wind represents God's Spirit. Tongues of flames does not mean literal tongues but most likely refers to single flames of fire. The fire rested above the disciples without burning them. Both the wind and fire symbolized the Holy Spirit filling the disciples.

The Holy Spirit gives the disciples power to praise God in languages they did not know or learn. They most likely walked out of the house when the crowd ran to the house to see what was happening.

The crowd included Jews from different countries who spoke different languages. Luke uses the word "now" to mean "at this time in history" and then gives background information. He then lists what different areas Jews were from in the crowd. This is significant because it shows how many different languages the disciples were speaking. Every Jew heard his or her own language spoken by one of the disciples.

Stop here and look at a map showing the areas of Parthia, Media, Elam, Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, the province of Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, parts of Libya, and Rome in relation to Jerusalem as a group. Pause this audio here.

The crowd asks, "Are not these men Galileans?" not because they want an answer, but because they are implying that people from Galilee did not know how to speak different languages.

Some people in the crowd said, "They are filled with new wine" or "They are just drunk" as a way to ridicule or mock the believers.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, how do people show they are mocking others? Discuss phrases or behaviors that people use when they are mocking someone. Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Acts 2:1–13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has two scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Believers in Jesus
- The 12 apostles including Peter
- Jesus' family, including Mary
- Holy Spirit
- Crowd of God-fearing Jews from many countries

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out Jesus' followers gathered together in a house in Jerusalem. A celebration is happening in the city. The believers are sitting and praying.

Pause the drama.

Act out a sudden strong wind filling the house. Flames of fire rest on each disciple. You can represent this by having the believers put something that has a flame or represents a flame over their heads. The Holy Spirit fills the believers. They began to praise God in different languages.

Pause the drama.

Act out the crowd hearing a loud sound and running to the house. The believers come out speaking different languages and praising God. Every person hears their own language being spoken by the believers. Some people are amazed, other people are puzzled, while other people mock the believers, saying they are drunk.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Acts 2:1–13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jesus' followers are gathered together on the **Pentecost**. The word Pentecost refers to a holy day for the Jews. It means "fiftieth." It is the Greek name for the Feast of Weeks, fifty days after the Passover. This means Jews from all over came to Jerusalem to celebrate. For more information on the Pentecost, refer to the Master Glossary.

Luke calls Jesus' followers **believers**. Believers is a term used to refer to a person who has chosen to believe in and follow Jesus exclusively. Be sure to use the same term for believers as you have in previous passages. For more information on believers, refer to the Master Glossary.

As the believers are praying, they hear a sound like a strong wind from **heaven**. Heaven can refer to the sky or to the place where God lives. It most likely refers to the place where God lives in this context. Be sure to translate

heaven in the same way you have in previous passages. For more information on heaven, refer to the Master Glossary.

After the appearance of wind and fire, **the Holy Spirit** fills the believers. The Holy Spirit is another name for God's Spirit. God gives people his Spirit to equip them with his presence, wisdom, authority, and power. In the New Testament, God gives his Spirit to live in everyone who decides to believe in and follow Jesus as their Savior. The Holy Spirit renews a person and helps them live a life pleasing to God. Sometimes, when someone receives the Holy Spirit, God may give them a gift like being able to speak a different language. Be sure to use the same term for the Holy Spirit as you have in previous passages. For more information on the Holy Spirit, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Holy Spirit gives the believers the power to **speak in tongues**. This means the power to speak in different languages. For more information on tongues, refer to the Master Glossary.

Luke tells us there were **God-fearing** Jews in the crowd. In this case, fear of God means devotion to following God's law because of holy reverence. Fear of God is in the Master Glossary. Be sure to use the same term for "fear of God" as you have in previous passages. There were Jews present from every **nation under heaven**. Nation refers to a group of people who have a specific territory and government. Be sure to use the same term for nation that you used in previous passages. "Under heaven" means in the whole earth, so the Jews were from many different countries on earth. For more information, heaven and nation are in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 2:1–13

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (2725707 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (4558230 KB)

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Acts 2:14–36

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Acts 2:14–36 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Acts 2:14–36 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Acts 2:14–36 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage, God filled believers in Jerusalem with the Holy Spirit and caused them to speak different languages on the day of the festival of Pentecost. A crowd gathered around them. They did not know what the miracle meant. Some people even said the believers were drunk. Now, Peter talks to the crowd and explains the miracle. Peter explains that Jesus is the Promised Savior.

Peter stands to talk to the crowd. The other eleven apostles, or Jesus' chosen representatives, are also with him. Peter loudly addresses the crowd. "Listen" and "let me explain" were polite ways to greet them. "Men of Judea" or "fellow Jews" probably refers to Jews living in Judea. Men is used in a general sense and refers to both men and women. "You who live in Jerusalem" includes the rest of the crowd. Peter wants to explain the miracle of the believers speaking in different languages. Peter also corrects the people who thought the believers were

drunk. Peter says it was the third hour, or 9 a.m., and too early to be drunk. At that time, people usually got drunk at night or at a meal, and the first meal wasn't until 10 a.m.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In many cultures, people get drunk at any time of the day. If that is true in your culture, discuss the best way to explain this cultural difference. Pause this audio here.

Peter explains that the believers speaking different languages fulfills the prophecy of Joel, a prophet, or messenger of God, who lived 400 years before Luke wrote the book of Acts. In Joel's prophecy, God says that during the last days, or before the current age ends, that he will pour out, or send, his Spirit to all people. Throughout Acts, it will become clear that God's promise of the Holy Spirit applies to all people, including the Gentiles, or non-Jews. God sending his Spirit to the believers on Pentecost was the beginning of the fulfillment of God's promise.

Joel said the people's sons and daughters would prophecy, or speak messages on behalf of God. God speaks to his messengers through supernatural visions and dreams. A vision is when God speaks to someone through a dream while they are awake; dreams happen while people are asleep. If your language uses the same word for vision and dream, it may be easier to say something like, "Your young men and old men will see visions or dreams during the day and during the night." "My servants" refers to the same young and old people who will prophecy in the future. This means that when God gives His Spirit to someone, they become his servant.

Joel continues and speaks about signs that the end of time is near. These signs included blood, fire, and smoke happening in the heavens, or sky, and on earth. Blood could refer to death or something turning the color of blood. It's best to keep your translation open to both interpretations. God will cause the sun to become dark and the moon to turn red like the color of blood. These signs will happen before the day of the Lord, or before the time when God will gather all people and judge them because he is Lord, or master. But God will save everyone who calls on the name of the Lord, or asks him for help. By calling on his name, they are asking God to powerfully save them. In Joel's context, Lord referred to God. But Peter implies that the Lord refers to Jesus and that God will save anyone who believes in Jesus as the Promised Savior. Here, saved means to be rescued from the power and punishment of sin.

Peter ends the quotation and continues to speak to the crowd. He respectfully addresses them as men of Israel. This phrase applied to all of the people who descended from Jacob. Peter says God showed the Jews that Jesus was the Promised Savior by the miracles Jesus did, or acts that only God could do. Peter says it was a part of God's plan for people to betray and hand Jesus over to the Jewish leaders to be killed. God had foreknowledge, or knew everything that would happen to Jesus before it happened, because it was a part of God's plan. Wicked men, or the Romans who did not follow God's law, helped the Jewish leaders crucify Jesus or nail him to a cross. But God raised Jesus back to life and set him free from the power of death. When Peter says, "It was not possible for death to keep its hold on him," he means it was not possible for Jesus to continue being dead. Peter is comparing death to an evil person trying to keep Jesus from escaping.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How is death talked about in your culture? What do people believe happens after death? Pause this audio here.

Then Peter quotes from their Jewish ancestor King David. David lived 1,000 years before Jesus and wrote some of the book of Psalms. David writes about the Lord, or God, always being with him and being at his right hand, or always ready to help him. Because of God's presence, David says he will not fear but be glad and speak joyfully. David says God will not abandon his Holy One, or his servant, nor allow his body to rot in the grave. The word that's been translated as grave is "Hades," or the place of the dead. Although people assumed the psalm was referring to David when he says the Holy One, Peter applies the psalm to Jesus. Holy One is someone who is morally pure. The Holy One is probably someone that God sent for a special purpose.

After quoting David, Peter explains that the Psalm could not apply to David because he did die, and his body was still in the tomb where people buried him. People of that day would have been familiar with the location. But God raised Jesus from the dead; his body did not decay. Peter reminds them that God promised David that one of his descendants would be king forever. You will remember from the account of Jesus' birth that he is a descendant of David. Peter says God caused David to look into the future and know that God would bring the Christ, or Promised Savior, back to life.

Peter tells them they are witnesses to Jesus' life. The crowd knew the miracles Jesus did and that his grave was empty. He says God resurrected, or raised Jesus from the grave, as the Promised Savior and that Jesus is now sitting with God in heaven, or the place where God lives. God placed Jesus at his right hand, or in the place of highest honor and authority under God himself. Peter explains that God the Father gave Jesus the right to give the promised Holy Spirit to his people. "Poured out" means God gives the Holy Spirit completely to his people. Jesus gave the Holy Spirit to the believers earlier that day, which is why they spoke different languages.

When Peter says David did not ascend to heaven, he means that David was not the Christ. Peter proves this by quoting David again. In the Psalm, David says the Lord, or God, speaks to my Lord. "My Lord" means David's master or someone who had authority over him. Peter says David was talking about Jesus. God places David's Lord in the position of highest honor and God conquers all of David's Lord's enemies as if they were a footstool. People rested their feet on footstools while they were seated. This word picture means that Jesus will have power and control over all of his enemies.

Stop here and look at a picture of a footstool as a group. How do you describe or what word pictures do you use in your culture to show that an enemy is completely defeated? Pause this audio here.

Peter ends by saying the people could be certain that God sent Jesus as the Christ.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Acts 2:14–36 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 6 scenes.

In the first scene: Peter, the apostles, and the other believers are in Jerusalem. God has just filled them with the Holy Spirit and caused them to speak different languages. A crowd gathers. Peter stands up to talk to the crowd.

In the second scene: Peter explains the miracle of different languages and quotes from the Prophet Joel. God speaks to Joel about the future. God says people will prophesy and that He will pour out his Spirit on all people. God describes signs of the end of time.

In the third scene: Peter continues to speak to the crowd. He says God sent Jesus and had a plan for Jesus to die and rise back to life.

In the fourth scene: Peter quotes from King David. David says God is always with him. David says God will not let his Holy One rot in the grave.

In the fifth scene: Peter speaks to the crowd. He explains that David was talking about Jesus as the Holy One. God did not allow Jesus' body to rot in the grave but instead raised him to a place of honor in heaven. God gave Jesus the Holy Spirit to give to his people. Peter says they are witnesses of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.

In the sixth scene: Peter quotes from David again. David watches as God places Jesus at his right hand, in a place of honor, and gives him power over his enemies. Peter explains that Jesus was David's Lord.

The characters in this passage are:

- Peter
- Apostles
- Believers in Jesus
- Crowd of God-fearing Jews from many countries
- Joel
- God
- King David
- Jesus
- Enemies

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Peter and the other 11 apostles are standing with a group of around 120 believers. They have just spoken in many different languages after receiving the Holy Spirit. A crowd of God-fearing Jews from many countries were gathered around them wondering what the miracle of different languages meant.

When Peter raised his voice, he wanted the whole crowd to listen to what he had to say. Peter was not trying to be disrespectful in any way.

Peter stands up and before answering the question of "What does this mean?" Peter answers the last accusation of being drunk. Peter says "no" or "but" to show the contrast between being drunk and the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy. Then Peter addresses the meaning of the miracle.

It is important to pay attention to the pattern of speech that Peter follows. Peter speaks directly to the crowd and then uses quotations from scripture, specifically from Joel and David, to explain that what he is saying about Jesus is true.

Every time that Peter makes a direct statement, Peter uses a way to identify his audience. For instance, "men of Israel," "brothers," and "all the people of Israel" were all polite ways to address his Jewish audience. All of these terms are general and refer to both men and women.

Peter tells Joel's prophecy out loud. Then Peter explains that God gave Jesus power to do miracles and what happened to Jesus. Peter mentions the death of Jesus and his resurrection. Peter uses David's words to support his statement that Jesus is the Promised Savior and God raised him from the dead.

In the Psalm, David says, "I see the Lord always before me and he is right beside me." These are figures of speech. "Always before me" means that God was always present in all that David did. "Right beside me" or "at my right hand" means that God was always ready to help David.

David says God showed him "the paths of life," or how to live a godly life. "You fill me with joy in your presence" means that God will make David completely happy or joyful because God is with him.

After Peter finishes quoting David, he mentions that David's body is still in the tomb. Peter emphasizes this by saying that David's tomb is still here to this day. This contrasts with the fact that Jesus' body is not dead because his tomb was empty!

Peter mentions that God exalted Jesus and placed him in the place of honor. Peter makes the contrast with David, because God never raised David to the place of honor. This does not mean that David was a bad person, but rather that he was not the Promised Savior. Peter justifies his statement by quoting David again.

Peter finishes his speech by telling the crowd that God made Jesus the Lord and Christ. This means he had all authority and power and that God sent him as king and savior to his people.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Acts 2:14–36 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 6 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Peter
- Apostles
- Believers in Jesus
- Crowd of God-fearing Jews from many countries
- Joel
- God
- King David
- Jesus
- Enemies

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out Peter, the apostles, and a large group of believers standing in front of a crowd of Jews in Jerusalem. The crowd wants to know what the miracle of speaking different languages means, some people in the crowd said it was because they were drunk.

Act out Peter speaking with a loud voice. He answers them. Peter tells them that it is too early for the people to be drunk. Peter tells them the messenger Joel predicted what was happening.

Pause the drama.

When Peter is quoting a prophecy or a part of scripture, the actor for Peter can mime while pretending to speak. In the background, the group can act out the prophecy or the part of quoted scripture. For the prophecy, have people or different objects to represent the sun, darkness, moon, and blood.

Act out Peter quoting Joel saying that God declared that he will pour out His spirit on the people, sons and daughters, young and old, and they will be his servants. They will prophesy or have dreams. There will be wonders in earth and heaven including blood, fire, and smoke. The sun will be dark and the moon will be like blood. God will save anyone who calls upon the name of the Lord.

Pause the drama.

Act out Peter talking directly to the men of Israel saying that God gave Jesus the power to do miracles and signs while Jesus was with them. According to God's plan and purpose, people delivered Jesus to the Romans. Then evil men crucified him and killed him. But God gave Jesus back life; death could not hold him.

Pause the drama.

When Peter is quoting one of David's psalms, the actor of Peter can mime while the group is acting the part of scripture Peter quotes. One person could act as David saying these things. He can point to the actor of Jesus not staying dead but rising to heaven.

Act out Peter speaking directly to the crowd again. He tells them that David already talked about Jesus. Peter then quotes David. Peter again addresses the people saying that David's body is still in his tomb. God promised David that one of his descendants would sit on his throne. David spoke about the resurrection of the Promised Savior. Peter says, "We all are witnesses of the resurrection of Jesus. Jesus received the promise of the Holy Spirit and Jesus poured it out and that is what you see and hear today."

Pause the drama.

Act out Peter explaining that David didn't ascend to heaven and then quoting David. Again, the actor for Peter can mime speaking while the actor for David watches as God places Jesus at his right hand. God gives Jesus power over his enemies.

Pause the drama.

Act out Peter telling the people of Israel that certainly God made Jesus Lord and Christ. Peter tells them that He is the same Jesus you crucified.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Acts 2:14–36 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Peter is with **the Eleven** when he addresses the crowd. "The Eleven" refers to the other eleven **apostles**, or Jesus' chosen representatives. Use the same word or phrase for "the Eleven" that you used in previous passages. For more information about apostle, see the Master Glossary.

Peter addresses the crowd as fellow **Jews** because he was also a Jew. Jew refers to anyone who is a descendant of Abraham's grandson, Jacob. God promised to give the Jews the land of Israel. Be sure to translate Jew in the same way you have in previous passages. For more information on Jews see the Master Glossary.

Peter quotes from the **prophet** Joel. A prophet is a messenger of God who spoke to the people on behalf of God.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for prophet. See the Master Glossary for more information about prophet. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

In Joel's prophecy, God says he will pour out his **Spirit** on all people. Here, Spirit refers to the Holy Spirit, or God's Spirit. God gives his Spirit to people to equip them with his presence, wisdom, authority, and power. Be sure to translate Spirit in the same way you have before. God also says your sons and daughters will prophesy. **Prophecy** refers to a person sharing an inspired written or spoken message from God to God's people.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for prophecy. See the Master Glossary for more information about prophecy. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

God says young men will see **visions** and old men will see **dreams**. Vision and dreams are supernatural experiences when God speaks or gives a divine revelation to a person. However, visions happen while people are awake while dreams only happen when people are asleep. If your language only has one word for vision and dream, you may want to specify whether the person was awake or asleep when they received the message from God.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for vision and dream. See the Master Glossary for more information about vision and dream. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

God says His **servants** will also prophesy. Here, servant means **slave**. Slaves were owned by another person and had no rights.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for servant. See the Master Glossary for more information about servant and slave. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

God talks about signs that will happen in the future, including wonders in the **heavens** above and **signs** on earth below. Here, "heavens" refers to the sky. Be sure to translate heaven in the same way you have in previous passages. A sign refers to a signal that indicates something is true and about to happen. In this case, the signs on earth would mean the day of the Lord was close.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for signs. See the Master Glossary for more information about signs. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

The day of the **Lord** refers to the day when God will gather all people and judge them. Lord means master and refers to God as master of all things. Use the same word for Lord as you have in previous passages. For more information, Lord is in the Master Glossary.

Peter politely addresses the crowd as Men of **Israel**. Israel refers to all of the descendants of Jacob who was also called Israel. It's another way to refer to the Jews.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for Israel. See the Master Glossary for more information about Israel. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

Peter says that Jesus performing **miracles, signs, and wonders** was proof that he was sent from God as the Promised Savior. Miracles, signs, and wonders are all similar words that refer to acts that only God can do.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for miracles, signs, and wonders. See the Master Glossary for more information about miracles, signs, and wonders. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

When Peter quotes David, David says "my **heart** rejoices." To the Jews, the heart was the place where a person's feelings and thoughts take place. Use the same word for heart as you have in previous passages. For more information, heart is in the Master Glossary.

David says God will not abandon him to **the grave** or allow his **Holy One** see decay. The original word for the grave is Hades. Hades refers to the place of the dead. "Holy One" refers to a person who belongs to or is set apart for God. Although originally people assumed David was referring to himself, Peter applies the title to Jesus as the Promised Savior.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for holy and Hades. See the Master Glossary for more information about holy and Hades. If you have already translated these words in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

Peter says the psalm could not apply to David because his body did decay and it was still in his **tomb**. Tomb refers to a rock cave where people placed dead bodies. Peter says God allowed David to see ahead and know about the **resurrection** of Jesus. Resurrection refers to God causing someone to rise from the dead as the same person. This is what happened to Jesus.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for tomb and resurrection. See the Master Glossary for more information about tomb and resurrection. If you have already translated these words in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

Peter uses the title **the Christ** to refer to Jesus. "The Christ" is a title that refers to the Promised Savior, or the person God chose and sent to his people as king and savior.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for Christ. See the Master Glossary for more information about Christ. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

Peter blames the crowd for **crucifying** Jesus. Crucifixion was the worst form of execution in Jesus' time. Romans nailed victims hands and feet to two wooden boards that formed a cross, then allowed them to hang there suffering until they died.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for crucify. See the Master Glossary for more information about crucifixion. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word (Acts 2:14–36)

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 2:14–36

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Acts 2:37-41

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Acts 2:37-41 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Acts 2:37-41 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Acts 2:37-41 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage, Peter and the other apostles were in Jerusalem on the day of the festival of Pentecost. Peter explained the miracle of speaking in different languages. He also explained that Jesus is the Promised Savior by using the scriptures. Now, many people in the Jewish crowd believe Peter's words and join the group of believers.

Peter has just explained that God sent Jesus as the Promised Savior, but instead of accepting him, the Jewish people were responsible for crucifying Jesus, or killing him by nailing him to a cross. The crowd was "pierced to the heart" when they heard Peter's words. This means they felt a strong emotion, most likely regret for supporting Jesus' death, because they now realized Jesus was the Christ or Promised Savior. Many Jews in the crowd believed Peter. They ask Peter and the 11 other apostles what they should do. This question implies that they believed what Peter was saying. The 12 apostles were Jesus' chosen representatives who he sent out to teach with authority, or the right to act. "Brothers" was a polite way for them to address the apostles.

Peter tells them to repent, or to stop doing their sins and to turn to God to begin living a new life with him. Sin refers to any act of disobedience to God. If the people repented, it means they were sorry for their past sin and admitted that they were wrong. Peter also says they should be baptized, or ceremonially washed in water. "In the name of Jesus Christ" means that their baptism publicly showed that they started following Jesus.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In many cultures, people ceremonially wash often to remove sins. What do people believe about baptism in your culture? How can you specify that this baptism is a once for all ceremony? Pause this audio here.

When a person repents and is baptized, Peter says God will forgive their sins, or erase their guilt, and give them the Holy Spirit. When God forgives someone's sins, he chooses not to punish that person for the evil things they have done. The Holy Spirit refers to God's Spirit. God gives His Spirit as a gift to those who repent.

Baptism in water was the visible sign that a person believed Jesus was the Christ, repented of their sins, and was a part of the new people of God who God gave his Holy Spirit to. Peter says that God's promise of forgiveness and the Holy Spirit is available not only to the descendants of the Jewish people but also to people far off. This includes the Gentiles, or non-Jews. God will forgive and give the Holy Spirit to all of the people who He calls, or asks to join him.

Peter continued to teach them strongly and told them to save themselves from this crooked generation. This means Peter wants the people to allow God to save them instead of being like all the other people living at that time. That generation, or the people living at that time, had rejected Jesus. Some of the crowd believed in Peter's words. That day three thousand souls, or people, believed in Jesus as the Promised Savior and the believers baptized them.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Acts 2:37-41 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 1 scene.

In the first scene: Peter and the apostles are teaching a crowd in Jerusalem. Peter explains that Jesus is the Promised Savior and the people are responsible for crucifying him. Many people in the crowd believe Peter and ask him what to do. Peter tells them to repent and be baptized. Three thousand people believe and are baptized.

The characters in this passage are:

- Peter
- Apostles
- Believers in Jesus
- Crowd of God-fearing Jews from many countries
- New believers in Jesus

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Peter and the other 11 apostles are standing with a group of around 120 believers. They have just spoken in many different languages after receiving the Holy Spirit. A crowd of God-fearing Jews from many countries were gathered around them wondering what the miracle of different languages meant. Peter finishes his speech by telling the crowd that God sent Jesus as the Promised Savior but the Jewish people were responsible for crucifying him.

Many people in the crowd who heard this had pierced hearts, or felt very emotional, and asked the apostles, "What should I do?" It is important to remember that "brothers" was a polite way to address the apostles.

Peter answered that they need to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus. Then God would forgive their sins and give them the Holy Spirit. This baptism would be a public display that they had repented and started following Jesus as the Promised Savior.

Peter continued to warn the people to save themselves by using many strong words and arguments. Saving themselves means the people would allow God to save them from their sin, or disobedience to God, and believe in Jesus as the Promised Savior. This would be different from the corrupt generation, or all of the people living at that time, who had rejected Jesus.

Then three thousand souls, or people, decided to follow Jesus that day. It is not clear who baptized the new believers, only that they were obedient to be baptized.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Acts 2:37-41 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 1 scene.

The characters in this passage are:

- Peter
- Apostles
- Believers in Jesus
- Crowd of God-fearing Jews from many countries
- New believers in Jesus

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out Peter, the apostles, and a large group of believers standing in front of a crowd of Jews in Jerusalem. The crowd wants to know what the miracle of speaking different languages means. Peter explains that God sent Jesus as the Promised Savior.

Act out Peter telling them that He is the same Jesus you crucified. The people felt remorse and asked Peter and the apostles what they needed to do. Peter tells them to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of sins. Peter tells them they will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Peter explains that this promise is for them and their children and for everyone that God calls to himself.

Pause the drama.

Act out Peter continuing to speak strongly. Then believers in Jesus baptized the people in the crowd who accepted Peter's message.

Pause the drama.

Act out three thousand people joining those who believed in Jesus as the Promised Savior.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Acts 2:37-41 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Peter teaches the crowd that Jesus is the Promised Savior. Some of the crowd believes Peter. They are **pierced to the heart**. This means they felt a strong emotion. Most likely they felt remorse for supporting the people who killed Jesus.

The people in the crowd who believe ask Peter and the other **apostles** what they should do. Apostle refers to Jesus' chosen representatives who Jesus sent out to teach the good news, be founders of the church, have spiritual authority, and to be witnesses of Jesus' death and resurrection. Use the same word for apostle that you used in previous passages. For more information on apostle, refer to the Master Glossary.

Peter says they should **repent** and be **baptized**. Repent means to turn away from sin and turn to God to live a new life following him. Here, baptism refers to a ceremonial cleansing in water to show that a person believed that Jesus was the Promised Savior and started following him. Use the same word for baptize as you used in previous passages. For more information on baptism, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for repent. See the Master Glossary for more information about repent. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

If a person repented and believed in Jesus as the Promised Savior, Peter said God will **forgive their sins**. Sin is any act of disobedience against God. When God forgives, it means He will erase their guilt as if it never existed.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for forgive and sin. See the Master Glossary for more information about forgive and sin. If you have already translated these words in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

When a person repents, they receive the **Holy Spirit**. The Holy Spirit is God's Spirit which he gives to people in order to equip them with his presence, wisdom, authority, and power. Use the same word or phrase for the Holy Spirit that you used in previous passages. For more information about the Holy Spirit, see the Master Glossary.

Peter begged the crowd to listen to him and to be saved from this corrupt **generation**. Generation refers to people who live at the same time as each other. The Jews living at that time were responsible for killing Jesus.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for generation. See the Master Glossary for more information about generation. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

That day God added 3,000 souls to their number. The **soul** is the part of a person that continues to exist when the body dies. This means that 3,000 people decided to trust in Jesus as the Promised Savior.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for soul. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. See the Master Glossary for more information about soul. Pause this audio here.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word (Acts 2:37–41)

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 2:37-41

Audio Content

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Acts 2:41-47

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Acts 2:42-47 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Acts 2:42-47 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Acts 2:42–47 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage, Peter used scripture to explain to a crowd of Jews in Jerusalem about the Holy Spirit and Jesus being the Promised Savior. Three thousand Jews believed in Jesus as the Promised Savior and joined Jesus' followers. Now, the believers gather together and share everything, the apostles perform miracles, and God continually causes more people to believe in Jesus.

All of Jesus' followers, including the three thousand new followers, devoted themselves or were faithful to listen to the apostles' teaching, fellowship, breaking bread, and praying. The 12 apostles were Jesus' chosen representatives. The apostles taught both privately and publicly about what Jesus did and said and who God said Jesus was—the Promised Savior. Fellowship refers to the believers closely associating or living life together. This meant they met together regularly. As you remember, breaking bread or eating together symbolizes friendship in Jewish culture. The believers ate together often. The bread that Jews ate was hard. People had to break it to share it with others. Breaking bread can also refer to celebrating the Lord's Supper, or the last time Jesus ate with his disciples before his death. During the meal, Jesus told them to remember him and the sacrifice he was about to make. The believers also prayed in groups, or talked to God. This included praising God and making requests.

Stop here and look at a picture of Jewish bread as a group. What are ways to show close friendship in your culture? What do close friends do together where you live? Pause this audio here.

All of the people in Jerusalem are filled with awe. They are amazed by the many miracles, wonders, and signs the apostles performed. Miracles, wonders, and signs all have a similar meaning and refer to acts that only God can do that cause people to be in awe of him. God gave the apostles power to perform these acts. In the previous passage, Peter quoted from Joel saying that there would be miracles, signs, and wonders in the last days. The Jews were already beginning to see these things happen through the apostles.

All of the believers were a community in the city of Jerusalem. Since they were such a large group, this probably means they visited each other and met together very often. Some of them may have moved to the same part of the city as other believers. The believers had everything in common, meaning they shared their possessions. This does not mean they shared all of their property. But rather, if someone in the group was in need, a believer or believers would sell their possessions or goods to help them. They would then give the money they received from selling their things to the person in need. When Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to his followers, it seems to have transformed the way they worked and lived together. We see here and throughout Acts that the believers share a sense of unity because they share the Holy Spirit.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture take care of the poor or those in need? How does the church in your culture work together to help those in need? Pause this audio here.

Every day the group of the believers met together in the temple courtyards. The temple is the building where God lived among his people. Priests served in the temple and presented the people's sacrifices to God. Usually, people met in the courtyards surrounding the temple to worship God. Since they were all from a Jewish background, the temple courtyard was a logical place for them to gather for worship.

Stop here and look at an illustration of the temple courtyards as a group. Pause this audio here.

The believers broke bread, or ate together, in each other's homes with sincere or uncomplicated hearts. To the Jews, the heart represents the part of a person where feelings and decisions take place. The believers praised God and all of the people of Jerusalem favored or thought well of them. Every day, the Lord added to their number or caused more and more people to believe in Jesus. It is not clear whether the Lord refers to Jesus or God. It is best to leave your translation open to either interpretation. If you have to choose, it is best to use God. God saved the new believers from the punishment of sin through their belief in Jesus as the Promised Savior, so they joined the group of believers.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Acts 2:42–47 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has two scenes.

In the first scene: Show the large group of believers going to the temple courtyards every day. The apostles teach the group of believers and do miracles. Many other Jews also listen to the apostles. They are in awe and believe in Jesus. The believers pray together. Everyone looks at the believers with favor.

In the second scene: A believer is in need and another believer sells their goods and gives the money to the person in need. Believers visit each other often and eat meals in each other's homes with joy and gladness. God adds to the group of believers every day.

The characters in this passage are:

- Apostles
- Group of believers
- Other Jews at the temple who hear then believe
- Believer in need
- Believer who sells their things

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It is important to remember that the group of believers included the apostles, the original 120 believers, and the 3,000 new believers from the day of Pentecost.

The believers devoted themselves to listening to the apostles' teaching and to fellowshiping with each other. They were faithful to do these things, and they were eager for them. They wanted to continue listening and fellowshiping.

The believers met every day in the temple courtyards. This was a place where Jews normally worshiped God. There would have been many Jews passing by while the 12 apostles taught the other believers and performed miracles.

The believers had everything in common. This means when one believer was in need, another believer would sell their property or goods and give the money to the person in need.

The believers had meals in each other's homes. Breaking bread together showed their friendship. It could also refer to the believers remembering the Last Supper of Jesus and his sacrifice. This probably included both.

People favored the believers and God caused people to believe in Jesus as the Promised Savior daily.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Acts 2:42–47 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has two scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Apostles
- Group of believers in Jesus
- Other Jews at the temple who hear then believe
- Believer in need
- Believer who sells their things

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out the group of believers going to the temple courtyards every day. The apostles teach the group of believers and do miracles. Many other Jews also listen to the apostles.

Pause the drama.

Act out the Jewish crowd in awe. Many people believe in Jesus. The believers pray together. Everyone looks at the believers with favor.

Act out one of the believers in need. Another believer sells their goods and gives the money to the believer in need.

Pause the drama.

Act out believers visiting each other often and eating meals in each other's home with joy and gladness. God adds to the group of believers every day.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Acts 2:42–47 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The **believers**, or the people who believed in Jesus as the Promised Savior, began to learn more about Jesus and his teaching by listening to the **apostles'** teachings. The 12 apostles were Jesus' chosen representatives. Their main functions are to preach the good news, to be founders of the church, to hold spiritual authority in the church, and to be witnesses to the fact that Jesus had been resurrected from the dead. Use the same word for believer and apostle as you used in previous passages. For more information, apostle and believer are in the Master Glossary.

The believers also devoted themselves to the **breaking of bread**, or to having meals together in each other's houses. Bread was a common food in Jewish culture and because it was hard it had to be broken to be shared. The breaking of bread could also mean the believers celebrated the Lord's Supper together, or remembering Jesus' body being broken for them in death.

The apostles did many **wonders and miraculous signs**, or acts that only God can do. God gave them the power to do these acts through the Holy Spirit. A sign is usually a signal or warning that something is true or will happen. Use the same word or phrase for wonders and signs as you have in previous passages. For more information, miracles, signs, and wonders is in the Master Glossary.

The believers met in the **temple** courts. "temple" refers to the place where God lived among his people. The courtyards surrounded the temple building and that is where the people worshiped God. Use the same word for temple as you have used in previous passages. For more information, temple is in the Master Glossary.

The believers met together with sincere **hearts**. In Jewish culture, the heart refers to the place where feelings and decisions happen. Use the same word for heart that you have used in previous passage. For more information, heart is in the Master Glossary.

The **Lord** added to the group of believers every day. The Lord means master or one who has authority. In this context, it is not clear whether the Lord refers to Jesus or God. It is best to leave your translation open to either interpretation. Use the same word for Lord as you have used in previous passages. For more information, Lord is in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word (Acts 2:42–47)

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 2:41–47

Audio Content

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Acts 3:1–10

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 3:1–10 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

This story takes place sometime soon after the Holy Spirit filled the believers in Jesus and Peter told people how to follow Jesus. The events in this story happen in the afternoon at the temple in Jerusalem.

Peter and John are going to the temple to pray. It is 3 p.m., specifically the Hour of Prayer. This is a special time of day when Jewish people would come to the temple to pray. The Jewish believers in Jesus are still following traditional Jewish religious activities. Jewish people pray three times a day—at 9 a.m., 12 p.m., and 3p.m.

Friends bring a lame man to the gate called Beautiful. The man is over 40 years old and he has been lame from birth.

Stop here and show an illustration or photo of Herod's temple in Jerusalem. Discuss: Describe your places of worship. What kind of things do people do in and around your places of worship?

The gate was called Beautiful because it was unusually large and covered in gold. No one knows the exact location of the Beautiful gate. Some people believe the Beautiful gate is on the east side of the temple and other people believe the gate is on the south side. Wherever the gate actually was, there were a lot of stairs, making it difficult for a person who cannot walk to reach the entrance. Friends or family members probably carried the lame man to the gate every day.

Jewish religious custom did not allow anyone who was sick or lame to enter the temple because they were considered unclean, or unqualified for service to God. Jewish law also required people to be generous to less fortunate people. The lame and blind often sat at the temple gates and begged because people going into the temple were more likely to be generous to them as part of their worship to God.

As the lame man arrived at the gate on this particular day, he saw Peter and John entering the temple and asked them for money. He did not know who Peter and John were.

Stop here and discuss how lame people are treated in your culture. What do they ask for? Where are they most likely to be during the day?

Peter and John stopped and looked at the lame man and said, "Look at us." The lame man looked at Peter and John. He thought Peter and John were going to give him money.

When Peter and John had the lame man's attention, Peter said, "We don't have any silver or gold or money to give you. But what we do have we will give you." Then Peter commanded the lame man in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth to rise and walk. In this culture, to make a command in a person's name meant authority came from that name. In this story, Peter is saying his command is coming from Jesus Christ. Jesus is doing the healing, not Peter.

Peter then took the lame man's right hand and helped him up. Immediately the lame man's legs and ankles and bones became strong and he was healed. He followed Peter and John into the temple, jumping and shouting and praising God.

Everyone in the temple recognized this lame man and were amazed and astonished that he was walking and jumping and praising God. They recognized the lame man because they saw him begging every day at the temple gate.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has 3 scenes.

First scene: Peter and John start walking to the temple at about three o'clock in the afternoon, which was the hour for prayer. There is a lame man at the Beautiful Gate of the temple. This man is carried by friends every day to the gate to beg for money from people who were going into that gate of the temple.

Second scene: Peter and John arrive at the Beautiful Gate and the lame man sees the disciples going into the temple and asks Peter and John for money. Peter heals the lame man instead.

Third scene: Peter, John, and the lame man walk into the temple together. The other people in the temple see the lame man and are amazed at what God has done.

The characters in this story include:

- Peter
- John
- Lame man
- Crowd of people
- Lame man's friends

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

It is important to remember that the temple that Herod built was at a high point in the city of Jerusalem. There were many gates around the exterior wall of the temple. Peter and John, Jesus' disciples, were walking up to one of the external gates of the temple.

Stop and look at the diagram of the temple of Herod. Look at the photo of a temple gate.

The Beautiful Gate is a very tall and deep wall made of molded large bricks. People who were not able to get a job would sit by the outer gates day after day to beg for help. Other people walking by might give the beggar money or food. Family or friends carried the lame man to the gate sometime earlier that day.

The lame man asked Peter and John for money as they were walking by. Peter asked the lame man to look at him. The lame man was probably used to not being looked at or ignored by the people walking by. It is important that Peter and John saw the lame man and wanted him to look at Peter before he started talking to the lame man.

It is important to remember that Peter told the lame man where the power to heal him had come from: Peter said "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!" Peter knew that healing comes from Jesus Christ. Jesus grew up in Nazareth and Peter did not want any confusion about who Jesus was.

Peter took the lame man by the hand and his feet and ankles were strong. The lame man jumped and praised God.

Remember that the people in the temple had walked past this lame man day after day for years as he sat by the gate but now the lame man was walking around inside the temple and praising God for healing him. People would have recognized him.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has three scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Peter
- John
- Lame man
- Crowd of people
- Lame man's friends

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

Some people are carrying the lame man to the Beautiful Gate just outside the temple. It is 3 p.m. in the afternoon. The lame man has been carried here by his friends or family every day for many years.

Stop action and ask how this lame man might have felt; ask how his friends or family might have felt. You might hear words like, "Tired," "Annoyed," "Depressed," "Hopeless." [!end] Restart the action.

Peter and John are walking up the stairs of the temple to pray. They are probably talking. The lame asks them for money. He has asked the same thing countless times. He asks without really thinking about it. Peter stops and turns to the lame man and says, "Look at us."

Stop action and ask the lame man how he might feel if someone acknowledged him. Responses might be, "Happy to be noticed," "Pleased," "Concerned," and "Hopeful." [!end] Restart the action.

The lame man turns his head to look at Peter and John. He thinks they will give him money. When Peter and John have the lame man's attention, Peter says, "We don't have money, but we will give you what we do have. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, stand up." It is important that the actor says, "in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth." This indicates it is Jesus/God who does the healing, not Peter or John. Then Peter takes the lame man's right hand and helps him up.

Stop the action.

As soon as that lame man stands, his feet and bones are healed. He is thrilled he can actually walk. He jumps for joy and praises God. The lame man follows Peter and John into the temple. This was the first time that the lame man would have been allowed to go past the gate of the temple. Everyone in the temple sees the lame man and recognizes him. They are amazed and astonished.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Peter and John, disciples of Jesus, were going to the **temple to pray**. The temple was the building where God's Spirit lived among His people. People would come to the temple to pray, or talk, to God. Use the same words for disciples, temple, and pray as you have in previous passages, and see the Master Glossary for a full definition of disciple, temple and pray.

Stop here if needed and look at the illustration of the temple.

Peter and John told the lame man they did not have silver or gold. In this case, they are telling the lame man they have no money. Peter said, "We give you what we have. In the name of Jesus **Christ** of **Nazareth**, get up and walk." Christ refers to the Promised Savior. Translate this in the same way you have before and see the Master Glossary for a full definition of Christ.

Nazareth is a town in the region of Galilee. Nazareth does not appear in the Old Testament, and the first time we see it is when we hear that Mary and Joseph live in Nazareth. Jesus is called a Nazarene, or someone from Nazareth. Because Nazareth is a small and insignificant town, people did not usually respect people from Nazareth.

The crowd that was already in the temple were amazed and astonished at what happened. The crowd recognized the lame man because they had seen him every day outside the gate asking for money and now the lame man was in the temple, he was fully healed, and he was praising God.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 3:1–10**Audio Content**

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Acts 3:11–26*Hear and Heart*

Hear Acts 3:11–26 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

This story takes place immediately after Peter and John heal a lame man sitting beside the Beautiful Gate to the temple.

The lame man follows Peter and John very closely into the temple as they enter Solomon's portico, or colonnade. Solomon's colonnade was a long covered porch or building with columned posts on either side instead of walls. This area was near the court of the Gentiles, the only area of the temple where non-Jews were allowed to enter. Peter, John, and other disciples often taught and preached here. Peter and John and the healed lame man

probably had to walk back to the Beautiful Gate to get to Solomon's Colonnade, which was on the east side of the temple. People in the temple are astonished and amazed and they run towards Peter, John, and the lame man.

Stop here and show an illustration of Solomon's portico. Discuss: How would you react if you witnessed someone who's been lame their whole life being healed completely?

Peter now has the perfect opportunity to explain to the people the true significance of the miracle. The people probably did not recognize the significance of the miracle. When Peter sees the people running towards them, he speaks to the crowd, saying, "Men of Israel." Peter uses the word "men," but because they are in the outer area of the temple, this word includes both men and women.

Peter asks the crowd why they are amazed and why they think he and John made the lame man walk. These questions are not meant to be answered. Some of the crowd probably think Peter and John healed the lame man because they were godly and powerful men. A godly person is someone who pleases God.

Then Peter begins telling the crowd about Jesus. Peter says, "The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers." Peter is referring to one God. Abraham, his son Isaac, and his grandson Jacob are the most important people in Jewish history. God started the Jewish nation through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They are the ancestors of the crowd.

This God glorified his servant Jesus, which means he gives power and honor to Jesus. Jesus was God's servant because he always obeyed God. Peter rebukes the crowd for handing Jesus over to Pilate and denying Jesus. To deny someone is to reject them or not accept who they are. Pilate was the Roman governor of the Jews.

You will remember from the story of Jesus' trial that Pilate wanted to let Jesus go free because he found Jesus innocent, but the crowd demanded Pilate to let a murderer go free and had Jesus killed instead. Peter tells the crowd they were responsible for the death of the Holy and Righteous one, the Author of Life. Peter uses these titles to explain who Jesus was. Jesus is holy which means he is set apart by God for God's purposes. Jesus is also righteous, which means he is good and perfect before God. Peter also says Jesus is the Author of life, which means he is God. Peter is telling the crowd that Jesus was with God in the beginning and created everything with God. The crowd had Jesus killed, but God raised Jesus back to life. Peter and John are witnesses of Jesus' death and resurrection. Peter tells the crowd that it was faith in this Jesus that healed the lame man.

Stop and discuss: How does your culture punish people who have broken the law? What happens if the person punished is innocent?

Peter continues to the next part of his speech by saying "now, brothers." The word "now" does not indicate a passage of time, as it does in other passages. It might be better translated, "Listen up." Peter calls the crowd "brothers." Peter is telling them that he sees them as his equals, his fellow kinsman. The crowd and their leaders acted in ignorance in having Jesus killed. Peter is telling the crowd and the leaders that they had no idea what they were doing when they had Jesus killed. Peter included the leaders in his speech because he was also speaking to them as well as the crowd. The word "but" is used here to contrast the Jews' ignorance and God's prophecies. Peter tells the crowd that God spoke through prophets hundreds of years earlier that Jesus had to suffer and die. The Jews fulfilled these prophecies. God said that his Christ would suffer. This means God chose Jesus to suffer and die for the sins of the world. The word Christ here is a title, not another name for Jesus. It means someone special, appointed, or chosen by God.

Peter concludes his speech by saying to the crowd, "therefore, repent." The word repent means to change your heart and your mind. Peter is telling the crowd to change how they think about God and his servant Jesus. Peter is telling the crowd to stop living for themselves and start living for God. If the crowd repents and turns back to God, Peter promises them God will blot out their sins and that the presence of the Lord will bring times of refreshment. To blot out means to forgive completely. Peter also promises that God will restore all things at his appointed time. The word restore also means rest. Peter is saying that one day God will bring peace upon the whole world.

Stop and discuss: In what ways do you see the world around you broken and in need of being restored?

Peter says God will send Christ to them. Peter is referring to Jesus' second coming, or his return. This event is still in the future and has not been fulfilled yet. There will come a time when Jesus will restore the whole world

by making it new again. But first, and until that time, Heaven must welcome or receive Jesus. All of what Peter is saying about Jesus, God spoke of long ago to his prophets, who told other people. Holy prophets were messengers of God set apart by God for a special purpose.

Peter uses the prophet Moses as an example. The Jews considered Moses to be the greatest prophet. Moses said that God would raise up a man from among the Jews. Peter directly quotes from Moses. Moses gives two contrasting options to the people. He says to listen to the prophet God raises up and to do everything he says. The other option is to not listen to this prophet. If anyone does not listen and does not obey this prophet, they will be cut off. Some versions translate this phrase "completely destroyed." In other words, they will not receive God's promise of eternal life with him. The prophet that Moses is referring to here is Jesus. Peter ends his quote here and begins his own words again.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story about a time when someone gave a warning. What did people do in response? What happened, or would have happened, if they ignored the warning?

Peter then tells the crowd that, in fact, every prophet from Samuel onwards has talked about and prophesied about Jesus. Samuel was also an Old Testament prophet who lived hundreds of years after Moses. Peter says all these prophets are talking about "these days," meaning the events that have just happened regarding Jesus.

Peter says, "You are the heirs of the prophets." The word "you" should be translated with emphasis, as though Peter is making sure the crowd is listening. He tells the crowd they are heirs of God's promise that He made with their forefathers. The Jews would already be familiar with this promise, but Peter reminds them anyway. Peter quotes what God said to Abraham: "And in your offspring, or descendants, everyone on earth will experience God's goodness." Peter ends his speech with a summary of his main point. Peter says God raised up Jesus and sent him to the crowd first, to bless them by turning every one of them from their sinful living.

Stop and discuss: What are some things in your family that have been passed down from generation to generation?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has 4 scenes.

First scene: Peter, John, and the man who had been crippled and was sitting by the gate enter the temple and go to Solomon's portico. A crowd starts to form and Peter takes this opportunity to speak to the crowd.

Second scene: Peter gives a lecture to the crowd, starting with an explanation on how the crippled man was healed by the power of God, not through their power.

Third scene: Peter calls the crowd to repentance. Peter tells how God used the crowd's ancestors to call the Jewish people to follow Him. Peter explains the importance of Jesus' trial before Pilate.

Fourth scene: Peter tells the crowd that when they follow God they will be blessed because they are descendants of Abraham.

The characters in this story include:

- Peter
- John
- Crippled man at gate that was just healed
- Crowd in the temple
- God
- Moses
- Abraham
- Isaac
- Jacob
- Jesus (called the Holy and Righteous One, The Author of Life, God's servant)
- Pilate
- Murderer that was released
- Samuel
- Descendants
- People of Israel

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

You can retell this passage together while people use objects or themselves to represent each person that is mentioned during the speech Peter gave to the crowd. Have the person or object rise up when they are mentioned during the speech to help remember the different people that are mentioned.

It is important to remember that this story happens right after the previous story where the crippled man was healed. Peter, John, and the formerly crippled man walked from the gate into the temple. This would have been the first time that the crippled man would have been allowed to walk into the temple. A crowd started gathering after seeing the man that was crippled walking and running around praising God. Peter saw the crowd starting to gather and decided to take this opportunity to talk to them. This speech that Peter gave was to the crowd that had gathered in the temple at Solomon's portico. It is important to remember that Solomon's portico or colonnade was in the court of the Gentiles. All people, men and women, Jews and non-Jews, were allowed in this area.

Stop here and show an illustration of Solomon's portico.

Peter reminds the crowd of people of their history. The crowd would have been very knowledgeable of the different prophets Peter talked about. This is why Peter does not take the time to explain who each person is, but each person is a very important part of their Jewish history.

Peter talks to the crowd as though they were directly responsible for the death of Jesus, even though the crowd probably was not. Peter calls Jesus the Holy and Righteous One and the Author of Life, Peter explains how the trial of Jesus, which happened only a few months earlier, is also an important part of their history.

After Peter accuses the crowd of killing Jesus, he says "now brothers." In this story, "now" means pay attention. Peter wants the crowd to listen carefully to what he is about to say next.

Stop and discuss: In your culture and language, how do you get people to pay attention to what is about to be said?

Peter explains how the crowd's ancestors had pointed to this important event in history. Peter tells the crowd to repent, or turn from their sins and turn to God. Peter speaks about the beginning of Israel's history by going back to when Abraham, the father of their descendants, was promised by God that their families would be

blessed. God raised his servant, Jesus, to cause the people of Israel to turn from their sinful ways so they could be blessed by God.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has four scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Peter
- John
- Crippled man at gate that was just healed
- Crowd in the temple
- God
- Abraham
- Isaac
- Jacob
- Jesus (called the Holy and Righteous One, The Author of Life, God's servant)
- Pilate
- Murderer that was released
- Moses
- Samuel
- Descendants
- People of Israel

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

Peter and John have just healed a man who has been lame his whole life. Peter and John healed the man outside the temple gate. They have now entered through the gate into the crowded temple where there are men and women surrounding them, marveling at the miracle that Peter and John had just performed. The lame man, who is now healed, follows Peter and John closely into the temple. A crowd follows Peter, John, and the healed lame man and gathers around them at Solomon's Portico.

Stop action.

Ask the actor playing Peter how they are feeling. You might hear answers like, "Courage to tell them about the miracle and about Jesus," or "A desire to hide from the crowd." [!end] Restart action.

Peter, seeing the crowd marveling at the miracle, turns to the crowd and begins to speak. Peter asks the crowd why they marvel about the miracle as though Peter and John's own power and good living healed the lame man. Peter tells the crowd who Jesus is. Peter explains that Jesus was a servant of the God of their ancestors and the crowd denied Jesus' authority and had him killed, but God brought Jesus back to life.

Stop action.

Ask the actor playing Peter how they are feeling. You might hear responses such as, "Fear," "Pride at letting the crowd know they messed up," "Boldness and courage at speaking the truth." [!end] Restart action.

Peter then tells the crowd that the lame man's faith in Jesus healed him. Peter then reassures the crowd that they acted in ignorance and God had planned and intended that Jesus die and be brought back to life. If the crowd repents of their sins, then God will give them peace that comes from the presence of God. Peter tells the crowd that God will one day, at an appointed time, send Christ, who is Jesus, back to earth.

Stop action.

Peter tells the crowd how Moses prophesied about Jesus and gives his listeners a choice. Moses's listeners, or in this case, Peter's crowd, can listen and obey Jesus and live, or not obey Jesus and die.

Stop action.

Peter concludes his speech by telling the crowd how all the prophets from the Old Testament prophesied about Jesus and that God sent Jesus to them to bless everyone who turns away from wickedness.

Stop action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Peter, John, and the lame man entered **Solomon's Portico**, or colonnade, after the lame man was healed. The portico was a double column porch in the temple area. It was the only area of the temple non-Jews were allowed to be. Jesus's disciples and other religious leaders often taught people from this porch. The porch was named after King Solomon. Solomon was considered the wisest king to ever live.

Peter addressed the crowd, "men of **Israel**." This is a general phrase similar to "my fellow countrymen." Use the same word for Israel that you have used previously. Israel is in the Master Glossary.

When Peter addressed the crowd, he described God as the **God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob**. These men, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, are considered the fathers of the nation of Israel. They are important people in the Jewish history.

God glorified his servant Jesus. To **glorify** a person is to honor or praise them. It most often refers to God. A **servant** is a person who works for someone else and cannot quit. They are viewed as the lowest of all people. See Master Glossary for more information on glorify and servant. Use the same words for glorify and servant that you have used previously.

But Peter described Jesus as **holy** and **righteous**. To be holy is to be set apart by God for a greater purpose. Righteousness is the idea of being in a right standing before God. Use the same words for holy and righteous that you have used previously. See Master Glossary for more information on these words.

Peter explained who Jesus is, then told the crowd it was **faith in his name**, Jesus' name, that healed the lame man. **Faith** is trusting someone even though you do not know what will happen. In Jewish culture, a person's name signified their whole character. When you trust, or have faith, in someone's name, you are trusting in who they are. Remember to use the same word for faith that you have used previously. See Faith in Master Glossary for more information.

Peter told the crowd that prophets told long ago that Christ would suffer and die. A **prophet** is a person called by God to deliver a message to people. **Christ** is a title for Jesus that means messiah, or one specially appointed by God. Use the same words for prophet and Christ as previously used. See Master Glossary for a more complete description of prophet and Christ.

Peter then urges the crowd to **repent** from their **sin** or **wickedness**. To repent is to turn from sins completely and follow God. Sin or wickedness is failure to do what God has asked or told you to do. Use the same words for repent and sin as you have used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on these words.

Peter finished his speech by telling the crowd that after Jesus was raised to life, he returned to **heaven**. Heaven is the place where God and his angels live. One day, all Christians will live here too. See Master Glossary for more information. Use the same word for heaven as you have used previously.

Peter then reminded the crowd that God blessed all of them through the promise made to Abraham. **Blessed** is when God does a favor for someone. Remember to use the same word for blessed as previously used. See Master Glossary for a more complete definition of blessed.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 3:11–26

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Acts 4:1–22

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Acts 4:1–22 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Acts 4:1–22 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Acts 4:1–22 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

After Peter and John heal a lame man at the temple, Peter explains to a large crowd that Jesus is the Promised Savior. Many people believed in Jesus because of his words. Religious leaders hear what Peter and John are teaching and arrest them. The religious leaders threaten to punish them if they don't stop teaching about Jesus, then release them. The apostles refuse to stop talking about Jesus.

While Peter and John are speaking to the crowd about Jesus in the temple area, some priests, the captain of the temple guard, and some of the Sadducees come to them. Priests served in the temple offering sacrifices to God on behalf of the people. The captain was the leader of the temple guards who maintained order in the temple area. The Sadducees were a Jewish religious group or party. They taught that the first five books of the Old Testament were the most important, and they did not believe that angels or spirits existed. They did not believe that God resurrected, or brought Jesus back to life. These men were very angry with the apostles because of their teaching. "The apostles" refers to Peter and John only, not all 12 apostles.

As you remember, Peter and John taught that God resurrected Jesus. This was the first example of a more general resurrection that would happen in the last days. With the support of the religious leaders, the captain of the guard arrested Peter and John. Since it was late and there was no time for a trial, they put the apostles in jail until the next day. So many people believed the apostles's message about Jesus that the group of believers grew to be over five thousand. Most likely, this number only refers to men, which means women and children were not counted. This would have been a large number of new believers since the number of believers on Pentecost was around three thousand.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you determine if someone has broken the law where you live? What, if any, religious laws do people enforce where you live? Pause this audio here.

The next day, Jewish rulers, elders, and teachers of the law met together in Jerusalem-these were the members of the Sanhedrin, or Jewish Council. Rulers refers to the high priest and other priests who ruled over the Jewish people. Elders were older, respected community leaders, while teachers of the law interpreted God's law. It is likely that the high priest summoned all of the members of the Sanhedrin together to discuss what to do with Peter and John. The high priest was not only the leader of all the priests, but he was also the leader of the Jewish supreme court. In a special way, he represented the Jewish people to God. Annas was the ex-high priest but his son-in-law, Caiaphas, was the current high priest. In Jewish culture, once a man became the High Priest, he had the honor of being called the High Priest for the rest of his life. Alexander and John were not only rulers but also family members of Annas.

Guards bring John and Peter from the jail to stand before the Sanhedrin. They also bring the healed man as a witness. The leaders ask John and Peter, "By what power or what name did you do this?" They are referring to the miracle of healing the lame man. To the Jews, someone's name refers to the authority that person has, or the right to act. Being filled with the Holy Spirit, or God's Spirit, Peter answers them. Here, being filled with the Spirit means that the Holy Spirit clearly guided Peter what to say to the rulers. It does not imply that the Holy Spirit ever left Peter after Pentecost and then returned in this moment.

Peter addresses the rulers respectfully using two of the three titles, rulers and elders, for the Jewish ruling council. When Peter says, "If we are being called to account today..." he is introducing a statement that is true. It implies that his next statement will also be true. Peter clearly states for the council and for all the people of Israel that they healed the crippled man through the name, or power, of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. Peter refers to the healed man who was standing with them as proof of the miracle. Christ is a title that identifies Jesus as the person God sent as king and Promised Savior while Nazareth refers to Jesus' hometown.

Peter tells the council they are responsible for crucifying Jesus, or nailing him to a cross to suffer and die, but God raised Jesus back to life. As you remember, the Sadducees did not believe in resurrection. Peter quotes well-known scripture from Psalms that spoke about the Promised Savior. Peter implies the Jewish leaders rejected Jesus, like builders who rejected the stone, but Jesus is like the cornerstone. A cornerstone can refer to a stone in the corner of the foundation or a stone at the center of an arched door. Whichever stone this is, it implies that the stone is the most important one and makes the whole building strong. Just like the builders, the leaders rejected Jesus as the Promised Savior but Jesus now sat with God in a place of honor.

Stop here and look at a picture of a cornerstone as a group. Discuss how people build houses in your culture. How do people make sure a house is strong and built well in your culture? Pause this audio here.

Peter says salvation is found in no one else. Specifically, the Jews could find salvation, or rescuing from the punishment for sin, in Jesus because Jesus is the Promised Savior. Peter says, "God has given no other name under heaven by which we must be saved." Again, Jesus' name refers to Jesus as a person while "under heaven" means in the whole world. So, God only saves people through Jesus. Only Jesus can save people from God's punishment for their sins.

The religious leaders were surprised that Peter and John spoke boldly and with confidence, because they recognized that the apostles had no formal education in interpreting the scriptures. Most Jewish children went to school until the age of 12, but some students continued to study in advanced Jewish schools where rabbis taught. The council could probably see from the clothing of Peter and John that they were ordinary men with no specialized training in the advanced Jewish schools. They recognized Peter and John as disciples, or followers, of Jesus. Just as the rulers had seen Jesus teach with authority, or the right to act, they saw that Jesus' followers were teaching with the same authority from God.

The leaders wanted to punish Peter and John for preaching about Jesus, but God had healed the man in the name of Jesus. They could not oppose the apostles because the healed man was standing in front of them. The council ordered the guards to take the three men out of the council meeting room so that the council could talk privately. They ask the question, "What are we going to do with these men?" as a way to express frustration and uncertainty. They wanted to punish Peter and John but were afraid to, because punishing them would make the people of Jerusalem angry with them. Everyone in Jerusalem knew that God had healed the crippled man because the apostles asked God to heal him. This miracle, or act of God, was a sign, or signal that what the apostles were teaching about Jesus was true. The leaders could not deny that the miracle had happened because too many people already knew about it. Instead, the leaders decide to tell the apostles that they will punish

them if they continue to teach people in Jesus' name. They want to stop the news of Jesus from spreading to more people.

The council calls Peter and John back into the meeting room and commands them to not speak or teach in the name of Jesus. Peter tells the leaders they must judge, or decide for themselves, what was right in God's sight—obeying God or obeying the leaders. "In God's sight" refers to what God considers to be right. This implies that obeying the leaders would mean disobeying God. Peter emphasizes that they must continue telling others what they saw Jesus do and heard Jesus say. The leaders continued to threaten the apostles but allowed them to leave because they could not think of a way to punish them without causing many people to become angry. The people in Jerusalem continued to praise God for the miracle of the man being healed after 40 years of being lame.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Acts 4:1–22 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has five scenes.

In the first scene: Peter and John are in the temple area teaching a crowd after healing a lame man. The captain of the guard, the priests, and the Sadducees come to them. The leaders are angry because Peter is talking about the resurrection. They arrest Peter and John. But many people heard and believed the words of Peter. The total number of men who believed was five thousand.

In the second scene: The Jewish council gathers together the next day, including the high priest's family members. The council orders guards to bring Peter and John from the jail to the council building. The leaders asked them by what name or power they healed the lame man. Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, answered them.

In the third scene: The council was surprised by the boldness of Peter and John. They recognized that they were uneducated and disciples of Jesus. The council also saw the healed man and couldn't say anything against what happened. They made Peter, John, and the lame man leave the room.

In the fourth scene: The council debates among themselves and talks about the undeniable evidence of the miracle the apostles performed. They decided to threaten them to not speak about Jesus any more. When Peter and John reenter the room and the council warns them not to speak about Jesus, Peter asks the leaders what is better to do, obey God or them?

In the fifth scene: The council lets them go because they couldn't find any reason to punish them. The people praise God for the miracle because the man had been lame for more than 40 years but the apostle healed him.

The characters in this passage are:

- Peter
- John
- Lame man who is healed
- Crowd
- Priests
- Captain of the temple Guard
- Sadducees
- Annas
- Caiaphas
- Annas' family
- Guards

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Peter and John are still addressing the same people as the last passage. This means they were in the temple area at a place called Solomon's Colonnade. A crowd had gathered around them because they healed a man that had been crippled for 40 years.

Peter and John are interrupted when religious leaders and the captain of the temple guard come to them. The captain was like the temple police. He was in charge of maintaining order at the temple and preventing riots from happening. The Sadducees, who did not believe in resurrection, are upset because the apostles are teaching about God raising Jesus back to life.

The people heard the word, or the message that Jesus was the Promised Savior, and believed it.

The leaders arrest Peter and John and put them in jail until they can be put on trial. The next day the Sanhedrin, or the Jewish council, gathers together at the court in Jerusalem. The council included the high priest and his family members. When the Sanhedrin met, they usually sat in semi-circles so that they could all see each other. The accused person sat in the middle of the circle.

The counsel asked Peter and John, "By what name or power did you do this miracle?" The word "you" is emphasized to scorn or belittle the apostles. Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, answered them.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How does the tone of voice affect the meaning of words in your culture? Pause this audio here.

Peter starts his answer by politely addressing the important people in his audience. Peter names the rulers and elders to imply that he is going to talk to them. This is a very respectful way to start his defense. When Peter said "if we are being examined," Peter is not questioning whether they are really being examined for healing the man or not. Instead, he is saying there is no doubt that they are being accused for that reason. Another way to translate this would be, "Since we are being examined..." Peter says this to emphasize the truth of the miracle happening because of the power of Jesus' name. After Peter mentions the charges he says "let it be known," or "know this," as a way to start his answer to the accusation. Peter wants the council to know without a doubt that what he is about to say is true.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people speak in court to answer accusations? Pause this audio here.

Peter says that the rulers and elders, who are also people of Israel, and the rest of Israel will know that Jesus is the one who healed the crippled man.

Peter expresses that Jesus is the cornerstone. Peter is not saying that Jesus is a rock or a statue made of rock, but rather that Jesus is like a rock that builders have rejected. Now that rock has become the most important

rock for construction of a building. This means that even though people rejected Jesus, Jesus is the only thing that saves us.

Peter's speech showed the council the boldness of Peter and John.

Then the council commanded them to leave the council room. It is possible the guards took them out of the room.

The council was frustrated because they did not know how to punish the apostles without causing a riot because the people were happy about the miracle. They decided to warn Peter and John to not speak anymore in the name of Jesus. Then the council called Peter and John back into the council room and told them not to speak anymore in the name of Jesus.

Peter and John said that they can't stop speaking in the name of Jesus because they want to obey God rather than man. The council couldn't find a way to punish them, because everyone was praising God for healing a man who had been lame for 40 years. The council lets Peter and John go.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Acts 4:1–22 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has five scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Peter
- John
- Lame man who is healed
- Crowd
- Priests
- Captain of the temple Guard
- Sadducees
- Annas
- Caiaphas
- Annas' family
- Guards

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out Peter and John teaching a crowd in the temple area. Some priests, the captain of the temple guard, and some Sadducees come to them. They are angry because the apostles are teaching about the resurrection of Jesus. They arrest Peter and John and put them in jail for the night.

Pause the drama.

Act out the Sanhedrin meeting together. Guards bring in Peter and John from the jail, and they also bring in the man who was lame. The Sanhedrin ask them by what power they have healed the lame man. Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, answers them.

Pause the drama.

Act out the Sanhedrin being surprised by the boldness of the apostles. They know the apostles are uneducated and that they are disciples of Jesus. The Sanhedrin sends the three men out of the room so that they can talk privately.

Pause the drama.

Act out the Sanhedrin not knowing what to do. They decide to threaten the apostles to not teach about Jesus any more. They order Peter and John to come back into the room and warn them not to teach about Jesus. Peter asks what is better, to obey God or the rulers? Peter and John refuse to stop talking about Jesus.

Pause the drama.

Act out the Sanhedrin continuing to threaten them but they have to let them go. People continue to praise God for the miracle of the lame man who the apostles healed.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Acts 4:1–22 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Priests, the captain of the **temple** guard, and **Sadducees** came to Peter and John after they healed the lame man and taught about Jesus. Priest refers to God's representatives who made sacrifices on behalf of the people to God. They also took care of God's temple, or the place where God lived among his people in Jerusalem. Use the same word or phrase for priest and temple as you used in previous passages. For more information on priest and temple, refer to the Master Glossary.

Sadducees were religious leaders who thought the Old Testament laws of Moses were the most important. They did not believe in the later oral teachings of the Pharisees, which included the teaching of the resurrection of the dead. They usually supported the political powers in authority like King Herod in Jesus' time.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Sadducee**. Look up Sadducee in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

When Luke says the **apostles** were teaching, here, he is referring to Peter and John, not to all 12 of the apostles. Apostles were the chosen representatives of Jesus. They preached the good news, had spiritual authority, and were witnesses of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. Use the same word or phrase for apostle as you used in previous passages. For more information on apostle, refer to the Master Glossary.

The religious leaders were upset because Peter and John were teaching about the **resurrection** of the dead. Resurrection means that God raises someone from the dead as the same person. In the last days, God will choose the time when everyone who has died will rise from the dead. Use the same word or phrase for resurrection as you used in previous passages. For more information on resurrection, refer to the Master Glossary.

After Peter and John were arrested and put in the jail, the Jewish Council met together the next day. This included Jewish **elders**, **teachers of the law**, and the **high priest**. Elders were older men who were non-religious community leaders.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **elder**. Look up elder in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

Sometimes called scribes, **teachers of the law** refers to religious leaders who were experts in the interpretation of God's law. These interpretations were not written down but memorized and taught orally by teachers.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **teacher of the law**. Look up teachers of the law in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

The **high priest** led the Jewish council. He was not only over the other priests, but he was also the leader of the Jewish supreme court and offered special sacrifices to God that only the high priest could do. In a special way, he represented the Jewish people to God. Be sure to translate high priest in the same way you have in other books of the Bible. For more information on high priest, refer to priest in the Master Glossary.

Peter is filled with the **Holy Spirit** when he responds to the Jewish Council. The Holy Spirit refers to God's Spirit which he gives to people in order to equip them with his presence, wisdom, authority, and power. As you remember, Jesus told his disciples that did not need to worry about what they would say when someone accuses them because he would give them wise words that their accusers could not contradict. Here, we see the Holy Spirit guide Peter how to respond. Use the same word or phrase for "the Holy Spirit" that you used in previous passages. For more information about the Holy Spirit, see the Master Glossary.

Peter tells the truth not just for the council but for all of **Israel** to hear and know. Israel refers to the Jews, or all of the descendants of Jacob. Use the same word or phrase for Israel as you used in previous passages. For more information on Israel, refer to the Master Glossary.

Peter calls Jesus the **Christ**. Christ or Messiah is a title that refers to the person God promised to send as king and savior. Use the same word or phrase for Christ or Messiah as you used in previous passages. For more information on Christ, refer to the Master Glossary.

Peter accuses the council of **crucifying** Jesus. Crucifixion refers to the worst form of execution during that time. Soldiers nailed the victim's hands and feet to a wooden cross and they hung there suffering until they died. Use the same word or phrase for crucify as you used in previous passages. For more information on crucifixion, refer to the Master Glossary.

When talking about Jesus, Peter says **salvation** is found in no one else. Here, salvation means rescue from the punishment of sin. In this case, Jews could find salvation from sin in Jesus as the Promised Savior they had been waiting for. Peter is saying that only Jesus can save people from God's punishment for their sins.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **salvation**. Look up salvation in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

When Peter says there is no other name **under heaven**, heaven refers to the sky. Peter is referring to everywhere on earth. Use the same word or phrase for heaven, meaning sky, as you used in previous passages. For more information on heaven, refer to the Master Glossary.

Sanhedrin refers to the high Jewish Council. The Sanhedrin includes the leading priests, the elders, and the teachers of religious law. There are 71 members of the Sanhedrin. This group listened to court cases and passed judgment based on religious law.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Sanhedrin**. Look up Sanhedrin in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

When the council refers to the outstanding **miracle**, they are speaking of the healing of the lame man. Miracle refers to an act that only God can do. Use the same word or phrase for miracle as you used in previous passages. For more information on miracle, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word (Acts 4:1–22)

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 4:1–22

Audio Content

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Acts 4:23–31

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Acts 4:23–31 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Acts 4:23–31 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Acts 4:23–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage, religious leaders arrested Peter and John in the temple area for healing a man and preaching about the resurrection of Jesus. Because the Jewish Council did not know how to punish the apostles without causing a riot, they threatened them to not preach about Jesus and then let them go. Now, the apostles return to the believers, and they pray together to ask God for help to speak boldly about Jesus. God shakes the place where they are meeting and answers their prayer.

After the Sanhedrin, or the Jewish Council, released Peter and John, they returned to their own people, or to the other believers in Jerusalem. They tell the other believers about their conversation with the chief priests and elders. Chief priest, or high priest, refers to the leader of the priests and the leader of the Jewish supreme court who made sacrifices on behalf of the people. Elders refer to older Jewish community leaders. These were two of the three groups who made up the Sanhedrin, or the high Jewish Council that put Peter and John on trial. This was also the group that was responsible for handing Jesus over to the Roman authorities to be executed.

The believers raised their voices together, or prayed to God with the same attitude of praise, trust, and desire to be bold. The believers begin their prayer by calling God "Sovereign Lord." This title means that God has all authority and power over all people. It was a common title for God among Jewish people in the Old Testament. Most likely one person prayed while the other believers were in agreement with what was being said. Be sure not to imply that all of the believers said the same words at the same time.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people pray as a group in your culture? Pause this audio here.

When they say, "You made all things in heaven," heaven refers to the sky. They mean that God created all living things on earth and in the skies. They say God spoke through their father, or ancestor, King David. The Holy Spirit, or God's Spirit, gave David the words to say. "Your servant" means that David served God. They quote one of the Psalms that David wrote. "Why do the nations rage and the people plot in vain?" is a question that was not meant to be answered. Instead, it emphasizes that the Gentiles, or non-Jewish nations, were very angry. Even though they made plans, they were never able to follow those plans and never got what they wanted. Here, nation refers to a group of people that share the same language and culture.

Both kings and rulers on earth gather together to oppose the Lord, or God, and his Anointed One. Originally, "the anointed one" referred to the Jewish king at that time, which was hundreds of years before Jesus. But Luke interprets the Psalm to be a prophecy about Jesus as the Christ, or Promised Savior. The title Christ means "anointed one." When God anointed someone, or chose them for a special task, God's messenger would pour oil on his head as a symbol that God chose him.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people react when someone tries to say what will happen in the future? What is the difference between imagining something that might happen and certainty in the future? Discuss what is done in your culture to indicate that someone is chosen for a special task. Pause this audio here.

After the prophecy about kings gathering together to oppose God, the people say "indeed" or "in fact" this happened in this very city, which was Jerusalem. The believers believed that King Herod and the Roman governor Pontius Pilate had fulfilled the prophecy. Herod and Pontius were the Jewish and Gentile authorities at that time who had worked with the Gentiles and Jewish people to kill Jesus. When they call Jesus "your holy servant," this means that God set apart Jesus for a special purpose and that Jesus did all that God wanted him to. God anointed Jesus or chose him for a special task—to be the Promised Savior! The believers recognize that God had already planned for the authorities to kill Jesus and that it was a part of God's will, or plan.

The believers use the word "now" to stop talking about past events and to start asking God to do something. They ask God to consider, or think about, the threats of the religious leaders and give his servants, or the believers praying, the ability to teach about Jesus with boldness. The believers want to teach God's word, or the good news about Jesus, with boldness. They want God to "stretch out his hand" or perform miracles, signs, and wonders that only God could do. God healing the lame man through Peter and John is an example of a miraculous sign. These types of miracles were indications that what the believers were saying about Jesus was true. The believers recognize that the power for the miracles did not come from themselves. God would do healings, signs, and miracles because they called on the powerful name of Jesus. In Jewish culture, a person's name represents the entire person.

After they prayed, God showed that he had heard and answered their prayer by shaking the place where they were meeting. Then the Holy Spirit, or God's Spirit, specially filled all of the believers. This does not mean that the Holy Spirit ever left the believers, but rather that the Holy Spirit was especially equipping the believers with boldness to be able to share about Jesus. The believers were probably able to go out and share boldly with others for the next few days or weeks. Here, the word of God refers to the good news that Jesus died for our sins, people buried him in a tomb, and that he rose again. This meant that God's Kingdom had begun!

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Acts 4:23–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: Peter and John return from their meeting with the Jewish Council to the place where the believers are gathered together in Jerusalem. They tell them everything that happened with the Council.

In the second scene: The believers pray together, quote Psalms, and ask God to give them boldness to share about Jesus even though they have been threatened not to do so.

In the third scene: God shakes the place where the believers are meeting. The believers are filled with the Holy Spirit and they all have boldness to go out and share about Jesus for some time.

The characters in this passage are:

- Peter
- John
- Group of believers
- God
- Holy Spirit

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Peter and John are released by the Jewish Council. They go back to their friends and tell them what happened at the council meeting including the way the leaders had threatened them. All of Jesus' followers prayed together to God to have boldness to share about Jesus.

The believers address God in a very respectful way calling him "Sovereign Lord." They acknowledge God as their Lord and that he is the Creator of everything.

The believers recognize that God spoke through King David by the Holy Spirit, and they quoted what David said in the Psalms.

David said that Gentiles and other people plot in vain, or make plans that never happen.

Kings and rulers gather against God and His Anointed One. The believers think the Psalm was a prophecy about Jesus. The believers end the quote of Psalms. When they say "indeed" or "in fact this happened here in this very city," the words "indeed" or "in fact" are used to show that Herod and Pilate fulfilled the prophecy as the kings and rulers who opposed Jesus as God's Anointed One. They accept that it was God's plan that people rejected Jesus as the Promised Savior.

The word "now" indicates a change from talking about past events to asking God to do something. The believers ask God for boldness to teach about Jesus and ask God to stretch forth his hand, or do powerful acts so that people will know their teaching is true.

God shakes the place where they are meeting and the Holy Spirit fills the believers. This does not mean that the Holy Spirit ever left the believers, but rather that the Holy Spirit was especially equipping the believers with boldness to be able to share about Jesus.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Acts 4:23–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has three scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Peter
- John
- Group of believers
- God
- Holy Spirit

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out Peter and John returning from their meeting with the Jewish Council to the place where the believers are gathered together in Jerusalem. They tell them everything that happened with the Council.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Peter and John, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Excited. The Holy Spirit gave us words to say exactly when we needed them," or "Bold. I want others to share about Jesus with confidence, too!" or "Thankful. I want to thank God for what he has done." [!end] Continue the drama.

Act out the believers praying together. They quote Psalms and ask God to give them boldness to share about Jesus even though they have been threatened not to do so. The believers end the prayer and God shakes the place where they are meeting. The Holy Spirit specially fills the believers and gives them boldness to share.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the believers, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Bold. If God is with us, who can be against us?" or "Joyful. Everyone has to know about the good news of Jesus," or "Blessed. Jesus chose me to be his witness and now he has given me power to do so."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Acts 4:23–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Peter and John return to the believers in Jerusalem and tell them all that the **chief priests** and **elders** said. Elders were older men who were non-religious community leaders. The chief priest or **high priest** led the Jewish council. He was not only over the other priests, but he was also the leader of the Jewish supreme court and offered special sacrifices to God that only the high priest could do. Both of the groups of men made up the high Jewish Council, the Sanhedrin. Use the same word or phrase for elder and high priest as you used in previous passages. For more information on elder and high priest, refer to the Master Glossary.

The believers start their **prayer**. Praying is when someone communicates with God. Be sure that the word you use here does not refer to only ritualistic communication, but something more personal. Some languages have separate words for thanksgiving prayers and asking for help prayers.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **prayer**. Look up prayer in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

They call God "Sovereign **Lord**." Lord means master or one who has authority. God has all power and authority over all people. Use the same word or phrase for Lord as you used in previous passages. For more information on Lord, refer to the Master Glossary.

The believers say God created all things under **heaven**. Here, heaven refers to sky. Use the same word or phrase for heaven, meaning sky, as you used in previous passages. For more information on heaven, refer to the Master Glossary.

The believers say God spoke through David by the **Holy Spirit**. The Holy Spirit refers to God's Spirit which he gives to people in order to equip them with his presence, wisdom, authority, and power. Use the same word or phrase for "the Holy Spirit" that you used in previous passages. For more information about the Holy Spirit, see the Master Glossary.

They call David "your **servant**." A servant is someone who lives in their master's home and serves them. People thought of them as the lowest and least important people in the community. Although David was a king, he was also God's servant, meaning he did all that God wanted him to. Use the same word or phrase for servant that you used in previous passages. For more information about servant, see the Master Glossary.

In the Psalm, David says the **nations** rage. Specifically, he is referring to non-Jewish nations being angry. Here, nation refers to a group of people who share the same language and culture. Use the same word or phrase for nation that you used in previous passages. For more information about nation, see the Master Glossary.

The believers refer to Jesus as the **Anointed One** whom David wrote about. In Jewish culture, when God anointed someone, it meant they received God's favor or appointment to a special place, service, or function in the purpose of God. God anointed or specially chose Jesus as the Promised Savior.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **anointed**. Look up anoint in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

When the believers say the authorities worked with the **Gentiles** to kill Jesus, Gentile refers to non-Jews. In this case, it refers to the Roman authorities and soldiers.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Gentile**. Look up Gentile in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

The Gentiles worked with the people of Israel to kill Jesus. "People of **Israel**" refers to the Jews, or the descendants of Jacob. Use the same word or phrase for Israel as you used in previous passages. For more information on Israel, refer to the Master Glossary.

The believers refer to Jesus as your **holy** servant. Holy refers to anything that is set apart for the service of God. Jesus was set apart by God for a special purpose, to be the Promised Savior. Jesus was God's servant because he did all that God wanted him to. Use the same word or phrase for holy as you used in previous passages. For more information on holy, refer to the Master Glossary.

The believers ask God to perform **miraculous signs and wonders**. Miracles, signs, and wonders are all acts that only God can do. Signs also indicate that something is true. An example of this is Peter and John healing the lame man—this was a sign that their teachings about Jesus was true. Use the same word or phrase for miracles, signs, and wonders as you used in previous passages. For more information on miracles, signs, and wonders refer to the Master Glossary.

The believers preached the **word of God**, or the good news that Jesus died for our sins, was buried, and rose again. Use the same word or phrase for word of God that you used in previous passages. For more information on word of God, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word (Acts 4:23–31)

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 4:23–31**Audio Content**

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Acts 4:32–37*Hear and Heart*

In this step, hear Acts 4:32–37 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Acts 4:32–37 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Acts 4:32–37 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage, Peter and John told a group of believers in Jerusalem about sharing about Jesus in front of the Jewish Council. The group of believers prayed that God would give them boldness to share about Jesus. God shook the place where they were meeting and answered their prayer. Now, the believers are united, sharing all things, the apostles are performing miracles, and God is providing everything they need.

Luke tells us that all of the believers, or the people who believed in and followed Jesus as the Promised Savior, were one in heart and mind or soul. This phrase means that the believers were united in their whole being including their motives, feelings, desires, and thoughts.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How would you describe this type of unity in your culture? Pause this audio here.

The Holy Spirit united the believers. They did not call the things that belonged to them their own. Instead, they shared their possessions when other believers were in need.

The 12 apostles, or Jesus' chosen representatives, continued to teach powerfully. This could mean that they spoke and taught strongly and at the same time performed miracles, or acts that only God can do. The apostles continued to testify, or tell people about the Lord Jesus' resurrection and how he is the Promised Savior. Resurrection refers to God causing Jesus to live again. When Luke calls Jesus Lord, he means Jesus is God and has authority over others. During this time, God continued to show his grace, or favor, to all of the believers and helped them in many ways.

Whenever a believer was in need, some of the wealthier believers sold their houses or land and brought the money from the sale to the apostles. Putting the money at the apostles' feet does not mean they actually laid the money at the apostles' feet. Rather, the believers gave control of the money to the apostles to distribute, or give out to the believers in need. Not all of the believers sold their property. It was not a requirement to sell property, but people did it several times and people gave these gifts freely.

Luke gives the example of Joseph who sold his field and gave the money to the apostles to give to whichever believer was in need. Joseph was a Jew who was a descendant of Levi. God placed the Levites in charge of helping at the temple. Joseph was born on the island Cyprus but he had relatives and land in Jerusalem. Though his name was Joseph, the apostles called him Barnabas, which means Son of Encouragement. This does not mean that he was the son of someone named Encouragement. Rather, this phrase means that he was a person who encouraged others. Joseph gave hope, courage, or confidence to people around him.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Describe names and nicknames in your culture. Give examples of how people refer to someone instead of using their actual name. Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Acts 4:32–37 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: All of the believers in Jerusalem were in agreement and united through the Holy Spirit. They said that all their belongings were for everybody. The apostles taught about the resurrection of Jesus with great power and miracles.

In the second scene: No one was in need when they were all together because if someone needed something, then one of the followers would sell his property or house then give the money to the apostles. The apostles gave the money to believers in need.

In the third scene: One example of this was Joseph who was from another region. He was a part of the group of believers. He sold his field and brought the money from the sale to the apostles. Joseph, also known as Barnabas, was known for being encouraging.

The characters in this passage are:

- Apostles
- Non-believers who hear the apostles speak
- Believers in need in Jerusalem
- Believers selling their property
- Joseph called Barnabas

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Luke starts the passage using the word "now." Luke does this to contrast the actions of Barnabas with the actions of Ananias that will happen in the next passage. The Holy Spirit united Jesus' followers in their way of thinking through the Holy Spirit in Jerusalem. They didn't call anything that they owned their own. At the same time, the apostles were telling people about Jesus' resurrection. God was helping them and they had the respect of the people.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What kind of objects are considered a possession of one person where you live? What objects are considered the possessions of the community? Describe a time when someone gave up their own property to the community. Pause this audio here.

There was no believer in need. Some of Jesus' followers sold their properties and gave the money to the apostles to use to help the needy.

Luke gives a summary of how the Holy Spirit united believers to introduce Joseph. "And so it was" is a transition into the narrative of Joseph. Joseph sold his property and put the money at the apostles' feet. This means that Joseph put the money in control of the apostles to distribute as needed.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Acts 4:32–37 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has three scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Apostles
- Non-believers who hear the apostles speak
- Believers in need in Jerusalem
- Believers selling their property
- Joseph called Barnabas

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out all the believers in Jerusalem in agreement and united. They did not call their belongings their own. The apostles spoke about the resurrection of Jesus with great power and performed miracles. They had the help of God and the respect of the people.

Pause the drama.

Act out no one being in need when all of the believers are together because if someone needed something then one of the followers would sell his property or house and then give the money to the apostles. The apostles gave the money to the believers in need.

Pause the drama.

Act out an example of this. Joseph, also called Barnabas, is a man who is a part of the group. Joseph sells his property and gives the money to the apostles to help believers in need. The apostles call Joseph a great encourager.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Acts 4:32–37 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The **believers** are united as a group in Jerusalem. Believers refers to people who believe in and follow Jesus as the Promised Savior. Use the same word or phrase for believer as you used in previous passages. For more information on believer, refer to the Master Glossary.

All of the believers were of one **heart** and **mind** or **soul**. The Jews used the word heart to refer to the part of a person where feelings and decisions happen. Soul refers to the part of a person that continues to exist after they die. Use the same word or phrase for heart or soul, as you used in previous passages. For more information on heart, soul, or mind, refer to the Master Glossary.

The **apostles** continued to teach powerfully. The 12 apostles were Jesus' chosen representatives who he sent out to preach the good news, have spiritual authority, and be witnesses of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. Use the same word or phrase for apostle as you used in previous passages. For more information on apostle, refer to the Master Glossary.

The apostles taught about Jesus' **resurrection**. This refers to God raising Jesus back to life from the dead as the same person. Use the same word or phrase for resurrection as you used in previous passages. For more information on resurrection, refer to the Master Glossary.

Luke calls Jesus "the **Lord**." This means Luke believes that Jesus is God; he has authority over all things and people. Use the same word or phrase for Lord as you used in previous passages. For more information on Lord, refer to the Master Glossary.

God's **grace** or **blessing** was upon the believers. This means that God's favor was with the believers. He helped them with whatever they needed.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **grace**. Look up grace and blessing in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word (Acts 4:32–37)

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 4:32–37

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Acts 5:1–11

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Acts 5:1–11 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Acts 5:1–11 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Acts 5:1–11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this narrative, the disciples have been living together in community. Many disciples sell their possessions and give the funds to the apostles to take care of the poor. The apostles then distribute the funds to the people so that no one has any need. The disciples are not required to sell their possessions, but do so if they want to.

This passage starts with the word "but" or "however" in order to contrast Ananias, whose name means "God is gracious," with Barnabas from the previous passage. Barnabas sold his possession and gave all of the money to apostles, or "laid the money at the feet of the apostles." Ananias, with the full knowledge of his wife Sapphira, whose name means beautiful, sold his property and told the apostles he sold it for less, so that they could keep back some of the money for themselves. Sapphira's knowledge of this was not just understanding that Ananias was going to cheat the apostles. The word indicates that she was a part of the plan and gave her consent to it. It seems that Ananias and Sapphira were attempting to get credit for a greater personal sacrifice than what was true.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What do people in your culture do in order to try to gain good status in your community? Tell a story about someone, maybe even yourself, who may have lied to try to look good to others. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture feel about lying? Pause this audio here.

Peter's question to Ananias indicates that Satan, the adversary or devil, filled Ananias' heart or thoughts with the belief that Ananias could lie to the Holy Spirit. In Jewish culture, the heart was the part of the body where people believed strong emotion was. Ananias not only thought about lying about his generosity, but had a strong desire to do so.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What word will you use to translate "heart"? In your culture, where in your body do you consider your deep emotions to be? You may use that part of the body instead of "heart" if it is different. Pause this audio here.

Peter understood that the Holy Spirit was the one who brought together the community as well as maintained their community of believers. For Ananias to lie about a community issue was not just a simple lie to Peter, but to the Holy Spirit. Ananias was trying to make it seem as if he was following the Holy Spirit when he was not.

Peter's questions also indicate that the selling of possessions was voluntary. Ananias and Sapphira could have kept their land or sold it and kept all of the money from the sale. Ananias' sin is against God. Most scholars believe God causes Ananias' death as judgment for Ananias' sin. Because of God's judgment, fear spreads among all of the people who hear about Ananias' death.

Some young men, most likely considered young because they are unmarried, come and wrap Ananias' body in a cloth and take him to be buried. In the culture of the story, they would bury the body either in the ground or in a tomb carved into a rock.

Stop here and look at a photo of the tomb and the photo of the burial plot in the ground. Pause the audio here.

It was normal to bury the body on the same day that the person died. It was not normal, however, for a man's wife not to know about him dying and being buried. When Sapphira came to the room where Peter was, about three hours later, she had no knowledge of what had happened to Ananias. Some versions say that Peter asked,

"Did you sell the land?" The pronoun "you" is plural here, meaning Sapphira and her husband. Sapphira told the same lie that she and Ananias had planned together. Her fate was exactly the same as Ananias'.

Peter's question about how Ananias and Sapphira could test the Lord is better understood that Ananias and Sapphira wanted to see what they could get away with without being punished. After Sapphira's death, great fear spread among the church. This word church indicates the group of believers, not a building, and is the first time the word church is used in the book of Acts.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: When you hear the word "church," what do you think about? How will you translate the word "church" so that people in your culture will not associate it with a building, but with the people of God? Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Acts 5:1–11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 5 scenes.

In the first scene: Ananias and Sapphira sell their land and decide together that they will keep back part of the money for themselves. Ananias brings the rest of the money to the apostles.

In the second scene: Peter questions Ananias about how it was that Satan filled his heart and mind to lie to the Holy Spirit. Peter questions whether or not the land and the money from the sale was Ananias' to do what he wanted with it.

In the third scene: Ananias hears Peter's accusations and falls down dead. Young men wrap Ananias and bury him. Fear spreads among those who hear what happened to Ananias.

In the fourth scene: Three hours later, Sapphira comes to where Peter is without knowing what happened to her husband. Peter asks Sapphira about the amount of money she and Ananias sold the land for. She also lies to Peter. Peter asks why she and Ananias were trying to test God. Peter tells her that the men who buried Ananias are coming to bury her as well.

In the fifth scene: Sapphira also dies. The same young men bury Sapphira next to Ananias. Fear spreads among the church.

The characters in this passage are:

- Ananias
- Sapphira
- The apostles
- Peter
- Young men
- Those who hear what happens
- God/Holy Spirit
- The church

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: The use of the opening word "but" is to contrast Ananias with the man named Joseph, or Barnabas, in the previous passage. Ananias and Sapphira sell their land and decide together that they will keep back part of the money for themselves. Ananias brings the rest of the money to the apostles. There is no exact indication of where the apostles were or where the land that Ananias and Sapphira sold was. We know that they were in Jerusalem because of previous passages. We also know that

the disciples knew where to find the apostles because they regularly came to bring their possessions or the money from the sale of their possessions.

Peter speaks for the apostles and questions Ananias as to how it came to be that Satan filled Ananias' heart in order to lie to the Holy Spirit. Peter uses questions to ask about the truth of Ananias' ownership of the property and how Ananias could have done what he wanted to with the land and the money from the sale of the land, but Peter does not expect an answer. It is assumed that the answer to Peter's questions is yes.

Upon hearing Peter's accusations, Ananias falls down and dies. The order of the words indicates that Ananias fell first and then took his last breath. But it is not truly known whether or not Ananias' death was the cause of him falling to the ground. Either way, Ananias has died. Fear is spread among those who hear about this.

Some young men come and wrap Ananias' body, probably in a cloth called a shroud, and bury Ananias.

Discuss as a group how this affects the setting where this story takes place. If a few men have to carry the body to be buried, is the burial site close by? Most places of burial in Jerusalem were outside of the city walls. Pause the audio here.

Have a group of young men carry a man in your group. How many young men does it take to easily carry a normal sized man in your culture? How far can they carry him? Pause the audio here.

Three hours later, Sapphira comes to where the apostles are, without any knowledge of what happened to Ananias. Peter also questions Sapphira about the amount of money the land was sold for. Sapphira also lies, just as Ananias did. Peter accuses Sapphira with questions as well, asking her how she could try to test the Lord, or see what she could get away with. Peter says "Behold!" or "Listen!" meaning "pay attention!" The feet of the men who buried Ananias are at the door. The assumption is that the door to the place where the apostles and Sapphira are is possibly closed. Sapphira also dies. The young men who buried Ananias come into the room, and find Sapphira dead. This means that they did not see her die, but that they found her this way. They take her and bury her next to her husband. Fear spreads among the group of believers who hear about all of this.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Acts 5:1-11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has 5 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Ananias
- Sapphira
- The apostles
- Peter
- Young men
- Those who hear what happens
- God/Holy Spirit
- The church

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Ananias and Sapphira sell their land and decide together that they will keep back part of the money for themselves.

Pause the drama.

Ananias brings the rest of the money to the apostles. Peter questions Ananias about how it was that Satan filled his heart and mind to lie to the Holy Spirit. Peter questions whether or not the land and the money from the sale was Ananias' to do what he wanted with it. Ananias hears Peter's accusations and falls down dead. Young men wrap Ananias and bury him. Fear spreads among those who hear what happened to Ananias.

Pause the drama.

Ask the actors playing the young men how they are feeling. Listen for things like, "I'm scared to death," "I'm never going to lie!" [!end] Continue the drama.

Three hours later, Sapphira comes to where Peter is without knowing what happened to her husband. Peter asks Sapphira about the amount of money she and Ananias sold the land for. She also lies to Peter. Peter asks why she and Ananias were trying to test God. Peter tells her that the men who buried Ananias are coming to bury her as well. Sapphira also dies. The same young men bury Sapphira next to Ananias. Fear spreads among the church.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Acts 5:1-11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

In this passage a husband and wife hold back money from the sale of their property to give to the **apostles**. The apostles are ones who are sent by Jesus or other apostles to do the work of Jesus. Use the same word for apostle as you used in previous passages. For more information on apostles, refer to the Master Glossary.

Peter, one of the apostles, questions the husband as to why **Satan** has **filled his heart** in such a way as to **lie** to the **Holy Spirit**. Satan is the leader of evil spirits.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Satan**. Look up Satan in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.*

Filling his heart is to give him ideas and desires. The heart is the place where a person's feelings and decisions happen. Use the same word for heart as you used in previous passages. For more information on heart, refer to the Master Glossary.

To **lie** is to speak something that is not true as if it is true.

The **Holy Spirit** is God's Spirit which God gives to those who follow Him. Use the same word for the Holy Spirit as you used in previous passages. For more information on the Holy Spirit, refer to the Master Glossary.

At Peter's accusations, Ananias fell down and died. Those who heard of it were filled with **fear**. Fear is the feeling of great distress caused by intense concern for danger, pain, or evil.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **fear**. Pause this audio here.*

Ananias' wife comes to the apostles three hours later. Peter questions her and she also lies. Peter asks her how she could test the Spirit of God, also the Holy Spirit, or try to see what she and her husband could get away with. Peter tells her that the feet of the men who buried her husband are at the door to come bury her as well. She

also dies. The men come in and find her dead and take her to bury her next to her husband. Great fear spread among the community of believers.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 5:1–11

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Acts 5:12–16

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Acts 5:12–16 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Acts 5:12–16 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Acts 5:12–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Sometimes it is not clear who is doing the action in this passage. It changes frequently in these verses. After the death of Ananias and Sapphira we see that the apostles continue to perform many signs and wonders among the people. We are not sure if this group of people are just the believers that were together and living in community, or if they are all people in Jerusalem. If understood together with the previous passage it sounds like it is talking about the people who were living together and caring for one another.

Solomon's colonnade or porch is part of the temple grounds. Each side of the temple had a porch that was held up by columns. The east side was called Solomon's porch or colonnade and had two rows of columns. It was called Solomon's because many believed that it was what remained of Solomon's original temple.

Stop here and look at a picture of a colonnade as a group. Stop here and look also at the diagram of Herod's temple, noting where Solomon's colonnade is. Look also at the larger map of Jerusalem, noting where the temple is. Pause this audio here.

All of the believers would gather together at Solomon's porch. Gathering together also indicates unity and single mindedness like a family. The passage says that no others would dare to join them. However, it says in the next two verses that many were being added to their number. The word join means to come near to them, or associate with them on intimate terms. Most scholars believe that these were many non-believers, or even Jewish leaders, who would not dare to come near to the believers, or associate with those who were gathering together. Another way to understand this is that non-believers did not pretend to be believers. However, non-believers, or people in the general community spoke highly of the believers. Even so, many people were joining the number of believers. Usually this description means that God was drawing people to believe in Jesus. But it could also be that more believers were coming to join the group of believers in Jerusalem.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story where many different groups of people are doing things. Pay attention to how you talk about which group of people is doing the action. Pause this audio here.

As a result of the miracles the apostles performed, people started bringing sick people into the streets so that as Peter walked by, Peter's shadow would come over the sick people. Luke does not specifically say that Peter's shadow healed people, but it seems like Peter's shadow must have healed people if people continued to bring sick people to him. Mats are beds used by poorer people. Even people from nearby towns would bring people who were sick and possessed by demons and they would be healed. Impure or unclean spirits are demonic spirits that would make a person religiously unclean. All people who were brought to be healed were in fact healed.

Stop here and look at the photo of a mat that people would carry others on. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story of a time you have seen God heal someone of sickness or of a demon. Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Acts 5:12–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: The apostles are performing many signs and wonders among the people.

In the second scene: Believers gather together at Solomon's porch. None would dare to join them though people spoke with respect about the believers. Many believed in the Lord Jesus and joined the believers.

In the third scene: People would bring their sick on their beds for Peter's shadow to cross over them and be healed. Even people from other towns would bring their sick and demon-possessed and all of them were healed.

The characters in this passage are:

- The apostles
- Believers
- Non-believers who would not join the believers but spoke highly of them
- Those who joined the believers
- Those who brought their sick and demon-possessed friends to be healed
- Those who were sick and demon-possessed.

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: This all takes place in Jerusalem mostly near or at the temple at a place called Solomon's Porch or Solomon's colonnade. Some of it takes place in the streets of Jerusalem, but it could possibly still be near the temple because the people in the community knew that the believers would gather there.

The apostles are performing many signs and miracles among the people. They, along with other believers, gather together at Solomon's porch. Others who are not believers would not dare to join them even though the believers were well thought of by the people.

Stop here and look at the diagram of the temple again. Where are the believers gathering? Where were the people who would not join them? Were they walking by and seeing the believers, or had they just heard about what the believers were doing? Pause the audio here.

The phrase "as a result" probably refers to the apostles performing miracles. So the result of the miracles is that many people were believing in the Lord and being added to the number of believers already in Jerusalem. Because of what miracles that the apostles were doing, many were bringing their sick friends into the streets so that at least Peter's shadow would pass over them. Others from other towns and villages nearby would also bring their sick and demon-possessed friends to be healed. And they were healed!

Stop and discuss as a group: Tell a story about someone you may have known who was demon-possessed. How hard or how easy do you think it would be to bring someone who was possessed to a nearby town? Discuss your culture's beliefs about people who are possessed or troubled by evil spirits. How will you present this in a way that will make sense in your culture? Pause the audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Acts 5:12–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- The apostles
- Believers
- Non-believers who would not join the believers who spoke highly of the believers
- Those who joined the believers
- Those who brought their sick and demon-possessed friends to be healed
- Those who were sick and demon-possessed.

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

The apostles are performing many signs and miracles among the people. They, along with other believers, gather together at Solomon's porch. Others who are not believers, would not dare to join them even though the people thought well of the believers.

Pause the drama.

Many people were believing in the Lord and being added to the number of believers already in Jerusalem. Because of what miracles that the apostles were doing, many were bringing their sick friends into the streets so that at least Peter's shadow would pass over them. Others from other towns and villages nearby would also bring their sick and demon-possessed to be healed. And they were healed!

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Acts 5:12–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The **apostles**, or those chosen specifically by Jesus or other apostles, were doing many **signs and wonders** among the people. Use the same word you've used for apostles in previous passages. Signs and wonders are powerful actions that only God can do in order to make people be in awe of Him. Use the same words for signs and wonders that you've used in previous passages. For more information on apostles as well as signs, refer to the Master Glossary.

All of the **believers** met together in **Solomon's colonnade**. Believers are people who chose to follow Jesus. Use the same word for believers that you've used in previous passages. For more information on believers, refer to the Master Glossary. Solomon's colonnade was the eastern porch of the temple of Herod. Most believed that this was what remained of King Solomon's temple.

None of the non-believers would dare to associate with the believers even though they thought well of them. However, many people believed in the **Lord**, or Jesus, and were still being added to, or joining, the number of believers. Use the same word for Lord as you have used in previous passages, and remember that Lord is in the Master Glossary. As a result people brought out their sick friends on their mats and beds hoping that Peter's **shadow** would at least pass over them and heal them. A shadow is a dark pattern on the ground because of an object that is blocking the light.

Others from nearby towns brought their sick and those tormented by **unclean spirits** to be **healed**. All of them were healed. Unclean spirits or evil spirits are servants of Satan and are not fit for the service of God. They torment or possess people and make them unclean as well. Healing is to be made whole or complete.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **unclean spirits**. Look up unclean spirits in the Master Glossary for more information. Use the same word throughout the book of Acts. Pause this audio here.*

This healing was physical healing. God used the apostles to heal people of sickness and diseases as well as get rid of the unclean spirits.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 5:12–16

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (2346980 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Acts 5:17–26

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Acts 5:17–26 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Acts 5:17–26 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Acts 5:17–26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The number of followers of Jesus is growing daily. The apostles have been performing many signs and wonders among the people in Jerusalem. Many people have been healed even when Peter's shadow passes over them.

The Sadducees are a group of Jews who believed in the laws of Moses. However, they did not believe in the resurrection of the dead. The high priest at that time was a part of this group of Sadducees. The high priest and all of his officials, who were Sadducees, were very jealous of the apostles. It is possible the Sadducees had felt very passionate about their religious beliefs and felt the apostles were preaching what the Sadducees believed to be false teaching. We know that the apostles are preaching Christ's resurrection, they are being used powerfully to do miracles among the people, and the number of believers is growing daily. The Sadducees and the high priest go to where the apostles are and arrest the apostles, throwing them in a city jail or prison.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about a time you felt jealous of or very passionate about your beliefs as someone was teaching something that you felt was not true. Pause this audio here.

God sends an angel of the Lord, or a supernatural, spiritual messenger, to free the apostles out of prison. This angel leads the apostles out and tells them to go back to the temple to preach all of the words of this life. In other words, the angel tells them to tell people about salvation, or the new life that comes when someone believes in Jesus. As the sun comes up, the apostles go to the temple to continue preaching. The temple gates opened at midnight because that is right after the time when the Jewish day started. However, most people did not return until the sun began to rise. The temple was the appropriate place for this preaching since this was where God made Himself known to His people. Now the apostles are making Jesus and the Holy Spirit known to the Israelites at the temple.

The trial for the apostles would have been held during daylight since it was not legal for the Jewish leaders to hold a trial at night. The Sadducees are joined by the rest of the council, also known as the Sanhedrin. One version refers to them as the senate of the sons of Israel. This is the group that planned together to have Jesus crucified. Their chambers, or the building where they met, must not have been near the temple since they did not yet know that the apostles were already preaching there again. Instead they send for the apostles to be brought to them from the prison. The officers find and report that the apostles are gone, even though the prison door is locked and guarded. These prison guards are part of the temple guard, not part of King Herod's guard. The temple guards were Jews who worked for the high priest. They are more than likely part of the tribe of Levi, the Jewish tribe responsible for everything in the temple. Herod's guards were held to a higher standard and would have been killed for losing their prisoners. Because these were temple guards and not Herod's guards, their lives are not in danger for losing the prisoners.

Stoning was not known to be a legal form of punishment, but sometimes angry crowds stoned people without permission. People would crowd around someone and throw stones at them until they died. The captain, or leader of the temple guard, feared the people who were listening to and who respected the apostles. The captain did not want to make the people so angry that they would stone him. So the captain did not use force to bring the apostles to the Sanhedrin. The apostles also did not resist going with him.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Discuss how people in your culture sometimes try to enforce the law, rather than let the government take care of a problem. How do angry groups of people respond to something they don't like or agree with? Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Acts 5:17-26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: The council of Sadducees is filled with jealousy over the apostles. The Sadducees had the apostles arrested and thrown into a city jail.

In the second scene: An angel of the Lord opens the door to the jail and lets the apostles go. The angel tells the apostles to go stand in the temple and preach the words of this new life, or salvation. The apostles go to the temple and begin to preach.

In the third scene: The high priest and the Sadducees and council meet together and ask for the apostles to be brought from the prison to where they are meeting. The officers did not find the apostles in the prison. The officers told the council that the prison doors were closed and guarded but there was no one in the prison. The chief priest and the captain of the temple guard were very confused about this. Someone comes in and tells the council that the apostles who were in prison are now preaching in the temple. So the captain went and brought back the apostles without the use of force.

The characters in this passage are:

- The high priest
- All of the Sadducees, or the religious group who believed only in the laws of Moses
- The apostles
- An angel of the Lord
- The senate of the sons of Israel (the Sanhedrin)
- The prison guards
- The officers of the temple guard
- Someone who tells them where the apostles are
- The captain of the temple guards

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: There are three settings in this passage that are mentioned a few times each. The apostles are kept in a jail or prison, which is one setting. The council chambers, or meeting room where the council meets, is another setting. And the other is the temple. Don't forget to note less specific settings like where the officials first take the apostles captive, which is possibly while they are in the temple.

Before you read this summary of the story, designate areas in your room or space that signify the different settings. While you read the summary below, move as a group to the area where the action is happening.

The high priest and the council of Sadducees arrest the apostles because they are jealous of the apostles. They go to where the apostles are and throw the apostles in a city or public jail. During the night, an angel of the Lord lets the apostles out of the jail and tells them to go preach at the temple. They go to the temple and begin to preach at daybreak.

The place where the high priest and the Sanhedrin end up meeting must not be close to the temple or the jail since they had not yet heard that the apostles were preaching in the temple. They were surprised when the officers came and told them that the apostles were not in the jail even though it was locked and guarded. While they were confused about the apostles being gone, someone comes in to tell the Sanhedrin "Look" or "Behold," meaning "Listen" or "Pay attention!" More than likely they could not specifically see the temple where the apostles were. This person tells the Sanhedrin that the apostles are preaching at the temple. The captain of the guard goes to the temple and brings the apostles back without using force because he was afraid of being stoned by the people.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Acts 5:17-26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- The high priest
- All of the Sadducees, or the religious group who believed only in the laws of Moses
- The whole council of Sadducees
- The apostles
- An angel of the Lord
- The senate of the sons of Israel (the Sanhedrin)
- The prison guards
- The officers of the temple guard
- Someone who tells them where the apostles are
- The captain of the temple guards

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

The council, or group, of Sadducees is filled with jealousy over the apostles.

Pause the drama.

The Sadducees have the apostles arrested and thrown into a city jail. An angel of the Lord opens the door to the jail and lets the apostles go. The angel tells the apostles to go stand in the temple and preach the words of this life. The apostles go to the temple and begin to preach.

Pause the drama.

The high priest and the Sadducees and council, or the whole Sanhedrin, meet together and ask for the apostles to be brought from the prison to where they are meeting. The officers did not find the apostles in the prison. The officers told the council that the doors were closed and guarded but there was no one in the prison. The chief priest and the captain of the temple guard were very confused about this. Someone comes in and tells the council that the apostles who were in prison are now preaching in the temple. So the captain went and brought back the apostles without the use of force because he was afraid of being stoned by the people.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Acts 5:17-26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The **high priest** and the council of **Sadducees** arrest the **apostles** and put them in jail because they are jealous of the apostles. The high priest was the leader of the Jewish religious high court known as the Sanhedrin. He was also a part of the group of Sadducees. The Sadducees were a group of Jews who held to the law of Moses, but did not consider the teaching of the Pharisees in their beliefs. The Sadducees are mostly known for not

believing in the resurrection of the dead. Use the same word for Sadducees that you've used before. For more information about Sadducees, refer to the Master Glossary. Apostles were those who were specifically appointed by Jesus or by other apostles to take the message of Jesus to the known world. Use the same word for apostles that you've used before. For more information on apostles, refer to the Master Glossary.

During the night, an **angel of the Lord** lets the apostles out of the jail and tells them to go preach at the **temple**. They go to the temple and begin to preach at daybreak. An angel is a messenger sent from God with a specific message for the people. In this case, "angel of the Lord" simply means that God, or the Lord, sent the angel. For more information about angels, refer to the Master Glossary. Jews would go to the temple to worship God because they believed that God's presence lived there. Use the same word for temple that you've used before. For more information on the temple, refer to the Master Glossary.

The full elders of the sons of **Israel**, sometimes translated as the **Sanhedrin**, gather and ask for the apostles to be brought to them from the jail. Israel is the land given by God to Abraham and his descendants who were the chosen people. Use the same word for Israel you've used before. For more information on Israel, refer to the Master Glossary. The Sanhedrin is the full council of the Jewish religious leaders. The group included the high priest, chief priests, elders, and teachers of the law. Use the same word you've used before for Sanhedrin. For more information on the Sanhedrin, refer to the Master Glossary.

They were surprised when the prison officials came and told them that the apostles were not in the jail even though it was locked and guarded. Then someone comes in to tell the Sanhedrin that the apostles are preaching at the temple. The captain of the guard goes to the temple and brings the apostles back without using force because he was afraid of being stoned by the people.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 5:17–26

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (2663009 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Acts 5:27-42

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Acts 5:27-42 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Acts 5:27-42 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Acts 5:27-42 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This passage is the continued narrative of the apostles' second arrest by the high priest. The Sadducees originally arrested the apostles and put them in the local prison. However, an angel of the Lord released the apostles and told them to go preach in the temple. When the high priest gathered the whole Sanhedrin together to question the apostles, they did not find them in the prison. Someone comes into their chamber to tell them that the apostles are out preaching in the temple. The Sanhedrin is the group of Jewish religious leaders that included the religious sect of the Pharisees, Sadducees, elders, and priests. This is the group that planned together to have Jesus crucified.

The high priest was the leader of the Sanhedrin and questioned the apostles about their teaching. The high priest asked, "Didn't we tell you not to teach in *that man's* name? Yet you have spread your teaching all over Jerusalem and tried to bring His blood on us." "That man" the priest is referring to is Jesus. The high priest

would not even say Jesus' name. The high priest is saying that the apostles are trying to hold the Sanhedrin responsible for Jesus' death. The Sanhedrin was in fact the humans responsible for Jesus' death.

Peter is the only apostle specifically named here. More than likely Peter is responding for the whole group, but all of the apostles are in agreement. Peter claims that it is more important to obey God than man. Peter does blame the Sanhedrin for putting Jesus to death, yet declares that it is the God of their ancestors who raised Jesus up to life. To claim that it is the God of their ancestors would have been to acknowledge that this was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob whom the Sanhedrin said they worshiped. Peter says that God put Jesus at God's right hand. In the Jewish culture, this was considered a place of high honor or the highest position.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How does your culture talk about a position of high honor? Pause this audio here.

When Peter said that God exalted Jesus as Prince and Savior, Peter was most likely referring to the royalty of the Messiah that the Jews had been waiting for. The Jews had been waiting for military salvation. The Jews in Israel were oppressed by the Romans and lived under Roman rule. Many Jews believed that the Messiah or Savior would come and overthrow the Roman government and set the Jews free. However, Jesus instead offered spiritual salvation through repentance and forgiveness of sins. Peter declared that the apostles saw everything that Jesus did, and then the apostle spoke about it. The Holy Spirit, whom God gave to those who followed Him, also spoke about the things that Jesus did. Here the apostles clearly have a deep understanding of the Holy Spirit who is moving and working in and among them.

Peter's declaration of the Sanhedrin's guilt as well as Jesus being Messiah, or Savior, angered the Sanhedrin to the point that they wanted to kill the apostles. Gamaliel, who was a highly respected Jewish teacher, or Pharisee, at the time, asked the apostles to leave the room so that he could speak privately with the Sanhedrin.

Gamaliel offers advice to the Sanhedrin, citing two other religious fanatics that started rebellions that failed. We do not know anything about Theudas other than what Gamaliel says. Judas the Galilean started a tax revolt around AD 6. He became the founder of the group called the Zealots. However, at the time that Gamaliel spoke, Gamaliel thought Judas' revolt had failed. Gamaliel uses both of these examples as movements that died out. He encourages the Sanhedrin to let the apostles go because if they are not of God then they too, and their movement, will die out. However, if the apostles are of God, then the Sanhedrin would be fighting against God Himself.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell stories of religious or even political groups that tried to rise up or succeed in your culture but failed. Pause this audio here.

Gamaliel more than likely represented the whole view of the Pharisees. Pharisees would have listened to someone as respected as Gamaliel. The whole of the Sanhedrin took Gamaliel's advice but decided to beat, or whip, the apostles. More than likely the Jewish beating was 39 whips to the body. The whip used was a rod with leather straps. The leather straps had pieces of bone or metal attached to the end. The Romans would use these to whip slaves or non-Romans. They would whip a person until the Roman soldier was tired. The Jews, in order not to be like the Romans, restricted the number of lashes, or whips, to 13 on the chest and 26 on the back. People often died from these beatings. The Jewish religious leaders used this punishment regularly to warn people from doing something. The Sanhedrin would have had the guards whip the apostles. Then the Sanhedrin ordered the apostles not to preach in the name of Jesus again.

Stop here and as a group look at the picture of the whip. Pause this audio here.

As the apostles leave the council, they rejoice because God thought they were important enough to be beaten for Jesus' sake. Then the apostles ignore the command of the Sanhedrin and continue preaching that Jesus is the Messiah, in homes and in the temple.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story of a time you or someone you knew was persecuted for their faith. How did you or they respond? Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Acts 5:27-42 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

In the first scene: The high priest questions the apostles saying, "We gave you strict orders not to preach in this man's name and yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are trying to blame us for his death." Peter responds to the chief priests that they must obey God and not man. Peter tells them that it is God who has exalted Jesus and raised Jesus up and seated Jesus at God's right hand. They are just witnesses to what happened. The Holy Spirit, who God gives to those who follow and obey God, is also a witness to what happened.

In the second scene: The Sanhedrin are so angry they want to kill the apostles, but Gamaliel, a respected teacher, steps in. Gamaliel convinces the Sanhedrin that if this is not a move of God it will die out like others before it. Gamaliel says that if this is a move of God they would be opposing God Himself.

In the third scene: The Sanhedrin agree to leave the apostles alone and let them go. So they beat them and let them go.

In the fourth scene: The apostles walk away rejoicing that they were worthy to suffer in Jesus' name. Then the apostles keep preaching Jesus as the Messiah, or Savior, everyday in the temple.

The characters in this passage are:

- The high priest
- The senate of the sons of Israel (the Sanhedrin)
- The apostles (Peter specifically)
- Gamaliel

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: We are not sure exactly where the council chamber of the Sanhedrin is. The Sanhedrin questions the apostles in the morning after they are thrown into prison, and let out by an angel of the Lord. Be sure to notice that the setting where the apostles are beaten is not necessarily mentioned. We do not know if it is in the room where they were questioned or somewhere else.

The high priest questions the apostles about why they continue to teach in the name of "that man," and try to bring His blood on them. This is a way to say that the high priest felt the apostles were trying to blame the Sanhedrin for Jesus' death.

Stop here and discuss this question as a team: How do you talk about people blaming others for the death of someone? Pause the audio here.

Peter tells them they must obey God and not man's rules or opinions. Peter tells them that God is the one who raised Jesus from the dead after the Sanhedrin had him crucified. It was God who set Jesus at His right hand, and that it is through Jesus that God offers forgiveness of sins and salvation.

When they hear Peter's words, the Sanhedrin are so angry that they want to kill the apostles.

Stop here and discuss: What could someone say that would make you so angry you would consider harming them? Pause the audio here.

Gamaliel, a respected teacher of the law, a Pharisee, asks the apostles to wait outside of the chambers. Gamaliel then convinces the council that if this is not a move of God it will die out. However, if it is a move of God, the council would be opposing God Himself. The Sanhedrin agrees to leave the apostles alone, but beats them severely and warns them not to preach anymore. It is likely that they had the apostles taken out of the chamber to be beaten. They would have been given 39 lashes, or whips. The apostles leave rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer for the name of Jesus, or so that the message of Jesus and His name would spread throughout the area. They continue daily to preach Jesus as the Messiah in people's homes and in the temple.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Acts 5:27-42 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has 4 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- The high priest
- The senate of the sons of Israel (the Sanhedrin)
- The apostles (Peter specifically)
- Gamaliel

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

The high priest questions the apostles saying, "We gave you strict orders not to preach in this man's name and yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are trying to bring His blood upon us." Peter responds to the chief priests that they must obey God and not man. Peter tells them that it is God who has exalted Jesus and raised Jesus up and seated Jesus at God's right hand. They are just witnesses to what happened and have the Holy Spirit who God gives to those who follow and obey Him.

Pause the drama.

The Sanhedrin is so angry they want to kill the apostles, but Gamaliel, a respected teacher, steps in. Gamaliel convinces the Sanhedrin that if this is not a move of God it will die out like others before it. Gamaliel says that if this is a move of God they would be opposing God Himself.

Pause the drama.

The Sanhedrin agree to leave the apostles alone and let them go. So they beat them and let them go, ordering them never to preach in Jesus' name again. The apostles walk away rejoicing that they were worthy to suffer in Jesus' name.

Pause the drama.

Then the apostles keep preaching Jesus as the Christ everyday in the temple and in people's homes.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Acts 5:27-42 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The **high priest**, along with the full council of the **Sanhedrin**, questions the **apostles** about why they continue to teach in the name of "that man." The high priest was the leader of the Jewish religious high court known as the Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin is the full council of the Jewish religious leaders. The group included the high priest, chief priests, elders, and teachers of the law. Use the same word you've used before for Sanhedrin.

Apostles were those who were specifically appointed by Jesus or by other apostles to take the message of Jesus to the known world. Use the same word for apostles that you've used before. For more information on priests, Sanhedrin, and apostles, refer to the Master Glossary.

Peter tells the council they must obey **God** and not man. God is the creator of all things and worthy of worship. Use the same word for God that you've used before. For more information on God, refer to the Master Glossary. Peter tells them that God is the one who raised Jesus from the dead after the Sanhedrin had him hung on a **cross**. A cross was the Roman form of execution. Use the same word for cross that you've used before. For more information on cross, refer to the Master Glossary.

It was God who set Jesus at His right hand as Prince and **Savior**. A Savior is someone who rescues or delivers people from danger or evil.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Savior**. Look up Savior in the Master Glossary for more information. Use this same word for Savior throughout the book of Acts. Pause this audio here.*

It is through Jesus that God gives **repentance** to Israel and the **forgiveness of sins**. Repentance is to turn away from sin or change your mind and start following God.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **repentance**. Look up repentance in the Master Glossary for more information. Use this same word for repentance throughout the book of Acts. Pause this audio here.*

Forgiveness of sins is God's way of releasing us from the punishment of our disobedience to God. Use the same words for forgiveness of sins that you've used before. For more information on forgiveness and sins, refer to the Master Glossary.

Peter also says that they are witnesses to these things and so is the **Holy Spirit**. The Holy Spirit is God's Spirit who God gives to those who obey Him, for wisdom, guidance, and comfort. Use the same word for the Holy Spirit that you've used before. For more information on the Holy Spirit, refer to the Master Glossary.

When the council, sometimes translated Sanhedrin, hears Peter's words, the Sanhedrin are so angry that they want to kill the apostles.

Gamaliel, a respected **teacher of the law** and a **Pharisee**, asks the apostles to wait outside of the chambers. A teacher of the law is usually known as a scribe who were experts at interpreting the law. A Pharisee was a Jewish religious leader who kept themselves separate from the people but were devoted to God's law and highly influential.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **teacher of the law** and **Pharisee**. Look up teacher of the law, and also Pharisee in the Master Glossary for more information. Use the same words for teacher of the law, and the same word for Pharisee throughout the book of Acts. Pause this audio here.*

Gamaliel then speaks to the council, or Sanhedrin, calling them "Men of Israel." Israel is the land given by God to Abraham and his descendants who were the chosen people. Use the same word for Israel you've used before. For more information on Israel, refer to the Master Glossary.

Gamaliel says that if this is not a move of God, it will die out. However, if it is a move of God, the council would be opposing God Himself. The Sanhedrin agrees to leave the apostles alone, but beats them severely and warns them not to preach anymore in Jesus' name.

The apostles leave the presence of the Sanhedrin, rejoicing that they were important enough to suffer for Christ. They continue daily to preach Jesus as the **Messiah** in people's houses and in the **temple**. The Messiah means "God saves" and was a person that God appointed or anointed with a special task. The temple was the place of worship in Jerusalem where God's presence was said to dwell. Use the same word for temple that you've used before. For more information on Messiah, or temple, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 5:27-42

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3350401 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Acts 6:1-7

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Acts 6:1-7 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Acts 6:1-7 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Acts 6:1-7 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The apostles have been doing many miracles among the people. They were also teaching Jesus' words in the temple. Because of their teaching they were arrested and beaten, or whipped, and told not to teach anymore in Jesus' name. However, the apostles continued to preach in Jesus' name and many believers or disciples were added to their numbers.

This is the first time in the book of Acts that the word "disciples" is used to describe followers of Jesus. Here it refers to any who follow Jesus, not just those who Jesus taught directly. These followers of Jesus are continuing to grow in number.

Hellenistic Jews were Jews that had adopted many Greek practices as well as the language. These Hellenists were different from Hebrew Jews as they had come from areas where Jews had dispersed around the Mediterranean Sea, closer to Greece. The Hebrew Jews were from Israel, or Palestine.

Stop here and look at the map of the area surrounding the Mediterranean Sea as a group. Pause this audio here.

Many Hebrew Jews did not like the Hellenistic Jews and looked down on them because they didn't speak Hebrew or Aramaic. However many of the Hebrew Jews spoke some Greek because it was the common language of the day.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about believers from a nearby culture who speak a different language and have different customs. Do the two cultures get along? How do they treat one another? Pause this audio here.

At this time when the disciples are growing in number, we see there is division between the disciples who were Hellenistic and the ones from Israel who were Hebrew. Both groups had come to join the disciples, or followers of Jesus, in Jerusalem.

There were several widows who had come to live outside of Jerusalem to die and be buried there. Many times, Jewish men would live out their last days in Jerusalem in order to be buried near the city. Their wives would come with them to live out their last days as well after their husband had died. If they had no means of provision, they would hope that they would be cared for or someone would help bury them. The Jews had set up a system to give the widows a daily amount of money to care for their needs. The followers of Jesus had taken on the same practice. Remember that the believers were living together and bringing their possessions and money to the apostles to give out to others so that no one had any need. The believers were supposed to give all of the widows food or money everyday. However, the widows of the Hellenistic disciples were not receiving this food or money.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture take care of widows? Pause this audio here.

The twelve apostles called together the whole group of disciples. Remember that the Bible often calls the twelve apostles "the Twelve." Also, "the Twelve" now includes Matthias instead of Judas. The Twelve were devoted to teaching others about the things Jesus said and did and not the financial matters. The apostles regularly told people about how Jesus offers salvation to all through His death and resurrection as well as teaching the disciples about how Jesus instructed them to live. The apostles were not saying that serving was unimportant, but that they were called to devote themselves to prayer and to the preaching of God's Word. The apostles

wanted to make the matter right, so they asked for the group to select 7 men to make sure the widows were taken care of. This was common in Jewish culture for leaders to choose 7 men to be selected to take care of a task. The men selected had to be wise, had to listen to and obey the Holy Spirit, and have a good reputation among the people.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Describe these kind of men in your culture. What kinds of things do men who obey the Holy Spirit and have a good reputation do? Pause this audio here.

The disciples agreed that this was a good idea. Some scholars think that the men were selected specifically from the group of Hellenists because all seven names given are Greek. However, it was not uncommon for men to have both a Greek and a Hebrew name. Little is known about these men except what we hear in this verse. Stephen completely believed in Jesus and allowed the Holy Spirit to lead Him, and Nicolas was a Gentile, or a non-Jew, who converted to Judaism, and then chose to follow Jesus. Nicolas was from a city called Antioch.

The laying on of hands was also a practice taken from Jewish culture. It symbolized passing on of responsibility and giving strength and the blessing of the community. The apostles prayed for the seven men, and then laid their hands on them, more than likely on each of their heads.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture choose men to fulfill a task? What are the requirements for these men? Discuss any symbolic way that you pass on responsibility and blessing. Pause this audio here.

It seems that in response to this appointment, the apostles were better able to devote themselves to preaching God's word. Because of this, the word of God was able to continue to spread and the number of people who started to follow Jesus increased in Jerusalem. Many Jewish priests also started to follow the teachings of Jesus.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Acts 6:1-7 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

In the first scene: The number of disciples is increasing regularly. The Hellenist Jews complained against the Hebrew Jews that the Hellenist widows were not receiving their daily amount of food.

In the second scene: The twelve apostles call together the whole congregation of disciples to have them appoint seven men to take care of the widows. This allows the apostles to devote themselves to prayer and the preaching of God's word.

In the third scene: This was approved by the congregation and so they chose seven men. They brought them before the apostles and prayed for them and laid hands on them.

In the fourth scene: The word of God continued to spread and the number of disciples continued to increase in Jerusalem. Even many priests came to follow Jesus in obedience.

The characters in this passage are:

- Hellenist Jews
- Hebrew Jews
- Widows
- Apostles
- All of the disciples
- The seven men
- Jewish priests

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: There is no specific setting mentioned in this passage other than Jerusalem. We do know that the apostles often would spend time at Solomon's colonnade at the temple. Solomon's colonnade was on the eastern side of the temple and thought to be the only part of Solomon's original temple still standing. It was a porch area with two rows of columns. Considering that at one point the whole congregation was called together, there must be space large enough for them to gather. However, there is also a lot of moving and people coming and going to other people. Be aware of how this may play out in the settings.

As the disciples were growing in number, the Hellenist Jews complained about the Hebrew Jews that the Hellenist widows were not receiving their daily amounts of food.

The twelve apostles came together with all of the congregation of disciples. The twelve asked the disciples to select or choose seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit, and who were wise, to put in charge of the task of making sure all of the widows were taken care of. This word "select" or "choose" means to choose based on having fully investigated. So these men were to be chosen after a full inspection of them. This allowed the disciples to be focused on prayer and ministry of, or teaching of the Word of God.

This idea was approved by the whole congregation and they chose seven men. These men were brought to the apostles who prayed and laid hands on them, symbolizing a passing of the responsibility to these seven men.

Because the seven men were chosen to care for the widows, the word of God kept spreading and the number of disciples in Jerusalem kept increasing. Many of the Jewish priests also started following and being obedient to Jesus.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Acts 6:1-7 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has 4 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Hellenist Jews
- Hebrew Jews
- Widows
- Apostles
- All of the disciples
- The seven men
- Jewish priests

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

As the disciples were growing in number, the Hellenist Jews complained about the Hebrew Jews that the Hellenist widows were not receiving their daily amounts of food.

Pause the drama.

The twelve apostles came together with all of the congregation of disciples. The twelve asked the disciples to select or choose seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit, and who were wise, to put in charge of the task of making sure all of the widows were taken care of. This allowed the disciples to be focused on prayer and ministry of, or teaching of, the Word of God.

This idea was approved by the whole congregation and they chose seven men. These men were brought to the apostles who prayed and laid hands on them, symbolizing a passing of responsibility to these seven men.

Pause the drama.

After this, the word of God kept spreading and the number of disciples in Jerusalem kept increasing. Many of the priests also started following and being obedient to Jesus.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Acts 6:1–7 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

As the **disciples** were growing in number, the **Hellenist Jews** complained about the **Hebrew** Jews that the Hellenist **widows** were not receiving their daily amounts of food.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **disciples**. Look up disciples in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.*

Hellenist Jews were descendants of Jacob, the grandson of Abraham. They had adopted Greek practices and were part of the Jews who had dispersed into other areas but come back to live in Jerusalem.

Hebrew Jews were native to the Israeli or Palestinian region. Use the same word for Jews as you've used before. For more information on Jews, refer to the Master Glossary.

Widows are women whose husbands have already passed away.

The twelve **apostles** came together with all of the congregation of disciples. The apostles are the twelve that were appointed by Jesus Himself, or by the apostles, as Jesus' representative. Use the same word you've used for apostles in previous passages. For more information on apostles, refer to the Master Glossary.

The twelve asked the disciples to select or choose seven men of good reputation, full of the **Spirit**, or **Holy Spirit**, and who were wise, to put in charge of the task of making sure all of the widows were taken care of. This allowed the disciples to be focused on **prayer** and ministry of, or teaching of, the **Word of God**. The Holy Spirit is God's Spirit who God gives to lead and comfort people. Use the same word for Holy Spirit as you have used before in previous passages. Prayer is communication with God. Use the same word you've used for prayer in previous passages. The Word of God here refers to the good news of Jesus dying for our sins, and being resurrected. Use the same word for Word of God that you've used in previous passages. For more information on the Holy Spirit, prayer and the Word of God, refer to the Master Glossary.

This idea was approved by the whole congregation and they chose seven men. These men were brought to the apostles who prayed and **laid hands** on them, symbolizing a passing of responsibility to these seven men. Laying hands on someone was a symbol of passing responsibility and giving blessing to another person.

After this, the word of God kept spreading and the number of disciples in Jerusalem kept increasing. Many of the **priests** also started following and being obedient to Jesus. Priests were the Jewish religious leaders who connected the people to God through sacrifices. Use the same word you've used for priests in previous passages. For more information on priests, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word (Acts 6:1-7)

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 6:1-7

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (2687704 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Acts 6:8–15

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Acts 6:8–15 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Acts 6:8–15 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Acts 6:8–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage, the apostles chose seven men from the group of disciples to be leaders and take care of the widows in the group. Stephen was one of the men who the apostles chose. Now, Stephen teaches with power and does miracles in Jerusalem. This causes problems with other Jews who lie about Stephen and bring him to the Sanhedrin.

Luke uses a word like "now" to introduce a story about Stephen. Luke tells us that Stephen was full of grace, or God's favor, and power, or the ability to act. We know from the previous passage that Stephen was full of the Holy Spirit, or God's Spirit. God gave him the power to do miraculous signs and wonders, or acts that only God can do. Signs are signals that show that something is true. Here, the signs showed that what Stephen was teaching about Jesus was true. But soon, Jews from the Synagogue of Freedmen opposed Stephen—these worshipers were from the areas of Cyrene, Alexandria, Cilicia, and Asia.

Stop here and look at the map showing Cyrene, Alexandria, Cilicia, and Asia in relation to Jerusalem as a group. Pause this audio here.

The Synagogue of Freedmen, or the Jewish place of worship, was full of Jews who had once been slaves of the Romans, but the Romans freed them. The name does not mean that all freedmen attended the synagogue or that only freedmen could attend. These Jews were Hellenistic Jews, or Jews who spoke Greek and had adopted many Greek practices. These people were not from Israel but came from other countries where Jews had settled. The Jewish freedmen were angry with Stephen's teachings, but they could not stand up to, or prove Stephen wrong, because God's Spirit gave him wisdom. The idea of wisdom means thinking thoughts that are true and doing things that are good.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Discuss how someone with wisdom acts and speaks. Why is it hard to argue with them? Pause this audio here.

The Jews convince other men to lie about Stephen and say that he blasphemed, or insulted, Moses and God. This was a serious accusation since Moses was a great Jewish prophet and God gave his people his laws through Moses. The Jews caused other people to be angry with Stephen, including the elders, or respected leaders of the Jewish community, and the teachers of the law. The teachers of the law were religious leaders who interpreted and taught God's law. Saying that Stephen was threatening the temple and its customs, organization, and rules would have made many people angry since the temple was the religious and economic center of the Jews' lives. The Jewish community was so angry with Stephen that they grabbed him and took him to the Sanhedrin, or the Jewish ruling council. The Jewish council listened to court cases and passed judgment based on religious law.

The same Jews from the synagogue arranged for people to be false witnesses to the Jewish council. A false witness is a person who lies about what they know about a person or event. These false witnesses changed the truth enough to make serious accusations against Stephen—they accused him of threatening the temple.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: When someone accuses a person of something, what do trials look like in your culture? How do authorities or judges come to a decision about who is telling the truth? Pause this audio here.

The false witnesses do not refer to Stephen by name but call him "that fellow" or "that man" to show disrespect. They exaggerate, saying that Stephen is always talking against the holy place, or the temple, and God's law. They are referring to Stephen's teaching that Jesus of Nazareth would destroy the temple and change the customs handed down by Moses. These were concepts Jesus himself had taught about. Because the temple and the law were the most important things to the Jews, speaking against these things or talking about changing them would have made the Jews very angry. The word customs refers to rules for the Jews to follow. Jewish religious teachers wrote or spoke these rules that were based on the Laws of Moses.

When the Sanhedrin looked carefully at Stephen, they saw that his face was bright or like the face of an angel. An angel is a spirit who serves God. Luke does not tell us how Stephen's face looked like an angel, but we do know that Stephen was full of the Holy Spirit.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Acts 6:8–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: Stephen teaches about Jesus and does miracles in Jerusalem. Jews from the Synagogue of Freedmen become angry with his teachings. The Jews try to argue with Stephen, but he answers with wisdom.

In the second scene: Because they cannot prove him wrong, the same Jews convince other Jews in the city to become angry with Stephen, including elders and teachers of the law. People become so angry that they grab Stephen and take him to be judged by the Sanhedrin.

In the third scene: Stephen stands before the Sanhedrin. False witnesses exaggerate their testimonies about Stephen—they say he is always talking against the temple and God's Law. The Sanhedrin gaze at Stephen and see that his face is bright like the face of an angel.

The characters in this passage are:

- Stephen
- The Holy Spirit
- Jews of the Synagogue of Freedmen
- Elders
- Teachers of the law
- Sanhedrin council members
- False witnesses

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In the last passage, Luke showed the disciples multiplying and the word of God continuing to spread in Jerusalem. The apostles chose Stephen as a leader in the group of disciples to care for the widows. Stephen was full of the Holy Spirit.

This passage starts with the word "now" or "and." The word used here does not express time, but it introduces the story of Stephen.

At the beginning, Luke describes Stephen. Stephen is full of the kindness of God. Stephen performed amazing signs among the people.

Now the story shows a strong contrast between the wonderful things Stephen was doing and the way the Jews responded to Stephen. This is the first time in Acts that the people do not react positively to the signs and wonders.

While Stephen is teaching, Jews from the Synagogue of Freedmen oppose Stephen together and argue with him. The same Jews couldn't stand up against, cope with, or refute Stephen's teachings. This means they didn't have good arguments against Stephen because Stephen was speaking with wisdom and the Spirit, or the Holy Spirit.

Because the Jews could not prove Stephen wrong, they persuaded other people to say that Stephen spoke against Moses and God.

The same Jews made the people, the elders, and the scribes angry with Stephen. The elders and scribes had representatives on the council. They seized Stephen and brought him to the council, or Sanhedrin, to judge him.

The same Jews set up false witnesses to say that Stephen was talking against the holy place and the law, referring to the law that God gave Moses for his people. The holy place refers to the temple. In earlier teachings, Jesus spoke about the coming destruction of the temple and how people would not have to go to priests to make sacrifices on their behalf to have a good relationship with God. Stephen most likely repeated these teachings. The false witnesses said that Stephen spoke of how Jesus of Nazareth will destroy the temple and change the customs that Moses left.

The members of the council looked straight at Stephen's face. Stephen's face was like the face of an angel.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Why do you think Stephen had a face like an angel's? What do you think a face like an angel's looks like? Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Acts 6:8–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has three scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Stephen
- The Holy Spirit
- Jews of the Synagogue of Freedmen
- Elders
- Teachers of the law
- Sanhedrin council members
- False witnesses

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out Stephen teaching with power and wisdom. He does signs and wonders. The actor for the Holy Spirit can help Stephen perform these miracles. Stephen teaches and Jews from the Synagogue of Freedmen become angry with his teachings.

Pause the drama.

Act out the Jews from the synagogue trying to oppose Stephen, but they cannot prove him wrong. Instead, the Jews begin to stir up anger in the Jews of the city, including the elders and teachers of the law. The people are so angry they grab Stephen and take him to be judged by the Sanhedrin, the Jewish ruling council. The actor of the Holy Spirit can stand beside Stephen during his trial.

Pause the drama.

Act out the Jews from the synagogue bringing false witnesses to Stephen's trial. The false witnesses exaggerate and say that Stephen is always talking about the destruction of the temple and changing the laws of Moses. The council members look at Stephen intently and see that his face is bright like the face of an angel.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Acts 6:8–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Luke tells us that Stephen was full of **grace** and **power**. Grace refers to God showing favor to someone who is undeserving, while power refers to the ability to act. God gave Stephen both favor and the ability to act. Use the same word or phrase for grace as you used in previous passages. For more information on grace, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stephen was able to do **wonders** and **signs**. Both of these words refer to acts that only God can do. Signs are signals that show that something is true. In this case, signs showed that what Stephen was teaching about Jesus was true. Use the same word or phrase for wonders and signs as you used in previous passages. For more information on miracles, signs, and wonders, refer to the Master Glossary.

But the Jews from the **Synagogue** of Freedmen were angry with Stephen's teachings. Synagogue refers to a Jewish place of worship where people in villages could meet instead of going to the main temple in Jerusalem. People did not do sacrifices in synagogues but gathered on the Sabbath to pray, read Scripture, hear teaching, and sometimes judge community disputes. Each synagogue had a group of elders, and one chief leader. These men were not priests or teachers, but they were highly respected and influential in their communities.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **synagogue**. Look up synagogue in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

The freed Jews tried to argue with Stephen, but they could not oppose him because he was filled with **wisdom** and the Spirit. Only God can give a person wisdom. It refers to thinking thoughts that are true and doing things that are good. Use the same word or phrase for wisdom as you used in previous passages. For more information on wisdom, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stephen was also full of the **Spirit**. The Holy Spirit is God's Spirit which he gives to people in order to equip them with his presence, wisdom, authority, and power. Use the same word or phrase for the Holy Spirit as you used in previous passages. For more information on the Holy Spirit, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Jews lie and accuse Stephen of **blaspheming** God and Moses. Blaspheme means to dishonor or insult God by making him less majestic.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **blaspheme**. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Look up blaspheme in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.*

The Jews even anger the **elders** and **scribes** with Stephen's teachings. Elders were old, respected leaders of the Jewish community, while scribes, or teachers of the law, studied, taught, and interpreted God's law. Both of these groups of people would have had connections to the Sanhedrin to have Stephen put on trial. Use the same word or phrase for elders and scribes as you used in previous passages. For more information on elder and scribe, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Jews grab Stephen and take him to be judged by the council, or **Sanhedrin**. The Sanhedrin was the Jewish ruling council who judged religious cases. It was made up of leading priests, elders, and teachers of the law. Use the same word or phrase for Sanhedrin as you used in previous passages. For more information on the Sanhedrin, refer to the Master Glossary.

When the false witnesses say that Stephen spoke against this **holy** place, they are talking about the temple, or the place where God lives among his people in Jerusalem. Many Bible translations use the word temple instead of holy place; this may be easier for your language. Holy means that the temple is set apart for a special purpose of God. Use the same word or phrase for holy as you used in previous passages. For more information on holy, refer to the Master Glossary.

When the council looks at Stephen, they see his face is bright like that of an **angel**, or a supernatural spiritual being who serves God. Use the same word or phrase for angel as you used in previous passages. For more information on angel, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word (Acts 6:8–15)

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 6:8–15

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (2917218 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Acts 7:1–8

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 7:1–8 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?

4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

In the last passage, the religious leaders arrested Stephen. They brought him to the Sanhedrin, the Jewish high council who tried religious cases. False witnesses accused Stephen of speaking against the temple and Jewish laws. Stephen's face became bright.

This story begins with the high priest asking Stephen if the accusations against him are true. The high priest was probably still Caiaphas, the same high priest who was at Jesus' trial. At each trial the court was obligated to state the reason for the charge against the person, and to give the person an opportunity to respond. The high priest gives Stephen a chance to defend himself.

From the beginning it is obvious that Stephen is not trying to prove his innocence—he already knows the court will condemn him, and he is ready for that. However, Stephen wants to make sure that the Sanhedrin hears the full reasons for Stephen's actions and really understands what Jesus has come to do.

Stephen begins a long speech that indirectly answers the accusations. This passage is the beginning of that speech. Stephen's long speech has two main themes.

Firstly, Stephen wants to respond to the accusation that he speaks against God's temple, the Jewish place of worship. Stephen wants to make it clear that this new belief in Jesus does not require that people worship God in a specific place. In fact, when God first chose his special people, God's people did not even have a special place to worship God. Interestingly, God's people seem to be closest to him when they are pilgrims, traveling from place to place, or when they are foreigners in a foreign land. Stephen traces these journeys of God's people through the lines of Abraham, Joseph, and Moses. Abraham was a foreigner and never received land. Joseph was a slave and then a leader in a foreign land. God gave Moses his laws while his people were wandering in the desert for 40 years. Now, with the coming of Jesus, the fact that God's people can worship him anywhere is emphasized yet again.

Secondly, Stephen reminds the court that throughout Jewish history Jewish religious leaders and people have persecuted the prophets or messengers that God sent to warn his people to continue to follow God. For example, Joseph's brothers hated him. The Jewish people in the wilderness were constantly angry with Moses. The Jewish people repeatedly killed God's prophets.

Stephen gives the history of the Jewish people directly from Jewish Scripture, often quoting it directly. Obviously, Stephen knows Jewish history well.

This passage is the introduction to Stephen's speech. Stephen respectfully addresses his audience as "brothers and fathers, listen to me!" Stephen's fellow Jews listening to this speech are like his brothers. The leaders in the Sanhedrin, or Jewish court, are like Stephen's fathers and he should treat them as older, wise men. This was a typical Jewish way to show respect when beginning a speech.

Stephen begins with the story of Abraham. Abraham is considered the father, or ancestor, of all Jewish people. Abraham and his father's family lived in Ur of the Chaldeans, which is in the region of Mesopotamia. The family left Mesopotamia and went to Harran, an important trade city. Stephen says that the God of glory appeared to Abraham while he was still in Mesopotamia, before he and his father's family left Mesopotamia and settled in Harran. Stephen calls God "the God of glory," meaning that Stephen thinks God is majestic and powerful. The Genesis story about Abraham seems to tell us that Abraham heard from God when he was in Harran. However, the Genesis account implies that God may have appeared to Abraham as early as when he lived in Mesopotamia. That is apparently what Stephen believes, and Stephen believes that God was in control of Abraham's movement from the very beginning. We know that after Abraham's father died, Abraham left Harran and traveled onwards to Canaan, the land God told him to go to. Nowhere along the way did Abraham ever own his own land. God never gave Abraham land as his inheritance, or for his possession. In fact, he didn't even own "a

foot of ground," which means a piece of land about 2 1/2 feet, or one meter, in length. Abraham only had the promise from God that one day his descendants would own this land. This was truly something that Abraham had to trust God for-because at that time Abraham didn't even have a child! So how could his descendants own this land one day?

Stop here and show your translation team a map of Ur in Mesopotamia, Haran, and Canaan, the promised land that God sent Abraham to.

Discuss with your team: Talk about who owns land in your culture. What kinds of people own land? What do they do with their land? How do they obtain their land? Discuss the importance of people or communities owning land in your culture.

God warned Abraham that Abraham's descendants would have much trouble-they would even be slaves in a foreign land for 400 years! Yet again, Abraham's descendants would not yet have a land to call their own. At this time Abraham lived in tents in this foreign land. But God promised that the land that Abraham camped on in tents would one day belong to the nation of Israel, and that they would come back from slavery and worship God there.

Now Stephen steps out of the story and he points out to the court that they are on that land that God promised Abraham now, as Stephen is speaking. In this part of the history of Israel that Stephen tells us, Stephen is really saying that the ownership of the land was not the real purpose of God bringing them to this land-the real purpose was that they would worship God there. We will see later in Stephen's speech that even the temple where they worship was not the end of God's purpose-Jesus was!

Stop here and discuss as a team: How important to your people is the place where they worship their gods or God? What kinds of meeting places do you have? Where do you worship your gods or the Creator God?

Stephen reminds the court that Abraham followed God's commands and he circumcised his son Isaac to show that God had made a covenant with Abraham to give him the land and to make Abraham's people into a great nation. Circumcision was a ritual where someone cut off the loose skin at the end of a man's penis. Circumcision was a sign of this covenant, or strong promise, that God gave his people. Abraham's son Isaac had Jacob, and Jacob had twelve sons who would become the leaders of the twelve tribes of Israel. All of these men were circumcised and that ritual continued throughout the history of Israel. These leaders were called patriarchs of Israel-the twelve men who started the family and the huge nation of Israel and fathered their descendants that became the twelve tribes of Israel.

During the time of Abraham's travels and settling into the land God promised him, there was no holy place where Abraham worshipped. Abraham obeyed God and everywhere he went he worshipped God. Abraham and his household had the mark of the covenant, circumcision, on their bodies as an act of trust and worship to God. That sign or mark of the covenant was passed on through the generations of Jewish men.

Stop here and discuss as a group: What kinds of rituals or symbols do you have in your culture to show that you are part of God's family, or that you belong to a special group of people?

In this introduction, Stephen has set up the family line of Israel to continue telling the Sanhedrin his history of the Jewish people.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Acts 7:1-8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This story has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: The high priest asks Stephen if the charges against him are true. Stephen addresses the crowd and the Jewish leaders and tells them that God appeared to Abraham and told him to go to the promised land.

In the second scene: Abraham went to Harran and then on to the promised land. God promised Abraham the land, but Abraham continued to live as a foreigner. God told Abraham that one day his descendants would spend 400 years in a foreign land as slaves, but then they would come back to obtain this land and worship there.

In the third scene: God gave Abraham the mark of the covenant, or promise, through circumcision, and Abraham, his son Isaac, Isaac's son Jacob, and all of Jacob's 12 sons were circumcised. Jacob's 12 sons became the patriarchs of Israel.

The characters in this story include:

- The high priest
- Stephen
- The Sanhedrin
- The false witnesses and others in the Sanhedrin

The characters in the story that Stephen tells include:

- God
- Abraham
- Isaac
- Jacob
- Jacob's 12 sons, the patriarchs of Israel

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, or children's toys to visualize the story and the action in it.

This story takes place where the last story ends. Stephen is in the place where the Sanhedrin meet. The Sanhedrin is made up of the Jewish elders and teachers of the law. The high priest leads the meeting. This is probably Caiaphas, the same high priest who tried Jesus. Annas, the former high priest, may have also been there.

The high priest asked Stephen a question he wanted Stephen to answer. In a trial before the Sanhedrin, the leaders give the person accused a chance to defend themselves. Stephen does not answer his question directly. Instead, Stephen begins a speech about the long history of the Jewish people. Stephen shows great respect for Jewish history.

Stephen calls the people in the room "brothers and fathers" to show respect. The people are not really his brothers and fathers, but this is a respectful way that Jewish people address others who are in authority.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How do you address men in authority in a respectful way in your culture? Stephen wants to answer the accusations people made against him. Talk about how you defend yourself in your culture. How do you talk to leaders when you want them to understand that you are innocent? Pause this audio here.

Stephen says that the God of glory appeared to Abraham in Mesopotamia. Stephen uses a respectful title for God.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How do you address God? What titles do you use for him that show that he is all-powerful and majestic? Pause this audio here.

Stephen is telling the story of Abraham. Stephen says that God appeared to Abraham before he went to Harran. Before Harran, Abraham lived in Ur, which was in Mesopotamia. Apparently, God appeared to Abraham there and told him to go to the land God promised him. Stephen quotes directly from Jewish Scripture when Stephen says that God said, "Leave your country and your people and go to the land I will show you." Then Abraham went to Harran and settled there for a while with his wife, his father, and his nephew Lot. Harran was not yet the land God had promised him. In Harran, Abraham's father died. Then Abraham left Harran with his wife and Lot and finally went to the land God promised him. God showed Abraham exactly where to go. Stephen makes

it clear that the land Abraham went to is the land where Stephen and the Sanhedrin are, at that moment, many years later.

Stop here and show your team a map that includes Ur in Mesopotamia, Harran, and the land of Israel where Abraham went to, and where the Sanhedrin are at this moment. Pause this audio here.

Stephen talked about what God told Abraham he would give him. Then Stephen said that God did not give Abraham even "one foot of ground to set his foot on." This is picture language, which means that Abraham did not even get one very small piece of land that he could stand on.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How do you talk about very, very small pieces of land? How will you talk about this small piece of land in your translation? Pause this audio here.

Then Stephen quotes again directly from the Jewish Scriptures. Stephen quotes what God says about Abraham's descendants being slaves in a foreign land for 400 years. Stephen goes back and forth between talking about what God said in indirect speech and quoting directly from the Old Testament.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How would you go back and forth between talking about what someone said and quoting directly what they said? Would you go back and forth, or would you just say everything in indirect or direct speech? Tell a story where someone is talking and pay attention to how you talk about what they said. Pause this audio here.

Now Stephen talks about the covenant, or strong promise, that God made with Abraham. God made the covenant or promise that he would give Abraham this land as a place to worship God and as a place where the great nation of Israel would live. God gave Abraham the special ceremony of circumcision as a sign or remembrance of the covenant. You may need to say that circumcision was a sign of the covenant in your translation. The men of Israel were circumcised to show that they wanted to follow God and receive the promise that God made them to give them the land. Circumcision is not the covenant itself. It is a sign of the covenant.

Then Abraham finally had a child! Abraham gave Isaac this sign of circumcision also. Circumcision was normally done 8 days after the birth of the baby, and that's when Abraham did it for Isaac. Later, Isaac became the father of Jacob. Later, Jacob became the father of the 12 patriarchs, or leaders of the 12 tribes of Israel.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has 3 scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- The high priest
- Stephen
- The Sanhedrin
- The false witnesses and others in the Sanhedrin

The characters in the story that Stephen tells include:

- God
- Abraham
- Isaac
- Jacob
- Jacob's 12 sons, the patriarchs of Israel

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

Stephen is in the room where the Sanhedrin meets. The Sanhedrin, the false witnesses, and any others they have called in are watching. False witnesses have just accused Stephen of speaking against the Jewish temple and the law of Moses. The high priest asks Stephen, "Are these accusations true?"

Stop the action.

Stephen begins to speak. Stephen says, "Brothers and fathers, listen to me!" Stephen begins with Abraham. He tells the Sanhedrin that the God of glory appeared to Abraham when he was still in Ur in Mesopotamia. God told Abraham, "Leave your native land and your family and go to the land I will show you." Then Abraham settled in Harran. Then Abraham's father died, and Abraham went to the land God showed him. God did not give Abraham any of the land. Abraham lived like a foreigner on the land God sent him to. God told Abraham that one day Abraham's descendants would be slaves for 400 years in a foreign land. But God will punish the land that enslaves them and they will come back to the land God promised them and worship God there. That land is where the Jewish people were on that day of the trial.

Stop the action.

- I know this history already, why is he telling us this?
- Frustrated, why doesn't he answer the question?

Ask the person playing Stephen, "What are you feeling?" You might hear things like:

- I want them to understand that Abraham didn't have one place to worship God, yet he worshipped God well. They didn't need a temple.
- God is so good and faithful-look at how he has helped his people through the years! [!end]
Restart the action.

God gave Abraham a sign of his covenant with him through the mark of circumcision. Abraham circumcised his son Isaac on the eighth day after he was born. Then later, Isaac circumcised his son Jacob. Jacob circumcised his 12 sons who became the patriarchs of Israel.

Stop the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

The high priest asked Stephen if the accusations were true. The high priest is the leading priest of all the Jewish priests. Use the same term for **priests** that you have used in previous passages, and remember that priest is in the Master Glossary.

Stephen says that the God of **glory** appeared to Abraham in Mesopotamia. Use the same word for glory that you have used in previous passages, and remember that glory is in the Master Glossary.

God gave Abraham a sign of his **covenant**. Use the same word for covenant that Peter used in his speech to the religious leaders earlier in Acts. Remember that covenant is a permanent agreement that two people or groups make to establish peace or friendship. If needed, look up covenant in the Master Glossary.

The sign of the covenant was **circumcision**. Circumcision is when someone cuts off the loose skin at the end of a man's penis. See the Master Glossary for a full definition of circumcision.

Jacob became the father of the twelve **patriarchs**, or leaders, of the twelve tribes of Israel. Patriarchs can mean famous ancestors. In this case, these 12 men became the ancestors of each of the 12 tribes of Israel.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 7:1–8

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3539431 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 3](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (5906642 KB)

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Acts 7:9-19

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 7:9-19 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus or God?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

In the previous passage, Stephen began to defend himself to the Jewish Sanhedrin, or council of Jewish religious leaders. Stephen started his Jewish history with the story of Abraham. Although Abraham had no home or a temple in which to worship, he worshipped God wherever he was.

Now Stephen continues the story of Abraham's descendant Joseph. Stephen begins to show how people often hated and rejected God's messengers. Stephen says that the patriarchs, the 12 great-grandsons of Abraham, were jealous of Joseph. Stephen then gives a summary of Joseph's story-how Joseph's brothers sold him as a slave into Egypt, but then how God was always with Joseph and rescued him. God gave Joseph wisdom, or understanding of how to act in a godly way. Because of this the Pharaoh, or king of Egypt, liked Joseph and made him a ruler over Egypt and his palace, or household.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story about people betraying an innocent family member or friend. What happened to the innocent person? How do you talk about people betraying other people?

Stephen goes on to show how Joseph's journey into Egypt was a gift to his family. A great famine came through all of Egypt and Canaan, where Joseph's family lived. Jacob sent his sons to Egypt to buy grain because his family did not have enough to eat. Stephen now jumps to the brothers' second visit to Egypt to buy grain. On the second visit, Joseph tells his brothers who he is. Pharaoh learned about Joseph's family, and Joseph was able to send for his father and his whole family to come and live in Egypt. Stephen says that 75 members of the family came. This would have included Joseph's father Jacob, his 11 brothers, their wives, and their children. Jacob went to live in Egypt. Jacob died in Egypt, and so did all his sons. Stephen says that the descendants of Jacob kept the bones of at least Joseph and brought them back to Shechem, the place where Abraham and his family were buried. It is possible that Abraham's descendants brought the bones of all the sons of Jacob back to Shechem. Jacob had already been buried in Hebron many years before. Actually, Abraham had bought a tomb in Hebron and people buried Abraham there. However, Stephen is summarizing a very long story from Jewish Scripture.

For Stephen, the details were not as important as the idea that Jacob and his descendants were buried in the land that God had promised Abraham's descendants. For Stephen, this shows that God keeps his promises and gives his people the land he has promised them.

Stop here and show the translation team a map that includes Canaan, Egypt, and the areas of Shechem and Hebron.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story about the origins of your people group or your tribe. Who were the leaders in the beginning? How do you talk about your ancestors?

The number of Jacob's descendants increased greatly. Stephen had said earlier that God had told Abraham about his descendants living in a foreign land for 400 years. Stephen tells the Sanhedrin that it was nearing the end of that time and it was close to time for God to fulfill his promise to give his people the land he had promised them. A new king was in Egypt, and the king did not care how much Joseph had helped Egypt's people. The king "dealt treacherously" with the descendants of Jacob. This means that the king lied to them and caused them harm. He made the people abandon their babies so that they would die.

Stephen is continually choosing to tell details in the story that show that God is faithful to his people.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Stephen continues the story of Joseph, telling how Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery in Egypt and how God made Joseph governor over all of Egypt.

In the second scene: Jacob's family was hungry because of the famine in Egypt, so he sent his sons, Joseph's brothers, to Egypt to buy food. Joseph brought his father and brothers' families to Egypt to live. Jacob and his sons eventually died and were buried back in the land God had promised them.

In the third scene: In the meantime, Jacob's descendants in Egypt became large in number and the king mistreated them.

The characters in this story include those telling and listening to the story:

- The high priest
- Stephen
- The Sanhedrin
- The false witnesses and others in the Sanhedrin

The characters in the story that Stephen tells include:

- Joseph
- Jacob
- Joseph's brothers, the patriarchs
- Pharaoh, king of Egypt who liked Joseph
- Jacob and his sons' families
- New king of Egypt who did not know Jacob's descendants

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, or children's toys to visualize the story and the action in it.

This story takes place where the last story ends. Stephen is in the place where the Sanhedrin meet. The Sanhedrin is made up of the Jewish elders and teachers of the law. The high priest leads the meeting. This is probably Caiaphas, the same high priest who tried Jesus. Annas, the former high priest, may have also been there.

Stephen continues his story without pausing. He goes on to talk about the 12 patriarchs, the sons of Jacob. Eleven of these brothers, or patriarchs, hated their brother Joseph and sold him into slavery.

It is important to remember that Stephen is trying to tell the entire history of the Jewish people in a short period of time. He summarizes events and puts events together. Although you may know all the details of this story, you should translate this passage in the way that Stephen tells it.

Stephen makes it clear that although Joseph was a slave, God was with him. Be sure that it is clear in your translation that there is a contrast between the state of slavery that Joseph was in and the fact that God was with him.

God gave Joseph favor with the king, or Pharaoh, of Egypt, which means that the king liked him. God also gave Joseph unusual or great wisdom. Joseph's wisdom made the king put Joseph in charge of his own household, or everyone who lived in his palaces, and his country of Egypt.

The next part of the story shows that the events changed. Things were going well, and then a great famine came to Egypt, where Joseph was, and to Canaan, where Jacob and his remaining sons were. Jacob sent his sons to Egypt to buy grain. Stephen does not tell all the details of what happened when they went to buy food. He jumps directly to the second time the brothers go to Egypt, when Joseph shows them that he is Joseph. Joseph introduced them to Pharaoh, and then he was able to invite them, their families, and their father back to Egypt to live. Stephen says that 75 people from Jacob's family came to live in Egypt.

Jacob came to Egypt, lived there, and died. His sons all eventually died there too. We know that Joseph and his brothers buried Jacob in Hebron. Many years later, when God rescued the descendants of Jacob from Egypt and took them back to Canaan, they carried the bones of Joseph and buried him in Shechem. Some people believe that they buried the bones of Joseph's brothers in Shechem too. This is an example of Stephen putting two events into one event. Stephen's main point was that Jacob's family was buried in Canaan to show that God really was giving them the land for their descendants.

You may need to re-order the events in the next section. The number of people in Jacob's descendants greatly increased. Then the time came closer when God would give the land back to his people. But one more thing had to happen. A new king was king in Egypt, and he didn't know Joseph. This king oppressed the people and made them abandon their babies so they would die. Stephen shortens this part of the story, because Jacob's family was in Egypt for 400 years-there was more than one king who oppressed Jacob's descendants.

Stephen sets up the story line here to show suspense. Things are happening just as God told Abraham that they would. Now, the time for God to help his people is coming close.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has 3 scenes.

The characters in this story include those telling and listening to the story:

- The high priest
- Stephen
- The Sanhedrin
- The false witnesses and others in the Sanhedrin

The characters in the story that Stephen tells include:

- Joseph
- Jacob
- Joseph's brothers, the patriarchs
- Pharaoh, the king of Egypt who liked Joseph
- Jacob and his sons' families
- New king of Egypt who did not know Jacob's descendants

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

Stephen is still talking to the Sanhedrin. He continues to talk about the patriarchs. He says, these patriarchs are jealous of their brother Joseph, and they sell him as a slave into Egypt. But God was with Joseph, and God rescued Joseph. God gave Joseph favor with the Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. Joseph had great wisdom, and the king of Egypt put him in charge of everyone in his palace and of all of Egypt.

Stop the action.

Ask the people playing the Sanhedrin, "How are you feeling?" You might hear things like, "Confused, why does Stephen keep talking about our patriarchs? We know this story! He's treating us like children!" [!end] Restart the action.

But a famine came to Egypt and to Canaan, where Jacob's family was. Everyone was in misery, and our ancestors ran out of food. Jacob heard about the grain in Egypt, so he sent his sons to Egypt to buy grain. They went twice. The second time they went, Joseph told them who he was, and Pharaoh learned about Joseph's family. Then Joseph sent for his father and brothers' families to come and live in Egypt. Jacob and the patriarchs died, and their descendants brought their bodies back to Shechem where Abraham had bought a tomb from the sons of Hamor.

Stop the action.

Ask the person playing Stephen, "What are you feeling?" You might hear things like, "I want them to understand that God took care of the patriarchs. God is faithful wherever we are, even when we didn't have our own land." [!end] Restart the action.

Time went on, and the number of Jacob's descendants in Egypt became more and more. It was soon time for God to keep his promise to Abraham and give his people the land he had promised them. But a new king became king in Egypt, and he did not know Joseph or how Joseph had helped his people. The new king lied to the descendants of Jacob and oppressed them. He made them abandon their newborn babies so they would die.

Stop the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

The **patriarchs** were jealous of their brother Joseph. Remember that the patriarchs refer to the 12 sons of Jacob who became the ancestors of the 12 tribes of Israel. Use the same word for patriarchs as you have in previous passages.

God gave Joseph **favor** with the **Pharaoh** of Egypt. This means that Pharaoh liked Joseph and did good things for Joseph. Pharaoh is the title of the king of Egypt. You can use this title or just say "king of Egypt." If you've already translated this word, be sure to use the same word you have used before.

*Stop here and discuss how you will translate **giving favor** and the title of the king of Egypt, **Pharaoh**.*

Remember that throughout this passage, Stephen refers to Joseph and his brothers as patriarchs, or **our ancestors**. These twelve brothers became the main ancestor of each of the twelve tribes of Israel. They were well-known throughout Israel during Stephen's time, because each Jewish person knew what tribe they belonged to.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 7:9–19

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (2573889 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 3](#)
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Acts 7:20–34

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 7:20–34 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus or God?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

Stephen continues telling the Sanhedrin the history of the Jewish people. He spends the most time talking about Moses, the man that God chose to rescue his people from slavery in Egypt. Stephen is still talking in front of the Sanhedrin, and this is a continuation of the speech he has been making.

The Egyptian king was oppressing the descendants of Jacob and making them abandon their newborn babies. But at this time, God had a plan to rescue his people, and Moses was born. Moses was "beautiful to God," which probably means that he was very special and God was pleased with him. Moses' family hid him and cared for him for 3 months until his mother had to put him outside. But Pharaoh's daughter found him and adopted Moses, and Moses learned the wisdom and education of the Egyptians. Moses was powerful in "speech and action." Moses became a powerful man who did great things both in what he did and in what he said.

Stephen now jumps to Moses as an adult—he is now 40 years old. Moses goes out to watch his people working. Moses knew that he was an Israelite—a descendant of Jacob. Moses saw an Egyptian mistreating an Israelite and Moses killed the Egyptian. This was Moses' way of trying to help his people. However, Moses' people did not recognize that Moses was trying to help. We know this because the next day Moses went out again. He saw two Israelites fighting, and he asked them why they were fighting. He said, "Men, you are brothers. Why do you want to hurt each other?" Moses is really saying that as Israelites from the same people group, the two men should not hurt each other. However, the Israelite who did the wrong thing asked Moses a question: "Who made you ruler and judge over us? Are you going to kill me too?" At this moment, Moses realized that other people knew that he had killed a man the day before. Moses realized that he could be in trouble with the Pharaoh if Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, knew that Moses had killed a man.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story about someone who tried to help others and people rejected them. How did that person respond? Why did the people reject them?

So Moses immediately "fled," or ran away, to a neighboring country called Midian. Moses settled there, meaning that he married and had children. Stephen tells us that Moses had two sons.

Stop here and show the team a map of Egypt and Midian.

Another 40 years passed, and now Moses is 80 years old. We know from the Jewish history of Moses that Moses was a shepherd and was taking care of his wife's father's sheep near Mount Sinai. Moses was in the desert near Mount Sinai and an angel appeared to Moses in the flames of a burning bush. Moses went closer, and a voice said, "I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." God is telling Moses here that he is the God that Moses has always heard about—the God who has been with his people and who Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob worshipped. This is the God that Moses can trust. This is the God who brought Abraham to the land he had promised him and gave him a son Isaac. This is the God who was with Isaac and gave him a son Jacob. This is the God who was with Jacob, gave him 12 sons, and brought him to Egypt. Moses realized that this was the creator God speaking to him and he was afraid. He showed his fear when his body trembled. Moses was so afraid to look at God that he did not look at the bush.

God told Moses to take off his sandals. In Moses' culture, people took off their shoes when they were standing on holy ground, or land that was set apart for God.

Stop here and show your team a photo of a pair of sandals.

Stephen is using this part of the story to remind his listeners that any place God considers holy, or set apart for himself, is where we can worship him. Midian was far away from where the temple in Jerusalem was, yet Moses worshipped God in Midian.

God reveals to Moses that he has seen the oppression of his people in Egypt. God says he has heard his people's groans. He has heard the sounds people make when they are very sad or discouraged. It is now time, God is now ready, to rescue his people. God reveals that he will rescue his people through Moses, and God sends Moses back to Egypt.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How do you know, in your culture, when God is speaking to you? When you feel like God is speaking to you, how do you respond? What do you do to show respect or honor to God when you are listening to him or worshipping him?

Also discuss as a group: God says he has heard the groans of his people. This is sounds that people make when they are very sad. How do you describe the sounds or cries people make when they are sad?

Stephen continues to show that God is making a plan to bring his people back to the land he has promised them. Stephen shows us how God plans out Moses' life and ensures that Moses will have the background, upbringing, and ability to rescue his people.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Moses is born, and Pharaoh's daughter adopts him. Moses grows up in Pharaoh's household and is educated as an Egyptian.

In the second scene: Moses begins to help his people as an adult of the age of 40. He kills an Egyptian who mistreats an Israelite, but then Moses' own people reject him when he tries to help them. Moses flees to Midian.

In the third scene: God appears to Moses in a burning bush. God identifies himself as the God of Moses' ancestors, and God sends Moses back to Egypt to rescue his people.

The characters in this story include those telling and listening to the story:

- The high priest
- Stephen
- The Sanhedrin
- The false witnesses and others in the Sanhedrin

The characters in the story that Stephen tells include:

- Moses' parents
- Moses
- Pharaoh's daughter
- Egyptian man that mistreats an Israelite
- Mistreated Israelite
- Two Israelites fighting
- The angel of God in the burning bush

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, or children's toys to visualize the story and the action in it.

Stephen begins this part of his Jewish history by saying, "This is the time that Moses was born," showing us that Moses' birth came at just the right time in Jewish history. Moses was born at the time that the Egyptian king was oppressing the Jewish people. Stephen summarizes Moses' birth and childhood. Stephen says two things about Moses. First he says that Moses was "beautiful in God's eyes." This meant that God was pleased with Moses, or that Moses was a very special child with a special purpose.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How do you describe children that people think will be special or have a great purpose when they grow up?

Stephen also says that Moses was "powerful in speech and action." This means that the things Moses said and the things Moses did as he grew up were powerful.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How do you describe someone whose speech and actions are powerful or cause great things to happen?

Then Stephen jumps to when Moses is 40 years old. Moses knows he is an Israelite, and he goes out to visit his people, the Israelites, who were working as slaves in Egypt. Stephen is very clear that when Moses killed the Egyptian who killed the Israelite, Moses is coming to the defense of his own people. Moses thought his own people would recognize him trying to help, but they did not. Stephen then gives us an example of how Moses' people did not recognize Moses' help. Stephen tells us that the next day, Moses asks two Israelite men who are fighting why they are fighting. Moses calls the two men brothers, although they are not blood brothers from the same mother and father. They are brothers because they are both Israelites. Moses does not expect the two men to answer his question. Moses is telling them that they should not fight together because they are from the same people group.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Talk about examples where you have given people advice or instructed them what they should or should not do. Do you ever ask questions when you do that? If not, how do you tell them that they should not do something? How will you translate this question in this passage?

One of the Israelites answered Moses with two other questions that he also does not expect Moses to answer. He asks Moses, "Who made you ruler or judge over us? Are you thinking of killing me too?" He is telling Moses that Moses has no right to tell them what to do. He is also telling Moses that he knows that Moses killed the Egyptian the day before.

Moses fled to Midian, and time passes. Stephen tells us 40 more years have passed, so now we know that Moses is 80 years old. Moses must be married, because Stephen tells us that he has 2 sons. Stephen then goes right

into the most important part of the story and tells us that an angel appeared to Moses in the flames of a burning bush. He tells us that Moses is near Mount Sinai in a desert, probably in the region of Midian. Moses is probably taking care of his wife's father's flocks of sheep. Moses goes near to the bush, and he hears the Lord, or God, speak to him. Moses trembles in fear and he does not look at the bush.

Then God told Moses to take off his shoes because he was standing on holy, or set apart, ground. God tells Moses that he has heard the cries of his people, and he has "come down" to set them free. God means that he is speaking to Moses now so that Moses can rescue his people. God has not come down from heaven in physical form.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has 3 scenes.

The characters in this story include those telling and listening to the story:

- The high priest
- Stephen
- The Sanhedrin
- The false witnesses and others in the Sanhedrin

The characters in the story that Stephen tells include:

- Moses' parents
- Moses
- Pharaoh's daughter
- Egyptian man that mistreats an Israelite
- Mistreated Israelite
- Two Israelites fighting
- The angel of God in the burning bush

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

Stephen is still talking to the Sanhedrin. Now he says that at the time the Egyptians were oppressing the Israelites, Moses was born. Moses was a beautiful, or special, child to God. Moses' parents hid him for 3 months, and then they had to abandon him. Pharaoh's daughter adopted Moses, and Moses grew up as her son. She taught Moses all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and Moses was powerful in the way he spoke and the way he acted.

Stop the action.

Ask the person playing Stephen, "How are you feeling?" You might hear things like, "Happy! I love this story of Moses. God used Moses and Moses followed God even when he was in a foreign country." [!end] Restart the action.

Moses was 40 years old, and he decided that he would visit the people of Israel as they worked. Moses saw an Egyptian mistreat an Israelite. Moses came to the Israelite's defense and killed the Egyptian. Moses thought that the Israelites would recognize that he had come to save them, but they didn't. Instead, the next day Moses went out again and stopped two Israelites from fighting with each other. He asked them, "You are brothers, why are you fighting?" One man said, "Who made you ruler and judge over us? Are you going to kill me like you killed the Egyptian yesterday?" Moses realized that people knew what he had done, and Moses fled Egypt.

Stop the action.

Ask the person playing Stephen, "How are you feeling?" You might hear things like, "I hope the Sanhedrin see how people rejected Moses." [!end] Restart the action.

Moses went to live in Midian. He had two sons. One day he was near Mount Sinai in the desert. An angel appeared to Moses in a burning bush. Moses went closer, and then the Lord, or God, spoke to him. God said, "I am the God of your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." Moses was very afraid and trembled in fear. He did not look at the bush because he was so afraid. Then God said, "Take off your sandals, because the place where you are standing is holy, or set apart, ground. I have seen the oppression of my people. I have heard their groans and have come down to rescue them. Now go, I'm sending you back to Egypt."

Stop the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

Moses was a **beautiful** child in God's eyes. This either means that God thought Moses was beautiful to look at, or simply that God was pleased with Moses.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How will you translate that God was pleased with Moses, or that Moses was beautiful to God?

Pharaoh's daughter adopted Moses. Be sure to translate Pharaoh in the same way you have before. Pharaoh is a title for the king of Egypt.

Moses visits his relatives, who are called the people of **Israel**. Israel is the name God gave to Jacob, and Jacob's descendants were called **Israelites**. The land God promised to Abraham, and that Jacob's descendants finally conquered as their own, came to be called Israel. Translate Israelites in the same way you have before, and remember that Israel is in the Master Glossary.

Moses fled to Midian when other people discovered that he had killed an Egyptian. Forty years later an **angel** appeared to Moses in a burning bush. God appeared to Moses and spoke to him in the form of an angel. You may say in your translation that God appeared to Moses in the form of an angel if you would like. Use the same word for angel that you have used in previous passages, and remember that angel is in the Master Glossary.

The voice of the **Lord**, or the voice of God, called out to Moses. Use the same word for Lord that you have used in previous passages, and remember that this term for Lord refers to God. Lord is in the Master Glossary.

God told Moses that Moses was standing on **holy** ground. This means that the ground Moses was standing on was set apart and special to God, because God was there. This was a place where Moses could worship God, because God was there. Use the same word for holy that you have used in previous passages, and remember that holy is in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 7:20–34

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3062281 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 3](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Acts 7:35–43

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Acts 7:35–43 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Acts 7:35–43 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?

3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Acts 7:35-43 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage, Stephen told the story of how Moses grew up and how God called him to rescue his people. Now the story shifts to how the Israelites rejected Moses even as he rescued them from Egypt.

In the previous passage, God was speaking. Now Stephen takes the story again and reminds his listeners that Moses, God's chosen rescuer, is the very man that the people rejected and said, "Who made you ruler and judge?" But God himself sent Moses through his message through the angel who appeared to him in the bush.

Moses led God's people, Jacob's descendants, out of Egypt. He performed wonders, or miracles, and signs in Egypt, at the Red Sea, and for the 40 years the Israelites wandered in the wilderness. The signs that Moses performed showed the people special things about who God is and God's promises to his people.

Now Stephen continues to explain the significant things that Moses did. Firstly, Moses is the one who said that a prophet, or messenger from God, would come like himself from among the Israelites. The Jewish people believed that this prophet would be the Messiah, or God's promised savior. Then Moses was with the people, the Israelites, who were gathered in the wilderness. Moses received living words, or messages from God. The angel from God gave Moses these messages from God while he was on Mount Sinai.

Stop here and show your group a photo of the wilderness. Pause this audio here.

But then God's people, who also happen to be the Sanhedrin's ancestors, rejected all that Moses had taught them. They did not listen to or obey Moses anymore. Instead, they wanted to go back to Egypt. Stephen retells the story of when the Israelites asked Aaron, Moses' brother, to make them gods who would lead them. Moses was on Mount Sinai receiving the messages from God, but the people didn't know where he was. Stephen reminds the Sanhedrin that God's people made an idol in the form of a calf, or baby cow. The people brought sacrifices to the calf, which means that they killed animals in front of the form of a calf so they could worship it. They were happy about what they had made themselves.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story about a time when people in your culture rejected their gods or authority figures. What kinds of things did they do to show that they rejected their authority? Pause this audio here.

Stop here and show a picture of the golden calf that the Israelites made to lead them. Pause this audio here.

God then turned away from the Israelites. He allowed the Israelites to worship the "host of heaven," which means the sun, moon, and stars. Stephen then compares this to what is written in the "book of the prophets." The "book of the prophets" is a scroll that contains the work of all the prophets who did not write as much as other major prophets. Stephen uses a quote from the book of the prophet Amos. He starts with a question that God asked: "Did you bring me sacrifices and offerings forty years in the wilderness, people of Israel?" Stephen believes that the answer is "no." Stephen believes that the Israelites did not offer God the sacrifices that they should have during their time in the wilderness. Stephen continues to quote the prophet Amos when he says, "You have taken up the tabernacle of Molech and the star of your god Rephan, the idols you made to worship." Molech was the Canaanite god of the sun and sky, and Rephan may have been the Egyptian god of a planet called Saturn. This is why God said that he gave the Israelites over, or allowed them, to worship the "heavenly hosts," or the sun, moon and stars. Amos is talking about how the Israelites disobeyed God many years later. Many years later, the Israelites put an idol of the false god Molech in a tent and worshipped him there. They worshipped a star that symbolized the false god Rephan. However, Stephen wants to remind the Sanhedrin that even in the wilderness, the Israelites began to stop following God. The Israelites' rejection of Moses, the laws from God that Moses told them about, and their rejection of God himself led them to worshipping false gods.

And God said, through the prophet Amos, that he would send them to exile in Babylon, a nearby country. God did just that many years before Stephen was standing in front of the Sanhedrin.

Stephen uses this history of God's people to show the Sanhedrin that the Israelites rejected God and his prophets throughout the course of their history. However, God gave the Israelites his messages everywhere they were, including during the time they wandered in the wilderness.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Acts 7:35-43 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

In the first scene: Stephen continues the story of when God sent Moses to Egypt to rescue his people. Moses performed wonders and signs in Egypt, at the Red Sea, and in the wilderness.

In the second scene: Moses is in the wilderness with the people. Moses tells the people that God will send them a prophet like him. Moses also received God's message to pass on to the people in the wilderness.

In the third scene: The Israelites refuse to obey Moses. They worship idols.

In the fourth scene: God turns away from the Israelites and turns them over to worship the sun, moon, and stars. He will allow them to experience the consequences of their disobedience.

The characters in this story include those telling and listening to the story:

- The high priest
- Stephen
- The Sanhedrin
- The false witnesses and others in the Sanhedrin

The characters in the story that Stephen tells:

- Moses
- People of Israel
- Angel of God who gave Moses God's messages, or living words from God
- Aaron, Moses' brother
- God

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

This passage is a continuation of the story Stephen is telling the Sanhedrin. Stephen has just finished telling the Sanhedrin how God called Moses to rescue his people from Egypt. Now Stephen starts this part of the story by saying, "This Moses is the same man the people rejected when they said, 'Who made you ruler and judge?'" However, God did later send Moses as their ruler! Stephen is showing again that the Israelites often rejected the very people God sent them to help them. Throughout this passage, the fact that it was Moses who led the Israelites out of Egypt is emphasized. The very man the people had rejected before has now become their savior! This passage makes that clear, and you may want to emphasize the name of Moses whenever it appears in this passage.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story about a famous hero in your history. How do you emphasize that this person is the one who did the famous things? Pause this audio here.

God sent Moses "by the hand of the angel who appeared to him." This is special language that means "with the help of" or "through the message of the angel who appeared to him." Then Stephen describes what happens. You may want to re-order the events in the order that they happened. First, Moses performed wonders and signs in Egypt, then he led them out of Egypt, and then he performed wonders and signs at both the Red Sea and in the wilderness for forty years.

The second scene describes the things that Moses told the people in the wilderness. Again, Moses' name is emphasized. Stephen is reminding the Sanhedrin that although the Israelites rejected Moses at first, Moses is now famous and highly respected because of these things he did. Firstly, Moses told the people that another prophet like himself will come to the people. Then, Moses was in the wilderness with the angel from God on Mount Sinai. The angel gave him God's commands, and Moses passed them on to the people. Stephen calls God's commands "living words." These words are not really alive, but they are important rules from God that are good for the people. When people follow these rules, they have real, complete life with God.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How will you describe "living words" in your translation? Pause this audio here.

But yet again the people refused to obey Moses. They rejected Moses and "their hearts turned back towards Egypt." This means that they thought about Egypt a lot and wanted to go back to Egypt. They would rather be slaves in Egypt than obey the laws from God that Moses brought to them! Stephen does not give a lot of details about the Israelites worshipping idols in the wilderness, but we can assume that Moses was away, and the Israelites did not know when he was coming back. They asked Aaron, who is Moses' brother, to build them an idol, or a statue that represents a divine being. They wanted to worship something, and they wanted a divine being to lead them through the wilderness. Aaron made an idol in the form of a calf. The people brought sacrifices to the calf idol and celebrated that they had made something themselves.

In the last scene, God turns away from the Israelites. This means that God allows the Israelites to experience the consequences of their sin. He allows them to worship the "heavenly hosts," which means the sun, the moon, and the stars. Stephen then stops telling the story and tells us a summary of how the Israelites started worshipping idols in the wilderness and continued even in the land God had promised them. Stephen quotes from the prophet Amos. The question, "Did you bring me sacrifices and offerings forty years in the wilderness, people of Israel?" expects the answer to be "no." Stephen believes that the Israelites brought sacrifices to other gods besides the one true creator God, the God of Israel. Stephen gives examples of the "heavenly hosts" that the Israelites eventually worshipped. The Israelites worshipped gods like Molech and Rephan hundreds of years after they were in the wilderness, but it all started with them making and then worshipping false gods in the wilderness before they even arrived in the promised land. Eventually, because the Israelites worshipped false gods, God sent them into exile in Babylon, with their enemies.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Acts 7:35-43 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

The characters in this passage include those telling and listening to the story:

- The high priest
- Stephen
- The Sanhedrin
- The false witnesses and others in the Sanhedrin

The characters in the story that Stephen tells:

- Moses
- People of Israel
- Angel of God who gave Moses God's messages, or living words from God
- Aaron, Moses' brother
- God

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Stephen continues his story. He says, "This is the same Moses you rejected and said, 'Who made you ruler and judge?'" But then God did send Moses to rule them and save them, through the angel that appeared to Moses in the burning bush. Moses performed wonders and signs in Egypt. Then Moses led the people out of Egypt. Then Moses performed wonders and signs at the Red Sea, and in the wilderness.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Sanhedrin, "How are you feeling?" You might hear things like, "Angry. Why does Stephen keep mentioning that the Israelites rejected Moses?" [!end] Continue the drama.

This Moses told the Israelites that God would send another prophet just like himself, from among the Israelites. Moses was with the people in the wilderness. The angel gave Moses living words from God, or messages from God, for the people. Moses passed them on to the people.

But the Israelites refused to obey Moses. They rejected him, and they wanted to go back to Egypt. They told Aaron, "Make us gods who will lead us. We don't even know where Moses is!" And they made an idol in the form of a calf. They brought sacrifices to the idol and celebrated in what they had made.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "How are you feeling?" You might hear things like, "I'm so sad that the people weren't patient. I'm always here for them. Why do they keep rejecting me?" [!end] Continue the drama.

God turned away from the Israelites. He allowed them to experience the consequences of their sin when they began worshipping the sun, the moon, and the stars. It's just like what the prophets wrote in their book: "Did you bring me sacrifices and offerings forty years in the wilderness, people of Israel? You have worshipped in the tabernacle, or tent, of the god Molech. You have worshipped the star of the god Rephan. You made idols to worship them. So I, God, will send you away to exile as far away as Babylon."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Stephen, "How are you feeling?" You might hear things like, "I'm satisfied to show the Sanhedrin how the Israelites have always rejected God's messengers," "I hope the Sanhedrin understands that Jesus can change the rebelliousness of the people!"

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Acts 7:35-43 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Stephen said that God sent Moses to rule and save his people, through the hand of the **angel**. "Hand of the angel" either means that the angel helped Moses, or that the angel told Moses the messages from God. Translate angel in the same way that you have in previous passages, and remember that angel is in the Master Glossary.

God sent Moses to the Israelites as their ruler and **savior**. Use the same word you have used before for savior, and remember that savior is in the Master Glossary.

Moses performed many **wonders** and **miraculous signs** in Egypt and in the **wilderness**. Wonders are like miracles in that they are not usual actions, and people are amazed when they see them. You could say that wonders are amazing events. Signs are events that happen in order to show something from God—they have special meaning. Signs is in the Master Glossary. Translate signs and wonders in the same way you have in previous passages. Moses was with the people in the **wilderness** or **desert**. The wilderness or desert in this passage refers to a barren area of land where there is not a lot of food and water.

*Stop here and discuss what word you will use for **wilderness**. Use the same word for wilderness that you have used in other parts of the Bible. For more information about wilderness, refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.*

Moses told the people that God would bring them or raise up for them a **prophet** from among the Israelites who would be like Moses. This prophet would be a savior. Translate prophet in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that prophet is in the Master Glossary.

When Moses was away, the Israelites asked Aaron to make them a **god**, or an **idol** in the form of a calf. A god in this case is a spirit being that people worship who is not the one true creator God. People often made idols or statues out of silver or gold to represent these false gods.

Stop here and discuss what word you will use for idols or gods. Idols and gods are in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

God asked the Israelites through the prophets, "Did you bring me **sacrifices** or **offerings** during those forty years in the wilderness, people of Israel?" Both sacrifices and offerings refer to animals that people would bring to gods and burn them in worship. People would bring sacrifices and offerings to give thanks to God or ask for forgiveness from God.

Stop here and discuss what word you will use for sacrifices and offerings. These words are in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

God says that the Israelites carried the god Molech in a **tent** or **tabernacle**. A tabernacle was a tent or canopy that people used to carry their idols under.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 7:35-43

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3441998 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Acts 7:44-53

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Acts 7:44-53 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Acts 7:44-53 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Acts 7:44-53 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Stephen continues to tell the Sanhedrin his story of Jewish history. Stephen has just explained how Moses led the people in the wilderness, performed wonders and signs, and gave the Israelites messages from God that would bring them complete life with God.

Now Stephen reminds the Sanhedrin that the Israelites had a special tent, called the tabernacle. People sometimes called this special tent the "tent of God's presence" or "Tent of Witness." God had instructed Moses in how to construct this tent, and the Israelites carried this tent with them wherever they went. The special tent is where the Israelites kept the written law that God had given Moses. In this way, they could always carry with them the messages from God. Then, 40 years later, the Israelites went into the promised land. Moses had died and Joshua was their new leader. Joshua led the Israelites in battle against the people who lived in the land. When they conquered the land, Joshua brought the Tent of Witness, or tabernacle, with them into the new land. This Tent of Witness was with the Israelites for many years, until the time of King David.

Stop here and show the team a photo of the tabernacle, or Tent of Witness. Pause this audio here.

King David was Israel's second king. People considered King David the greatest of all Israelite kings. God was pleased with David because of his actions. David asked God if he could build a more permanent building, or temple, for the God of Jacob, or the God that Jacob and his descendants worshipped. Stephen is pointing out that the Israelites built the temple for their God, the one that their ancestors have always worshipped.

However, King David's son King Solomon is the king who actually built the temple.

Stephen immediately explains that the Most High God does not live in temples that humans build. The Most High God is the name for God that Israelites used when they wanted to make it clear that they worshipped the one true creator God. Although the Israelites tried to build a place or home for the Most High God through building a temple, they could not build a place good enough for God. God himself said, through the prophet Isaiah, that heaven is God's throne. Heaven is the place where God lives. Earth is his footstool, which means that Earth is very small and not great compared to God himself. No human being can build God a house as great as heaven itself! God asks the questions, "Can you build me a temple as good as that? Didn't I make both heaven and earth?" God is showing that as the creator of heaven and earth, nothing we make can be adequate for God.

Stop here and discuss as a group: In your culture, what kinds of structures or temples do your people build for their traditional spirits or their gods? What kinds of things do people do in those places of worship? Pause this audio here.

Now Stephen stops his history of the Jewish people and he turns to the Sanhedrin. He directly addresses the Sanhedrin as "stiff-necked people," which means people who are very stubborn and will not change their ways. Then Stephen says that the Sanhedrin is "uncircumcised in their hearts and their ears." You will remember that God used circumcision as a sign on people's bodies of the strong promise, or covenant, he had made with his people. All the Israelite males were circumcised when they were 8 days old as a sign of being God's special people. But now Stephen is saying that these Israelites' hearts and ears are not circumcised! This seems impossible. Stephen is really saying that although they may be circumcised physically, their hearts or intentions are not with God. They are just like those non-Jews who do not follow God and are not circumcised. They are also just like their ancestors who did not follow God's Holy Spirit. Their ancestors persecuted the prophets-in fact Stephen asks, "Was there ever a prophet your ancestors did not persecute?" Stephen is implying that the Jewish leaders persecuted every prophet from God throughout their history. Stephen says that the Jewish leaders even persecuted the prophets who prophesied the coming of the Messiah, or the Savior. Stephen calls the Savior the "Righteous One." Stephen is saying that the savior is a servant who follows what God wants. Not only did they persecute the prophets who prophesied about the Savior, but they betrayed and murdered the Righteous One himself! Stephen seems surprised yet again that the Jewish leaders did these things-because angels themselves gave the Jewish leaders God's law! But still, the Jewish leaders did not obey it. They have no excuse.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Acts 7:44-53 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

In the first scene: God directed Moses in how to build the tabernacle, or Tent of Witness. Stephen's and the Sanhedrin's ancestors carried the Tent of Witness with them in the wilderness and when they came into the promised land. The Israelites had the Tent of Witness with them until the time of King David.

In the second scene: King David asked to build God a permanent home, but it was actually his son Solomon who built the permanent home, or the temple, for God.

In the third scene: Stephen tells the Sanhedrin that despite Solomon building the temple for God, God does not live in buildings that humans build. God is too great for human-made buildings.

In the fourth scene: Stephen says that the Jewish leaders, just like their ancestors, resist the Holy Spirit. They persecuted and killed the prophets, and they even murdered the Righteous One, or Jesus. They have no excuse, because angels gave them the law from God, but they did not obey it.

The characters in this passage include those telling and listening to the story:

- The high priest
- Stephen
- The Sanhedrin
- The false witnesses and others in the Sanhedrin

The characters in the story that Stephen tells:

- Moses
- Joshua
- Israelites, who are the ancestors
- King David
- King Solomon
- God
- Righteous One, or Savior

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Stephen continues his history of the Jewish people. Stephen has just explained how the Israelites turned away from God while they were in the wilderness, and they sometimes worshipped other, false, gods. Now he shows that these Israelites truly had everything they needed in order to follow God. They had the tabernacle, or the Tent of Witness, with them all the time in the wilderness. Moses followed God's instructions and made the tent exactly as God had told him to. The Israelites carried the Tent of Witness even into the land God had promised them. Stephen says that they took the land from nations that God "drove out" before them. This means that God enabled the Israelites to conquer the nations of people who lived in the land he had promised them. The Tent of Witness remained in the land, or in the land of Israel, until King David reigned. God showed grace, or undeserved kindness, to David. David asked if he could build a more permanent house, or temple, for God. Stephen does not tell us the rest of that story or why David did not build the temple. He just says that Solomon built the house, or temple, instead.

Stephen starts the next scene with a contrast word: "however." He wants to remind the Sanhedrin that despite the temple that Solomon built, The Most High, or God, does not live in houses that humans built. God is "Most High," or so great and majestic that heaven itself is his home, and earth could even be the place where he rests his feet! God then asks, through the prophet Isaiah, "What kind of house will you build for me? Where will my resting place be? Haven't I made all of heaven and earth?" God does not expect an answer to these questions. Instead, God is saying that no one can build a sufficient house for him. He made all of heaven and earth, and he alone can provide for his own needs.

In the next scene, Stephen stops talking about the history of the Israelites, or Jewish people. Now he talks directly to the Sanhedrin. He calls them "stiff-necked people." This does not mean that they cannot move their necks. This is picture language to say that the Israelites are stubborn people. They do not want to change their ways.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story about a really stubborn person. How do you talk about them? What words do you use to describe them? Pause this audio here.

Stephen then tells the members of the Sanhedrin that they are not circumcised, which is a Jewish ritual where people cut off the loose skin at the end of a man's penis. Again, this does not literally mean that they are not circumcised—this is picture language. Circumcision is a sign that the Israelites are following God and are a part of God's special people. But Stephen says that even though they may be physically circumcised, it does not mean that they are following God with their thoughts or intentions. Stephen says this by saying that their hearts and their ears are not circumcised, or that they are not following God. In fact, Stephen says that they directly resist the Holy Spirit. Their ancestors persecuted every prophet, even the ones who prophesied about the Savior, or Righteous One, who would come to save them. Now, the Israelites have actually murdered the Savior himself! This is surprising, because God has given the Israelites his law through angels! But they still disobeyed him!

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Acts 7:44–53 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

The characters in this passage include those telling and listening to the story:

- The high priest
- Stephen
- The Sanhedrin
- The false witnesses and others in the Sanhedrin

The characters in the story that Stephen tells:

- Moses
- Joshua
- Israelites, who are the ancestors
- King David
- King Solomon
- God
- Righteous One

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Stephen continues his story. He explains that the Israelites had the Tent of Witness with them the entire time they were in the wilderness. Moses made the Tent exactly as God had instructed him. The Israelites received the Tent, and they took it with them when Joshua was leading them to conquer and move into the land God had promised them. The Tent remained with them until the time of King David, many years later.

Pause the action.

God was pleased with David and gave him undeserved kindness. David asked if he could build a permanent home for God, the God of Jacob, the God of his ancestors. But David's son Solomon built the permanent home, the temple, for God.

But the Most High God does not live in houses that humans built. The prophet said, "Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool, or the place where I rest my feet. You can't build a house for me where I can truly rest. I've made everything in this earth myself."

Pause the action.

- Confused, didn't God tell us to build him a tent, and then a temple? Why doesn't he live with us like he said he would?
- Surprised! I've never heard the prophet's words explained in this way before. It makes some sense. [!end] Continue the action.

Now Stephen addresses the Sanhedrin directly. He says, "You stiff-necked, stubborn people! Your hearts and ears are uncircumcised! You are like those who don't follow God! You are like your ancestors! You resist the Holy Spirit! Your ancestors have persecuted every prophet, even the ones who predicted the coming of the Righteous One, the savior. And now you have betrayed and murdered the Righteous One. You don't obey the law, even though the angels gave it to you."

Pause the action.

- How dare he speak to us like that! He should not be speaking so disrespectfully to us! We are religious leaders!
- I'm offended! I've always followed God's laws!
- I'm a little frightened-is it true that I'm really stubborn and that I've killed the Righteous One?

Ask the person playing Stephen, "How are you feeling?" You might hear things like:

- I'm so angry that they have betrayed Jesus!
- I'm so surprised at how they still don't understand!

Ask the person playing God, "How are you feeling?" You might hear things like:

- I'm so frustrated and sad. For hundreds of years I gave my people many chances. I even sent them my laws through angels! Why do they keep resisting me?

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Acts 7:44–53 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The ancestors, or fathers, of the Israelites had the **tabernacle**, or **Tent of Witness**, with them throughout the time they were in the wilderness and when they conquered the people who lived in the land God had promised them. The tabernacle is the special tent that God instructed Moses to make. God gave Moses very specific measurements and instructions for what to put in the tent. The laws that God had given Moses were in the tent, and people made sacrifices there. In this passage it is called the "Tent of Witness" because it was the tent where the people kept the laws of God and it was their testimony that God was with them. Some translations use the word tabernacle, and some use the words Tent of Witness or tabernacle of Witness.

*Stop here and discuss as a group: How will you translate **tabernacle** or **Tent of Witness**? Tabernacle is in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.*

Use the same word for **wilderness** that you used in previous passages, and remember that wilderness is in the Master Glossary.

If needed, stop here and show the photo of the wilderness again. Pause this audio here.

Joshua led the people into the land, and God drove out the **nations**, or people groups, that had been living there. Use the same word for nations that you have used in previous passages, and remember that nations is in the Master Glossary.

Stephen said that the **Most High** does not live in houses that humans built. The Most High refers to God himself. This is a way to show that God is majestic and great—he is the greatest being in the universe.

The **prophet** says that God says **Heaven** is God's **throne**, or the place where God sits and rules as king. Heaven is the place where God lives. A throne is usually a special seat where kings sit when they judge. Throne may simply mean the place from which a king rules. Translate prophet, heaven and throne in the same way you have translated them in previous passages, and remember that prophet and heaven are in the Master Glossary.

God, or the **Lord**, asks what kind of house people can build for him, since he created everything. The Lord is a special title that people used for God to show him respect as the master and owner of everything. Use the same word you have used for Lord in previous passages, and remember that Lord is in the Master Glossary.

Stephen says that the Jewish people are stiff-necked, or stubborn. He says that their hearts and ears are **uncircumcised**. Stephen is not talking about literal circumcision, but about the state of the people's hearts. However, **circumcision** refers to the act of cutting off the loose skin at the end of a man's penis. Some translations simply say that the Jewish people are heathen or like those people who don't follow God. If you use the term circumcision, translate it in the same way you translated it in previous passages, and remember that circumcision is in the Master Glossary.

Stephen says that the Jewish people resist God's **Holy Spirit**. Translate Holy Spirit in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that Holy Spirit is in the Master Glossary.

Stephen says that the Jewish people even killed the prophets who predicted that the **Righteous One** was coming. The Righteous One refers to the servant who follows God. Most scholars understand this to mean the promised savior, Jesus. Remember that **righteous** refers to someone who is holy, in right standing or relationship with God, and has no guilt. Translate righteous in the same way you have before, and remember that righteous is in the Master Glossary.

The ancestors received the **law**, or law from God, from **angels**. Translate law, or God's law, and angels in the same way you have before and remember that law and angels are in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 7:44–53

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3357732 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (5572791 KB)

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Acts 7:54–8:3

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Acts 7:54–8:3 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Acts 7:54–8:3 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?

3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Acts 7:54–8:3 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passages, Stephen has just completed his speech before the Sanhedrin, the Jewish council. Stephen had been falsely accused and forced to go before the Jewish religious leaders to answer these accusations and explain his belief in Jesus. Stephen ended his speech by accusing the religious leaders. He tells them that their hearts are not for God, that they persecute God's prophets, and that they killed the promised Savior.

When the Sanhedrin heard Stephen's complaint against them, they were extremely angry and gnashed or ground their teeth at him. Gnashing of teeth is an expression or word picture, meaning that someone is extremely angry.

Stop here and discuss: What do people do in your culture that shows they are very angry? What special words or phrases do you have in your language that indicate different types of anger? Which one explains the most extreme kind of anger? Pause this audio here.

But Stephen remained calm because he was full of the Holy Spirit. God's Spirit was controlling Stephen so that Stephen was able to see into heaven, the place where God lives. Stephen saw the glory of God. Stephen did not see God but a bright and dazzling light that shone from God, showing that God is present. The glory of God is God's power and majesty. Stephen also saw Jesus standing at the right hand of God, the place of highest honor.

Stephen told the group what the Holy Spirit allowed him to see. No one else could see this, but it was so amazing and unexpected that Stephen had to tell everyone what he saw. Stephen said "Behold" or "Look" to get everyone's attention and let them know something unexpected was happening. Stephen told them, "I see the heavens opened," meaning God had opened an entrance or a door into heaven, enabling Stephen to see inside of heaven. Stephen said he saw the Son of Man, Jesus, standing at God's right hand, or the place of highest honor. You will remember from the Gospels that "Son of Man" was Jesus' favorite title for himself. "Son of Man" is a title that the Jews connected with the Promised Savior that God would send.

This is the only passage in the Bible that states that Jesus is standing at the right hand of God. Other references describe Jesus as sitting if there is any mention of Jesus' posture. Many scholars believe that here Jesus was standing in order to welcome Stephen to be with him in heaven.

Stephen's hearers would have understood that he was claiming that Jesus was God. They considered that he was blaspheming or insulting God. The people expressed their anger by shouting and covering their ears. They rushed at Stephen and dragged him outside the city so that they could kill him with stones. The Jewish law authorized people to kill a person who insulted God. They did that by throwing stones at that person.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What is the punishment for blasphemy in your culture? Tell a story of a time when you watched or were part of an angry crowd. Pause this audio here.

The people who threw stones at Stephen removed their outer robes or coats and put them at the feet of a young man named Saul. They probably removed their robes so they could throw the stones more easily. By placing their robes at the feet of Saul, they were asking Saul to guard the robes for them. Killing a person by throwing stones took some time. While they were still throwing stones, Stephen called out or prayed to Jesus, saying, "Lord Jesus, please receive my spirit." The spirit of a person is the part that continues to exist after they die. Stephen was asking Jesus to welcome him to be with Jesus. By calling Jesus "Lord," Stephen is calling Jesus his master as well as saying that Jesus is God.

At this point, Stephen kneels. We do not know if Stephen kneels because he is so badly injured that he can no longer stand or because he is praying. Stephen continues talking with Jesus, saying, "Lord, do not hold this sin

against them." Stephen is asking Jesus to forgive the people throwing stones at him. You will remember that this is similar to Jesus' words on the cross, "Father, forgive them." Then Stephen fell asleep, meaning he died.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are some expressions in your language that are used as a polite way to say that someone has died? Pause this audio here.

Saul approved of the killing of Stephen. The very same day that the angry crowd killed Stephen, they began to persecute or treat harshly the church in Jerusalem. The church in the New Testament always refers to the followers of Jesus, never a building. Many of the believers in the Jerusalem church left the city and went to areas of Judea and Samaria. However, all of the apostles remained in Jerusalem.

Stop here and look at a map of Judea and Samaria in relation to Jerusalem.

Discuss as a group: In what ways are followers of Jesus mistreated because of their belief in Jesus? How does the local church respond when there is persecution? How do the local authorities respond to religious persecution? Pause this audio here.

Devout or godly men buried Stephen and mourned deeply for him. These were men who tried to please God by obeying the Jewish laws. It is not clear if these men believed in Jesus. The Jewish custom was for people to bury the body of a person on the day he died. So, they probably buried Stephen on the day that the people killed him. The Jewish law allowed people to bury the executed person, but the law discouraged people publicly mourning the person. However, these godly men mourned deeply, meaning that they probably beat their chests and cried loudly to express how upset they were that Stephen had been killed. It also shows they knew Stephen was a good and innocent man.

Saul began going from house to house, trying to ravage or destroy the church. Saul went from one house to another in a planned way, looking for believers in Jesus. When he found them, he would drag, or forcefully remove, both men and women from their houses and have them put into prison. Saul did not do this alone but was a leader organizing the persecution.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Acts 7:54–8:3 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

In the first scene: The Sanhedrin, the religious council, is very angry at Stephen. Stephen sees Jesus standing in heaven and tells the crowd. They drag Stephen outside the city.

In the second scene: The crowd kills Stephen with stones. Stephen prays to Jesus, then dies.

In the third scene: Devout men bury Stephen. The Jewish people persecute the believers of Jerusalem. Many believers leave Jerusalem and scatter throughout Judea and Samaria.

In the fourth scene: Saul goes from house to house looking for followers of Jesus. He removes them from their homes and has them put in prison.

The characters in this passage are:

- Stephen
- Those who heard Stephen's speech, including:
 - The high priest
 - The Sanhedrin
 - The false witnesses
 - Jesus, the Son of Man
 - The Glory of God, which represents God himself
- Saul
- Devout men who buried Stephen
- Believers in the Jerusalem church
- The apostles

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It is important to remember that Stephen has just delivered a very long speech that summarizes the history of God and the Jewish people. At the end of his speech, he accuses the religious leaders. He tells them that their hearts are not for God, that they persecute God's prophets, and that they killed the promised Savior.

It is important to remember that the Sanhedrin were angry at Stephen because he accused them of murdering messengers from God, including the Messiah, and not keeping God's law.

Stephen told the group what the Holy Spirit allowed him to see. No one else could see this, but it was so amazing and unexpected that Stephen had to tell everyone what he saw. Stephen said "Behold" or "Look" to get everyone's attention and let them know something unexpected was happening. Stephen told them, "I see the heavens opened," meaning God had opened an entrance or a door into heaven, enabling Stephen to see inside of heaven.

It is important to remember what Stephen saw and said when he looked into heaven.

The Sanhedrin believed that Stephen was blaspheming or dishonoring God. They dragged Stephen out of the city so that they could kill Stephen with stones. In this context, it means that they grabbed him and forcibly took him out of the city of Jerusalem. They started throwing stones at Stephen in order to kill him. What they did appears to be the action of an angry mob rather than the result of the Sanhedrin formally deciding to punish him.

It is important to remember that the men who threw stones at Stephen removed their outer robes and placed them at the feet of Saul.

It is important to remember what Stephen said and did while the people were throwing stones at him. When Stephen died, Luke describes it as "falling asleep." Early believers in Jesus often used the idea of "sleep" to refer to "death." This symbolic expression is a word picture that shows that they believed that one day Jesus would bring them back to life.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How are you going to translate the idea that Stephen falling asleep really means that he died? People in your culture may also prefer to avoid speaking directly about death. However, what you use to translate this should clearly indicate that Stephen had died. Pause this audio here.

It is important to remember that on the very same day that Stephen died, two things happened. First, the angry crowd that killed Stephen began to persecute or treat harshly the church in Jerusalem. The church in the New Testament always refers to the followers of Jesus, never a building. Second, devout or godly men buried Stephen and mourned for him.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How will you translate the word "church" so that it means the group of Jesus' followers and not the building where believers meet? Pause this audio here.

It is important to remember that the passage says, "All of the believers were scattered throughout the region except for the apostles." This is most likely an exaggeration used to emphasize the severity of the persecution. Many of the believers in the Jerusalem church left the city and went to areas of Judea and Samaria. Saul participated in the persecution. He forcefully took followers of Jesus from their houses and put them in prison.

Stop here and look at a map of Judea and Samaria in relation to Jerusalem. Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Acts 7:54–8:3 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Stephen
- Those who heard Stephen's speech, including:
- The high priest
- The Sanhedrin
- The false witnesses
- Jesus, the Son of Man
- The Glory of God, which represents God himself
- Saul
- Devout men who buried Stephen
- Believers in the Jerusalem church
- The apostles

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out the Sanhedrin being very angry at Stephen and gnashing or grinding their teeth. Stephen is filled with the Holy Spirit. God allows Stephen to see into heaven. He sees Jesus standing in heaven at the right side of God. Stephen tells the crowd. The Sanhedrin shout and cover their ears. They rush at Stephen and drag him out of the city.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Sanhedrin, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Outraged. How dare he say these things about us!" or "Shocked! Who does he think he is talking to us like that? Doesn't he know who we are?!" or "He is saying blasphemous things about God. We need to do something about this troublemaker!" [!end] Continue the drama.

Act out the crowd removing their outer robes and placing them at the feet of Saul. The crowd then picks up stones and throws them at Stephen. Stephen prays to Jesus, then dies.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Saul, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Glad someone is doing something to stop Stephen. He has caused lots of trouble," or "Happy that I can serve these men by watching their coats. It's the least I can do to help them," or "Inspired. I need to come up with a plan to help stop these people from ruining our religion."

Ask the person playing Stephen, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Forgiveness. They don't know that they are really opposing the Messiah," or "Happy that I will be with Jesus in heaven soon," or "At peace. I have faithfully served Jesus and testified that He is the Messiah." [!end] Continue the drama.

Act out devout men burying Stephen. The Jewish people persecute the believers of Jerusalem. Many believers leave Jerusalem and scatter throughout Judea and Samaria. The apostles stay in Jerusalem.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the believers who leave Jerusalem, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Afraid. Why are people trying to hurt us because of what we believe?" or "Cautious. I know that God is with me, but He also wants me to be wise. I should avoid these angry people if possible," or "Optimistic. Maybe if I go to another place, I will find people who are willing to hear and believe about Jesus." [!end] Continue the drama.

Act out Saul going from house to house looking for followers of Jesus. He removes them from their homes and has them put in prison.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Acts 7:54–8:3 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The **Sanhedrin** were angry about the things Stephen had said. They gnashed or ground their teeth to show their anger. Use the same word or phrase for Sanhedrin as you used in previous passages. For more information on Sanhedrin, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stephen was filled or controlled by the **Holy Spirit**, the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit allowed Stephen to see into **heaven**, the place where God lives. Stephen saw the **glory** of God, the power and splendor of God. Use the same word or phrase for Holy Spirit, heaven, and glory as you used in previous passages. For more information on these words, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stephen also saw the **Son of Man**, or Jesus, standing at the **right hand** of God. The right hand is the place of highest honor and authority. You will remember from the Gospels that Son of Man was Jesus' favorite title for himself. This title Son of Man refers to the humanity of Jesus as well as Jesus' uniqueness of being fully God and fully human. The Son of Man is a title that Jews connected with the Messiah, or Promised Savior that God would send to help them.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Son of Man**. Look up Son of Man in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this phrase in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

The people who wanted to stone Stephen removed their **robes**, or outer garments. They placed them at the feet of Saul. Use the same word or phrase for robe as you used in previous passages. For more information on robes, refer to the Master Glossary.

As he was being stoned, Stephen prayed, "**Lord** Jesus, receive my **spirit**." Stephen is calling Jesus both God and Master. Use the same word or phrase for Lord as you used in previous passages. For more information on Lord, refer to the Master Glossary. Spirit in this instance refers to the spirit of a person. The spirit of a person is the part that continues to exist after they die.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **spirit**. Look up spirit of a person in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

The day that Stephen died, the Jews began **persecuting** the **church**. This means that others will hurt God's people or cause them to suffer. This kind of suffering could be physical suffering or suffering from not having money. Remember that "church" in the New Testament always refers to the followers of Jesus, never a building.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what words or phrases you will use for **persecution** and **church**. Look up persecution and church in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated these words in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

Because of the persecution, many believers left Jerusalem and went to many places in the region. However, the **apostles**, or the 12 closest followers of Jesus, remained in Jerusalem. Use the same word or phrase for apostles as you used in previous passages. For more information on apostles, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 7:54–8:3

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3777526 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 4](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (6360242 KB)

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Acts 8:4–25

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 8:4–25 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In the previous story, the Jewish leaders and other Jews who heard Stephen's speech were furious. They stoned Stephen and killed him. On the day that Stephen was killed, the people who killed him also began to persecute and kill the other believers. So most of the believers fled from Jerusalem to places in Judea and Samaria.

The believers who fled Jerusalem because they were attacked for believing in Jesus, went from place to place and continued to tell people the message about Jesus. Philip was one of the believers who escaped from Jerusalem. He went to the main city of Samaria, which was most likely the capital of the region also called Samaria. Samaria was a Roman province placed on the east coast of the Mediterranean Sea, north of Judea. Philip walked a distance of around 100 kilometers. It would have taken him about 2 to 3 days.

Stop here and show the translation team a map showing the journey Philip walked from Jerusalem to the main city of Samaria.

When he arrived in the city he was telling the people the good news that Jesus is the Messiah, the promised Saviour. The people who lived in Samaria were descendants of Jews who had married non-Jews. Because of that, Jews hated the people of Samaria, or Samaritans, and considered them to be "unclean," or unfit for service to God. However, like the Jews, the Samaritans were also expecting God to send the Messiah to them. Philip spoke to the people in the city and did supernatural signs, or unusual things that God enabled him to do that showed that God was working there. For example, Philip had commanded the unclean spirits, or demons to leave those people. Also, God enabled Philip to heal many paralytics and lame people. Paralytics and lame people are people who cannot move their bodies or parts of their bodies.

When the crowds in the city saw the supernatural signs he was doing and heard him speak about Jesus, they all listened carefully to what he was saying and were strongly affected by what he said and what he did. And the people in the city were glad in their hearts.

Stop here and talk with the translation team about a time when someone introduced a new great idea to your community. What did they do that made you listen and believe their idea?

At the time of Philip's visit to the Samaritan city, there was a man there called Simon. Simon practiced sorcery, or magic. Magic, or sorcery refers to the use of supernatural power over others through the help of evil spirits and not through the power of the creator God. Simon amazed people from Samaria when they saw what he did and heard what he said. He was boasting all the time that he was somebody great.

All the Samaritans, from the least to the most important, continually listened to Simon and he continually influenced them. They said, "This man is the power of God that is called Great." They probably thought of him as the most powerful and important representative or messenger of God. They carefully thought about what Simon said, because he had astonished them by performing magic for a long time.

Stop here and tell a story about how you got deceived by someone who was claiming they were someone special or great, but they were not.

But when Philip told them the good news about the kingdom of God and Jesus being the Messiah, the Samaritans believed him and Philip baptised them, both men and women. Baptism is a Christian ritual, which involves a believer immersing a new believer in water. Baptism is a public demonstration of someone's commitment to follow Jesus as his master. It is a symbol of Jesus' burial and resurrection. It shows that when we begin to follow Jesus we die to our old life, or stop doing the bad things we did before. Then we live a new life—we start doing things that Jesus wants us to do!

Simon himself also believed what Philip said about Jesus and Philip baptised him. Simon began to accompany Philip wherever he went. Simon saw all the great signs and miracles, which Philip performed through the power of God all the time. Seeing those signs continually amazed him. Signs and miracles are similar things and refer to powerful actions that only God can do, and make people be in awe of God. A sign means a miracle that happens in order to show people something important.

Stop here and tell a story about how somebody from your people group who used to practice magic or who was a witch doctor turned away from their sin when they believed in Jesus as their saviour.

The twelve apostles in Jerusalem heard that the Samaritan people had believed the message from God about Jesus, which Philip had been preaching. The apostles are the original group of Jesus' followers that Jesus chose to be his representatives. They were helping lead the church in Jerusalem at the time. In response to this report, the apostles decided to send two of them, Peter and John, to go to the new believers in the province of Samaria. When they arrived, Peter and John prayed specifically that the Holy Spirit, or God's Spirit, would come to be with those believers. The Holy Spirit is God's Spirit, which he gives to people in order to equip them with his presence, wisdom, authority, and power. God had promised Israel through several of his messengers that God would place his Spirit within all believers and pour out his Spirit in powerful displays. When someone receives the Holy Spirit, God may give them a gift such as being able to speak in a different language or being able to give messages from God to others.

Up to this point the Holy Spirit had not yet come on any of the Samaritans. Philip or others had baptised the Samaritans in the name of the Lord Jesus, but they had not received the Holy Spirit. The delay of the Holy Spirit falling on the Samaritans does not mean that Philip's teaching about Jesus was incomplete. It was God's plan to involve leaders of the Jewish believers, when he sent the Holy Spirit to be with the Samaritan believers. In this

way God made it clear that he had accepted Samaritan believers as his people just like he had accepted Jews who believed in Jesus.

Then Peter and John placed their hands on the many Samaritan believers and the Holy Spirit fell on them. Simon observed that God had given the Holy Spirit to the believers when the apostles placed their hands on them. He might have heard the believers praise God, speak in a new tongue or tell others a message from God.

And Simon asked Peter and John to make him be able to give the Holy Spirit to anyone he lays his hands on and he offered to pay them money for that. He wanted to be able to give the Holy Spirit to anyone regardless if that person believed in Jesus as his or her Saviour.

Peter answered Simon, "May you and your money go to hell, because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money!" Peter expected God to severely judge Simon, because he thought that he could buy some kind of power that he called the Holy Spirit. The words "the gift of God" refer to the Holy Spirit himself whom God gives only to those who believe in his Son. Peter told Simon that he could not possibly work along with them and God would not allow him to have anything to do with granting his Spirit to other people. The reason for it was that Simon was thinking and acting totally wrongly about God and his Spirit. Peter recognised that Simon was very bitter with envy, or extremely envious of the two apostles and because of his sin he was tied like a prisoner. So he told Simon that he must repent, or stop thinking and scheming wickedly, as he had been doing. And he must pray that God would forgive him.

In response, Simon pleaded with both Peter and John to pray for him to the Lord God that God would not condemn him to hell because of the terrible thing he had proposed.

When Peter and John had solemnly declared what they knew personally about Jesus and told the people what God wanted them to say about the Lord Jesus, they set off on their journey back for Jerusalem. On their way they were sharing the good news about Jesus in many Samaritan villages.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has ten scenes.

First scene: The believers who flee Jerusalem because of the persecution continue to tell people the message about Jesus.

Second scene: Philip, one of the believers, goes to the main city of Samaria and tells people the good news about Jesus. God confirms Philip's message by enabling him to do supernatural signs like casting out demons out of people and healing paralytics and cripples.

Third scene: When the crowds in the city hear Philip speak about Jesus and see the supernatural signs he performs they open their ears to his message and are greatly impacted and are very glad in their hearts.

Fourth scene: Simon is introduced to the story. Simon lives in the city. He used to practice sorcery, or magic. He amazed the people of Samaria with what he did and said. He was boasting all the time of being someone great. All the people paid attention to him and thought he was the power of God.

Fifth scene: The people in the city believe the good news that Philip preached about the kingdom of God and Jesus being the Messiah and Philip baptises them.

Sixth scene: Simon believes the good news about Jesus and Philip baptises him. Simon continues to follow Philip and witnesses the great miracles Philip performs.

Seventh scene: The twelve apostles in Jerusalem hear about people in Samaria believing in the good news about Jesus and they send Peter and John to them. Peter and John pray for the believers and put their hands on them and God gives the believers the Holy Spirit.

Eighth scene: Simon sees that the Holy Spirit comes on people when the apostles put their hands on them and he asks Peter and John to make him able to give the Holy Spirit to anyone he lays his hands on. He offers them money for it.

Ninth scene: Peter severely rebukes Simon for thinking that he could buy the gift of God with money. He tells Simon he can't work along with them because his heart is not right before God. Peter tells Simon that he must repent from his wrong actions and pray that God would forgive him. Simon pleads with Peter and John to pray for him to the Lord God.

Tenth scene: After Peter and John have finished testifying about Jesus and told people everything that God wanted them to, they start their journey back to Jerusalem. They share the good news about Jesus in Samaritan villages on their way back.

The characters in this story include:

- Believers from Jerusalem who fled persecution
- Philip, one of the believers from Jerusalem
- Crowds, or people in the main city of Samaria who Philip spoke to
- Unclean spirits who came out of people
- Paralyzed and crippled people who Philip healed
- Simon
- The twelve apostles in Jerusalem
- Apostles Peter and John
- The Holy Spirit, or God's Spirit
- People in Samaritan villages who Peter and John spoke to about the good news about Jesus.

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the actions in it.

The believers who fled Jerusalem because of the persecution went from town to town telling people the good news about Jesus.

Philip, who was one of the leaders chosen by the apostles who escaped from Jerusalem, went to the main city of Samaria. Samaria was a Roman province placed on the east coast of the Mediterranean Sea, north of Judea. Philip walked a distance of around 100 kilometers. It would have taken him about 2 to 3 days. The city he went to was most likely the capital of Samaria also called Samaria, or in Roman times, Sebaste. Philip was telling the people there the good news about Jesus being the Messiah, the promised Saviour. The people who lived there were the descendants of Jews who married non-Jews. The Jews considered them as unclean. It is important to note that Samaria was the first place where the believers shared the good news about Jesus with non-Jews after Jesus went to heaven.

Stop here and show the translation team a map showing the journey Philip walked from Jerusalem to the main city of Samaria.

Philip performed many signs and miracles including casting demons out of people and healing the paralyzed and the cripples. It is important to note that the original Bible text indicates that Philip was performing the supernatural signs very often. It is important to note that God had given him the ability to perform those signs. When the crowds in the city saw the supernatural signs he was doing and heard what he said about Jesus being the Messiah, they all with one mind paid close attention to his message. It is important to know that the phrase "the crowds" means that a great many people in the city listened to Philip.

It is important to know that when the people witnessed all the miraculous signs and heard the message about Jesus being their saviour, they all were very happy in their hearts. They would have been overjoyed to see their

family and friends being set free. Physical problems were healed and unclean spirits were cast out. They would also have been so happy to know that their sins can now be forgiven and they can have eternal life because of Jesus dying and rising from death.

At the time when Philip was in the city, there was a man there called Simon. Simon practiced sorcery, or magic. He had amazed the people of the province of Samaria with the signs he performed for a long time. He spoke of himself as somebody great and all people from the least to the greatest really listened to him and said, "This man is the power of God that is called Great!" It is important to note that Simon practiced sorcery with the power of evil spirits and not through the power of the creator God.

But when the Samaritans believed Philip's message about the kingdom of God and the good news about Jesus, Philip baptised them. The word "but" indicates that when they believed in the name of Jesus they stopped following Simon. Then Simon himself believed and Philip baptised him. Baptism is a ritual, which at that time involved a believer fully immersing another believer in water as a symbol of Jesus' death and resurrection. The Greek word for baptism means to put inside or under water. People performed baptisms in ritual purification pools in cities, or in a river or a lake or the sea.

The apostles in Jerusalem heard that the Samaritan people had believed the message from God about Jesus, which Philip had been preaching. Possibly Philip sent a message with someone and reported to the apostles that people in Samaria had believed in Jesus. So the apostles sent Peter and John to the Samaritan city where Philip was. It is important to note that Peter and John knew that the Holy Spirit had not come on the Samaritan believers yet. Some Bible versions say that the Holy Spirit had not "fallen" on them yet. "Fallen" is the exact translation of the Greek text and it means to come on or into someone. The apostles may have known that the Holy Spirit had not fallen on the believers yet from a possible report sent to the apostles in Jerusalem, or they may have realized this from speaking to Philip and the believers. Therefore they prayed to God to send the Holy Spirit. Then they laid their hands on the believers and the Holy Spirit came on them. The apostles would have probably put their hands on the believers' heads. It would have taken a long time, as there were only two apostles and many believers.

When Simon saw that the Holy Spirit came on the believers when the apostles laid their hands on people, he offered them money to buy this power. He wanted to be able to give the Holy Spirit to anyone regardless whether they were a believer or not. It is important to note that Simon most likely had not fully turned away from his sin in the first place and he was probably craving his previous reputation of being "the Great Power."

Peter strongly rebuked Simon for thinking that he could obtain the gift of God by paying money. He said both Simon and his money deserved to go to hell. He told Simon that he could not participate in their work because his heart was not right before God. Peter told him to repent of his wicked behaviour and pray to the Lord God, that, if it was possible, he would forgive Simon what he intended to do.

Simon asked both Peter and John to pray for him, that God would not punish him for offering to pay for the Holy Spirit.

When Peter and John had finished telling the Samaritans the things they knew about Jesus and explaining God's message to them, they returned to Jerusalem. It is important to note that seeing so many Samaritans believe in Jesus encouraged them and on the way back they shared the good news about Jesus in many villages.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has ten scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Believers from Jerusalem who fled persecution
- Philip, one of the believers from Jerusalem
- Crowds, or people in the main city of Samaria who Philip spoke to
- Unclean or evil spirits who came out of people
- Paralyzed and crippled people who Philip healed
- Simon
- The twelve apostles in Jerusalem
- Apostles Peter and John
- The Holy Spirit, or God's Spirit
- People in Samaritan villages who Peter and John spoke to about the good news about Jesus.

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The believers who fled Jerusalem preached the good news about Jesus wherever they went.

Stop the action.

Philip, who was one of the believers, went to the main city in Samaria and told the people there about Jesus being the Messiah. God enabled Philip to perform many signs. He cast out many unclean spirits out of the people and healed many paralytics and lame people. When the crowds heard him speak and saw the miraculous signs he did, they all listened to him intently. And the people had very glad hearts.

Stop the action.

A man named Simon was in the city and he had been practicing sorcery for many years. He amazed the people, claiming that he was someone great. Everyone, from the least to the greatest, often spoke of him as the Great One-the Power of God. They listened to him closely because for a long time he astounded them with his magic.

Stop the action.

But now the people believed Philip's message of good news concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ. As a result Philip baptized many men and women. And Simon also believed and Philip baptized him. He began following Philip wherever he went and the signs and great miracles that Philip performed amazed him.

Stop the action.

When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that the people of Samaria had accepted God's message, they sent Peter and John there. As soon as they arrived, they prayed for these new believers to receive the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them, for they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then Peter and John laid their hands upon these believers, and they received the Holy Spirit.

Stop the action.

When Simon saw that the Spirit was given when the apostles laid their hands on people, he offered them money to buy this power. "Let me have this power, too," he exclaimed, "so that when I lay my hands on people, they will receive the Holy Spirit!"

But Peter replied, "May your money be destroyed with you for thinking God's gift can be bought! You can have no part in this, for your heart is not right with God. Repent of your wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive your evil thoughts, for I can see that you are full of bitter jealousy and are held captive by sin."

Simon pleaded with them to pray to the Lord God for him, so "that these terrible things you've said won't happen to me!"

Stop the action.

After testifying and preaching the word of the Lord in Samaria, Peter and John returned to Jerusalem. And they stopped in many Samaritan villages along the way to preach the good news.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Philip went down to the city of Samaria and proclaimed to them the **Christ**. Remember to use the same word you have used previously for Christ. A full definition of Christ can be found in the Master Glossary.

For **unclean spirits**, crying with a loud voice, came out of many who had them. Remember to use the same words you have used previously for unclean spirit. A full definition of unclean spirit can be found in the Master Glossary.

But when they believed Philip as he preached good news about the **kingdom of God** and the name of Jesus Christ, they were **baptised**, both men and women.

Remember to use the same word you have used previously for **kingdom of God**. A full definition of kingdom of God can be found in the Master Glossary.

Baptism is a once for all ceremony when a new believer makes a public demonstration of his commitment to Jesus and his union with him. Baptism, which means to put inside or under water, is a symbol of Jesus' burial and resurrection, and our death to our old life and resurrection into our new life with Jesus. Remember to use the same word you have used previously for baptised. A full definition of baptism can be found in the Master Glossary.

And seeing **signs** and great **miracles** performed, he was amazed. These words refer to powerful actions that only God can do, and make people be in awe of God. Miracles, signs, and wonders all refer to similar things. A sign means a miracle that happens in order to show people something important. Remember to use the same words you have used previously for signs and miracles. A full definition of signs and miracles can be found in the Master Glossary.

Now when the **apostles** at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John. The apostles are the original group of Jesus' followers chosen by him as his representatives. They were helping lead the church in Jerusalem at the time of this story. Remember to use the same word you have used previously for apostles. A full definition of apostles can be found in the Master Glossary.

The apostles sent to them Peter and John, who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the **Holy Spirit**. Remember to use the same words you have used previously for Holy Spirit. A full definition of Holy Spirit can be found in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 8:4–25

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (5691228 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Acts 8:26–40

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 8:26–40 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?

5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In the previous story Philip went to the main city in Samaria and shared the good news about Jesus with many people. The people there were amazed by what he said and by the miracles he performed through the power of God. Many Samaritans believed in Jesus as their saviour and Philip baptised them. Two apostles, Peter and John, came from Jerusalem and God gave the believers the Holy Spirit when the apostles put their hands on them.

One day when Philip was in the main city of Samaria, an angel of the Lord, or a spirit being, which the Lord God sent with a message, commanded Philip, "Get up and keep going toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." This road, which started in Jerusalem was about 100 kilometers long. Philip would have walked 100 kilometers from the Samaritan capital to Jerusalem first and then he would join the road described by the angel. The whole road, or possibly just the part of it near Gaza, was in the desert.

Stop here and show the translation team a map showing Philip's journey from Samaria to the desert road leading from Jerusalem to Gaza.

So Philip responded promptly to what the angel asked him to do, he rose up and set off immediately. As he walked on the desert road, Philip saw an Ethiopian man who was a eunuch and a court official in charge of the entire treasury, or all the money of the kingdom of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. Ethiopia was a kingdom located in the upper Nile Valley in northern Africa in the present day country of Sudan. The word eunuch usually means someone who is unable to have normal sexual relations because they have been sterilized. In the Old Testament, people used the word eunuch to mean a high political or military official. Rulers often employed important officials who were eunuchs to protect the women in their household. Candace was the official title of the queens, or women rulers of Ethiopia. The Ethiopian was an important official authorized to command people. He had a very important job of looking after the gold and silver, which belonged to the queen.

Stop here and show the translation team a map showing the kingdom of Ethiopia.

The official was probably a non-Jew who believed in the creator God. He had come to Jerusalem to show his respect and reverence for God. According to the Jewish law eunuchs were not able to become fully Jewish men. However, God himself welcomed and blessed those eunuchs who obeyed the laws of his special agreement with God's people, Israel. The Ethiopian was on his way home and was sitting in his chariot, a two-wheeled vehicle pulled by two horses, oxen or wild donkeys. Such an important official would also have a driver sitting at the front of the chariot guiding the animals that were pulling it. The Ethiopian kingdom was about 2,900 kilometers away from Jerusalem. It would have taken the official between 45 to 60 days to get from Ethiopia to Jerusalem in a chariot. He had to travel the same distance to go back to Ethiopia.

Stop here and show the translation team a picture of a chariot.

Stop here and discuss if people in your culture travel a long distance to worship a god. If so, where do they go? What do they do when they get there?

The official was reading aloud words that the Jewish prophet Isaiah wrote. He was most likely reading the Scripture from a scroll. The Holy Spirit spoke to Philip and commanded him to go over to the official's chariot. The command, "Go over and join this chariot," really means to get close and stay close to the official, not just his chariot. God's Spirit commanded Philip to associate with a non-Jewish person, which was contrary to the custom of the Jews.

Stop here and show the translation team a picture of a scroll of Jewish Scripture.

So Philip ran over to the chariot and, as he kept close to it, he heard the official reading from the book that Isaiah the prophet had written. So Philip asked the official if he understood what he was reading. Philip was aware that the official knew how to read and that he understood the individual words he was reading. However, Philip undoubtedly realized that the official probably did not understand the meaning of what he was reading.

The Ethiopian answered, "How can I, unless someone explains it to me?" This was a rhetorical question, or a question to which the man did not expect an answer. He was really saying, "No! I cannot possibly understand it." He meant that he needed a teacher to explain the prophecy from Isaiah to him. Then he said to Philip, "Please come up and ride in the carriage with me."

The man was reading a passage of Scripture, which the prophet Isaiah wrote around 700 years before the birth of Jesus. It was a prophecy, or foretelling of future events, which God revealed to Isaiah. This prophecy is about God's Suffering Servant, an expression that Isaiah used to refer to the Messiah or Promised Saviour. Isaiah wrote it as if the events he described already happened.

This is what the Ethiopian was reading: "People led him to be killed like a sheep." A sheep is a woolly animal. Most scholars think this means that people would lead the Messiah to a place where they would kill him. It is just like people leading a sheep to a place where they would kill it. "And as a lamb before the shearer is silent, so he did not open his mouth." Here Isaiah compared the Messiah to a lamb, or young sheep, that quietly submits to the person who cuts off its wool. Isaiah foretold that, similarly, the Messiah would quietly submit to those who would cause him to suffer and die. He would not struggle to get away from his enemies and he would not speak out against them.

Stop here and show the translation team a video and a photo showing a sheep with lambs.

The Scripture goes on to say, "People humiliated him, and people would not allow anyone to judge him fairly." The word "humiliated" means that people would insult and mistreat the Messiah when they would bring him to those who would judge him.

"Who can speak of his descendants? That is because people have taken his life away from this earth." This is a rhetorical question, which does not need an answer. It means that no one will be able to tell about his children and their children. That's because people would violently kill the Messiah, rather than God taking him up to heaven.

The Ethiopian official asked Philip, "Was the prophet talking about himself or was he talking about someone else?" The Ethiopian did not know that this passage referred to the Messiah. And Philip began to speak to the official. He started by explaining the meaning of the passage from Isaiah. He would have made it clear that it referred to the Messiah, not to the prophet. Then he would have told the official that Jesus was the Messiah. Philip most likely used many other Scripture passages in addition to the one in Isaiah. Philip would have made it very clear to the official that Jesus fulfilled the prophecies from the Scriptures about the Messiah. He also would have told the official what he needed to do as a result of knowing this—repent of his sins, trust in Jesus as his Saviour, and have someone baptise him.

As they were continuing to travel along the road in the official's chariot, they came to a place where there was some water near the road. Most likely the water was in the form of a pond, possibly in a dry river channel, because they were traveling through a very dry area. And the official said to Philip, "Is there any reason why you should not baptise me now?" Baptism is a ritual, which at that time involved a believer fully immersing another believer in water as a symbol of Jesus' death and resurrection. The Greek word for baptism means to put inside or under water. People performed baptisms in ritual purification pools in cities, or in a river, or a lake, or the sea.

The following verse is not in the earliest and best Greek manuscripts. Therefore it is not included in many Bible translations. However, it records a conversation, which could have happened and is consistent with the rest of Acts. The verse reads as follows: "And Philip said, 'If you believe with all your heart in Jesus, you may.' And the official answered, 'I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.'"

And the official commanded the chariot driver to cause the horses or oxen pulling it to stop. This implies that Philip agreed to baptise him, because he knew that the official had become a true believer in Jesus. And both Philip and the Ethiopian went down and got into the water and Philip baptised him. When they both walked up out of the water, God's Spirit suddenly took Philip away. The Holy Spirit actually transported Philip to another place. The context implies that Philip did not resist the Spirit carrying him away. He completed his mission on the desert road and God took Philip quickly and effortlessly to the next place where he wanted him to work. And the official did not see Philip again. In spite of that the official was very happy as he continued to travel

back to Ethiopia. Joy filled his heart because he had come to know Jesus as his Lord and Saviour and Jesus forgave him his sins.

After the Holy Spirit miraculously transported him, Philip realised that he was in Azotus, which is the Greek name for the city of Ashdod. Azotus was about 40 kilometers north of Gaza on the Mediterranean Sea. Philip did not stay in Azotus, but walked up north until he reached Caesarea. Caesarea was the capital of Israel at that time and was about 88 kilometers away from Azotus. Philip continually shared the good news about Jesus with people in all the towns he passed. It would have taken Philip about 4 to 5 days to walk from Azotus to Caesarea. Philip did not stop preaching the gospel when he arrived in Caesarea. The city probably became his main base and hometown, as there is a reference to him living there later on in Acts.

Stop here and show the translation team a map showing Philip's journey from Azotus to Caesarea.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has eight scenes.

First scene: An angel speaks to Philip who was in Samaria and instructs him to immediately set off and travel on a desert road leading from Jerusalem to Gaza.

Second scene: Philip leaves straight away and comes across an important Ethiopian official, a treasurer of the queen of the Ethiopians. He is traveling in a chariot from Jerusalem where he went to worship the Jewish God, back to Ethiopia.

Third scene: The official is reading out loud the words of the Jewish prophet Isaiah. The Scripture is talking about people leading the Messiah to be killed like a sheep. He does not defend himself, people judge him unfairly, and he dies. The Holy Spirit tells Philip to approach the chariot and stay close by. So Philip runs up to the chariot and hears what the official is reading.

Fourth scene: Philip asks the official if he understands what he is reading. The official says that he can't understand the Scriptures unless someone explains them to him. He invites Philip to come and travel with him in the chariot. The official asks Philip if the Scriptures were talking about Isaiah or someone else.

Fifth scene: Philip explains the Scriptures to the official and tells him the good news about Jesus being the Messiah whom Isaiah is talking about.

Sixth scene: As they come across a pool of water near the road the Ethiopian asks if Philip can baptise him. The official commands the chariot driver to cause the animals pulling it to stop. Philip and the official walk down to the water and Philip baptises him.

Seventh scene: When they come out of the water the Holy Spirit takes Philip away and the official continues on his way back to Ethiopia. He is rejoicing because he came to know and believe in Jesus as his Saviour.

Eighth scene: Philip realises that the Holy Spirit took him to the town of Azotus. Philip starts his journey to Caesarea. He shares the good news about Jesus with people in all the towns he passes along the way.

The characters in this story include:

- The angel of the Lord
- Philip
- The Ethiopian official
- The Holy Spirit

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip and commanded him to get up immediately and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza. Note the word "now" in this sentence. It does not show time here, but it is an introductory word, which shows that a new story is starting.

So Philip sets off right away. It is important to note that Philip listened to the angel and obeyed his command immediately. He knew that the command came from God himself and that the angel was God's messenger. As he was still in Samaria, he probably would have walked 100 kilometers south to reach Jerusalem. This journey would have taken him about 2 or 3 days walking.

Stop here and show the translation team a map showing Philip's journey from Samaria to the desert road leading from Jerusalem to Gaza.

Then, some time after starting on the road leading from Jerusalem to Gaza, he saw an Ethiopian official traveling in a chariot. He was a eunuch, who was in charge of the whole treasury of Candace, the queen of the Ethiopians. The official was probably a non-Jew who believed in the creator God. He had come to Jerusalem to show his respect and reverence for God. The Ethiopian was on his way home and was sitting in his chariot, a two-wheeled vehicle pulled by two horses, oxen or wild donkeys. Such an important official would also have a driver sitting at the front of the chariot guiding the animals that were pulling it. It is important to note that the trip to Jerusalem to worship God must have been very important to the official. The Ethiopian kingdom was about 2,900 kilometers away from Jerusalem. It would have taken the official between 45 to 60 days to get from Ethiopia to Jerusalem in a chariot. He had to travel the same distance back to Ethiopia.

Stop here and show the translation team a map showing the kingdom of Ethiopia.

Stop here and show the translation team a picture of a chariot.

The official was reading the Scriptures which prophet Isaiah wrote. He was most likely reading the Scripture from a scroll. We know that the official was reading aloud because Philip heard him. In those days people mostly read aloud rather than silently.

Stop here and show the translation team a picture of a scroll of Jewish Scripture.

The Holy Spirit spoke to Philip and commanded him to go over to the official's chariot. Even though the Bible text does not say Holy Spirit, but Spirit, it is clear that Luke, the writer of Acts, talks about the Holy Spirit here. God wanted Philip to get close and stay close to the official, not just his chariot. God's Spirit commanded Philip to associate with a non-Jewish person, which was contrary to the custom of the Jews.

It is important to note that God uses both an angel and the Holy Spirit to instruct Philip what to do in this story.

So Philip ran over to the chariot and, as he kept close to it, he heard the official reading from the book that Isaiah the prophet had written. So Philip asked the official if he understood what he was reading. Philip undoubtedly realized that the official probably did not understand the meaning of the text.

The Ethiopian answered, "How can I, unless someone explains it to me?" This was a rhetorical question, or a question to which the man did not expect an answer. He was really saying, "No! I cannot possibly understand it." He meant that he needed a teacher to explain the prophecy from Isaiah to him. Then he invited Philip to come up and ride in the carriage with him.

The man was reading a passage of Scripture, which was a prophecy, or foretelling of future events, which God revealed to Isaiah around 700 years before the birth of the Messiah. This prophecy is about God's Suffering Servant, an expression that Isaiah used to refer to the Messiah. Isaiah wrote it as if the events he described already happened. The scripture is talking about people leading a man to be killed like a sheep. He does not defend himself, people judge him unfairly, and he dies.

This is what the Ethiopian was reading: "People led him to be killed like a sheep. And as a lamb before the shearer is silent, so he did not open his mouth. People humiliated him, and people would not allow anyone to judge him fairly. Who can speak of his descendants? That is because people have taken his life away from this earth."

Stop here and show the translation team a video and a photo showing a sheep with lambs.

The official asked Philip whether Isaiah was talking about himself or someone else.

And Philip began to speak to the official. He started by explaining the meaning of the passage from Isaiah. He would have made it clear that it referred to the Messiah, not to the prophet. Then he would have told the official that Jesus was the Messiah. Philip most likely used many other Scripture passages in addition to the one in Isaiah. Philip would have made it very clear to the official that Jesus fulfilled the prophecies from the Scriptures about the Messiah. He also would have told the official what he needed to do as a result of knowing this—repent of his sins, trust in Jesus as his Saviour, and have someone baptise him.

Stop here and tell a story about a situation when you were reading something important you did not understand and you had to ask someone to explain it to you. Did your new understanding of the text have an impact on your actions? If so, what did you do differently?

And as they came across some water near the road the Ethiopian said, "See, here is water! What prevents me from having you baptise me?" It is important to understand that this is evidence that the official accepted Philip's teaching, trusted Jesus as his saviour and was eager to obey God's command about baptism. The official commanded the chariot driver to cause the animals pulling it to stop. Philip and the official walked down to the water and Philip baptised him. Baptism is a ritual, which at that time involved a believer fully immersing another believer in water as a symbol of Jesus' death and resurrection. The Greek word for baptism means to put inside or under water. The text in Greek also indicates that there was some depth to the water where Philip baptised the official.

When they came out of the water, the Holy Spirit took Philip away. It is important to know that it was a totally supernatural event, something that neither Philip nor the Ethiopian experienced before. After that, the official continued on his way back home rejoicing because he came to believe in Jesus as his saviour.

However, Philip realized that he was in Azotus, which was about 40 kilometers north of Gaza on the Mediterranean Sea. Philip did not stay in Azotus, but walked up north until he reached Caesarea, which was about 88 kilometers away from Azotus. Philip continually shared the good news about Jesus with people in all the towns he passed. It would have taken Philip about 4 to 5 days to walk from Azotus to Caesarea.

Stop here and show the translation team a map showing Philip's journey from Azotus to Caesarea.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has eight scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- The angel of the Lord
- Philip
- The Ethiopian official
- The Holy Spirit

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

One day when Philip was in the main city of Samaria, an angel of the Lord commanded Philip to get up and leave and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.

Stop the action.

So Philip responded promptly to what the angel asked him to do. He rose up and set off immediately. As he walked on the desert road from Jerusalem to Gaza, Philip saw an Ethiopian man who was a eunuch and a court official, in charge of the entire treasury, or all the money of the kingdom of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. He had come to Jerusalem to worship God. The Ethiopian was on his way home and was sitting in his chariot. The official was reading aloud words that the Jewish prophet Isaiah wrote.

The Holy Spirit spoke to Philip and commanded him to go over to the official's chariot and stay close to the official. So Philip ran over to the chariot and, as he kept close to it, he heard the official reading from the book that Isaiah the prophet had written. So Philip asked the official if he understood what he was reading.

The Ethiopian answered, "How can I, unless someone explains it to me?" Then he invited Philip to come up and ride in the carriage with him.

This is what the Ethiopian was reading: "People led him, to be killed like a sheep. And as a lamb before the shearer is silent, so he did not open his mouth. People humiliated him, and people would not allow anyone to judge him fairly. Who can speak of his descendants? That is because people have taken his life away from this earth."

The official asked Philip whether the prophet was talking about himself or whether he was talking about someone else. And Philip began to speak to the official and explained to him from the Scriptures the good news about Jesus being the Messiah.

Stop the action.

As they were continuing to travel along the road in the official's chariot, they came to a place where there was some water near the road. And the official asked Philip if he could baptise him.

And the official commanded the chariot driver to cause the horses or oxen pulling it to stop. And both Philip and the Ethiopian went down and got into the water and Philip baptised him.

Stop the action.

When they both walked up out of the water, God's Spirit suddenly took Philip away. And the official did not see Philip again. In spite of that, the official was very happy in his heart as he continued to travel back to Ethiopia.

However, Philip realized that he was in Azotus. Philip did not stay there, but walked up north until he reached Caesarea. Philip continually shared the good news about Jesus with people in all the towns he passed.

Stop the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Now an **angel** of the **Lord** said to Philip, "Rise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." The term "angel of the Lord" denotes that the angel, and therefore the message too, is directly from God, or the Lord. Remember to use the same word you have used previously for angel and Lord. A full definition of angel and Lord can be found in the Master Glossary.

He had come to Jerusalem and was returning sitting in his **chariot**. A chariot was a two-wheeled vehicle pulled by two horses, oxen or wild donkeys.

Stop here and show the translation team a picture of a chariot.

And the **Spirit** said to Philip, "Go over and join this chariot." Here "the Spirit" means the **Holy Spirit**. Remember to use the same word you have used previously for Holy Spirit. A full definition of Holy Spirit can be found in the Master Glossary.

Now the passage of the **Scripture** that he was reading was this. Remember to use the same word you have used previously for Scripture. A full definition of Scripture can be found in the Master Glossary.

Like a **sheep** he was led to the slaughter and like a **lamb** before its shearer is silent, so he opens not his mouth. A sheep is a woolly animal. A lamb is a young sheep.

Stop here and show the translation team a video and a photo showing a sheep with lambs.

And the eunuch said to Philip, "About whom, I ask you, does the **prophet** say this, about himself or about someone else?" Remember to use the same word you have used previously for prophet. A full definition of prophet can be found in the Master Glossary.

And the eunuch said, "See, here is water! What prevents me from being **baptised**?" Remember to use the same word you have used previously for baptised. A full definition of baptism can be found in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 8:26–40

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (5832652 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Acts 9:1–19

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 9:1–19a and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

In the previous passages, Philip was sharing the good news about Jesus in Samaria and to the Ethiopian official. Luke tells us that the events that occur in this passage are happening at the same time as the events with Philip. In English translations this is pointed out with the words "meanwhile" or "but Saul."

Stop and discuss how you talk about events that are happening at the same time but in different places. What special words or phrases do you use in your language so that the listener knows that this story is happening at the same time as the last story you told?

After the death of Stephen, Saul was threatening the followers of Jesus and wanted to have more of them killed. You will remember that the people who killed Stephen by stoning placed their outer garments at the feet of Saul. After this event, you will remember that the followers of Jesus fled to other places because of the persecution against the church in Jerusalem.

Saul went to the High Priest in Jerusalem for permission to find the followers of Jesus. You will remember that the High Priest was the top religious leader of the Jews and head of the Jewish Council. Saul asked for letters from the High Priest authorizing him to arrest anyone belonging to the Way, meaning the followers of Jesus. These letters were for the synagogue leaders in Damascus, asking them to assist Saul in arresting any believers found in their city. Damascus is the main city in the country of Syria. It is about 240 kilometers, or 150 miles, northeast of Jerusalem. This journey would take a person about 6 days to travel by foot. Luke does not say if Saul is walking or traveling by animal.

Stop and show a map that includes Jerusalem and Damascus and the possible route Saul would have taken.

Saul was probably searching for the followers of Jesus who had previously fled from Jerusalem to other places in the region. He wanted to bring them back to Jerusalem to be put on trial before the Jewish Council. Saul was authorized to arrest both men and women belonging to the Way. "The Way" was what the first believers in

Jesus called themselves. This title could come from when Jesus had said of himself, "I am the way...to the Father," indicating that he is the one who makes a right relation with God possible. Another explanation could be that the followers of Jesus saw themselves as the true way within the larger Jewish faith community.

Stop and discuss: How do groups of people identify themselves in your culture? How do they come up with names for their group?

As Saul and his companions neared Damascus, a bright light shone from heaven and blinded him. Most people agree that the light was supernatural. It is not clear whether the light was from heaven, the place where God and his angels live, or the sky. Saul falls to the ground and then hears a voice asking him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" Saul's name is said twice. This is a way to get a person's attention and tell them they need to listen closely. The question was not a question that required an answer but was a way of scolding Saul and make him think about what he was doing. Persecuting means to hurt people or cause them to suffer.

Saul responds by asking, "Who are you, Lord?" Saul does not recognize the voice of the one speaking to him. Saul's use of the title Lord is not just from respect but also from the recognition that he was not speaking to an ordinary person. The voice said, "I am Jesus, who you are persecuting." Saul now knows that Jesus is speaking to him. By saying this, Jesus also lets Saul know that by persecuting the followers of Jesus, he was actually persecuting Jesus. Jesus then tells Saul to enter into Damascus and he will be told what to do. The people traveling with Saul hear a voice but do not see anyone. Saul rises to his feet but cannot see. His traveling companions lead him into Damascus.

Stop and discuss: How do people in your culture help a blinded person go from one place to another? Have you ever helped a blind person travel? If yes, describe how that experience was for you.

Possible activity: Divide the team into pairs. Have one person cover their eyes with something like a blindfold so that they cannot see. Have the other person help the temporarily blinded person travel a short distance. After a couple of minutes, switch roles. Discuss as a team: How did it feel being temporarily blind? How did it feel being responsible for leading the blinded person?

Saul goes without food or water for three days. It is believed that Saul did not eat or drink because of the shock of what he had just experienced. It is also possible that Saul did not eat because he was troubled by what he had been doing and was sorry. He was not fasting, going without food or water, in the religious sense of the word.

A definition of fasting can be found in the Master Glossary, if needed.

Ananias was a follower of Jesus who lived in Damascus. Jesus came to Ananias in a vision and told him to go and find Saul. A vision is a supernatural experience in which a message from God is given to a person when they are awake. Jesus told Ananias that Saul also had a vision and was waiting for Ananias to come to where he was staying. In Saul's vision, Ananias would place his hands on Saul and Saul would regain his eyesight. Saul was staying at the home of Judas who lived on Straight Street. Judas is a common Jewish name, so he is further identified as the one who lives on Straight Street.

Stop and discuss: How do people in your culture talk about people who share the same name? Discuss the ways you might talk about them to help others understand exactly who you are speaking about.

Jesus said that Saul had a vision of Ananias coming to pray for him so that he could see again. Ananias knew about Saul probably from the news brought by the believers who had fled Jerusalem. Ananias was unsure about going because of this. Jesus commanded Ananias to go because Saul was Jesus' chosen instrument to take the good news of salvation in Jesus to the Gentiles, those who were not Jews. "Chosen instrument" means that Jesus had picked Saul to serve him. Saul would also speak about Jesus to the kings and to the Jews as well. Jesus will let Saul know that he will suffer because of the name of Jesus. This means that Saul will suffer because he follows Jesus. The one who persecuted the followers of Jesus will now also be persecuted because he follows Jesus.

Ananias obeyed Jesus and went to the house where Saul was staying. Ananias went to Saul, placed his hand on him. He called Saul "brother." This most likely means that Ananias is addressing Saul as a fellow believer in Jesus. Ananias tells Saul that the Lord Jesus who appeared to him on the road has sent Ananias so that Saul can regain his eyesight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Stop and discuss: Do you use family terms in your culture with people to whom you are not related? Discuss what words or terms that are used in your culture to address someone who is dear to you but is not related by kinship.

After Ananias touched and spoke to Saul, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes and he could see again. Scales are flakes of skin or similar to what is found on the skin of many fish. Saul was then baptized, a ceremonial washing to show that he followed Jesus. Saul was probably baptized by Ananias since no other person is mentioned. Luke tells us that Saul then took food, meaning that he ate food, and regained his strength.

Show a picture of fish scales if your team has never seen them.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has 5 scenes.

First scene: Followers of Jesus are persecuted by Saul and others. They flee Jerusalem and go to many places in the region, including Damascus.

Second scene: Saul goes to the high priest. He asks for permission to arrest the followers of Jesus in Damascus. The high priest gives Saul letters instructing the synagogue leaders of Damascus to help Saul.

Third scene: Saul and his companions travel from Jerusalem to Damascus. Before arriving at Damascus, Saul is struck blind by a light from heaven and sees a vision of Jesus. Saul's companions lead him into the city, to the home of Judas on Straight Street.

Fourth scene: Ananias has a vision of Jesus. Jesus instructs Ananias to go to Saul in Damascus.

Fifth scene: Ananias goes to Saul and lays his hands on Saul. Saul sees again. Saul is baptized.

The characters in this story include:

- Saul
- High priest
- Men traveling with Saul
- Jesus
- Ananias
- Judas
- Followers of Jesus
- Synagogue leaders in Damascus

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

It is important to remember that Saul was present when Stephen was stoned. He then began persecuting, or causing harm to, followers of Jesus. It is also important to remember that these things happened during the same time that Philip was sharing about Jesus in Samaria and to the Ethiopian.

Many followers of Jesus in Jerusalem leave the city because of persecution. They go to various places in the region, including Damascus. Saul asks the High Priest for permission to arrest the followers of Jesus, also called The Way, in Damascus and bring them back to Jerusalem.

While traveling to Damascus, Saul is blinded by a light from heaven and has a vision of Jesus. The voice of Jesus speaks to Saul. It is important to remember what Jesus and Saul say to one another. It is also important to

remember that his traveling companions hear a voice and see the light but don't see anyone. Saul is led into Damascus by his traveling companions.

Saul was blinded for three days and did not eat or drink during that time. Jesus appears to Ananias and Saul in separate visions, telling them the same thing. Ananias was reluctant to go to Saul because of his reputation of persecuting, causing harm to, followers of Jesus. Jesus commanded Ananias to go because Jesus had a special plan for Saul.

Ananias obeys Jesus. Ananias went to the house where Saul was staying. He placed his hands on Saul. Ananias tells Saul that the Lord Jesus who appeared to him on the road, has sent Ananias so that Saul can regain his eyesight and be filled with the Holy Spirit. Saul can see again. He is baptized, a ceremonial washing to show that he followed Jesus.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has 5 scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Saul
- High priest
- Men traveling with Saul
- Jesus
- Ananias
- Judas
- Followers of Jesus
- Synagogue leaders in Damascus

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

Act out followers of Jesus in Jerusalem being persecuted, being harmed by people in Jerusalem. Act out them running away from Jerusalem to other places, like Damascus.

Stop the action.

Act out Saul going to the High Priest for permission to go to Damascus to arrest followers of Jesus, also called The Way, and bring them back to Jerusalem. The high priest gives Saul letters to the synagogue leaders in Damascus.

Stop the action.

While traveling to Damascus, Saul is blinded by a light from heaven and has a vision of Jesus. Saul hears the voice of Jesus saying, "Saul, why are you persecuting me?" Saul does not recognize the voice and asks, "Who are you, Lord?" Jesus tells Saul, "It is Jesus, the one you are persecuting." It is important to remember that his

traveling companions hear a voice and see the light but don't see anyone. Saul is led into Damascus by his traveling companions.

Stop the action.

Saul was blinded for three days and did not eat or drink during that time. Jesus appears to Ananias and Saul in separate visions, telling them the same thing. Ananias was reluctant to go to Saul because of his reputation of persecuting, harming the followers of Jesus. Jesus commanded Ananias to go because Jesus had a special plan for Saul.

Stop the action.

Ananias obeys Jesus. Ananias went to the house where Saul was staying. He placed his hands on Saul. Ananias tells Saul that the Lord Jesus who appeared to him on the road has sent Ananias so that Saul can regain his eyesight and be filled with the Holy Spirit. Saul can see again. He is baptized, a ceremonial washing to show that he followed Jesus.

Stop the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

Saul obtained letters from the **high priest**, the leader of the Jewish high **Council**, giving him permission to arrest the followers of Jesus who had gone to Damascus. These letters were addressed to the leaders of the **synagogues**. Remember to use the same words you have used previously for priest and synagogue. Full definitions of these words can be found in the Master Glossary.

Paul was authorized to arrest both men and women belonging to **the Way**. "The Way" was what the first believers in Jesus called themselves. This title could come from when Jesus had said of himself, "I am the way...to the Father," indicating that he is the one who makes a right relation with God possible. Another explanation could be that the followers of Jesus saw themselves as the true way within the larger Jewish faith community.

As Saul neared Damascus, a bright light shone from **heaven** and blinded him. **Heaven** can refer to the sky, or to the place where God and his angels live. In this context it is most likely the place where God lives, since the light was caused by Jesus. Remember to use the same word for **heaven** that you have previously used. You can find a definition of heaven in the Master Glossary.

Saul falls to the ground and then hears a voice asking him, "Why are you **persecuting** me?" Persecuting means to hurt people or cause them to suffer. Remember to use the same word for persecuting that you have used in previous passages. A definition of persecution can be found in the Master Glossary.

Saul replies with, "Who are you, **Lord**?" Saul's use of the title Lord is not just from respect but also from the recognition that he was not speaking to an ordinary person. Remember to use the same word for Lord that you have used in previous passages. A definition of Lord can be found in the Master Glossary.

Saul is told to go into Damascus and he would be told what to do. Jesus appears to Ananias, a **disciple** or follower of Jesus, in a **vision**, telling him to go to Saul. He tells Ananias that Saul has also had a vision. Visions refer to a supernatural experience in which a message from God is given to a person when they are awake. Dreams are what God causes people to see when they are asleep. If your language only has one word for vision and dream, you may want to specify that Ananias and Saul were awake when they received the message from Jesus. Remember to use the same words for disciple and vision that you have used in previous passages. Definitions of disciple and vision can be found in the Master Glossary.

Ananias was hesitant to go because he has heard about Saul persecuting the followers of Jesus. Jesus commanded Ananias to go because Saul was Jesus' chosen instrument to take the good news of salvation in Jesus to the **Gentiles**, those who were not Jews. "Chosen instrument" means that Jesus had picked Saul to serve him. Use the same word for Gentile that you have used previously. You can find a definition of Gentile in the Master Glossary.

Ananias obeyed Jesus and went to the house where Saul was staying. Ananias went to Saul, placed his hand on him. Ananias tells Saul that the Lord Jesus who appeared to him on the road, has sent Ananias so that Saul can

regain his eyesight and be filled with the **Holy Spirit**. Remember to use the same word for Holy Spirit that you have used in previous passages. A definition of Holy Spirit can be found in the Master Glossary.

After Ananias touched and spoke to Saul, something like **scales** fell from Saul's eyes and he could see again. Scales are flakes of skin or similar to what is found on the skin of many fish. Saul was then **baptised**, a ceremonial washing to show that he followed Jesus. Remember to use the same word for baptise that you have used in previous passages. A definition of baptism can be found in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 9:1–19

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Acts 9:19–31

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 9:19b-31 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

In the previous passage, Saul went to arrest the followers of Jesus in Damascus. On his journey, he met Jesus in a vision and as a result became a follower of Jesus. At the end of the passage, Saul was baptized, a ceremonial washing to show that he followed Jesus.

For several days Saul stayed with the believers or disciples, followers of Jesus, in Damascus. These were probably the same people that he had planned to arrest and take back to Jerusalem. As soon as Saul had regained his strength, he began proclaiming in the synagogues, the Jewish place of prayer, that Jesus was the Son of God. To proclaim means to announce or declare openly.

Son of God is a title used for Jesus. This title was often used to refer to the Savior who would be a descendant of King David. God would send this Savior to rescue his people. This person was often referred to as the "Messiah" or "Christ." The title "Son of God" also indicates that Jesus has the same nature and character as God. It refers to the special relationship between God and Jesus. It needs to be understood that he was not the result of a physical union of God with a woman.

A complete definition of Son of God can be found in the Master Glossary.

Everyone who heard Saul speak was amazed or surprised. They said, "Isn't this the same person who caused problems among the followers of Jesus in Jerusalem? Didn't he come here to arrest the followers of Jesus?" These were questions that are not expected to be answered. They knew about Saul's reputation as someone who persecuted or made followers of Jesus suffer. They knew of Saul's plans to arrest followers of Jesus and take them back to Jerusalem as prisoners to be judged by the chief priests of the Jewish Council.

Saul increased in strength, or his preaching became more and more powerful. This does not mean Saul's physical strength. This is an expression that means that Saul's ability to convince people about Jesus got better each day. Saul would prove to the Jews of Damascus that Jesus was the Messiah, or Promised Savior. Proving

means that Saul used the passages of the Old Testament about the Messiah to convince people that Jesus is the Messiah. The Jews were confounded, or could not refute what Saul said. This means they were not able to speak against Saul's proof about Jesus.

The passage says "after many days." It is not clear how much time has passed. Many scholars believe that it was as long as three years, based upon the letter that Saul, later called Paul, wrote to the followers of Jesus in another region. After this time had passed, the Jews plotted to kill Saul. This probably means that the leaders of the Jews made the plan to kill Saul. The Jews did not succeed in arguing with Saul, so they decided to kill him. They had people watching at the gates of Damascus day and night hoping to catch Saul. Saul became aware of their plan.

Damascus had a high stone wall around the city with gates. This was the normal way of entering and exiting the city. Some houses were built on to the city wall and had windows that were cut into the city wall.

Stop here and discuss: How are the towns and cities in your area organized? How does someone know when they are entering or leaving your town or city? What kinds of boundaries exist around your cities, towns, or other types of property?

The followers of Jesus in Damascus took Saul to one of these houses. At night, they took a basket strong enough to hold a man. They tied a rope to the basket. Saul got inside the basket and the believers lowered the basket through the window. Saul was able to escape Damascus and go to Jerusalem.

Show a picture of a city wall with a window/opening in the side of the wall.

Show a picture of a basket large enough for a man to hide in.

Once Saul reached Jerusalem, he tried to join the other disciples, the followers of Jesus in Jerusalem. The followers of Jesus in Jerusalem were afraid of Saul because of what he did to them in the past. They did not believe that Saul had become a disciple of Jesus. However, Barnabas believed Saul. You will remember from an earlier passage that Barnabas sold a piece of property and gave the money to the leaders of the church to help those in need. Barnabas got his name because he was an encouraging person. He also had a good reputation among the believers in Jerusalem. The passage says Barnabas took Saul to the apostles, the twelve closest followers of Jesus. This means that Barnabas introduced Saul to the apostles in Jerusalem. Barnabas told them how Saul had met Jesus. This means that Barnabas must have listened to Saul tell his story of how he met Jesus and believe him.

Stop here and discuss: How is someone new introduced to your community? How does someone who previously had a bad reputation gain acceptance?

Possible activity: Have the team divide into pairs. Have each person tell their teammate the story of how they met Jesus.

Barnabas also told the believers in Jerusalem how Saul had boldly preached or proclaimed the name of Jesus in Damascus. The followers of Jesus in Jerusalem believed what Barnabas told them about Saul. Saul was able to join the believers in everything they did in Jerusalem. Saul continued to boldly proclaim about Jesus in Jerusalem. Saul debated with Hellenists or Greek-speaking Jews. These were Jews who had adopted the Greek language and culture. These Jews tried to kill Saul. When the believers in Jerusalem heard about this, they took Saul to the coastal town of Caesarea and sent him by ship to Tarsus, Saul's hometown.

Show a map that includes Jerusalem, Caesarea, and Tarsus.

Show a picture of a ship used on the Mediterranean Sea.

From that time, the church in the region of Judea, Galilee, and Samaria experienced a time of peace. This means that the persecution had stopped for this time. The church refers to the group of believers in a specific location or region. In the New Testament "church" never refers to a building.

A complete definition of church can be found in the Master Glossary.

Show a map that includes Judea, Galilee, and Samaria if the team has not already seen one.

The Holy Spirit strengthens the believers spiritually. This means that the Holy Spirit enabled them to obey Jesus more completely. The believers also lived in or walked in the fear of the Lord. This means that they had

reverence or honor and respect for Jesus. The church increased in numbers, which means that the Holy Spirit helped more and more people become followers of Jesus.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has 6 scenes.

First scene: Saul regains his strength and begins proclaiming Jesus in the synagogues of Damascus. The Jews plot to kill Saul.

Second scene: The believers in Damascus help Saul escape. Saul travels to Jerusalem.

Third scene: The believers in Jerusalem do not believe Saul is a follower of Jesus. Barnabas goes to Saul and then introduces Saul to the apostles in Jerusalem.

Fourth scene: Saul is accepted by the believers in Jerusalem. Saul begins proclaiming Jesus in Jerusalem. The Greek-speaking Jews try to kill Saul.

Fifth scene: The believers in Jerusalem take Saul to Caesarea. Saul goes on to Tarsus.

Sixth scene: The church experiences a time of peace. The believers are strengthened. The church grows.

The characters in this story include:

- Saul
- Believers in Damascus
- People in Damascus synagogue
- Believers in Jerusalem
- Barnabas
- Apostles
- Greek-speaking Jews of Jerusalem

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

It is important to remember that Saul had just been baptized, a ceremonial washing to show that he follows Jesus. He had not eaten from the time he was blinded until after his baptism.

It is important to remember that after Saul regained his strength, he began proclaim Jesus in the synagogues of Damascus. People were surprised because they knew that he had previously persecuted followers of Jesus.

It is important to remember that each day, Saul became better and better in his ability to proclaim Jesus. It is important to remember that Saul stayed in Damascus for many days. Many scholars believe this could have been as long as 3 years. He debated with the Jews and they were not able to disprove what Saul said. The Jews made plans to kill him.

It is important to remember how the believers in Damascus helped Saul to escape.

It is important to remember how after Saul came to Jerusalem, that people did not believe him and how Barnabas helped Saul. Saul was then accepted by the believers. Saul began to proclaim Jesus in Jerusalem.

It is important to remember the reaction of the Greek-speaking Jews in Jerusalem to Saul. Remember how the believers in Jerusalem helped Saul and what the result was for the church.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has 6 scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Saul
- Believers in Damascus
- People in Damascus synagogue
- Believers in Jerusalem
- Barnabas
- Apostles
- Greek-speaking Jews of Jerusalem

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

Make sure your team acts out Saul going to synagogue in Damascus to proclaim the message of Jesus. Remember the people's reaction to Saul.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing the people in the Damascus synagogue, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Surprised. Wasn't he the same man causing problems for the followers of Jesus in Jerusalem?" or "Shocked. Didn't he come here to arrest followers of Jesus?" and "Amazed. His arguments are very convincing." [!end] Restart the action.

Act out Saul debating with people in the synagogue. They cannot refute him. Act out the people plotting to kill Saul and watching for him at the city gates. Act out the believers helping Saul escape Damascus.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing believers in Damascus, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Concerned. We need to help Saul get away," and "Happy. Saul was against us but now he is with us." [!end] Restart the action.

Act out Saul going to Jerusalem and trying to meet with the believers. They are afraid. Barnabas goes to Saul to find out if he is truly a follower of Jesus. Barnabas introduces Saul to the apostles in Jerusalem.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing the Jerusalem believers, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Suspicious. Who is he trying to fool? This is just a trick to arrest us," or "Afraid. He has a reputation for persecuting Jesus' followers," and "I don't believe him. He was there when Stephen was killed."

Ask the actor playing Barnabas, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I'll go find out for myself. I know Jesus changes people," or "He needs someone to help him," and "I heard Saul's testimony. Saul has met Jesus." [!end] Restart the action.

Act out Saul moving about freely in Jerusalem and proclaiming Jesus. Saul debates with some Greek-speaking Jews. They try to kill him. The believers take Saul away from Jerusalem.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing Saul, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Happy to be accepted by the believers. I need to help spread the word about Jesus," or "Why are people always trying to kill me? I guess this is what Jesus meant when he said I would suffer for him," and "Glad that the other believers are concerned about my well-being." [!end] Restart the action.

Act out the church growing during a time of peace.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

Saul stayed with the **disciples**, or believers, followers of Jesus, in Damascus and Jerusalem. Use the same word, believers or disciples, that you have used in previous passages. A definition of disciples can be found in the Master Glossary.

As soon as Saul had regained his strength, he began **proclaiming** in the **synagogues**, the Jewish place of prayer, that Jesus was the **Son of God**.

To **proclaim** means to announce or declare openly.

Use the same word for **synagogues** previously used in other passages. Synagogue can be found in the Master Glossary.

Son of God is a title used for Jesus. People sometimes used this title to refer to a Savior who would be a descendant of King David. God would send this Savior to rescue his people. People also referred to this Savior as the "Messiah" or "Christ." The title "Son of God" indicates that Jesus has the same nature and character as God. It refers to the special relationship between God and Jesus. However, it needs to be understood that he was not the result of a physical union of God with woman. Son of God and Messiah can be found in the Master Glossary.

After some time, **Jews** in Damascus wanted to kill Saul. The city of Damascus was enclosed by a high stone wall. They watched the **city gates**, the entrances and exits to the city, in hopes of catching Saul. The believers helped Saul to escape Damascus by lowering him in a large basket through a window or opening in the city wall. Saul went to Jerusalem. A definition of Jews can be found in the Master Glossary.

In Jerusalem, the followers of Jesus were afraid of Saul, so Barnabas went to Saul to hear his story. Barnabas then introduced Saul to the **apostles**. Use the same word for apostles that you have used in previous passages. The definition of the word apostle can be found in the Master Glossary.

In Jerusalem, Saul also **preached boldly in the name of Jesus**. This means that Saul was speaking boldly about Jesus. He debated with the Greek-speaking Jews. The Jews tried to kill Saul so the brothers in Jerusalem took Saul to Caesarea and sent him on to Tarsus, Saul's hometown. Here "brothers" means the believers or followers of Jesus.

The **church** in the region of Judea, Galilee, and Samaria experienced a time of peace. The church refers to the group of believers in a specific location or region. In the New Testament "church" never refers to a building. Use the word for church previously used in other passages. A complete definition of church can be found in the Master Glossary.

The **Holy Spirit** strengthened the believers spiritually. This means that the Holy Spirit enabled them to obey Jesus more completely. The believers also lived in or walked in the **fear of the Lord**. This means that they had reverence or honor and respect for Jesus. The church increased in numbers, means that the Holy Spirit helped more and more people become followers of Jesus. Use the same words for Holy Spirit and Lord used in previous passages. Complete definitions of Holy Spirit, Lord, and fear of God can be found in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 9:19–31

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Acts 9:32–35

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 9:32–35 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

Luke re-introduces Peter into the story, by saying "now Peter" or "meanwhile Peter." This was Luke's way to shift the focus back to Peter. In the previous passages you will remember the events related to Saul becoming a follower of Jesus. Earlier, you will remember that Peter and John had been in the region of Samaria to see the work of God among the Samaritan people. They then returned home to Jerusalem.

Probably because the church is now experiencing a time without persecution, Peter decides to make a trip to visit and encourage the believers in various places. In some English versions, it says that Peter visited "the saints." This term literally means "the holy people" and refer to people who belonged to God because they had believed in Jesus.

Stop and discuss: Think of a group or groups of people that you know. What are the different terms or names that you use to identify the same group?

One of the places Peter visited was Lydda. Lydda is a town on the road between Jerusalem and the Mediterranean Sea port town of Joppa. Lydda was 16 kilometers, or 10 miles, southeast of Joppa. It was located in a region called Sharon.

Show a map that includes Jerusalem, Lydda, Joppa, and the Sharon Plains.

In this town, Peter met a man called Aeneas. It is believed that Aeneas was a follower of Jesus since Peter was traveling to visit with believers. Aeneas was paralyzed, meaning he was unable to walk. He had been unable to leave his bed for eight years. Peter speaks to Aeneas and says, "Jesus Christ heals you." Christ is the Greek word for Messiah, or Promised Savior.

Stop and discuss: In your culture, where does a paralyzed person spend most of their time? How are paralyzed people treated? Who helps them and how do they help them?

He commands Aeneas to "get up and make your bed." Most scholars believe this means to roll up your mat or put your bed away. Beds were often sleeping mats consisting of a large thick pad made of reeds, straw, or animal hide. This type of sleeping mat only provided a basic buffer from the ground or floor. A person could easily fold the bed and carry it from one location to the next, or it could be folded and stored in the home, allowing the floor space it occupied to be used for something else.

Stop and discuss: What are the various sleeping arrangements found in your culture?

Show a photo of a sleeping mat if your team has not already seen one.

Aeneas immediately got up. This showed people that Jesus has healed him. The news of his healing spread through the region. The people saw him and the people of Lydda and the region of Sharon turned to the Lord, meaning they became followers of Jesus.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has 3 scenes.

First scene: Peter travels from place to place visiting believers. He arrives in Lydda.

Second scene: Peter meets Aeneas and Jesus heals Aeneas.

Third scene: The residents of Lydda and the region of Sharon see Aeneas walking and put their trust in Jesus.

The characters in this story include:

- Peter
- Believers in places Peter visited
- Aeneas
- Believers in Lydda
- People of Lydda and Sharon

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

It is important to remember that there is a time of peace when the church, the followers of Jesus are not experiencing persecution.

It is important to remember who Peter was visiting on his journey. When Peter arrives in Lydda, he meets a man called Aeneas. It is important to remember Aeneas' condition during the last eight years.

It is important to remember what Peter says to Aeneas when they meet. Peter tells him that Jesus heals him, which means that the power of Jesus heals him, even though Jesus was not physically there. It is important to remember what happens to Aeneas.

It is important to remember that the news of Aeneas' healing spread through the region. It is important to remember how the people of Lydda and Sharon react to these events.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has 3 scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Peter
- Believers in places Peter visited
- Aeneas
- Believers in Lydda
- People of Lydda and Sharon

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

Act out Peter traveling place to place to visit the believers.

Stop the action.

Act out Peter arriving at Lydda and meeting Aeneas. Act out the healing of Aeneas. Aeneas gets up, rolls up his sleeping mat.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing Peter, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I'm so happy that I can serve Jesus by helping his people," or "I'm honored that Jesus would send me here," and "Excited. Jesus said we would do great things in his name." [!end] Restart the action.

Act out Aeneas walking around Lydda and Sharon so that the people see him. Many people place their trust in Jesus.

Stop the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

The church is now experiencing a time without **persecution**, or being mistreated by other people. Peter decides to make a trip to visit and encourage the believers in various places. In some English versions, it says that Peter visited the **saints**. This term literally means "the holy people" and refers to people who belonged to God because they had believed in Jesus. Definitions for persecution and saints can be found in the Master Glossary.

Peter arrives in Lydda, a town on the road between Jerusalem and the Mediterranean Sea port town of Joppa. Lydda was 16 kilometers, or 10 miles, southeast of Joppa. It was located in a region called Sharon.

Show a map that includes Jerusalem, Lydda, Joppa, and the region of Sharon.

In this town, Peter met a man called Aeneas. Aeneas was **paralyzed**, meaning he was unable to walk. He had been confined to his bed for eight years. Use the same word for paralyzed as you have used in previous passages.

Peter speaks to Aeneas and says, "Jesus **Christ** heals you." Christ is the Greek word for **Messiah**, or Promised Savior. Use the same word for Christ that you have used in previous passages. Definitions for Christ and Messiah can be found in the Master Glossary.

Peter commands Aeneas to "get up and make your **bed**." Most scholars believe this means to roll up your mat, or put your bed away. Beds were often sleeping mats consisting of a large thick pad made of reeds, straw, or animal hide. This type of sleeping mat only provided a basic buffer from the ground or floor. A person could easily fold the bed and store it in the home, allowing the floor space it occupied to be used for something else. Use the same word for bed or mat that you have previously used.

Show a photo of a sleeping mat if your team has not already seen one.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 9:32–35

Audio Content

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Acts 9:36–43

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 9:36–43 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?

2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

In the previous passage you will remember that Peter had been traveling and visiting believers in various towns. He was in Lydda where a man named Aeneas was healed after being paralyzed for eight years. Lydda is a town on the road between Jerusalem and the town of Joppa. Lydda was 16 kilometers, or 10 miles, southeast of Joppa. Joppa was an important town on the Mediterranean coast. The people of Joppa had probably heard about the healing of Aeneas.

Show a map that includes Jerusalem, Lydda, and Joppa.

There was a woman living in the town of Joppa whose Jewish name was Tabitha. She was also known by Dorcas, which was her name in Greek. Her name meant "gazelle" which is a small antelope or deer-like animal.

Show a picture of a gazelle.

Stop and discuss: When a person is known by more than one name in your culture, how are the different names used? What is the significance of a name given to a person? If the name has another meaning or a special meaning, how is the name chosen for that person?

Tabitha was a disciple, a follower of Jesus. She was a woman who always did good things. She regularly did acts of charity, or helping the poor. This means that she gave things like money and clothing to help people who did not have what they needed in order to live normally. Luke tells us "in those days" or "about this time," meaning during the time that Peter was in Lydda, Tabitha became sick and died. According to Jewish custom, the women would have washed her body for burial and wrapped it with cloth. Instead of burying the body right away, they place the body of Tabitha in an upper room or upstairs room. This refers to a room that people had built on the flat top of the house. People probably climbed an outside stairway to go to that room.

Show a picture of a house with a flat roof that has a stairway on the outside.

The disciples in Joppa heard that Peter was in Lydda, which was not far away. They sent two men as messengers to Peter. The men urged or pleaded with him to come to Joppa as quickly as possible. The two messengers would have also told Peter why they needed him to come to Joppa. Peter immediately accompanied the men back to Joppa. The men brought Peter to the room where Tabitha's body was kept. The widows from Joppa were standing there crying. They showed Peter the tunics, or robes, and other clothing that Tabitha, also called Dorcas, had made for them while she was still with them, meaning when she was alive.

Widows are women whose husbands had died. Widows in this culture were people in great need because they had lost their husbands who had been providing for them. Tunics or robes refers to full-length clothes worn next to the body. "Other clothing" refers to outer garments or cloaks.

Stop and discuss: What happens to a woman in your culture when her husband dies? Who is responsible for helping to provide for her needs?

Show a picture of a tunic and robe or cloak if your team has not seen one.

Peter put all of the people outside. This means that Peter sent them out or made everyone leave the room. This is a strong statement. Perhaps he may have had to lead some of them out because they did not want to leave.

Stop and discuss: How do people in your culture behave when someone close or special to them dies?

Peter then knelt down and prayed to God. Luke does not tell us what Peter said, but most likely he prayed that God would cause Tabitha, or Dorcas, to come to life again. Peter then turned to the body of Tabitha and

commanded her: "Tabitha, get up." Tabitha opened her eyes, saw Peter, and sat up. The statement "seeing Peter" tells us that her face was not covered with cloth and that she was lying on her back. By opening her eyes and sitting up, Luke is providing details to show that Tabitha is alive again. Peter took her by the hand and helped her stand up. This was an act of kindness or politeness by Peter to help her stand up. Tabitha was able to stand on her own.

Stop and discuss: What are some acts of kindness or politeness that people do for others, even though they are capable to do it by themselves?

Peter then called the saints, meaning the believers, including the widows, back into the room and presented Tabitha to them. This means Peter showed them that Tabitha was alive again. The news of Tabitha coming back to life was soon known by everyone living in Joppa. Many people believed in Jesus, meaning they became followers of Jesus, because of this event.

Peter stayed in Joppa for a long time. Luke does not tell us exactly how long. Peter stayed at the house of a man called Simon the tanner. You will remember that Simon is one of Peter's names. This man was a tanner, which means that he processed animal hides or skins to make leather. Other people would use the leather to make things such as sandals. Jews considered that a person who prepared hides into leather was doing what made him ritually "unclean." Peter had accepted to stay in the home of Simon the tanner. This probably shows that Peter did not follow the Jewish ceremonial laws as strictly as the Jewish religious leaders.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has 5 scenes.

First scene: Peter is in Lydda. Tabitha is a believer in Joppa who helped poor people. She gets sick and dies. The women of Joppa wash Tabitha's body to prepare her for burial.

Second scene: Two messengers are sent from Joppa to Lydda to find Peter. They bring Peter back to Joppa.

Third scene: Peter arrives in Joppa and is taken to where Tabitha's body is laid. The widows show Peter the clothing that Tabitha had made for them. The women are crying. Peter has everyone leave the room.

Fourth scene: Peter kneels in the room and prays. He tells Tabitha to get up. Tabitha gets up and Peter presents her to the believers in Joppa.

Fifth scene: Everyone in Joppa hears how Tabitha has come back to life. Many people believe in Jesus. Peter stays in Joppa at the home of Simon the tanner.

The characters in this story include:

- Tabitha
- Believers of Joppa
- Widows of Joppa
- 2 men sent to Peter
- Peter
- Other people of Joppa
- Simon the tanner

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

It is important to remember that Peter is in Lydda, which is located about 16 kilometers (or 10 miles) from Joppa. He has recently been used by God to help bring healing to Aeneas in Lydda.

It is important to remember that Tabitha is also called Dorcas. Tabitha is a follower of Jesus who always does kind deeds, like helping poor people and making clothes for people who need them. Tabitha gets sick and dies. It is important to remember how the women of Joppa prepare Tabitha's body for burial.

The believers in Joppa send two messengers to Lydda in order to find Peter. Peter comes with them to Joppa. It is important to remember what the widows were doing when Peter arrived. Peter has everyone leave the room. It is important to remember what Peter does after everyone leaves. It is important to remember what happens when Tabitha comes back to life.

It is important to remember how the people of Joppa react to this news. Peter stays at the home of Simon the tanner in Joppa.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has 5 scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Tabitha
- Believers of Joppa
- Widows of Joppa
- 2 men sent to Peter
- Peter
- Other people of Joppa
- Simon the tanner

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

Peter is in Lydda. Act out Tabitha in Joppa doing good things for the people, including making clothes for them.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing believers of Joppa, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Thankful. Tabitha is so kind and generous," or "Encouraged. She is such a good example of God's love and care," and "Grateful. I don't know what I would do without Tabitha's help." [!end] Restart the action.

Tabitha gets sick and dies. Act out the women preparing her body. Act out the men being sent to find Peter.

Stop the action.

Act out the men bringing Peter back to Joppa. The widows are crying and showing Peter the clothes Tabitha made for them. Peter makes everyone leave the room.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing Peter, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Sympathy. These sisters are feeling great loss," or "Have faith. God will provide for you," and "There is too much noise in here. I need some quiet so I can talk to God about this." [!end] Restart the action.

Act out Peter praying. He then speaks to Tabitha. Act out Tabitha coming back to life. Act out Peter presenting Tabitha to the believers.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing believers of Joppa, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "It's a miracle. Tabitha is back with us," or "Joyful. I thought we had lost her," and "Inspired. Maybe I can help people like she does." [!end] Restart the action.

Act out the people of Joppa hearing about Tabitha. Many people believe in Jesus. Peter stays at the home of Simon the tanner.

Stop the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

Tabitha, also called Dorcas, was a **disciple**, follower of Jesus, who lived in Joppa. Joppa is an important port town on the Mediterranean Sea. Use the same word for disciple that you have previously used. A complete definition of disciple can be found in the Master Glossary.

Show a map that includes Jerusalem, Lydda, and Joppa.

Tabitha regularly did **acts of charity**, or helping the poor. This means that she gave things like money and clothing to help people who did not have what they needed in order to live normally.

Some of the people Tabitha helped were **widows**. Widows are women whose husbands had died. Widows in this culture were people in great need because they had lost their husbands who had been providing for them. She made **tunics** or robes and **cloaks** for them. Tunic refers to full-length clothes worn next to the body. Cloak refers to outer garments. Use the same word for tunic, robe, and cloak that you have used in previous passage. Tunic and cloak can be found in the Master Glossary.

Tabitha became ill and died. The women prepared her body for burial and placed it in an **upper room**, or upstairs room. This refers to a room that people had built on the flat top of the house. People probably climbed an outside stairway to go to that room.

Show a picture of a house with a flat roof that has a stairway on the outside if needed.

The believers sent two messengers to bring Peter to Joppa. Peter prayed for Tabitha and she came back to life. Peter then called the **saints**, meaning the believers, including the widows, back into the room and presented Tabitha to them. Use the same word for saints you have used in previous passages. A more complete definition of saint can be found in the Master Glossary.

Peter stayed in Joppa at the home of Simon the **tanner**. A tanner is a man who processed animal hides or skins to make leather. Other people would use the leather to make things such as sandals. A tanner's trade was considered unclean by the Jews since it involved handling skins of animals that were considered ceremonially unclean.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 9:36–43

Audio Content

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Acts 10:1–8

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 10:1–8 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?

2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus or God?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

In the last passage, Peter was staying at the home of Simon the tanner in the Mediterranean port town of Joppa. Luke moves our attention to the city of Caesarea. Caesarea was also located on the Mediterranean Sea. Caesarea was about 88 kilometers, or 55 miles, northwest of Jerusalem and about 53 kilometers, or 30 miles, north of Joppa.

Show a map with Caesarea, Joppa, and Jerusalem if your team has not seen one.

The city of Caesarea was built by King Herod the Great, the Jewish king that the Romans appointed. King Herod named the city after Caesar Augustus, the ruler of the Roman Empire when Jesus was born. The city of Caesarea was the headquarters of the Roman governor and the military units for the Roman province of Judea. Cornelius was a centurion, a Roman military officer who lived in Caesarea. A centurion is an officer in charge of 100 soldiers. He was part of the military unit called the "Italian Cohort" or "Italian Regiment." A cohort, or regiment, in the Roman army is a unit made of six groups of 100 soldiers. This regiment came from the country of Italy.

Stop and discuss: What types of military units are found in your area? How are they organized? Who are the officers?

Show a picture of a centurion and a Roman soldier, if your team has not seen them.

Cornelius was a devout man. This means that he worshiped God and accepted part of the Jewish religious practice without becoming a convert. In order to fully convert, he would have to be circumcised. Cornelius and his entire household feared God. This means that they had reverence or respect for God. His household would include everyone who lived in his house; his wife, children, servants, or anyone else who lived with him. Cornelius gave alms, or gifts to the poor people. He also prayed to God continually, which in this situation means he prayed on a regular basis.

About the ninth hour of the day, or three o'clock in the afternoon, Cornelius had a vision. A vision is a message from God that comes when someone is awake. The phrase "the ninth hour" refers to nine hours after sunrise. It was one of the times when Jews went to the temple each day to pray and worship God. Luke gives the time of day to show that Cornelius was devout. In his vision, an angel, a spirit messenger from God, comes to Cornelius with a message. The angel says Cornelius' name and Cornelius was afraid. Cornelius replied, "What is it, lord?" In this instance, lord is a respectful title for a man, like "sir" in English.

Stop and discuss: What are some different ways in your culture or language that you refer to the time of day?

What are some general terms you use when speaking to a man whom you do not know? Which of those terms is the most polite or respectful?

The angel told Cornelius that Cornelius' prayers and good deeds have risen up to God, or been received by God like a memorial offering. The Law of Moses describes the memorial offering. A priest took a small quantity of flour and oil and then added incense. He burned the mixture on the altar. The smoke would ascend from the incense in these daily offerings. The angel told Cornelius that his prayers rose up to God so that Cornelius would understand that his good works pleased God.

Show a picture/illustration of the priest making a burnt offering of incense.

The angel commands Cornelius to send men to Joppa to bring Simon Peter to him. The angel uses both of Peter's names because Peter is staying at the home of another man named Simon: Simon, the tanner. The angel gave the location of the house, saying it was "by the sea." You will remember from the last passage that a tanner is a

workman who processes animal hides or skins to make leather. Other people would use the leather to make things such as sandals. Simon the tanner processed the skins of dead animals, so Jews believed that this caused him to be "unclean," according to their rules. Probably because of that, his house was outside of the city of Joppa. Also, the process of making leather required lots of water. That is probably one reason Simon's house was near the Mediterranean Sea.

Stop and discuss: In your culture, how does someone's occupation or social status determine where they live? Give some examples.

As soon as the angel left Cornelius, Cornelius obeyed what the angel commanded. He called two of his trusted servants and a devout soldier. The servants were part of Cornelius' household, so we know that they were also devout. Cornelius told these men everything that happened in the vision. He sent the men to Joppa to find Simon Peter.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has 3 scenes.

First scene: In the town of Caesarea, Cornelius, a Roman centurion, worships God by praying regularly and gives assistance to Jewish people in need.

Second scene: One day during afternoon prayer, Cornelius has a vision. An angel appears to him and gives him a message from God.

Third scene: Cornelius calls two trusted servants and a loyal soldier. He tells them about the vision and sends them to Joppa to find Simon Peter.

The characters in this story include:

- Cornelius
- Household of Cornelius
- Jewish people in Caesarea
- Angel
- 2 Servants
- Loyal soldier
- Simon Peter
- Simon the tanner

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

It is important to remember that in the previous passage, Simon Peter was staying in the home of Simon the tanner in Joppa.

Luke introduces Cornelius here for the first time.

Stop and discuss: How are new characters introduced in stories in your language?

It is important to remember that Cornelius was an officer in the Roman army. Cornelius' regiment was assigned to the town of Caesarea. It is important to remember that Cornelius and his entire household were devoted to God and worshiped Him. He prayed faithfully to God and helped others.

It is important to remember what happened one day to Cornelius at the time of afternoon prayers. It is important to remember what the angel told Cornelius about his faithfulness. It is also important to remember the command that the angel gave to Cornelius.

It is important to remember how Cornelius obeyed the command that the angel gave him.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has 3 scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Cornelius
- Household of Cornelius
- Jewish people in Caesarea
- Angel
- 2 Servants
- Loyal soldier
- Simon Peter
- Simon the tanner

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

Act out Simon Peter staying at the home of Simon the tanner.

Act out Cornelius and his household praying to God and giving help to the poor people of Caesarea.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing people in Caesarea, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I am thankful for the generosity of Cornelius," or "This man truly honors God with his actions," and "I am surprised that a Roman officer is devoted to God and shows compassion toward us." [!end] Restart the action.

Act out Cornelius praying and the angel coming to him in a vision. The angel tells Cornelius that God has heard his prayers and accepted his good deeds. The angel commands Cornelius to send for Peter in Joppa.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing the angel, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Honored to be a faithful messenger of God," and "People are always afraid when we come to them. Why are they surprised that God hears them?" [!end] Restart the action.

Act out Cornelius calling his 2 servants and a loyal soldier. He tells them about the vision. Cornelius sends the 3 men to Joppa to find Peter.

Stop the action.

Act out the servants and soldier leaving to go find Peter.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

Cornelius was a **centurion**, a Roman military officer who lived in Caesarea. A centurion is an officer in charge of 100 soldiers. He was part of the military unit called the "Italian Cohort" or "Italian Regiment." A **cohort** or **regiment** in the Roman army is a unit made up of six groups of 100 soldiers. This regiment came from the country of Italy. Use the same word for **centurion** that you have used in previous passages. Centurion can be found in the Master Glossary.

Show a map with Caesarea, Joppa, and Jerusalem if your team has not already seen one.

Show a picture of a centurion and a Roman soldier.

Cornelius was a **devout** man. This means that he worshipped God and accepted part of the Jewish religious practice without becoming a convert. In order to fully convert, he would have to undergo the ritual of **circumcision**. Cornelius and his entire household **feared God**. This means that they had reverence or respect for God. His **household** would include everyone who lived in his house: his wife, children, servants, or anyone else who lived with him. Use the same term for **fear of God**, and **household** that you have used in previous passages. The terms circumcision, fear of God, and household can be found in the Master Glossary.

Cornelius gave **alms**, meaning that he gave money to help poor people.

About the **ninth hour of the day**, or three o'clock in the afternoon, Cornelius had a **vision**. A vision is a message from God that comes when someone is awake. The phrase "the ninth hour" refers to nine hours after sunrise. The ninth hour was one of the scheduled times of prayer at the temple. Use the same word for vision that you have previously used. A complete definition of vision can be found in the Master Glossary.

In his vision, an **angel**, a spirit messenger from God, comes to Cornelius with a message. The angel says Cornelius' name and Cornelius was afraid. Cornelius replied, "What is it, **lord**?" In this instance, **lord** is a respectful title for a man like "sir" in English. Use the same word for angel that you have used in previous passages. Definitions of angel and lord can be found in the Master Glossary.

The angel told Cornelius that Cornelius' prayers and good deeds have ascended to God, or been received by God like a **memorial offering**. The Law of Moses describes the memorial offering. A priest took a small quantity of flour and oil and then added incense. He burned the mixture on the altar. The smoke would ascend from the incense in the daily offerings. Cornelius would have understood that his good works pleased God. A complete definition of offering can be found in the Master Glossary.

Show a picture/illustration of the priest making a burnt offering of incense.

The angel commands Cornelius to send men to Joppa to bring Simon Peter to him. Simon Peter was staying at the home of another man named Simon: Simon, the **tanner**. You will remember from the last passage that a tanner is a workman who processes animal hides or skins to make leather. Other people would use the leather to make things such as sandals. Use the same word for tanner that you used in the previous passage.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 10:1–8

Audio Content

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Acts 10:9–23

Hear and Heart

Hear Act 10:9–23a and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?

6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

In the previous passage, Cornelius, a Roman centurion living in Caesarea, had a vision from God. In the vision, an angel told him to send messengers to Joppa to find Simon Peter, who was staying at the home of Simon the tanner. He immediately called two devout servants and a trusted soldier and sent them to Joppa in search of Peter. You will remember that Joppa is about 50 kilometers from Caesarea. If the messengers left the same day, they most likely spent the night along the route.

Show a map that includes Caesarea and Joppa, if your team needs to see it.

Just as God had prepared Cornelius for meeting Peter, God had to prepare Peter for meeting Cornelius. Remember that Cornelius is a Gentile who honors God. Peter is a Jew who follows Jesus but also follows Jewish religious law. God-honoring Gentiles were comfortable with Jewish society. However, Jews would not be willing to enter into the home of a Gentile.

The next day, meaning the day after Cornelius's vision, the men were nearing the city of Joppa. At about the sixth hour, or twelve o'clock noon, Peter went on top of the roof to pray. You will remember from previous passages that houses in this area had flat roofs with an outside staircase. Sixth hour means the sixth hour after sunrise, meaning about twelve o'clock noon.

This was not one of the appointed prayer times for Jews. However, many devout Jews would pray three times a day, like Daniel the Old Testament prophet did. While Peter was praying, he became hungry and wanted to eat. He asked for someone to prepare food for him. Noon was not the normal meal time for Jews. The Romans ate a meal around noon time. The Jewish custom was to have a light mid-morning meal with the main meal in the late afternoon.

Stop and show a picture of a house with a flat roof and an outside staircase, if your team has not seen one.

Discuss: What are the normal meal time practices in your culture? How often do people break away from the normal meal pattern? Why would someone change their normal meal habit?

Even though it was not the normal meal time, Peter was hungry. While they were preparing his food, Peter fell into a trance, or vision. This means that Peter was no longer aware of his surroundings, but instead he was aware of whatever God would show him. Peter saw the heavens or sky open and someone lowered a large sheet by the four corners. Heavens can mean either the place where God lives or the sky. In this situation, the meaning is not clear, so either meaning can be used here.

When Peter looked into the large sheet, he could see many different kinds of animals, reptiles, and birds. Then Peter heard a voice which told him to "get up, kill, and eat." Hearing a voice means that someone told Peter to do this. Peter replied, "By no means, Lord." This shows that Peter knew that it was God speaking to him. Peter then said that he had never eaten anything unclean, or not holy. Jewish law said that some animals were unclean and unholy, or not fit for service to God or people. Peter refuses to eat those animals because it was against Jewish law. Peter refuses to kill even the clean or accepted animals because the Jewish law also gave rules for how to properly slaughter animals in preparation for eating.

Stop and discuss: What are acceptable and unacceptable foods to eat in your culture? Why is a certain food considered unacceptable? What would happen to someone if they ate the unacceptable or taboo food?

The voice, meaning God, said to Peter, "Do not call unclean what God has made clean." This means that God no longer forbids Peter to eat the meat from these animals and birds. This happened three times. This most likely means that the conversation between God and Peter happened three times: God's command to eat and Peter's refusal. This does not mean that the sheet was lowered three times. God said these things three times to emphasize their importance. Right after God said these things three times, someone pulled the sheet with the animals back into heaven.

Stop and discuss: How do you show that a message is important in your language or culture? What words are used? How many times must something be repeated to emphasize the importance of what someone says?

Luke tells us that Peter was greatly perplexed by the meaning of this vision. This means that Peter was trying to figure out why God had shown him this vision. Peter was thinking deeply and wondering, "What did this mean?" While Peter was thinking about the vision, the men Cornelius sent had found the home of Simon the tanner. The men then came to the gate to the house's courtyard and asked if Simon Peter was there. At that same moment, the Holy Spirit told Peter that there were three men looking for him. The Spirit told Peter to go with them. The Spirit of God sent these men to find Peter.

Peter came down from the roof and told the three men, "I am the one you are looking for. What is your reason for coming?" The men told Peter about Cornelius, the God-fearing Gentile centurion in Caesarea. They told Peter about how Cornelius had been instructed by an angel to send for Peter to come to the house of Cornelius. Peter was to give a message to Cornelius.

When Peter came down, the meal he had requested was probably ready. He invited the men in and they stayed for the night. It was probably too late to make the journey to Caesarea that evening.

Stop and discuss: How is hospitality shown in your culture? What are the expectations regarding the receiving of visitors?

We will see in the next passage that God gave Peter a vision about unclean or unfit food that was made clean again. This is a picture of what God will do with people. The "unclean" or outcast Gentiles will be considered part of God's family.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has 4 scenes.

First scene: While the messengers from Cornelius journey to Joppa to find Peter, Peter goes to the roof to pray. He gets hungry and asks for food to be prepared.

Second scene: Peter has a vision from God.

Third scene: The messengers arrive asking for Peter. The Holy Spirit tells Peter that men are looking for him.

Fourth scene: Peter meets the messengers and hears their request. Peter invites them to stay with him for the night.

The characters in this story include:

- Peter
- Person preparing food
- Voice from heaven
- Animals, reptiles, and birds
- 2 servants and soldier from Cornelius
- Holy Spirit
- Cornelius
- Angel

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

It is important to remember that in the previous passage Cornelius had a vision from God. An angel told Cornelius to send messengers to get Simon Peter, who was staying in Joppa.

It is important to remember that Peter is on the rooftop and praying at about noon.

Stop and show a picture of a house with a flat roof and an outside staircase, if your team has not seen one.

It is important to remember what happened in Peter's vision.

The heaven or the sky opened probably means that Peter saw an opening in the clouds. The large sheet was a big piece of cloth that probably had ropes tied to the four corners so someone could lower it. Remember that some animals are considered unclean in Jewish law. Jews are not permitted to eat these animals.

It is important to remember that the voice from heaven, God, tells Peter, "Do not call something unclean if God has made it clean." Remember that the conversation between God and Peter happened three times. "Suddenly" the sheet was pulled up. That means that right after God said these things three times, someone pulled up the sheet.

The men sent by Cornelius arrive at the same time that Peter was trying to figure out what the vision meant. Peter didn't hear them come, but God told him that they were there.

The men arrive at the gate of the house's courtyard. Houses in this area were surrounded by courtyards. A gate is a type of door that provides access to the courtyard.

It is important to remember what happens when the messengers from Cornelius arrive at the place where Peter was staying. The men tell the story of what had happened to Cornelius.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has 4 scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Peter
- Person preparing food
- Voice from heaven
- Animals, reptiles, and birds
- 2 servants and soldier from Cornelius
- Holy Spirit
- Cornelius
- Angel

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

Act out the servants and soldier traveling from Caesarea to Joppa.

Stop the action.

Act out Peter going to the roof to pray. Peter gets hungry and asks for food to be prepared. Act out Peter seeing the vision of the sheet being lowered. The voice from heaven, God, tells Peter to "get up, kill and eat."

Stop the action.

Act out Peter's response to God. God tell Peter, "Do not call something unclean if God has made it clean." This conversation happens three times. The sheet of animals goes back up to heaven.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing Peter, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Puzzled. What does all of this mean?" and "Curious. God said this three times. It must be very important." [!end] Restart the action.

Act out the messengers arriving at the house where Peter is staying. It is important to remember what the Holy Spirit tells Peter. Peter goes downstairs to meet the men. The messengers tell Peter why they have come.

If your team wants to, you can act out the message the servants of Cornelius give to Peter.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing Peter, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Grateful. Now I understand why God gave me the vision," or "Excited to be able to go share the good news about Jesus with Cornelius," and "Still hungry. I bet these men would like something to eat as well. They've traveled far." [!end] Restart the action.

Act out Peter inviting the men to stay for the night.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

Peter went to the rooftop to **pray** at the sixth hour, or noon. Use the same word for pray that you have used in previous passages. Refer to the Master Glossary for a full definition of pray.

Peter fell into a **trance**. This means that Peter was no longer aware of his surroundings, but instead he was aware of whatever God would show him. Some English versions use the word **vision**. A vision happens when someone is awake. For a complete definition of vision see the Master Glossary.

Peter saw the **heavens**, or sky, open and a large sheet was lowered by the four corners. **Heavens** can either mean the place where God lives or the sky. In this situation, the meaning is not clear, so either meaning can be used here. Use the same word for **heavens** or **sky** that you have used in previous passages. Refer to the Master Glossary for a full definition of heaven.

When Peter looked into the large sheet, he could see many different kinds of animals, reptiles, and birds. Then Peter heard a voice which told him to "Get up, kill, and eat." Peter replied, "By no means, **Lord**." This shows that Peter knew that it was God speaking to him.

Peter then said that he had never eaten anything **unclean**, unholy, or common. The Jewish law called these animals unclean. Use the same words for **Lord** and unclean that you have used in previous passages. Refer to the Master Glossary for a full definition of Lord and clean/unclean.

The **Holy Spirit** told Peter that there were three men looking for him. Use the same word for Holy Spirit that you have used in previous passages. Refer to the Master Glossary for a definition of Holy Spirit.

Peter went downstairs to speak to the men. They told Peter that Cornelius the **centurion**, a Roman military officer, had sent them. Cornelius was a **God-fearing** man. Use the same words for centurion and God-fearing that you have used in previous passages. Refer to the Master Glossary for a full definition of centurion and fear of God.

The men told Peter that Cornelius had been instructed by a **holy angel**, a spirit messenger of God, to send for Peter to come to the house of Cornelius. Use the same word for angel and holy that you have used previously. For a full definition of angel and holy, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 10:9–23

Audio Content

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Acts 10:23–33

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 10:23b-33 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Acts 10:23b-33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Peter was staying in Joppa at the home of Simon the tanner. He had a vision from God while he was praying. In that vision, God told Peter not to call unclean what God has made clean. While Peter was thinking about the vision, messengers from Cornelius arrived and told Peter that an angel of God told Cornelius to send for Peter. Peter invited the messengers to stay for the night.

The next morning, Peter and the messengers from Cornelius—two servants and a soldier—left for Caesarea. Some brothers, followers of Jesus from Joppa, joined them on the journey. We learn from a later passage that there are six brothers from Joppa who joined Peter on this trip. The following day, they arrived at Caesarea. This means that they had to spend the night someplace along the way. You will remember that it was about 50 kilometers, or 30 miles, from Joppa to Caesarea. They were probably walking.

Stop and look at a map that shows Joppa and Caesarea, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Cornelius was expecting Peter's arrival. Cornelius had invited his family and close friends to his house to hear Peter's message. These people probably worshiped and honored God, just as Cornelius did. When Peter entered the house, Cornelius fell at Peter's feet in an act of worship. "Fell at his feet" means that Cornelius bowed down before Peter. Cornelius may have thought that Peter was a supernatural being. Some people believed that a messenger from God had a god-like quality. Peter lifted up Cornelius. This means that Peter took Cornelius by the arm or hand and made him stand up. At the same time, Peter told Cornelius "Stand up. I too am a man." This meant that Peter was the same as Cornelius and that Cornelius should not worship Peter. This interaction between Peter and Cornelius probably happened at the entry area with a hallway that led to the main area of the house.

Stop and discuss: Where do people in your community greet visitors who have just entered your home or property? What are the ways that different types of visitors are greeted? How are special visitors greeted? How are expected visitors greeted? Pause this audio here.

As Peter was talking, they continued into the main part of the house. Peter found Cornelius' family and friends waiting for Peter's arrival. All of the people waiting were Gentiles, non-Jews. Peter talks to the group. He reminds them of something that he was sure they already knew: Jewish people were not allowed to come into the home of a non-Jew. This was against Jewish religious law. This rule was taught by Jewish religious teachers because the Gentiles ate and touched things that the Jewish religious law said were unclean, or unfit for service to God. If a Jewish person associated with people who ate unclean things, they would also become unclean. Peter then tells the people gathered at Cornelius' house that God has shown Peter that he should not call any person unclean or common.

Stop and discuss where are some places that you are forbidden to go to in your culture or community. Why are you not allowed to go there? What would happen if you went there? Pause this audio here.

When Cornelius called Peter to come, he came without objection. This meant that Peter understood the meaning of the vision God gave to him. He did not ask many questions about coming to visit Cornelius. Peter then asks Cornelius to explain why he sent for Peter to come. The messengers from Cornelius had already told Peter the reason. He may have asked the question so that the people gathered could hear the reason, or Peter may have asked the question to get more information.

Stop here and discuss: In your language or culture, when do people ask questions that they already know the answer to? Why do they ask these types of questions? If you do not ask these kinds of questions, discuss as a team how you might translate Peter's question. Pause this audio here.

Cornelius describes the vision he had four days ago at the same time of day-the ninth hour, or three o'clock. This is one of the Jewish prayer times. Cornelius said "Behold-or suddenly-a man in bright clothes stood before me." You will remember from previous passages that this means that something unexpected happened.

The man in bright clothes was an angel. Cornelius then recounts what the angel told him. Cornelius tells how he immediately sent the messengers to find Peter. Then Cornelius said, "It was good, or kind, of you to come." Cornelius was thanking Peter. Cornelius said that they were in the presence of God. This meant that Cornelius knew that God was there with them. Cornelius said "we" meaning Cornelius, his family, and friends were there to hear what God has told Peter to tell them. This also means that they were willing to obey the message from God.

Stop and discuss: In your language, how would you describe someone who was listening and was willing to obey what they heard? Pause this audio here.

In the next passage, Peter shares the good news about Jesus with Cornelius, his family, and friends who are gathered in the house.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Acts 10:23b-33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has four scenes.

In the first scene: Peter, the messengers from Cornelius, and some believers from Joppa travel to Caesarea.

In the second scene: Peter and his traveling companions arrive at Cornelius' house. Cornelius greets Peter.

In the third scene: They continue inside the house to where Cornelius' family and friends are waiting for Peter. Peter speaks to the group.

In the fourth scene: Cornelius describes his vision.

The characters in this passage include:

- Peter
- The two servants and a soldier from Cornelius
- Believers from Joppa
- Cornelius
- Cornelius' family and friends
- Angel

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It is important to remember that it was about 50 kilometers (or 30 miles) from Joppa to Caesarea. Peter and his companions were probably walking. They had to stop somewhere for the night. It is important to remember that some believers from Joppa accompanied Peter on this trip.

Stop and look at a map that shows Joppa and Caesarea, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Remember that Cornelius gathered his family and friends so they could hear God's message from Peter.

It is important to remember how Cornelius greets Peter. He meets Peter at the entryway to the house. Remember Peter's response to Cornelius' greeting.

It is important to remember that it has been four days since Cornelius had the vision from God. Cornelius recounts the story of his vision. Remember that when Cornelius was praying, something unexpected happened. Cornelius says "behold" or "suddenly" which tells us this is unexpected.

It is important to remember that Jewish people did not normally enter Gentile homes. Remember why Peter was willing to go into Cornelius' house.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Acts 10:23b - 33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has four scenes.

The characters in this passage include:

- Peter
- The 2 servants and a soldier from Cornelius
- Believers from Joppa
- Cornelius
- Cornelius' family and friends
- Angel

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out Peter, the messengers from Cornelius, and the believers from Joppa traveling to Caesarea. They arrive at Cornelius' house. Cornelius bows down at Peter's feet.

Pause the drama.

Ask the actor playing Peter, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You may hear things like, "What is he doing? I'm just a man like him!" or "Get up! Only God is supposed to be worshiped like this." [!end] Continue the drama.

Act out Peter helping Cornelius to stand. They enter the main part of the house where Cornelius' family and friends are waiting.

Act out Peter telling the gathered group why he is willing to come into a Gentile's home. He asks Cornelius why he has been called there.

Pause the drama. Ask the actors playing Cornelius' family and friends, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You may hear things like, "Wow, he's right! I've never had a Jew in my house," or "I wonder what is so important that Cornelius has called us all together," and "Who is this guy? What's so special about him?"

Ask the actors playing the believers from Joppa, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You may hear things like, "What are we doing here? We might become unclean," or "So that's what Peter's strange vision means!" and "This is exciting. I wonder what God is going to do." [!end] Continue the drama.

Act out Cornelius telling about his vision. You may want also to act out the angel coming to Cornelius as he retells the story.

Pause the drama. Ask the actor playing Cornelius, "What are you feeling or thinking?" You may hear things like, "I'm so happy my friends and family can be here to listen," and "Impatient. I'll tell my story quickly so I can hear what God has to say through you."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Acts 10:23b-33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The next morning, Peter and the messengers from Cornelius—two servants and a soldier—left for Caesarea. Some **brothers**, followers of Jesus from Joppa, joined them on the journey. These men were not members of Peter's family. In the New Testament, fellow believers are often referred to as brothers and sisters. They were part of God's family. Use the same word for brothers that you have used in previous passages.

When Peter entered the house, Cornelius **fell at Peter's feet** in an act of worship. "Fell at his feet" means that Cornelius bowed down before Peter. Cornelius may have thought that Peter was a supernatural being. Peter **lifted up** Cornelius. This means that Peter took Cornelius by the arm or hand and made him stand up. At the same time, Peter told Cornelius, "Stand up. I too am a man." This meant that Peter was the same as Cornelius and that Cornelius should not **worship** Peter. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information about worship, if needed.

Peter said that it was unlawful for a **Jew** to enter the home of a non-Jew. This rule was taught by Jewish religious teachers because the **Gentiles**, or non-Jews, ate and touched things that the Jewish religious law said were **unclean**, or unfit for service to God. They believed if a Jewish person associated with people who ate unclean things, they would also become unclean. Peter then tells the people gathered at Cornelius' house that God has shown Peter that he should not call any person **unclean**, or common. Use the same word for Jew, clean, and unclean that you have used in previous passages. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on Jews, Gentile, law, and clean/unclean, if needed.

When Cornelius told the story of his vision, he said that it occurred at **the ninth hour**, or three o'clock in the afternoon. The ninth hour refers to nine hours after sunrise. Use the same term for the ninth hour as you have used in previous passages.

After Cornelius finishes his story, he tells Peter, "We are all here **in the presence of God** to hear all that you have been commanded by the **Lord**." This meant that Cornelius knew that God was there with them. Here the word Lord refers to God the Father, not Jesus. Use the same word for God and Lord that you have used in previous passages. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on God and Lord God.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 10:23-33

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (2662219 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
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Acts 10:34-48

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Acts 10:34-48 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Acts 10:34-48 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Acts 10:34-48 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Peter had arrived at the home of Cornelius in Caesarea. Cornelius' friends and family members were waiting for Peter. Peter asked Cornelius why he had sent for him. Cornelius tells Peter and those gathered about the vision he had from God. Cornelius invited Peter to give them a message from God.

Peter "opened his mouth," or spoke the message God had given him. "Opened his mouth" is an expression that shows that a very important speech or message is about to follow.

Stop and discuss: In your language and culture, how does someone show that the words or message they are giving are very important? Pause this audio here.

Peter said that he now knows that God does not show partiality or favoritism. God acts the same way toward all people or nations. In this instance, nation refers to any ethnic group, race, or tribe. God accepts all people from any group that fears or honors Him and does what is right. You will remember from the previous passage that Peter learned this lesson because of the vision God gave him. Cornelius had confirmed Peter's vision when he explained to Peter about his own vision from God.

Peter then reminds Cornelius and his guests of things they already know. They know these things because they were God-fearing or God-honoring Gentiles, or non-Jewish people. Peter reminds them that God sent a message to Israel. The message that was proclaimed is the good news that people can have peace with God through Jesus Christ, the Promised Savior. Jesus is the Lord, or master of all people.

Peter reminded them that they knew about all the events that happened in Judea, the land of the Jews. He recounts how John the Baptist began in Galilee preaching or proclaiming that people should be baptized, a ceremonial washing showing that people had turned away from their sin and turned to God. God anointed or poured out on Jesus the Holy Spirit and power. Peter called Jesus, Jesus of Nazareth because he grew up in the town of Nazareth. In this culture, people are often identified by the place where they live.

Stop and discuss: What are the various ways that people identify themselves in your culture?

Stop and show a map of Judea that includes the region of Galilee, the town of Nazareth, and the city of Jerusalem. Pause this audio here.

Peter continues by reminding them that Jesus did good things and healed people who were oppressed or controlled by the devil, Satan. Jesus was able to do these things because God was with him. Now Peter begins to tell them things that they did not previously know. Peter said "we were witnesses," meaning that the apostles, or the twelve closest followers of Jesus, saw the things that Jesus did. They can give an eyewitness account of what Jesus did in Judea, the country of the Jews, and in Jerusalem, the capital of the Jews. The Jews put Jesus to death on a tree, meaning the cross, but God raised him to life again three days later. God allowed Jesus to appear to Jesus' chosen followers after he came back to life. You will remember from the Gospel of Luke and the opening passages of Acts that Jesus appeared to many people after his resurrection. Jesus ate and drank with his closest followers. Jesus also commanded these witnesses to preach or proclaim and testify to all people about Jesus.

God had appointed Jesus to judge all people-the living and the dead. Jesus will judge those who are alive and those who have died, both Jewish people and non-Jewish people. Jesus will judge people according to what they had done-if they were obedient to God or not. This will happen at the end of time during the final judgment. The Jewish Old Testament Scriptures teach that God is the one who will judge all people. This shows that Jesus has equal authority with God the Father.

Stop and discuss: How does someone become a judge in your culture? Pause this audio here.

Peter said that the Old Testament Jewish prophets also testify or give witness about Jesus. Peter is referring to the prophecies about the Messiah, the Promised Savior. These prophets declare that everyone who believes in Jesus, the Promised Savior, will receive forgiveness of sins, or disobedience against God. This forgiveness comes through the name, or authority, of Jesus. You will remember that when Jesus healed the paralyzed man, Jesus said that he had the authority to forgive sin.

While Peter was sharing the message with the people gathered, the Holy Spirit fell on or came and took control of all who heard the message. The Holy Spirit filled or controlled Cornelius, his family, and friends listening to Peter's message in the same way that the Holy Spirit filled the believers on the day of Pentecost. They were Gentiles or non-Jews. The circumcised Jewish believers, followers of Jesus, who had accompanied Peter, were amazed. You will remember that circumcision symbolized the covenant or agreement between God and his special people, the Jews. Circumcision is a requirement of all Jewish males or any non-Jews who want to follow Jewish religious laws. These men were surprised that God gave the gift of the Holy Spirit to uncircumcised, or non-Jewish, people. The Jewish believers in Jesus heard the Gentiles speaking in tongues and extolling or praising God. Here "speaking in tongues" probably means that they spoke with words or in languages that they had not learned and which the Holy Spirit enabled them to speak. You will remember that this is similar to what happened to the 120 believers in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story about a time when something completely unexpected happened. How did the people watching react to what had happened?

Optional activity: Have someone in your group tell the story of the coming of the Holy Spirit during Pentecost from the earlier passage in Acts. Pause this audio here.

When this happened, Peter made a statement in the form of a question: "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water?" Peter was saying that Cornelius, his family, and his friends should be baptized or be ceremonially washed with water to show that they now follow Jesus. Peter's reason for saying this is that God has given them the gift of the Holy Spirit, just like He did to the Jewish believers.

Peter then commanded that the new followers of Jesus be baptized in the name of Jesus. Most scholars believe that Peter was the person who baptized the new believers. Another possibility is that the Jewish believers from Joppa baptized the new believers. Peter's command can be interpreted in one of three ways. First, it could be that Peter commanded the new believers to be baptized. Another possibility was that Peter commanded the believers from Joppa to perform the baptism. A third option is that Peter commanded someone to prepare a place for the baptism to be done.

Cornelius asked Peter to stay with the new followers of Jesus for several days. Peter probably continued to tell Cornelius and the new believers more about Jesus. The believers from Joppa also probably stayed with Peter as well. By staying with Cornelius, Peter shows that he accepts believers who are non-Jews. Jewish law prohibits Jews from accepting hospitality from a non-Jew. We will learn in a later passage that the believers from Joppa accompanied Peter back to Jerusalem.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Acts 10:34-48 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This story has 4 scenes.

First scene: Peter speaks to the group gathered at Cornelius' house.

Second scene: While Peter is speaking, the Holy Spirit comes on Cornelius, his family, and his friends. They began speaking in other languages.

Third scene: Peter says that the new followers of Jesus should be baptized.

Fourth scene: Peter and the believers from Joppa stay with Cornelius and the new believers for several days.

The characters in this story include:

- Peter
- Cornelius
- Cornelius' family & friends
- Believers from Joppa

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It is important to remember that in the previous passage, Cornelius had invited Peter to give a message to the family and friends of Cornelius. They had all gathered at Cornelius' house.

It is important to remember that Peter was accompanied by Jewish followers of Jesus from Joppa.

It is important to remember that Cornelius and those gathered at his house were Gentiles, or non-Jews, who honored and worshiped God. Peter reminds them of things they already knew. He reminded them about events related to John the Baptist and Jesus.

Peter uses a word picture to describe God giving Jesus the power of the Holy Spirit. He says that God anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit and power, just like someone would be anointed with oil to show that they have divine favor and are appointed for special service to God.

Peter then continued to tell them about things they didn't know. Peter knew these things because he was an eyewitness to the events. Peter told them how Jesus died, but God raised Jesus to life. All the Jewish people did not see Jesus alive, but Jesus' followers saw him. Jesus commanded his followers to tell this good news to everyone. Peter then shares with the group the message of forgiveness of sins through belief in Jesus. Peter told them that if anyone believes in Jesus, God will forgive that person's sins.

While Peter was speaking, the Holy Spirit came upon or took control of the people hearing the message. They began speaking in languages they had never learned before and praising God. The Jewish believers were amazed that God had given the Gentiles gathered there the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Peter asks a question to the Jewish believers that he did not expect them to answer. Peter asked, "Can anyone object or prevent these Gentiles from being baptized since they have also received the Holy Spirit just like us?" Peter was saying that no one could object. They were all seeing the work of God. Peter then commanded the new believers to be baptized.

The new believers, which included Cornelius, his family, and friends, asked Peter to stay with them for several days.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Acts 10:34-48 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has 4 scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Peter
- Cornelius
- Cornelius' family & friends
- Believers from Joppa

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In the previous passage, Peter and six Jewish followers of Jesus from Joppa arrived at the home of Cornelius in Caesarea. Cornelius had called together his family and friends. Cornelius welcomed Peter and the men from Joppa into his house. Cornelius asked Peter to give them a message from God. If it is helpful to your team, you can include this scene as part of your drama.

Act out Peter addressing the crowd. He tells them that he now knows that God does not show partiality or favoritism. God accepts all people who honor God and do what is acceptable to Him. Peter reminds the people of things they already know-the recent events from the life of Jesus.

Pause the drama.

Ask the actor playing Cornelius, "How are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like "Hopeful. I want to know what message God has for me through Peter," or "Eager to hear more about Jesus." [!end] Continue the drama.

Act out Peter sharing things that Cornelius and those gathered didn't know. Peter tells how he and the other closest followers of Jesus were eyewitnesses to the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. He tells them how Jesus appeared to his followers and ate with them. Peter tells those gathered that Jesus commanded his followers to tell others that God appointed Jesus to be the judge of all people. Peter tells them that the prophets of God also confirm that forgiveness of sins comes through belief in Jesus.

Pause the drama.

Act out the Holy Spirit taking control of the people hearing Peter's message. They begin speaking in languages they had never learned before and praising God. The Jewish believers were amazed that God had given the Gentiles gathered there the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Pause the drama.

Act out Peter asking the believers from Joppa, "Can anyone object or prevent these Gentiles from being baptized since they have also received the Holy Spirit just like us?" Peter commands the new believers to be baptized. Act out the baptism.

Pause the drama.

Ask the actor playing Cornelius and the other new believers, "How are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Forgiven. I now have peace with God," or "Ready to be obedient to Jesus and be baptized," and "Eager to tell my other friends and family about Jesus." [!end] Continue the drama.

The new believers, which included Cornelius, his family, and friends, asked Peter to stay with them for several days.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Acts 10:34-48 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Peter tells Cornelius and those gathered in his house that God accepts people from every **nation** that **fears** Him. Nation in this passage refers to any ethnic group, race, or tribe. To fear God means to honor or show reverence to Him. Use the same words for nation and fear of God that you have used in previous passages. Nation and fear of God are in the Master Glossary.

Peter says that God sent the message of **good news** to **Israel**-that there is **peace** with God through Jesus **Christ**, who is **Lord** of all. In this context, peace refers to a restored relationship with God in which a person is no longer in conflict with God and His way. This person can now experience a full or complete life. In this passage, Lord refers to the master or supreme head. Peter affirms that Jesus is the master of every people, not just the Jews. Use the same words for good news, Israel, peace, Christ, and Lord as you have used in previous passages. These words are all in the Master Glossary.

After the **baptism** that John proclaimed, God **anointed** Jesus with the **Holy Spirit**. Baptism is the ceremonial washing with water showing that people have turned away from their sins and turned to God. Anoint is to pour oil on someone or something to set them apart for service to God. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God. Use the same words for baptism, anointed, and Holy Spirit that you have used previously. The terms baptism, anointed, holy, and Holy Spirit are in the Master Glossary.

Peter said that Jesus healed all who were oppressed by the **devil**, Satan. The devil or Satan is the leader of the evil spirits. Use the same word for devil that you have used in previous passages. For more information, refer to devil or Satan in the Master Glossary.

Peter said that he and the other disciples were witnesses to what Jesus did in the **country of the Jews** and in **Jerusalem**. The country of the Jews refers to Judea. Jerusalem is the most important city for the Jews. Use the same words for the country of the Jews and Jerusalem that you have used previously. For more information, refer to Judea and Jerusalem in the Master Glossary.

Stop and show a map of Judea and Jerusalem if your team needs to see one. Pause this audio here.

Peter told those gathered that all the **prophets** testify that everyone who believes in Jesus received **forgiveness of sins**. A prophet is a person who receives a message from God that he must give to the people. Sin is disobedience to God. In this context, forgiveness is when God wipes away the sin of a person and restores their relationship with Him. Use the same words for prophet, forgiveness, and sins that you have used in previous passages. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on prophet, forgiveness, and sin.

The Holy Spirit came on or took control of those who heard the message. The **circumcised believers**, the Jewish followers of Jesus, were amazed. Circumcision is the Jewish custom of cutting off the loose skin at the end of a boy's penis. It is a sign that the male is a part of the Jewish religion and God's chosen people Israel. Use the same word for circumcised and believer that you have used previously. For more information on the words circumcision and believer, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Jewish believers were amazed because the gift of the Holy Spirit was given to the **Gentiles**, or non-Jews. Gentiles were **speaking in tongues**. In this context, speaking in tongues probably means that they spoke with words or in languages that they had not learned and which the Holy Spirit enabled them to speak. Translate the words for Gentiles and speaking in tongues in the same way as you did in previous passages. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on Gentiles.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 10:34-48

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3739538 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Acts 11:1-18

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 11:1-18 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?

6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

This story happens after an entire household of Gentiles in Caesarea believed in Jesus. Remember this was the Roman commander named Cornelius, his family, and his servants. This story refers to Cornelius only as a "Gentile man." Peter and six other Jewish men who believed in Jesus saw this happen. Then other apostles and Jews who believed in Jesus, or "brothers and sisters," who lived in other areas in the region of Judea heard this news. The apostles were the Jewish disciples Jesus chose as His representatives. Before Jesus returned to heaven, Jesus told the apostles to tell people about Him.

Peter and the six men then traveled southeast from Caesarea about 112 kilometers, 70 miles, to return to Jerusalem. In Jerusalem, the Jews who believed in Jesus and closely followed Jewish laws, or Jewish circumcised believers, criticized Peter. Some Jewish believers in Jesus continued to strictly follow Jewish religious laws. They were called "the circumcised," for example, because they continued to insist that Jewish men be circumcised according to Jewish law. They even did not want to eat with Gentiles, or non-Jewish believers, because they considered them unclean. These believers accused Peter of breaking the Jewish laws by eating a meal in the uncircumcised Gentile's house. So, Peter explained what happened.

Show a map that shows Peter's journeys in Judea, including Jerusalem, Joppa, and Caesarea.

The rest of this story is Peter retelling events that already happened. Peter told the Jewish believers that he was staying at someone's house in Joppa. While Peter was praying, he went into a trance. Then God showed Peter a vision. A "vision" refers to a supernatural experience in which God reveals a message to a person when they are awake. In the vision, Peter saw something like a large sheet or piece of cloth come down to him by its four corners from heaven, or the sky. Peter looked inside the sheet when it came down to him. Peter saw tame animals or "four-footed animals of the earth," wild animals, reptiles or "crawling creatures," and birds or "birds of the air or sky." Jewish law considered these animals "unclean" or ritually unfit to eat. So, devout Jews like Peter never ate these animals. In the vision God told Peter to kill and eat these animals.

Discuss a true example of someone in your culture who had a vision. What did this person experience? How did this person know they were having a vision? Show a drawing of what the sheet with the animals might have looked like coming from the sky.

Peter said, "No, Lord, or Master." Peter said that he had never eaten any unclean food. God spoke to Peter again saying that God had made the unclean animals clean. So, God told Peter not to call the animals unclean anymore. All this happened three times. Then God caused the sheet and everything in it to return to the sky. Peter's vision ended.

As soon as the vision stopped, three Gentile men arrived at the house where Peter was staying in Joppa. A Gentile man from Caesarea sent the three men to ask Peter to come to Caesarea. The Holy Spirit told Peter not to worry that the men were Gentiles and that Peter should go with the Gentile men. Six "brothers," or Jewish men who believed in Jesus, also went with Peter and the three Gentile men to Caesarea. The group arrived at the house of the Gentile man who had asked Peter to come. This Gentile told the Jewish believers that one of God's messengers, an angel, came to his house. The angel told the Gentile man to send messengers to Joppa, asking a man named Simon Peter to come to meet the Gentile man in Caesarea. The angel explained that Peter would tell the Gentile man and everyone in the house a message about how God could save them from the consequences of their sins. Some translations talk about Peter's message "by which you will be saved." It is important to note that the words do not do the saving. God is the one Who saves. Peter is just sharing the information about Jesus.

While Peter told the group of Gentiles about Jesus, "the Holy Spirit fell on them, just as he fell on us at the beginning." Here Peter remembers the time God sent the Holy Spirit to all the Jews in Jerusalem who believed in Jesus. God did the same thing again, this time sending the Holy Spirit to all the Gentiles who believed in Jesus. Peter also remembered what Jesus said to His disciples before Jesus went back to heaven: "John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

Peter finished telling the Jewish believers in Jerusalem about God accepting the Gentiles into God's family. Peter then said that God gave the Gentiles who believed in Jesus the Holy Spirit, just as God gave the Holy Spirit to the Jews who believed in Jesus. Peter asked, "Who was I to stand in God's way?" Peter did not expect an answer to this question. God accepted the Gentile believers. Peter knew that, if he did not accept the Gentile believers, that would be the same as opposing God. Peter is saying he accepts the Gentile believers just like God did. Peter's question also implies that the Jewish believers opposed God if they did not accept the Gentile believers. After hearing this report, the Jewish believers in Jerusalem stopped criticizing Peter. In fact, the Jewish believers praised God for giving the same opportunity or "gift" to the Gentile believers as to the Jewish believers. God gave these believers the opportunity to "repent," or turn away from sins and turn to God. Because these Gentiles repented, they could begin living their lives by following God's ways.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has 6 scenes.

First scene: Jewish believers in Judea heard about Gentiles in Caesarea accepting God's word.

Second scene: In Jerusalem the Jewish believers criticized Peter for eating with the Gentiles.

Third scene: Peter tells the Jewish believers in Jerusalem about the vision from God.

Fourth scene: Peter tells how God arranged for Peter to go to the Gentile's house in Caesarea.

Fifth scene: Peter tells the Jewish believers that God gave the Holy Spirit to those Gentiles.

Sixth scene: The Jewish believers praised God. They accepted that God saved these Gentiles.

The characters in this story include:

- Simon Peter and the six Jewish men who believed in Jesus and traveled with Peter
- The apostles and other Jewish believers who heard that the Gentiles believed in Jesus
- The voice from heaven-God
- The Jewish believers in Jerusalem who criticized Peter for socializing with Gentiles
- Three Gentile men-messengers sent by the Gentile man who sent for Peter
- The Holy Spirit
- An angel-the messenger of God who appeared to the Gentile man who sent for Peter
- The household members, family and servants of the Gentile man
- You might also include Jesus talking to his disciples if it helps you to visualize the quote

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

In the first scene, the apostles and other believers throughout Judea heard the news that the Gentiles accepted God's word. Some translations say "now" or "soon." This means that the Jews heard the news just a short time after the Gentiles accepted God's word.

Discuss how you think people in multiple, far away locations could hear this news soon after it happened. Remember that people at that time did not have technology or newspapers.

In scene two, Peter and his companions traveled from Caesarea to Jerusalem. Some translations say "went up" to Jerusalem because people had to walk uphill to go there. In Jerusalem, the Jewish believers criticized Peter.

Jewish law stated that entering a non-Jew's home made a Jew ritually unclean or unfit. Some translations call the non-Jews "Gentiles" and other translations call the non-Jews "uncircumcised." Jewish law required circumcision and only Jews practiced circumcision. Devout Jews never socialized with an uncircumcised person or Gentile. Peter had even eaten a meal at the Gentile man's house, so the Jewish believers considered this unclean.

Discuss something that a person can do that would make them unfit in your culture. How do other people respond to this person who has done this?

In the third scene, Peter retells what happened to him in a previous story. Peter was praying and went into a trance, a temporary sleep-like state while awake. Then Peter saw a vision of a sheet coming towards him from heaven or the sky. Most translations say something like, a large sheet "was being lowered" by its four corners. The story does not describe who lowered the sheet. The sheet came down from the sky as though someone held it by its four corners. God caused this to happen, but Peter did not see God doing this action.

Peter saw types of animals in the sheet that God had forbidden the Jewish people to eat. Devout Jews like Peter never ate these "unclean" or ritually unfit to eat animals. However, God told Peter to kill and eat these animals. Peter respectfully disagreed with God because Peter had never eaten anything unclean before. A voice from heaven, or God, told Peter that God had made those things clean. God did not want Peter to call those things unclean anymore. "This happened three times" refers to either God's command to Peter or God's command and Peter's reply.

Then some translations say something like the sheet "was pulled up to heaven again." The story does not describe who pulled the sheet. The sheet returned to the sky as though someone pulled it. God caused the sheet to return to the sky. Peter could not see it anymore. Peter's vision ended.

Discuss possible ways to describe the sheet coming down from and returning to the sky.

In scene four, Peter told the Jewish believers how God arranged for Peter to tell the Gentiles in Caesarea about Jesus. Peter told the story from his perspective, starting in the middle. The events of the story actually start when an angel told the Gentile man to send messengers to bring Peter to the Gentile's house. Remember that we know from the previous story that this man is named Cornelius. However, this story only refers to Cornelius as the "Gentile man." The angel said Peter would explain how God could save everyone in the house from the consequences of their sins. The Gentile man sent the messengers and they found Peter in Joppa just after this vision ended. The Holy Spirit reassured Peter it was okay to go with the non-Jewish messengers. Peter went with the Gentile messengers, to the Gentile man's home. Peter also points out that 6 other Jewish men who believed in Jesus were with him and also went to the Gentile man's house.

In scene five, Peter told the Jewish believers that God gave the Holy Spirit to those Gentiles just like God did for Jewish believers. Peter quoted Jesus' words to the disciples that God would baptize them with the Holy Spirit. Peter saw that God accepted the Gentiles because they also believed in Jesus. Peter also accepted the Gentiles and implied the Jewish believers should, too.

In the sixth scene, the Jewish believers "fell silent" or stopped criticizing Peter and, instead, praised God. These Jewish believers recognized that God accepted these Gentiles into God's family. The Jews knew that these Gentiles had turned away from their sins and turned to God, living life by following God's ways.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has 6 scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Simon Peter and the six Jewish men who believed in Jesus and traveled with Peter
- The apostles and other Jewish believers who heard that the Gentiles believed in Jesus
- The voice from heaven-God
- The Jewish believers in Jerusalem who criticized Peter for socializing with Gentiles
- Three Gentile men-messengers sent by the Gentile man who sent for Peter
- The Holy Spirit
- An angel-the messenger of God who appeared to the Gentile man who sent for Peter
- The household members, family and servants of the Gentile man
- You might also include Jesus talking to his disciples if it helps you to visualize the quote

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

In the first scene the apostles and other Jewish believers across Judea heard about Gentiles accepting God.

Stop the action.

In scene two, Peter and his companions traveled from Caesarea to Jerusalem. In Jerusalem, the Jewish believers criticized Peter for eating a meal at the Gentile man's house. These Jewish believers strictly followed the Jewish rituals. They felt that circumcision was a requirement to follow Jesus.

Stop the action.

In the third scene, Peter is telling the story of what happened. Peter was praying and went into a trance. Then Peter saw a vision of a sheet coming towards him from the sky. The sheet came down from the sky as though someone held it by its four corners. God told Peter to eat the unclean animals in the sheet.

Stop the action.

Peter said, "No, Lord," because Peter had never eaten anything unclean before.

Stop the action.

God told Peter that God had made those unclean animals clean. This happened three times. Then the sheet returned to the sky as though someone pulled it. Peter's vision ended.

Stop the action.

In scene four, after Peter's vision, three Gentile messengers arrived at Joppa and asked Peter to go with them to Caesarea. The Holy Spirit told Peter to go with these men, not discriminating against them because they were Gentiles. Peter and his companions traveled with the messengers to Caesarea.

Stop the action.

Peter's group arrived at the Gentile man's house in Caesarea. This Gentile said that an angel had said Peter would explain how God could save everyone in the household from the consequences of their sins.

Stop the action.

In scene five, Peter tells the Jewish believers that God also gave the Holy Spirit to these Gentiles. Peter quoted Jesus' words that God would baptize the believers with the Holy Spirit. God accepted these Gentiles. So did Peter. Peter implied that the Jewish believers should accept these Gentiles, too.

Stop the action.

In the sixth scene, the Jewish believers "fell silent" or stopped criticizing Peter and, instead, praised God. These Jewish believers recognized that the Gentiles turned away from their sin and turned to God. So, God accepted the Gentiles into God's family.

Stop the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

The **apostles** and other Jewish **believers** or "brothers" and "sisters" heard the news that the **Gentiles** or **uncircumcised** people had received the word of God. Jesus had appointed men as His representatives, or apostles. Believers refers to the people who believed in and followed Jesus. Gentiles were non-Jews. Jews practiced circumcision and non-Jews did not practice circumcision. Jews thought that a man who followed God must do the ritual of circumcision. So Jews called non-Jews uncircumcised people. Here the "word of God" refers to the gospel or good news about Jesus.

Use the same words for **apostles**, **believers**, and **Gentiles**, or **uncircumcised**, that you have used in previous passages. Refer to the Master Glossary for a full definition of apostles, believers and Gentiles, or uncircumcised.

The Jewish believers in Jerusalem criticized Peter for eating in a Gentile's house.

Then Peter explained what happened. Peter was in Joppa **praying** when he went into a trance, which means that he was no longer aware of his surroundings. Then God gave him a **vision**. A vision refers to a supernatural experience in which God reveals a message to a person when they are awake.

Peter saw something like a large sheet come down to him from the sky as though someone held it by its four corners. Peter saw tame and wild animals, reptiles, and birds in the sheet. A voice from heaven told Peter to kill and eat these animals. Peter responded to God, "No, **Lord**." Here Peter's use of the word "Lord" shows that Peter knows the voice from heaven is God.

Use the same words for pray, **vision**, and **Lord** that you have used in previous passages. Refer to the Master Glossary for a full definition of vision and Lord.

Peter continues to say that he has never eaten anything **unclean**. Jewish law considered the animals in the sheet as unclean, or ritually unfit to eat. The voice from heaven said that Peter should not call something unclean because God has made it clean. This happened three times. Then God caused the sheet to return to **heaven**. Here heaven may refer to where God lives or to the sky so you can translate using either meaning.

Use the same words for **unclean** that you have used in previous passages. Refer to the Master Glossary for a full definition of clean/unclean and heaven.

Immediately after Peter's vision, the **Holy Spirit** told Peter to go with the three Gentile messengers. The Holy Spirit told Peter not to hesitate or worry that these men were Gentiles, or non-Jews. The Gentile man in Caesarea explained to them that an **angel** gave him a message. The angel, a spirit messenger from God, told this Gentile man to send messengers to bring Peter to tell everyone in the Gentile man's **household** how God could **save** them from the consequences of their sins so that they could join God's family. The household likely included this Gentile man, his family, and his servants.

Use the same words for **Holy Spirit**, **angel**, **household**, and **save** that you have used in previous passages. Refer to the Master Glossary for a full definition of Holy Spirit, angel, household, and save.

Peter started to tell these Gentiles about God. The Holy Spirit came onto these Gentiles in the same way the Holy Spirit had already come onto the Jews who believed in Jesus. Peter remembered Jesus saying to the disciples, "John **baptized** with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." Baptism is a ceremonial or

ritual washing to show that someone has followed Jesus. Jewish believers thought people who believed in Jesus must do the ritual of baptism in order to show that they had joined God's family.

Use the same word for **baptize** that you have used in previous passages. Refer to the Master Glossary for a full definition of baptize.

When the other Jewish believers heard what Peter said, they stopped objecting and began **glorifying** or **praising** God. These Jewish believers knew God had also given the Gentiles the opportunity to **repent** of their **sins** in order to have "life." This meant that the Gentiles turned away from their sins and lived in a new way, following God. "Life" also refers to eternal life with God forever.

Use the same words for **glorify**, **praise**, **repent**, and **sins** that you have used in previous passages. Refer to the Master Glossary for a full definition of glorify, praise, repent and sin.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 11:1–18

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3396458 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

Acts 11:19–26

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 11:19–26 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

Before this passage, Peter gave a report to Jewish Christians in Jerusalem about Cornelius' family in Caesarea. God's Spirit had led Peter to share the good news of Jesus with Cornelius and his family. Even though Cornelius' family was Greek, they received the Holy Spirit by faith. The Jewish followers of Jesus were amazed that God was leading Greeks to turn from sin and turn to God by believing in Jesus.

In this passage, we see God working again to bring many non-Jewish people to faith in Jesus. Although this story follows Peter's report in Jerusalem about Cornelius, it might have taken place at the same time as Peter's experience with Cornelius.

This story begins with a very similar statement that follows Stephen's death, found in Acts 8:1. Luke, the writer of Acts, repeats that followers of Jesus were persecuted in Jerusalem, and they fled to different places. They went to Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, speaking God's word only with Jews. It might not have even occurred to them that Greeks or other non-Jews could hear and receive God's word about Jesus.

Do you find it hard to share the good news with people from a different cultural background or native language than yours? If so, why is it hard?

Show a map that includes Syria, Phoenicia, Cyprus, Antioch, the Orontes River, Cyrene, Tarsus, and Jerusalem in New Testament times.

There were many Jews already living in Phoenicia, Antioch, and Cyprus, which explains why the scattered believers went there. However, Antioch was well-known for its wickedness. Greek and Assyrian gods were worshipped in many ways that even included prostitution.

Some of the men who fled from Jerusalem to Antioch were originally from Cyprus and Cyrene. Both Jewish and Greek people lived in Cyprus and Cyrene. The men told the good news about the Lord Jesus to both Jews and Greek people in Antioch, which would have been natural for them to do.

The men from Cyprus and Cyrene told the good news about the "Lord Jesus," or "Master Jesus." "Lord Jesus" would have been a better phrase to describe Jesus to Greeks than "Jesus Christ" or "Jesus the Messiah." Greek people were not waiting for a Messiah, or Savior. However, many Greeks in Antioch were seeking a divine lord through pagan rituals.

Show a picture of the ruins of Ancient Antioch and a picture of modern day Antioch.

The Lord's hand was with the men from Cyprus and Cyrene. "The Lord's hand" is an Old Testament way of referring to the Lord God's power. God continued to help followers of Jesus as they taught about Jesus. As a result, many people in Antioch believed in Jesus and made Jesus their Lord, or Master.

Have your team members share a time when it was obvious that God's hand, or God's power was with them in a situation.

Followers of Jesus in Jerusalem heard about what was going on in Antioch. Jerusalem was considered the mother church at the time. They likely sent Barnabas to confirm the news of the Greeks turning to Jesus. This is similar to when the Jerusalem church sent Peter and John to Samaria after they heard that the good news about Jesus was received there.

Show a picture of a model of ancient Jerusalem.

Barnabas was glad and rejoiced at what he found in Antioch. Barnabas, whose name means encouragement, encouraged the church to stay completely dedicated to the Lord. Luke then comments that Barnabas is a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith. The Holy Spirit enabled Barnabas to help many people by leading them to the Lord Jesus.

Have your team discuss the following: Do you know someone who frequently encourages others? What does that person do or say to encourage others? How does that person have an impact in your church?

Barnabas needed help to teach the new followers of Jesus in Antioch. Barnabas went to look for Saul in Saul's hometown of Tarsus.

About ten years ago, Saul had been boldly preaching about Jesus to Greek-speaking Jews in Jerusalem. The Greek Jews then tried to kill Saul, so the followers of Jesus sent Saul to Tarsus. Saul was based in Tarsus but shared the good news in Syria and Cilicia for about ten years. When Barnabas went to find Saul it might have been difficult because Saul may have been traveling. Then Barnabas and Saul went to Antioch together.

Show a map of the eastern Mediterranean that includes Antioch, Tarsus, and the regions of Syria and Cilicia.

Barnabas and Saul met the followers of Jesus in Antioch, teaching them regularly for a whole year. They taught God's message about Jesus to many people. People from many different cultures and ethnicities lived in Antioch. Barnabas and Saul likely taught many new followers as well, both Gentiles and Jews. It was probably the non-believers in Antioch who came up with a new name for the believers-Christians, or followers of Christ. Christianity began to be known as a faith separate from Judaism.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has four scenes.

First scene: After Stephen was stoned, followers of Jesus in Jerusalem fled north. Some stopped in Phoenicia. Other followers of Jesus took a boat to Cyprus. Others stopped in Antioch.

Wherever they went, the followers of Jesus who fled Jerusalem told Jews about Jesus. However, some men from Cyprus and Cyrene began to tell Greek-speaking non-Jews about Jesus as well. God's power was with these men. As a result, a large number of people in Antioch, probably mostly non-Jews, believed and turned to the Lord.

Second scene: The church in Jerusalem hears about what is happening in Antioch. The Jerusalem church was interested in the spread of the good news to Antioch, so they sent Barnabas. When Barnabas arrived, he saw

the grace of God. God had strengthened the men of Cyprus and Cyrene to spread the word of the Lord, and many Greeks had come to faith in Jesus. Barnabas rejoiced and encouraged the church at Antioch to remain faithful and devoted to the Lord. Many more people were brought to the Lord in Antioch.

Third scene: Barnabas needs help teaching the large group of new believers in Antioch. Barnabas goes to look for Saul in Tarsus and returns to Antioch with Saul.

Fourth scene: Together, Barnabas and Saul teach many followers of Jesus in Antioch for a year. The followers of Jesus in Antioch were the first ones to be called Christians.

The characters in this story include:

- Followers of Jesus who fled Jerusalem after Stephen's death
- Jews who hear the word of God from the scattered followers of Jesus
- Men from Cyprus and Cyrene who went to Antioch
- Greeks in Antioch
- Church in Jerusalem
- Barnabas
- Saul
- Church in Antioch

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives to visualize the story and the action in it.

In this story, there are a lot of references to places. It would be good to keep out the map of the area as you are listening to it.

It is important to know about the places in this story. Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch are all north of Jerusalem. There were Jews already living in these three areas. Phoenicia is a plain in northern Palestine on the Mediterranean coast that includes the towns of Sidon and Tyre. Cyprus is a large island in the Mediterranean Sea, about 160 kilometers off the coast. Antioch is a city about 24 kilometers east of the Mediterranean coast situated on the Orontes River. Antioch was the capital of Syria and the third largest city in the Roman empire. Antioch was a beautiful city, planned out carefully. Cool afternoon breezes blew through the city.

It is important to note that the men from Cyprus and Cyrene already spoke Greek, so talking to Greeks or non-Jews about Jesus was natural. The men were from countries where non-Jews were more common. However, it is implied that the men were sharing the word of God with Jews as well.

It is important to think about the Jerusalem church. Jerusalem was the center of the church, or the "mother church," at the time. Many events of Jesus' ministry took place in Jerusalem. The disciples received the Holy Spirit and began their own ministry in Jerusalem.

It is important to note the kind of man the Jerusalem church sent to Antioch. Barnabas was known as an encourager. Also, Cyprus was Barnabas' home country, so he already spoke Greek, the dominant language of Antioch. Luke takes the time in this story to note that Barnabas is a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith. Barnabas looked for the best in others.

At that time, followers of Jesus usually referred to each other as believers, brothers, or disciples. It is likely that Gentile non-believers gave followers of Jesus the name, "Christians," which means one who follows Christ. The term Christian appears only two other times in the New Testament.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has four scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Followers of Jesus who fled Jerusalem after Stephen's death
- Jews who hear the word of God from the scattered followers of Jesus
- Men from Cyprus and Cyrene who went to Antioch
- Greeks in Antioch
- Church in Jerusalem
- Barnabas
- Saul
- Church in Antioch

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

After Stephen is stoned to death, followers of Jesus in Jerusalem scatter to different places.

Stop the action.

Some followers of Jesus from Jerusalem go to Phoenicia. Some take a boat to Cyprus, and some travel to Antioch. They speak the word of God about Jesus to only Jewish people.

In the group that goes to Antioch, there are some men from Cyprus and Cyrene. These men begin to also share with Greek people living in Antioch about the Lord Jesus. The Lord's power is with the men from Cyprus and Cyrene. Many people, including Greeks, believed the word about Jesus and turned to the Lord.

Stop the action.

Ask the Greeks in Antioch who turned to the Lord, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Happy that someone shared the word with me," "Grateful that Jesus died for all people," or "Ready to tell others about the Lord."

The church in Jerusalem gets the news about what is happening in Antioch. They send Barnabas to Antioch. When Barnabas arrives in Antioch, he sees the grace of God in action. Men from Cyprus and Cyrene had shared the Lord's word with Greek people, and many Greeks have come to faith.

Stop the action.

Barnabas rejoices and encourages the followers of Jesus to remain completely faithful to the Lord. Barnabas was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and strong in faith. More and more people in Antioch were brought to the Lord.

Barnabas knows he needs help teaching so many new believers. Barnabas goes to Tarsus to look for Saul. Saul has been traveling and ministering across the provinces of Syria and Cilicia for about ten years. It takes some time to find Saul. Barnabas finds Saul and brings him to Antioch.

Stop the action.

For a whole year, Saul and Barnabas meet regularly with the church in Antioch, teaching large crowds of people. The followers of Jesus in Antioch have different native languages and different homelands. This does not matter. They are the first followers of Jesus to be called Christians.

Stop the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

Followers of Jesus in Jerusalem were **persecuted** after Stephen was stoned to death. Persecution is when followers of Jesus are harmed because of their beliefs. Sometimes they are put in prison, beaten, stoned, or harmed in another way.

The followers of Jesus in Jerusalem went to Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, speaking the **word**. They were telling the message of Jesus, the good news, wherever they went.

However, the followers of Jesus only spoke the word to **Jews**. Jews refers to the people group descended from Isaac, the son of Abraham. It is both an ethnic group and a group of people who practice the religion of Judaism. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information.

Some of the men who fled Jerusalem were from Cyprus and Cyrene. In Antioch they began to tell God's message to the **Greeks**. Greek refers to Greek-speaking people who were not Jews. Greeks are a smaller group within the larger group of **Gentiles**, or anyone who is not Jewish. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on Gentiles.

The men in Antioch were telling the good news about the Lord Jesus, and the **Lord's hand was with them**. "The Lord's hand" is an expression used in the Old Testament that means the Lord God's power was with them. God's strength helped them. As a result, many people in Antioch believed and **turned to the Lord**. "Turned to the Lord" conveys commitment and trust in the Lord. The phrase suggests that most of the new believers were non-Jews leaving false gods and turning to the true God.

The news about the many new followers of Jesus in Antioch **reached the ears** of the church in Jerusalem. Here, **church** does not mean a building, it means a group of people who believe in Jesus, specifically in Jerusalem. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on church. "Reached the ears" means that news about the growing church in Antioch was heard in the ears of the church in Jerusalem. They heard the exciting news! So they sent Barnabas to Antioch. When Barnabas arrived, he saw the **grace** of God. In most New Testament contexts, grace refers to God's favor shown to undeserving people. Salvation was freely given to many Greeks in Antioch. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on grace.

Barnabas rejoiced at what he had seen, and encouraged the church in Antioch to **remain true to the Lord** with **all their hearts**. "Remain true to the Lord" indicates that the church should remain loyal and dedicated to the Lord. The church in Antioch should not give up obeying the Lord. "With all their hearts" indicates they should do this wholeheartedly, or completely, with purpose, devotion, and determination.

Barnabas was a good man, full of the **Holy Spirit** and faith. The Holy Spirit, or God's spirit, equipped Barnabas in his ministry. The Holy Spirit led Barnabas to encourage others with divine wisdom and authority. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on the Holy Spirit. Barnabas was also full of **faith**. He put his whole trust and confidence in God. Barnabas fully trusted Jesus as Lord and believed God would empower him to carry out God's work. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on faith.

Barnabas needed help teaching the new followers of Jesus in Antioch. Barnabas went to Tarsus to get Saul. For a year they taught the followers of Jesus and many more people in Antioch. The **disciples** were called **Christians** for the first time in Antioch. Here, disciples means followers of Jesus, not Jesus' twelve disciples. The followers of Jesus took on the name "Christians," a name probably given and used mostly by non-Christians. In the Roman world, the confession "Caesar is Lord" was common. In contrast, followers of Jesus would say, "Christ is Lord." Christian means one who is a follower of **Christ**. "Christ" is the Greek word for the Hebrew word "Messiah." It means someone whom God has anointed, or appointed for a special task. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on Christ.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 11:19–26

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3890034 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
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- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

Acts 11:27–30

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 11:27–30 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

Followers of Jesus were scattered from Jerusalem after Stephen's death. They faithfully shared the good news of Jesus where they went. Many people, both Jews and non-Jews, turned to Jesus as Lord. Antioch is one of the places this happened. So many people turned to the Lord that Barnabas and Saul came to Antioch to teach them. In this story, the growing church in Antioch helps other brothers and sisters in Christ in Judea.

Luke begins this story with "during this time," or "now in these days." It is unclear exactly how much time has passed, but we see at the end of the passage that Barnabas and Saul are still in Antioch when this story takes place.

Prophets come from Jerusalem to Antioch. Since the prophets come from Jerusalem, they are probably Jewish Christians. Prophets are followers of Jesus who receive a message from God and give it to other people. Sometimes prophets told people about things that would happen in the future, but that was not their main purpose. Paul's letters mention the spiritual gift of prophecy. Paul considered Christian prophets to be a very important part of the church.

Show a map that includes the region of Judea, the city of Antioch, and the city of Jerusalem.

Discuss the following with your translation team: In your culture, are there people who predict the future? What kind of influence do they have in your community? Are the people who predict the future respected by the community?

Agabus is one of the prophets who comes to Antioch. This is the first mention of Agabus, but Luke writes about Agabus later in Acts. In both accounts, Agabus makes a prediction of future events. In this story, Agabus gives a message through the power of God's Spirit, or the Holy Spirit. God's Spirit enables Agabus to predict that there will be a great famine in the entire Roman world, or wherever people live.

Luke uses parentheses when writing "the famine took place during the reign of Claudius." This is not part of Agabus' message. This is a comment added by Luke. Claudius was the fourth Roman emperor. He reigned from the years A.D. 41 to 54. While Claudius was emperor, there were many bad harvests and food shortages in Rome, Greece, Egypt, and Judea.

Show a map of the Roman Empire during A.D. 45-47.

Show a picture of Emperor Claudius.

Luke does not say how the Christians in Antioch know that Judea is going to suffer from the famine. However, all the disciples, or devoted followers of Jesus in Antioch, decide to send help to Judea. Everyone gives as much as they can. Money is easier to send than food. It is implied that people collected money, although "money" is not used in the passage.

Discuss the following with your team: Has your community ever experienced a famine, or a shortage of food? If so, how did your community survive? In your culture, how do communities help others when there is a bad harvest or food shortage?

The followers of Jesus in Antioch have different homelands and ethnicities. Some are Jewish believers and many are non-Jewish believers. The church in Antioch might already feel unity with the church in Jerusalem, even though most believers in Jerusalem are Jewish. The believers in Antioch might be grateful to the church in Judea

because the good news about Jesus had come from Jerusalem. Despite cultural differences, the followers of Jesus in Antioch give as much as they can to help their brothers and sisters in Christ in Judea.

Barnabas and Saul take the gift to Judea and give it to the elders, or men who are leaders in the Judean churches. The passage says relief was sent to Judea. Jerusalem is not mentioned here. However, later in Acts after Herod's death, Luke writes that Barnabas and Saul leave Jerusalem and return to Antioch. We can infer Barnabas and Saul go to Jerusalem to distribute the relief.

Show a map that includes Jerusalem, Antioch, and Judea.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has three scenes.

First scene: Prophets, or messengers of God, left Jerusalem and went to Antioch.

Second scene: The followers of Jesus in Antioch are gathered together. Agabus, one of the prophets from Jerusalem, stands up. By the power of God's Spirit, Agabus tells the believers that there will be a great famine all over the world. The followers of Jesus in Antioch decide to send relief to their brothers and sisters in Christ in Judea.

Third scene: The believers in Antioch each contribute as much as they can. Barnabas and Saul take the gifts to Judea. They give the gifts to the elders in Judea.

The characters in this story include:

- Prophets that leave Jerusalem and travel to Antioch
- Agabus
- Disciples, or followers of Jesus in Antioch
- Claudius
- Luke
- Followers of Jesus in Judea
- Barnabas
- Saul
- Elders in Judea

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

This story has a few different locations.

Show a map that includes the region of Judea, the city of Antioch, and the city of Jerusalem.

Jerusalem is a city in the province of Judea.

When this story begins, Saul and Barnabas are still in Antioch. They are teaching the followers of Jesus. Many new believers are non-Jewish. The church is growing in Antioch.

It is important to note the phrase "prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch." The Greek language uses different words for traveling to a higher or lower location. Jerusalem is at a higher elevation than Antioch. The prophets travel down in elevation, or closer to sea level.

Before Agabus delivers the message about the famine, he stands up. We can assume the believers are gathered together, and everyone is sitting down. Agabus stands to give the message through the power of God's Spirit. Agabus predicts that wherever people live all over the earth, mainly the Roman Empire, there will be a great famine.

Followers of Jesus in Antioch likely gathered money for the relief fund in different ways. Some might have taken money out of their fixed income. Others might have sold property to contribute. This would be similar to what happened in Jerusalem after the Holy Spirit came. Many followers of Jesus in Jerusalem sold their land and gave the money to provide for others in the church.

The passage says relief was sent to followers of Jesus in Judea. However, in the next chapter of Acts, Luke mentions that Barnabas and Saul leave Jerusalem and return to Antioch. We can infer that Barnabas and Saul go to Jerusalem.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has three scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Prophets that leave Jerusalem and travel to Antioch
- Agabus
- Disciples, or followers of Jesus in Antioch
- Claudius
- Luke
- Followers of Jesus in Judea
- Barnabas
- Saul
- Elders in Judea

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

Saul and Barnabas are still in Antioch teaching the followers of Jesus. During this time, prophets, or messengers of God, travel from Jerusalem to Antioch.

The followers of Jesus in Antioch are gathered together and sitting down. Agabus, one of God's messengers from Jerusalem, stands up. Speaking through the power of God's Spirit, Agabus tells the gathered believers that wherever people are living on the earth, there will be a great famine.

Stop the action.

Ask the followers of Jesus in Antioch, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Worried," "Concerned," or "Surprised." [!end] Restart the action.

The followers of Jesus in Antioch decide to do something about the coming famine. They decide to send help to their brothers and sisters in Christ who live in Judea. They gather as much money as they can.

Stop the action.

The gifts are given to Barnabas and Saul. Barnabas and Saul take the gifts and travel to Judea. They give the gifts to the elders, or older men who are leaders in the Judean churches.

Stop the action.

Ask Barnabas and Saul, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Amazed," "Nervous to be back where Stephen was killed," or "Happy to see my friends in Jerusalem again."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

Saul and Barnabas are in Antioch, teaching the growing church. Prophets from Jerusalem travel to Antioch. **Prophets** are people who receive a call and message from God, and take the message to God's people. A prophet understands that his most important job is to take the message of God to people. In this story, a prophet tells about something that is going to happen in the future, but that is not the primary job of a prophet. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on prophets. Use the same word for prophet that you have used in previous stories.

The followers of Jesus in Antioch are gathered together. Agabus, a prophet from Jerusalem, stands up and makes a **prediction** by the Spirit. "Predict" is foretelling when something will happen in the future. **Spirit** is the power or authority God gives someone to do amazing things. Spirit in this story refers to God's Spirit, or the **Holy Spirit**. God's Spirit gives Agabus the power to predict a future event. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on the Holy Spirit. Use the same word for Spirit you have used in the term Holy Spirit in previous stories.

Agabus predicts by the Spirit that a great famine will take place **over the entire Roman world**. "Over the entire Roman world" from the Greek language means "over all the inhabited earth," or wherever people live on the earth. Most scholars think this refers to the Roman empire. Others think it refers to the entire world. Another possibility is the phrase means the famine is happening in every part of the world the believers knew about at the time.

Show a map of the Roman Empire during A.D. 45-47.

The disciples in Antioch decide to send relief to other followers of Jesus. **Disciples** in this story does not mean Jesus' twelve closest followers. Here disciples refers to the followers of Jesus in Antioch. They gather as much as they can for the relief fund. Use the same word for disciples you have used in previous stories.

The gift is given to Barnabas and Saul. Barnabas and Saul take it to Judea and give it to the elders. **Elders** are leaders in the community. Elders are men who help the community live together well. At that time, elders could be leaders in a religious or non-religious community. Because the church at Antioch was sending relief to their brothers and sisters in Christ, we can infer that "elders" refers to leaders in the Judean churches. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on elders.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 11:27-30

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Acts 12:1-5

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 12:1-5 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

The church in Antioch is steadily growing. Believers fleeing persecution in Jerusalem had come to Antioch and shared the good news. Many people in Antioch, Jews and non-Jews, heard the good news of Jesus and turned to Jesus as Lord. Barnabas and Saul came to Antioch to teach the growing church. The church also gathered a relief offering to help believers in Judea, who are facing a famine.

At this time, Herod Agrippa is King over most of the land of Israel. He is the grandson of Herod the Great. Herod the Great was king of Judea when the angel Gabriel spoke to Zechariah about the birth of Zechariah's son, John. Herod Agrippa is a Jew from Judea, the province around Jerusalem but was raised in Rome around royal Roman families. The Roman leaders gave Herod Agrippa the title, "king." They also gave Herod control of the same lands his grandfather had ruled: all of Judea, Samaria, Galilee, the Transjordan, and the Decapolis. Herod wants to stay on good terms with the people he rules, mostly Jews. Herod thinks this will please Rome and keep peace. According to historical accounts of Herod Agrippa's reign, this story takes place in the year A.D. 42 or 43.

Show a map of the area under Herod Agrippa's rule in about the year A.D. 42–43.

Herod begins to persecute the church in Judea. Herod lays hands on people of the church to mistreat them. Herod himself doesn't lay hands on the believers. He orders soldiers to seize some people of the church. Because the text tells us that apostles James and Peter are seized, we can infer that the others who are seized are church leaders.

Herod orders someone to use a sword to kill James. In Roman times, soldiers executed prisoners with a sword by cutting the prisoner's head off. The Jewish method of execution by sword is thrusting the edge of the sword through the body. Luke does not mention which method is used to kill James. James is John's older brother, the son of Zebedee, and one of the twelve apostles. James is the first apostle to be killed for his faith.

Show a picture of a sword.

Stop and discuss the following with your team: In your country, how are followers of Jesus persecuted, or harmed for their faith? Discuss how the threat of being killed for your faith would affect your church. If someone can be killed for their faith in your country, how does this affect the way your church congregates and shares their faith?

Herod sees the Jews in Judea are very happy about James' execution. Therefore, Herod orders soldiers to arrest Peter, too. Luke does not explain why Herod begins to persecute the church in Judea. However, we know some Jews did not accept Jesus as the Messiah. Some Jews did not like that Gentiles, or non-Jews, were being led to faith and repentance. Herod probably persecuted church leaders to stay on good terms with the Jewish leaders in Judea.

Luke notes that Peter's arrest happens during the Days of Unleavened Bread. During this time Jews are not allowed to have any yeast in their homes or to eat anything with yeast. The Days of Unleavened Bread are celebrated after the Passover meal. In Jesus' time, the celebration was a combination of Passover and the seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread. Luke referred to this time as one continuous festival and used both names to refer to the festival. The Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread is a festival to remember when God saved the Jewish ancestors from slavery in Egypt. The festival days are considered holy, so executions during this time are offensive. Herod would displease the Jews if he executed Peter during the festival, so Herod orders soldiers to put Peter in jail during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Herod intends to bring Peter out for public trial immediately after the Passover is finished.

Show a picture of unleavened bread, or bread without yeast.

Four squads, or four groups, of four soldiers guard Peter. Most scholars think one group at a time watched Peter, and they switched groups every three hours. This was a common practice in Roman prisons. We learn from later in the text that two soldiers are chained to Peter, and two soldiers stand at the gate. Soldiers continuously guard Peter during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Meanwhile, the church gathers in small groups in each others' homes, earnestly and continuously praying for Peter throughout the festival.

In your culture, how do family members, friends, or neighbors support each other when times are hard? How do members of your church support each other when going through a hardship? How does your church help someone who is unfairly accused by nonbelievers?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has four scenes.

First scene: Herod orders soldiers to arrest and mistreat believers in the church.

Second scene: Herod has the apostle James killed by a sword. James is John's older brother.

Third scene: Herod sees that the Jews in Judea are pleased by James' execution, so Herod orders soldiers to arrest Peter. Peter's arrest takes place during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Herod puts Peter in prison until the end of the festival. Peter is watched by four groups of four soldiers. After the festival is over, Herod plans to bring Peter out for a public trial.

Fourth scene: While Peter is in prison, the church continuously prays for Peter.

The characters in this story include:

- Herod Agrippa
- Herod's soldiers
- Believers in the church in Judea
- Jews in Judea
- James, the apostle, older brother of John
- Peter
- Church in Judea

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

King Herod persecutes the church but does not personally lay hands on and mistreat the believers. He orders soldiers to seize them and mistreat them. Soldiers are not mentioned in the text, but we can infer they followed Herod's orders to capture and harm the believers. Herod also orders James, the apostle, to be executed by the sword.

Remember that the Jews were pleased with James' execution, so Herod orders Peter's arrest, too. Remember that this happened during a festival. When Peter is put in prison, he is guarded by four groups of four soldiers each. According to Roman practice, the groups take turns. Each group takes a three hour shift. Two soldiers are chained to Peter, and two soldiers stand at the gate. Herod puts Peter in prison until the Feast of Unleavened Bread is over.

The church is not all gathered together in one big meeting place to pray for Peter. It is not safe to hold a large gathering for prayer. They pray to God in smaller groups in each others' homes throughout the festival.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has four scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Herod Agrippa
- Herod's soldiers
- Believers in the church in Judea
- Jews in Judea
- James, the apostle, older brother of John
- Peter
- Church in Judea

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

Herod Agrippa is king of Judea. Herod orders soldiers to arrest believers and mistreat them.

Stop the action.

Herod orders soldiers to arrest James, the older brother of John. James is one of the twelve apostles. Herod has James executed by a sword. The Jews are pleased that Herod had James killed.

Stop the action.

Because the Jews are happy about James' execution, Herod orders soldiers to arrest Peter.

Stop the action.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread is going on, so Herod puts Peter in jail for now. Herod plans to bring him out for public trial as soon as the festival is over. Herod orders Peter to be watched by four groups of four soldiers each.

Stop the action.

While Peter is in prison, the church gets together in each other's homes. Throughout the Feast of Unleavened Bread, they pray to God continuously for Peter.

Stop the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

Herod Agrippa is king of Judea. Herod orders soldiers to arrest and mistreat believers in the church. Herod even has the apostle James, the older brother of John, killed by a **sword**. A sword is like a very large knife, used for fighting.

Show a picture of a sword.

James was an **apostle**. Apostles are the twelve men Jesus chose as his representatives. The apostles witnessed Jesus' resurrection and were appointed to spread the good news of Jesus. James is the first apostle who is killed for his faith. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on apostles.

When Herod sees that the Jews are pleased by James' execution, Herod orders Peter's arrest, too. The Feast of Unleavened Bread is taking place. The **Feast of Unleavened Bread** is part of the **Passover** celebration. On the evening of Passover, the Jews eat a special meal to remember how God saved their Jewish ancestors from

slavery in Egypt. The Feast of Unleavened Bread lasts for seven days after Passover. For seven days, the Jews eat bread without yeast and do not even keep yeast in their homes. Luke referred to the time of Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread as one continuous festival. Luke used both names to refer to the entire festival. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Show a picture of unleavened bread, or bread without yeast.

In prison, Peter is guarded by four **squads**, or four groups of four soldiers. Herod plans to bring Peter out for a public trial when the festival is over. Meanwhile, the church earnestly prays to God for Peter. **Earnestly** means fervently or strongly. The church is continuously praying with words they felt in their hearts.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 12:1–5

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Acts 12:6–19

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 12:6–19 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

Herod is persecuting the church in Judea. Herod orders James, one of Jesus' twelve disciples, to be killed with a sword. Herod also orders soldiers to arrest Peter. Because Peter's arrest takes place during the Feast of Unleavened Bread, Herod puts Peter in jail until the festival is over. Herod does not want to upset the Jews by killing Peter during their festival. The church prays continuously for Peter while he is in prison.

Luke continues this story that takes place in Jerusalem. It is the night before Herod plans to bring Peter to trial. It is implied that Herod plans to have Peter killed, as he had James killed earlier. Peter is sleeping in prison with chains on both of his wrists. Two guards are chained to Peter, one on each side. Sentries, or guards, are in front of the door, guarding the prison. It is unclear exactly how many guards are at each post. It is likely there are more guards than Luke mentions here.

All at once, without any warning, the scene changes. Suddenly, an angel of the Lord God stands next to Peter. A light shines in the prison room where Peter is sleeping. Angels of the Lord appear throughout Luke's accounts. In Luke and Acts, angels provide deliverance for God's witnesses, give strength, bring judgment, and reveal God's plan for people to be saved from the punishment of their sin. Peter is sleeping so soundly that the angel has to hit Peter on the side to wake him up. The angel tells Peter, "Get up quickly!" The chains on Peter's wrists fall off.

The angel tells Peter to tie his belt around his clothing and put on his sandals. At the time, men wore a long, loose robe tied around the waist with a girdle, or belt. Peter probably wore leather sandals that were tied to his ankles with leather cords. After Peter gets dressed, the angel tells Peter to wrap himself in his outer cloak and follow him. A cloak is a long, loose outer garment, like an outer robe or coat.

Show a picture of a man wearing a robe and belt from New Testament times.

Show a picture of leather sandals worn at the time.

Show a picture of a man wearing an outer cloak over a robe and belt.

Peter follows the angel but doesn't know that what is happening is real. Peter thinks it is a vision. A vision is like a dream, but God reveals visions while someone is awake. When Peter was in Joppa, God gave Peter a vision of animals being lowered in a sheet, so Peter has experienced a vision before. The angel and Peter pass two prison guards and come to the iron gate that leads into the city. These guards are probably the guards at the prison door that Luke mentioned earlier. It's implied that the guards did not see them. The prison must have been in Jerusalem and was probably in the Antonia Fortress, a tower where the Roman troops lived. The eastern entrance of this tower opened into the city. The gate opens for Peter and the angel by itself, the same way the chains fell off Peter's wrist.

Show a picture of an iron gate.

Show a map of ancient Jerusalem during Herod Agrippa's reign that includes the Antonia Fortress.

The angel and Peter go through the gate and down the length of one street. Immediately, the angel leaves Peter. Peter realizes he has actually come out of the prison. It's not a vision! He knows the Lord sent an angel. Peter acknowledges that God rescued him from Herod's power and from all that the Jewish people were expecting. Peter is probably referring to only the Jewish leaders who were pleased with James' execution, not all the Jewish people. The text implies the Jewish leaders were expecting Peter's execution.

Now knowing what has happened, Peter goes to the house of Mary, Mark's mother. Mark is a follower of Jesus who also goes by the name John. John Mark wrote the Gospel book of Mark. Many followers of Jesus are gathered at the house to pray. Peter knocks on the outer door, asking to be let in. Because the outer door is in the gateway, the house could be large, with a door leading to the street, an open courtyard, and a main building. Mary's servant girl, Rhoda, comes to see who is at the door.

Discuss the following with your translation team: In your culture, how do you announce yourself as a guest at someone's home? How do the people who live there usually respond to the guests who announce themselves?

Rhoda recognizes Peter's voice and is so excited that she doesn't even open the door. Rhoda runs inside to tell everyone it's Peter, but they tell Rhoda she's out of her mind. This is an expression that means someone is crazy. They did not believe Peter was really at the gate. Rhoda keeps telling them Peter really is there, but the group keeps saying it's Peter's angel. Some Jews believed that God assigned an angel to every person to protect them. They believed the angel could appear visibly, looking like the person they protected.

Discuss the following with your translation team: In your culture, what do people believe about a guardian angel, or a spirit that protects people? What do people think happens to the guardian spirit when the person dies?

Peter keeps on knocking and the followers of Jesus finally open the door. They are completely amazed to see Peter. They must get noisy, because Peter motions with his hand to quiet them down. Peter describes how the Lord brought him out of prison. Then he tells the believers to tell James and the brothers about what happened. The James mentioned here is probably the half-brother of Jesus. James is a leader in the Jerusalem church and later writes the book of James. The "brothers" probably refers to other church leaders, or elders in Jerusalem. After this, Peter leaves. He does not want to be captured again. Luke does not mention where Peter goes.

In the morning, there is an uproar among the soldiers who had guarded Peter. The soldiers are probably confused and fearful. The Roman soldiers know the punishment for losing prisoners is the same penalty their prisoners would have faced in this case, execution. Herod orders the soldiers to search for Peter, but they don't find him. Herod thoroughly questions the guards and then orders their execution.

Soon afterward Herod goes down to Caesarea. The text says Herod goes down from Judea to Caesarea. Luke is referring to Judea as the land that belonged to the Jewish tribe of Judah called Judea, not the Roman province. Caesarea is not included in this Jewish territory. Jerusalem is the capital of Judea to the Jews. Caesarea is the Roman capital of the Roman province of Judea, which is much larger. Caesarea is mostly a non-Jewish city. Jerusalem is at a higher elevation than Caesarea, a coastal city. Herod travels down in elevation.

Show a map of the Jewish territory of the tribe of Judah, or Judea, that includes the cities of Jerusalem and then Caesarea outside of Judea.

Show a map of the Roman province Judea that includes the cities of Jerusalem and Caesarea.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has five scenes.

First scene: Peter is sleeping in prison the night before his trial. Suddenly, an angel and a bright light appear in Peter's room. The angel tells Peter to get up quickly, and Peter's chains fall off. The angel tells him to get dressed and follow him. Peter follows the angel out past the guards, and the prison gate opens by itself. Peter and the angel walk the length of one street, and the angel disappears.

Second scene: Peter becomes fully alert and realizes he has not been seeing a vision. Peter knows God sent his angel to rescue him. Peter goes to the house of Mark's mother, Mary.

Third scene: Many believers are gathered at Mary's house, praying. Peter knocks on the door, and a servant girl named Rhoda comes to see who it is. When she recognizes Peter's voice, Rhoda is so excited that she doesn't open the door.

Fourth scene: Rhoda runs inside to tell everyone it's Peter. They disagree with her, saying it can't be Peter. It must be his angel. When they finally open the door, they are completely amazed. Peter tells them how God rescued him, and then tells them to pass on the news. Peter leaves.

Fifth scene: Back at the prison, the soldiers who had guarded Peter are frantic, trying to figure out what happened to Peter. Herod orders the soldiers to search for Peter, questions the soldiers, and then has them killed for losing Peter. Then Herod leaves Judea and goes to Caesarea.

The characters in this story include:

- Prison guards, assigned to watching Peter
- Peter
- Herod
- An angel
- Mary
- Mark
- Believers in Jerusalem
- Rhoda
- Soldiers that kill Peter's guards

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

It is important to note this story takes place the night before Herod was going to bring Peter out of prison for trial. Peter would likely be executed in a matter of hours. The followers of Jesus have been praying continuously throughout the Feast of Unleavened Bread for Peter. One group is praying at Mary's house. She is the mother of John Mark.

It is important to visualize the opening scene. In a prison room, Peter is chained, probably to two guards according to Roman practice. One chain is bound to each of Peter's hands, or wrists. The chain on each wrist is attached to a guard on each side. The Roman guards usually chained their left hands to the prisoner and kept their right hands free, in case the prisoner tried to escape.

All at once, an angel appears in Peter's prison room, and a light shines brightly. The bright light does not wake Peter. The angel hits Peter in the side to wake him up. The angel commands Peter to get up quickly. The chains

suddenly become loose and fall off Peter's wrists to the floor. It is implied that God caused the soldiers who were chained to Peter to be asleep, so the actors playing the soldiers who are tied to Peter should stay on the ground, asleep.

Peter is still not fully alert. The angel gives Peter step-by-step directions. Tie your belt around your waist. Put on your sandals. Wrap your cloak around you. Follow me. Peter obeys. As Peter follows the angel out of the prison, he does not realize that what is happening is real. Peter thinks he is seeing a vision. The angel and Peter pass the first and second guards. The angel and Peter come to an iron gate in the wall that opens by itself and leads into the city. Peter follows the angel into the city. After they go the length of one street, the angel disappears.

Peter is now fully alert and speaks to himself: "It is really true! The Lord sent his angel and rescued me from Herod and all that the Jewish people were expecting." Then Peter goes to Mary's house. She is John Mark's mother. John Mark is Barnabas' cousin. John is his Jewish name, and Mark is his Roman name. This is the first time Luke mentions Mark in Acts. Luke tends to briefly introduce new characters, especially when they appear later in his narrative, as Mark does.

In your culture, how are new characters in stories introduced?

Many followers of Jesus are praying together at Mary's house. Peter knocks on the outer entrance, asking to come in. A servant girl named Rhoda comes to the door to see who is knocking. Rhoda recognizes Peter's voice and is so excited she doesn't let him in. Rhoda runs inside and exclaims, "Peter is standing at the gate!" The followers of Jesus tell Rhoda, "You are crazy!" Rhoda keeps telling them it is Peter. The group keeps saying it has to be Peter's angel. Meanwhile, Peter still knocks on the door. They finally open the door, see Peter, and are completely amazed. Everyone is so surprised to see Peter, they probably get noisy with excitement. To quiet everyone down, Peter motions with his hand. Peter tells the whole story about how the Lord brought him out of prison. Then Peter says, "Tell James and the other brothers, or followers of Jesus, about how God rescued me from prison."

In the morning, the soldiers who had guarded Peter couldn't figure out what had happened to Peter. They are probably very confused and terrified about what will happen to them. Herod orders the soldiers to search for Peter, but the soldiers do not find him. Herod questions the guards and then orders the guards to be killed for allowing Peter's escape. Then Herod leaves Jerusalem and travels to Caesarea to stay a while.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has five scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Prison guards, assigned to watching Peter
- Peter
- Herod
- An angel
- Mary
- Mark
- Believers in Jerusalem
- Rhoda
- Soldiers that kill Peter's guards

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

It is the night before Herod plans to bring Peter out for trial. Peter is in prison, bound by two chains, and sleeping between two soldiers. Soldiers are standing guard at the prison door. At Mary's house, a group of people are praying for Peter.

Stop the action.

All of a sudden, an angel of the Lord God appears in Peter's prison room. A bright light shines in the room. The angel hits Peter in the side to wake him up. The angel says, "Hurry! Get up!" The chains fall off Peter's wrists.

Stop the action.

The angel tells Peter, "Tie your belt around your clothes. Put on your sandals." Peter obeys. The angel says, "Put on your cloak and follow me." Peter follows the angel, but he doesn't know that what is happening is real. Peter thinks he is seeing a vision.

Stop the action.

The angel and Peter pass the first and second prison guards. They come to an iron gate that leads into the city. The gate opens for them by itself.

Stop the action.

The angel and Peter go through the gate and down one street. Suddenly, the angel disappears. Peter becomes fully alert and says to himself, "Now I know what has happened is real! The Lord sent his angel to save me from Herod and all that the Jewish people were expecting." Then Peter goes to the house of Mary, John Mark's mother. Many people are praying for Peter at Mary's house. Peter knocks on the door of the gate. A servant girl named Rhoda comes to answer the door. She recognizes Peter's voice and runs to tell the others without opening the door.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing Peter, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Worried someone is going to capture me on the street," "Excited to tell the believers about what God has done," and "Wondering why no one will open the door." [!end] Restart the action.

When Rhoda tells the group gathered at Mary's house that Peter is at the gate, they tell Rhoda, "You are crazy!" Rhoda keeps insisting it is Peter, but they keep saying, "It is his angel."

Stop the action.

Ask the believers at Mary's house, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Fed up with this crazy servant girl's lies," "Certain there is no way Peter can be outside," and "Tired of praying all week for Peter's release. He will definitely be killed in the morning." [!end] Restart the action.

Peter is still knocking at the gate, and they finally open the door. When the believers see Peter, they are completely amazed. Peter motions with his hand for them to quiet down and describes how the Lord led him out of the prison. Then Peter says, "Tell James and our brothers in the Lord about what happened." Peter leaves and goes to another place.

Stop the action.

In the morning, there was a big commotion among the soldiers who had guarded Peter. They had no idea what had happened to Peter.

Stop the action.

Herod orders a thorough search for Peter, but no one finds him. After Herod questions the guards, he orders for them to be killed. Then Herod leaves Judea and goes to Caesarea.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

It's the night before Herod plans to bring Peter out for trial. Peter is in prison, bound by two chains, and sleeping between two soldiers. **Sentries**, or guards, are at the prison door. Suddenly, an **angel** of the Lord appears in Peter's prison cell. An angel is a supernatural, spiritual being who is a messenger from God. Angels have different tasks. Sometimes they only deliver a message from God, but this angel's task was to help Peter escape. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on angels. Use the same word you have used in previous stories for angel. The angel is from the **Lord**. Here, Lord refers to God himself. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on Lord. Use the same word you have used in previous stories for Lord.

The angel **strikes Peter's side** to wake him up. The angel does not hurt Peter, but he has to hit Peter hard enough to wake him up. The angel probably gives him a kick in the ribs or a push in the side, but the text does not specify. The angel says, "Get up quickly." The chains fall off Peter's hands, or wrists. The angel tells Peter, "**Gird yourself** and put on your sandals." Gird yourself means to tie your belt around your tunic, or clothes. Back then men wore long, loose robes tied at the waist by a girdle, or belt. Peter gets dressed, and the angel tells Peter, "Wrap your **cloak** around you and follow me." A cloak is a loose outer garment. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on cloak. Use the same word used in previous stories for cloak.

Show a picture of a man who is girded up, wearing a robe and belt from New Testament times.

Show a picture of leather sandals worn at the time.

Show a picture of a man wearing an outer cloak over a robe and belt.

Peter follows the angel but doesn't understand that what's going on is real. Peter thinks he is seeing a **vision**. A vision is similar to a dream, but God reveals visions while people are awake. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on visions. Use the same word you have used in previous stories for vision.

The angel and Peter go past the first and second guard posts and arrive at the iron gate that leads into the city. The **iron gate** opens for them by itself. Iron is a strong, heavy metal. The gate was probably built into the wall of the prison in Jerusalem.

Show a picture of an iron gate.

The angel and Peter go out and down one street. Suddenly, the angel leaves Peter. Peter **comes to himself**, or realizes what has happened to him is true. Peter says, "I know for sure the **Lord** sent his angel and rescued me from the **hand of Herod** and all that the Jewish people were expecting." The "hand of Herod" refers to Herod's power. "The Lord" in this verse probably refers to God instead of the Lord Jesus. Jewish people greatly respected God's name. They often referred to God as "The Lord" to avoid saying the name of God. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on Lord. Use the same word you have used in previous stories for Lord.

When Peter realizes this, he goes to Mary's house. Peter knocks on the door, but the servant girl Rhoda does not open the door. She runs to tell the group it is Peter. They say, "You are **out of your mind!**" "Out of your mind" is an expression that means someone is crazy. This is a way of saying they did not believe Peter was really at the gate. Rhoda insists it is Peter, but the believers insist, "It is Peter's **angel.**" In this instance, angel refers to the angel God assigned to protect Peter. Some Jews believed every person is guarded by an angel that can take the form of the person they are guarding. Use the same word you have used in previous stories for angel.

Peter keeps on knocking at the door. When they open the door and see Peter, they are amazed. Peter tells them how the Lord led him out of the prison. **The Lord** in this verse probably refers to God instead of the Lord Jesus. Use the same word you have used in previous stories for Lord. Peter says, "Report these things to James and the **brothers.**" Brothers refers to other followers of Jesus, probably other church leaders in Jerusalem. Peter leaves and goes to another place.

In the morning, there is **no small disturbance** among the soldiers about what had happened to Peter. This means there is a great commotion, or noisy confusion among the soldiers. Herod orders soldiers to search for Peter, but no one finds Peter. Herod **examines** the guards, or questions them. Then Herod orders soldiers to kill Peter's guards. Herod goes down from Judea to Caesarea for some time. Caesarea is lower in elevation than Judea, so Herod travels down in elevation.

Show a map of the Jewish land of the tribe of Judah, or Judea, and the cities of Jerusalem and then Caesarea outside of Judea.

Show a map of the Roman province Judea, and the cities of Jerusalem and Caesarea.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 12:6–19

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (5055307 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (8486370 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Acts 12:20–24

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 12:20–24 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

King Herod Agrippa has been persecuting the followers of Jesus in Jerusalem and Judea. Herod Agrippa had James, one of Jesus' twelve disciples, killed. He had planned to also execute the disciple Peter. However, God sent an angel to help Peter escape from prison. Herod has Peter's guards killed for losing Peter. Then Herod goes to Caesarea. Caesarea is the capital of the Roman Province of Judea.

Show a map of the area under Herod Agrippa's rule in about the year A.D. 42–43, including the city of Caesarea, the region of Phoenicia with the cities of Tyre and Sidon, the province of Judea, and Galilee.

Herod has been very angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon. Luke says that Herod has been furiously quarreling, or arguing with them. Luke does not say why Herod is so angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon. Tyre and Sidon are coastal cities north of Caesarea in the region of Phoenicia. Phoenicia is part of the Roman province of Syria and outside of the Roman province of Judea under Herod's rule.

The people who live in Tyre and Sidon depend on Galilee for their food supply, such as wheat and barley. Galilee is ruled by King Herod. About a thousand years ago, when Solomon was king in Jerusalem, he made an agreement of peace and trade with Hiram, the king of Tyre. It is likely this kind of agreement between the coastal cities and Judea continued for generations. Tyre and Sidon work together to seek peace with Herod because they needed the trade for food from his inland territories.

Ask your team: What kind of trade does your community depend on for food or other basic needs?

The people of Tyre and Sidon want to set a meeting with Herod to try to make peace and restore the trade. They speak with Blastus, Herod's chamberlain, in hopes of meeting with Herod. A chamberlain is a trusted personal servant of the king. Blastus is a personal assistant and important official to Herod. The representatives from Tyre and Sidon persuade Blastus to schedule a meeting with Herod. They might have paid Blastus for his help.

Stop and discuss: In your community, how do people arrange meetings with government leaders or people in authority?

Herod chooses a day to meet with the representatives of Tyre and Sidon. A reliable Jewish historian, Josephus, wrote a detailed account of this event. He wrote that the day Herod chose is a celebration to honor the Roman emperor. Josephus recorded that on that day, Herod wore royal robes woven from silver. Royal robes are long, loose outer garments made from expensive materials for kings or someone of authority. Royal robes are usually worn for ceremonial occasions. However, a robe woven from silver is very rare.

Luke writes that Herod puts on royal robes, sits on his throne, and speaks to the people. A throne is a special chair where a person of authority, usually a king, sits to make judgments or decisions for the people he rules.

Show a picture of a king's throne during the Roman Empire.

In your culture, what kind of clothing does a king or high ruling official wear? What other things, such as a throne or special place to live, sets a ruler apart as a person of authority?

According to Josephus, Herod speaks to the people in the theater of Caesarea. A theater is an open-air auditorium used for entertainment in Roman times.

Show a picture of the Roman Theatre of Caesarea.

Josephus's account says the silver from Herod's royal robes shine and glitter in the sun. There is a large crowd that probably includes the people of Caesarea. Luke tells us after Herod delivers his address, or speech, the people shout, "It's the voice of a god, not a man!" This is a way of saying Herod speaks more like a god than a man, or that Herod is a god speaking. The crowd means that Herod is a supernatural being, not a human.

Herod does not agree or disagree that he is a god. He does not give honor or praise to God. Herod allows the people to praise him instead of telling the people to praise God. Immediately, an angel, or messenger from God, strikes Herod down. While the people are shouting, the Lord sends an angel to make Herod become sick in a way that would end in death. At this moment, Herod becomes incurably ill and dies soon afterwards.

The word for worms here refers to worms that can grow inside a body. It is possible the worms quickly eat away Herod's insides and kill him.

Show a picture of a worm that infects people on the inside—an intestinal worm.

Luke is not referring to maggots that eat Herod's flesh after he dies. However, the phrase "eaten by worms" is a way many ancient writers describe the death of extremely evil people, especially people in power. It's not clear exactly how Herod died. The Jewish historian Josephus recorded that while the people were shouting, Herod began to have a very bad pain in his stomach. Herod died five days later. Herod's death could be anywhere from several months to a year after Peter's escape from prison.

Meanwhile, the word of God continues to increase and spread. Here the word of God is described as something growing, like a tree, or bush, or grass. This is similar to Jesus' story of the seed of the good news falling on good ground. Believers keep telling the good news of Jesus. More and more people who hear the good news of Jesus believe.

Have your team share times when they have seen the good news of Jesus spread.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has four scenes.

First scene: Herod Agrippa is very angry with the people who live in Tyre and Sidon.

Second scene: The people from Tyre and Sidon come together to try to get a meeting with Herod. They want to ask Herod for peace because Tyre and Sidon rely on trading with Herod's country to get food. The people from Tyre and Sidon speak to Blastus, Herod's trusted assistant, and convince Blastus to set a meeting with Herod.

Third scene: It is the day Herod will speak to the people from Tyre and Sidon. Herod puts on his royal robes, sits on his throne, and gives a speech. The people shout, "This is not a man's voice. This is a god's voice!" Herod does not give God glory or praise. God immediately sends an angel to strike Herod with a sickness.

Fourth scene: Herod is eaten by worms and dies. But the good news of Jesus continues to spread, and there are many new believers.

The characters in this story include:

- Herod Agrippa
- People from Tyre and Sidon
- Blastus
- People who live in Caesarea
- Angel of the Lord
- Followers of Jesus sharing the word of God
- New followers of Jesus

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

This story includes a lot of places. Have a map of the area available. In this story, Herod Agrippa is in the coastal city of Caesarea.

Show a map of the area under Herod Agrippa's rule in about the year A.D. 42–43, including the city of Caesarea, the region of Phoenicia with the cities of Tyre and Sidon, the province of Judea, and Galilee.

It is important to note the order of the written text may be confusing. Herod is very angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon. Herod has been arguing with them. Some representatives of Tyre and Sidon join together and decide to meet with Herod. They want to restore peace with Herod because they depend on Herod's country for food. In order to get a meeting with Herod, they speak to Herod's personal assistant, named Blastus. The representatives from Tyre and Sidon gain Blastus' support. They are given an appointment with Herod Agrippa.

On the meeting day, according to historical sources, the people from Tyre and Sidon are gathered in the theater, or meeting place in Caesarea. Since the king is appearing, it is likely many people from Caesarea are there.

Show a picture of the Roman Theatre of Caesarea.

Herod wears his impressive royal robes and sits on his throne.

Herod gives a speech to the people. The crowd shouts, "It's the voice of a god, not of a man!" Because Herod accepts the people's worship instead of giving the praise to God, immediately an angel of the Lord strikes Herod with a sickness. Herod is eaten by worms and dies, probably five days later.

But the word of God, or the good news of Jesus, continues to spread through followers of Jesus. The conjunction "but" is translated from a Greek connecting term used to change topics in narratives. Here, this connecting term also contrasts the end of an evil king with the spread of the good message of God. Luke says the word of God continues to increase and spread. These are continuing actions. Followers of Jesus continue to share the message from God about Jesus, and continually many who hear the message believe.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has four scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Herod Agrippa
- People from Tyre and Sidon
- Blastus
- People who live in Caesarea
- Angel of the Lord
- Followers of Jesus sharing the word of God
- New followers of Jesus

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

Herod has been very angry and arguing with the people of Tyre and Sidon. The people of Tyre and Sidon get together to try to get a meeting with Herod. They want to restore peace with Herod, because their food supply comes from Herod's lands.

Stop the action.

The people of Tyre and Sidon go to Blastus, Herod's personal assistant, to ask for an appointment with Herod.

Stop the action.

An appointment with Herod is granted. When the day arrives, Herod puts on his royal robes, sits on his throne, and gives a speech to the people. The people shout, "It's the voice of a god, not of a man!"

Stop the action.

Ask the gathered crowd, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "In awe," "Like I'm in a dream," or "Fascinated." [!end] Restart the action.

Because Herod accepts the people's worship instead of giving the praise to God, an angel instantly strikes Herod with a sickness. Herod is eaten by worms and dies.

Stop the action.

The word of God, the good news of Jesus, continues to spread. Many people hear the good news, and there are many new followers of Jesus.

Stop the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

King Herod Agrippa is in Caesarea.

Show a map of the area under Herod Agrippa's rule in about the year A.D. 42–43, including the city of Caesarea, the region of Phoenicia with the cities of Tyre and Sidon, the province of Judea, and Galilee.

Herod is very angry with the people who live in Tyre and Sidon. The people in Tyre and Sidon come together to make a plan to make peace with Herod. Their country depends on the king's country, or Herod's country, for food. The people of Tyre and Sidon go to Blastus, the king's chamberlain, for help. A **chamberlain** is a trusted personal servant to a high government official. Blastus is Herod's personal assistant. They persuade Blastus to get a meeting with Herod.

On the appointed day, Herod puts on royal robes. **Royal robes** are long, loose outer garments worn by kings, usually for ceremonies. The robes are made of expensive materials. Herod sits on his rostrum. **Rostrum** is a word for throne, a special seat or chair where Herod sits when making judgments to rule his people.

Show a picture of a king's throne during the Roman Empire.

Herod delivers an **address**, also called an **oration**. Herod makes a speech, or speaks to the people. This was probably a long speech. The people keep crying out, shouting, "It's the **voice of a god**, not a man!" This means, "You speak more like a god than a man," or, "He is a god speaking, not just a man." Here, **god** refers to a pagan god, not the Lord God. They think that Herod is a supernatural being. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on god.

Because Herod does not give God the glory, an angel of the Lord strikes Herod down. **Angels** are messengers of God. An angel is a supernatural, spiritual being who is a messenger from God. In Luke and Acts, angels provide deliverance for God's witnesses, give strength, bring judgment, and reveal God's plan for people to be saved from the punishment of their sin. In this story, the angel's task is to bring judgment. It is understood that the angel strikes Herod with a sickness. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on angels. Use the same word used in previous stories for angel. Luke writes that it's an angel of the **Lord**. Here, Lord refers to God himself. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on Lord. Use the same word used in previous stories for Lord.

Herod is **eaten by worms**. There are some worms that can get in a person's stomach and eat their insides. This causes major damage to the body parts necessary to keep the body healthy and alive. Luke could be referring to these types of worms. However, writers of old times sometimes use "eaten by worms" to describe the terrible death of very evil people. Luke does not give us the exact meaning. Herod **breathed his last**, or died.

Show a picture of a worm that infects people on the inside—an intestinal worm.

But the word of God continues to grow and be multiplied. **Word of God** refers to the Christian message, the good news of Jesus.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 12:20–24

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3618212 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

[mp3 zip](#) (6113153 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 4](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Acts 12:25–13:3

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 12:25–13:3 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus and the Holy Spirit?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?

6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

In the previous passage, King Herod Agrippa had persecuted the followers of Jesus in Judea. However, in Caesarea Herod accepted praise from people instead of telling them to praise God. God sent an angel that struck Herod with an illness, causing Herod's death. Even though Herod Agrippa harmed many followers of Jesus, the good news of Jesus continued to spread and multiply.

Luke returns to writing about Barnabas and Saul. Earlier, Agabus had prophesied that there would be a famine in Judea. Barnabas and Saul took a gift from the church in Antioch to the church in Judea. Now Barnabas and Saul have finished their mission, or completed their service. They gave the gift to the church leaders in Judea.

Show a map that includes Antioch of Syria, the Jewish territory of Judea, Jerusalem, Cyprus, the region of North Africa, Cyrene, and Cilicia.

Some translations say Barnabas and Saul returned *to* Jerusalem. Scholars believe the correct reading is Barnabas and Saul returned *from* Jerusalem. The previous story about Barnabas and Saul delivering the gift makes it easy to infer that they indeed are returning from Jerusalem to Antioch. Also, the next story Luke records takes place with Barnabas and Saul in Antioch. It makes the most sense that they return *from* Jerusalem *to* Antioch. Barnabas and Saul take John Mark with them to Antioch. John Mark is Barnabas' cousin. Luke introduced John Mark in the story of Peter's escape from prison. John Mark wrote the Gospel of Mark.

Remember that persecution began in Jerusalem after Stephen was stoned for sharing the good news of Jesus. Then some followers of Jesus fled to Antioch. Some believers shared the good news of Jesus with both Jews and non-Jews, and the church in Antioch grew quickly. Barnabas and Saul have already spent much time teaching and serving the church in Antioch. Remember that Antioch is an important city at this time.

In the church at Antioch there are prophets and teachers. Prophets receive a message from God to give to the people. Teachers tell how to live as followers of Jesus, according to Jesus' teachings. Most scholars think the five men listed in the text are both prophets and teachers. The text does not divide them into two groups. The men are all led by God's Spirit to teach and lead the believers in Antioch. We can see this is true because the Holy Spirit leads them to send out Barnabas and Saul.

In your culture, what are the requirements to become a leader in the community? What are the requirements to become a leader in the church? What are the roles of church leaders?

Barnabas is a Levite from Cyprus. Simeon is also called Niger. Niger means black, so Simeon might have dark skin and come from North Africa. Lucius is a Roman from Cyrene in North Africa. Lucius is not Luke, the writer of Acts. Manaen grew up with Herod Antipas, the tetrarch, or governor. Antipas was the governor during Jesus' ministry. Saul is a Pharisee from Cilicia. The order of the names might be oldest to youngest.

Show a map that includes Antioch of Syria, the Jewish territory of Judea, Jerusalem, Cyprus, the region of North Africa, Cyrene, and Cilicia.

They are worshipping the Lord and fasting. Most scholars think "they" refers to the five leaders, and others think "they" means the entire Antioch church. Or, it could be the five leaders were ministering to the Lord and fasting in the presence of the entire church. Ministering to, or worshipping, the Lord means serving the Lord in official tasks. The word "ministering" was used to express priestly duties in the Old Testament, but here it refers to service in the Christian church. Serving God is honoring him, so they are also worshipping the Lord, as some translations say. They fast, or go without food or drink to focus on worshipping God. Fasting is an old Jewish custom practiced by some early Christians. Fasting with worship probably means that the leaders had a focused time of dedication to God.

In your culture, for what reasons do people go without food or drink? What other kinds of practices are observed while fasting?

The Holy Spirit speaks to one or more of the five leaders, who then deliver the message to the church. The Holy Spirit instructs the church to set apart Barnabas and Saul for the work to which the Holy Spirit has called them.

In the Greek language, the Holy Spirit's command to set apart Barnabas and Saul is given with urgency, to be obeyed right away. God already decided to send Barnabas and Saul for a special purpose. The church sends them out, in response to the Holy Spirit's direction. The Holy Spirit leads the church in its mission. Throughout Acts, God initiates every new advancement of the good news, and the church does its part to obey.

It is not clear who fasted and prayed and laid their hands on Barnabas and Saul. "They" could refer to just the other three prophets and teachers, or the entire church at Antioch. Laying on of hands comes from a Jewish custom. Laying or placing hands on someone is a symbol of giving someone blessing and authority for a special task. The church acknowledges God has given Barnabas and Saul responsibility and strength for the mission. The church passes on their blessing and approval by laying hands on Barnabas and Saul. Then the church sends Barnabas and Saul on their way.

Discuss with your translation team: How are people designated for special tasks in your culture? What ceremonies are performed? How are they prepared for the task? What does your community do before sending someone on a journey?

Beginning with this passage, Luke changes the focus of Acts to Paul. This part of Acts is a turning point. From here on, the focus is on Saul, who is later called Paul. Luke writes much in Acts about Paul's journeys to share the good news of Jesus. The accounts follow Paul as he moves from place to place. There are three themes in the remainder of Acts. First, more non-Jews, or Gentiles, are interested in the good news. Second, some Jews resist the spread of the good news. Third, as Paul travels and teaches, more and more people believe in Jesus.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has three scenes.

First scene: Barnabas and Saul complete the task of giving the gift to the church in Judea. They leave Jerusalem and return to Antioch of Syria. They take John Mark with them to Antioch.

Second scene: Barnabas, Simeon, Lucius, Manaen, and Saul are some of the prophets and teachers among the followers of Jesus at Antioch. As the church leaders are praying and fasting, the Holy Spirit says to set apart Barnabas and Saul for the work God has chosen them to do.

Third scene: The church at Antioch fasts and prays some more. Then they lay their hands on Barnabas and Saul and send them out.

The characters in this story include:

- Barnabas
- Saul
- John Mark
- The church in Antioch of Syria
- Simeon
- Lucius
- Manaen
- Holy Spirit

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

This story begins in Jerusalem. Barnabas and Saul have delivered the gift sent by the church in Antioch to the followers of Jesus in Judea. The gift was to help the believers in Judea during a famine. Barnabas and Saul have finished their task. They return to Antioch and take Barnabas's cousin, John Mark, with them.

Five men are listed as prophets and teachers in the Antioch church: Barnabas, a Levite from Cyprus; Simeon, who is called Niger; Lucius, a Roman from Cyrene; Manaen, who grew up with Herod Antipas; and Saul, a Pharisee from Cilicia.

In your language, how do you introduce people in a list?

It is important to note that twice in this passage it is not clear exactly who the word "they" refers to. "They" could mean only the five prophets and teachers minister to the Lord and fast, or it could mean the whole church in Antioch ministers to the Lord and fasts. And "they" could mean only the five prophets and teachers fast, pray, and lay their hands on Barnabas and Saul, or it could mean the whole church.

It is important to note the Holy Spirit spoke *while* they are praying and fasting. The believers are intensely seeking God, and God answers. When the Holy Spirit tells them to appoint Saul and Barnabas for God's work, the church obeys.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has three scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Barnabas
- Saul
- John Mark
- The church in Antioch of Syria
- Simeon
- Lucius
- Manaen
- Holy Spirit

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points. Barnabas and Saul finish their mission in Judea. They have delivered the gift from the church in Antioch of Syria to help the followers of Judea in Jerusalem who are facing a famine. Barnabas and Saul return to Antioch with John Mark.

Stop the action.

Some of the prophets and teachers at the church in Antioch are Barnabas, Simeon, Lucius, Manaen, and Saul. One day they are worshipping the Lord, serving and worshipping Him. They are also fasting.

Stop the action.

While they are ministering and fasting, the Holy Spirit says, "Set apart Barnabas and Saul for the work I have appointed them to do."

Stop the action.

Ask the church members in Antioch, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Glad to send them," "Excited about their mission," or "Honored." [!end] Restart the action.

The five men, and probably also the other followers of Jesus in Antioch, spend more time fasting and praying. They place their hands on Barnabas and Saul and send Barnabas and Saul on their way.

Stop the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

After Barnabas and Saul finish their mission, they leave Jerusalem and return to Antioch of Syria. John Mark goes with them. In the Antioch **church** there are some **prophets** and **teachers**.

Church refers to a group of people who believe in Jesus. Use the same word used in previous stories for church. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on church.

Prophets are men led by the Holy Spirit to give the message of Jesus to uplift and instruct the community. Although sometimes prophets tell of a future event, there is no reason to believe that is the case here. Use the same word used in previous stories for prophets. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on prophets.

Teachers teach the church how to follow Jesus. This is the only time in Acts that Luke mentions teachers as church leaders. The teachers in the Antioch church were probably introducing the new believers to teachings of Jesus and how to live a new life in Christ.

The prophets and teachers are listed as Barnabas, Simeon, who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manean, who had been brought up with Herod the **tetrarch**, and Saul.

A **tetrarch** is a ruler who has less authority than a king, such as a prince or governor. A tetrarch rules over a province, or smaller part of an empire.

The men, or the entire church at Antioch are **ministering** to the **Lord** and **fasting**.

Ministering refers to serving the Lord in official duties. Some translations say worshipping the Lord.

Lord means master. Some scholars think the Lord in this text refers to Jesus, and others think the Lord refers to God. Use the same word used in previous stories for Lord. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on Lord.

Fasting is going without food or drink from sunup to sundown to worship God. Here, they were probably fasting to ask for guidance from God. Use the same word used in previous stories for fasting. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on fasting.

While the men are ministering and fasting, the **Holy Spirit** speaks. The Holy Spirit is God's Spirit. The Holy Spirit gives wisdom, power, and instructions from God. Here, the Spirit of God tells the Antioch church exactly what to do. Use the same word used in previous stories for the Holy Spirit. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit says, "Set apart Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." **Set apart** means to give a special work to someone, or appoint someone for special tasks.

After the prophets and teachers, and possibly the rest of the church at Antioch, fasted and prayed, they laid their hands on Barnabas and Saul. **Laying hands** on someone who is set apart or sent out is a symbolic act. It acknowledges God's appointment for that person to do a special work for God. Laying hands shows that the church believes God will enable them for the work, and the church gives their blessing and approval. The church at Antioch sends Barnabas and Saul off, or on their way to do the mission.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 12:25–13:3

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3532850 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Acts 13:4–12

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 13:4–12 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

In the previous passage, Barnabas and Saul returned to Antioch from Jerusalem with John Mark. The Holy Spirit spoke to the prophets and teachers in the Antioch church. The Holy Spirit told them to send out Barnabas and Paul for a special work. After prayer, fasting, and laying hands on Barnabas and Saul, the church in Antioch sent them out. John Mark went with them.

Barnabas and Saul are sent out from the church in Antioch by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit guides Barnabas and Saul, directing their movements and actions. Barnabas and Saul leave Antioch and go to the nearby coastal town of Seleucia. From Seleucia they sail to Cyprus, Barnabas' homeland. Luke does not mention why they go there, but there are many possible reasons. Cyprus is close to the mainland, many Jews live there, Barnabas already has connections there, and there are already some followers of Jesus in Cyprus. Remember that some followers of Jesus fled to Cyprus after Stephen was stoned to death in Jerusalem, so there are believers in Cyprus.

Show a map that includes Antioch, Seleucia, the Orontes River, Cyprus, and the towns of Salamis and Paphos on Cyprus.

Barnabas and Saul arrive in Salamis. They teach the word of God about Jesus to people who are gathered in the synagogues, or buildings where Jews meet for worship. Because the text says there is more than one synagogue there, we can infer that many Jews live in Salamis. Throughout Paul's missionary journeys, when Paul goes to a new place to share the good news, he usually goes to the synagogues first. As a Jew, Paul can easily introduce the good news of Jesus to the Jews in the synagogues. John Mark helps Barnabas and Saul.

Barnabas and Saul travel across the island to Paphos, the capital of Cyprus. Barnabas and Saul meet a magician, or sorcerer, called Bar-Jesus. At the time, Jesus is a common Jewish name. The word used for magician here is the same used for the magi, or wise men who followed the star to see Jesus after his birth. Magicians are usually eastern wise men, priests, or astrologers who practice magic arts and interpret dreams. Both Jews and non-Jews claimed to be magicians. However, "magician" can also refer to a deceiver who claims false powers. Luke tells us Bar-Jesus is a false prophet. Bar-Jesus claims his messages are from God, but his messages are not from God. False prophets oppose the truth of Jesus. Bar-Jesus's Greek name is Elymas, which probably means something similar to the word magician.

In your community, what kind of people claim to have false powers? What kind of things do people who claim to have false powers do? How do people in your community respond to people who claim to have false powers?

Elymas is with the Roman proconsul, or governor. Some scholars believe this means that Elymas and the governor were friends, and others believe Elymas worked for the governor. The Romans regularly consulted oracles, or people who claimed to tell the future. They believed what the oracles said. The Romans believed this information could be used to help them maintain control of the people. The governor of Cyprus is Sergius

Paulus, a Roman whom Luke calls intelligent. This means Sergius understands things well and recognizes what is important.

For what reasons do people in your community seek to know what will happen in the future? In your culture, what do people do if they want to know what will happen in the future?

Sergius calls for Barnabas and Saul to come to his court. He wants to hear the word of God. It's likely Sergius has heard that Barnabas and Saul have been proclaiming a message of God. Barnabas and Saul go to Sergius and tell him the message of God about Jesus. Elymas opposes Barnabas and Saul with his words and actions. Elymas tries to keep the governor from believing in Jesus. Elymas probably realizes that if Sergius believes, Elymas will lose his important position with the governor.

At this point Luke introduces Saul's Roman name, Paul. Throughout the rest of Acts, Luke uses the Roman name Paul, unless there is a reference to Paul's earlier life. Luke might introduce the Roman name here because Paul begins preaching more to non-Jews. Luke might also make the change here because Paul takes a more central role in Luke's writings. Before, when Luke wrote Saul, Saul's name came second: "Barnabas and Saul." After Luke begins using Paul, Paul's name comes first, such as, "Paul and his companions," or "Paul and Barnabas." Paul becomes the main character.

Talk about a time when a person or character in a story changed their name, or someone else changed their name for them. What happened? Why did their name change? What did they do to cause the change?

Paul is filled with the Holy Spirit because he has turned from his sins and turned to God by believing in Jesus. God's Spirit guides Paul in what to do and say. However, at this moment the Holy Spirit fills Paul in a powerful, special way. Paul looks straight at Elymas and reveals what kind of man he really is. Elymas is a son of the devil. Elymas is not the actual offspring of the devil, but he is just like the devil. Satan opposes God's work, just like Elymas does. "Son of the devil" is opposite from the meaning of his Jewish name, Bar-Jesus, which means son of the Savior. Elymas is an enemy of all righteousness, meaning he actively opposes everything good, right, and true. Elymas is full of all kinds of deceit and fraud, or trickery. This means he lies to people in a harmful way and uses dishonest ways to harm or wrong others, like deceiving Sergius with false claims so that Sergius does not believe in Jesus. Elymas is always trying to turn God's truths into lies.

Paul tells Elymas that the hand of the Lord is against him. The hand of the Lord is a way of describing God's power, but here it refers to the Lord's power to judge and punish. The Lord is going to badly punish Elymas right away. Paul says God is going to cause Elymas to be blind. God will decide how long Elymas will remain blind. Paul says Elymas will not see the light of the sun, which means he will be totally blind. As soon as Paul says this, Elymas becomes blind. Since Luke is a doctor, he describes blindness using the medical term "mist" for diseases of the eyes. Then he says Elymas' eyes are in "darkness." Elymas feels his way around as he moves, searching for someone to lead him. Sergius hears Paul's words and sees Elymas go blind. Sergius, an important Roman official, believes in Jesus. Sergius is amazed at the teaching of Jesus.

In your culture, how do you describe someone who is blind? How do blind people move around, or know where to go?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has six scenes.

First scene: The Holy Spirit sends out Barnabas and Saul. They leave Antioch with John Mark and go to the coastal town of Seleucia.

Second scene: They sail from Seleucia to Cyprus.

Third scene: They land in Salamis, on the eastern coast of Cyprus. Barnabas and Saul teach in the Jewish synagogues. John Mark helps them.

Fourth scene: Barnabas, Saul, and John Mark travel across the island of Cyprus.

Fifth scene: They arrive in Paphos, where the Romans rule Cyprus. Sergius Paulus is the Roman governor there. Sergius requests to hear the word of God from Barnabas and Saul.

Sixth scene: Barnabas and Saul go to speak to Sergius. Bar-Jesus, also called Elymas, is there with Sergius. Elymas is a magician and Jewish false prophet. Elymas resists Barnabas and Saul and tells Sergius not to listen to them. Saul, also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, rebukes Elymas and tells Elymas he will be blind for a time. Immediately Elymas becomes blind. Elymas asks for someone to lead him by the hand. Sergius sees this and believes in Jesus. Sergius is amazed at the teaching of the Lord.

The characters in this story include:

- Holy Spirit
- Barnabas
- Saul, also called Paul
- John Mark
- Bar-Jesus, also called Elymas the magician
- Sergius Paulus

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

This story begins in Antioch, where Barnabas and Saul are sent out by the Holy Spirit through the Antioch church. The Holy Spirit has work for them to do. We learn later in the story that John Mark goes with Barnabas and Saul.

Led by the Holy Spirit, Barnabas and Saul go down from Antioch to Seleucia. Antioch is higher in elevation, so they travel down to the coastal town of Seleucia. Seleucia is about eight kilometers north of where the Orontes River meets the Mediterranean Sea. Then they sail about 1,261 kilometers west to the island of Cyprus in the Mediterranean Sea. Cyprus is a Roman province ruled by a proconsul, or governor. Barnabas and Saul arrive in Salamis, the main port city on the eastern coast of Cyprus.

Barnabas and Saul go to the other side of the island to Paphos. Paphos is the government center for Cyprus. The governor lives in Paphos.

It is important to note the chronology of the text may be confusing. It says when Barnabas and Saul get to Paphos they find a magician. Here to find, or meet, means to find by chance. The reason they meet, or find, Elymas is because Elymas is with Sergius Paulus, and Sergius Paulus had already called for Barnabas and Paul. So first Sergius Paulus calls for Barnabas and Saul, seeking to hear the word of God. Next, Barnabas and Saul come to Sergius in court. Elymas is there with Sergius. Then Barnabas and Saul meet Elymas.

When Barnabas and Saul met Elymas, the Holy Spirit controlled Saul. Saul looks directly at Elymas to rebuke him. It is important to note that it is in this moment that Luke begins to use Saul's Roman name Paul. In the Greek language, Paul's rebuke begins with a small word like "Oh!" that adds emphasis on the words that come after it. Some translations have also changed the order of Paul's words for emphasis. The worst part, "You son of the devil!" is sometimes placed first.

In your language, what word do you use to begin a statement with excitement and emphasis? How are important parts of stories or quotations emphasized?

It is important to note that Paul asks Elymas a question that does not need an answer. "Will you not stop perverting, or making crooked, the straight paths of the Lord?" Perverting the right ways of the Lord means Elymas was trying to change what was true about God into what was not true. Some translations turn Paul's question into a statement to make the meaning more clear.

It is important to note when Paul says to Elymas, "Now, behold, the hand of the Lord is against you," there is a significance to the transition word, "now." In the Greek language the phrase begins with something like,

"behold!" or "look!" that emphasizes "now" and the rest of the phrase. Paul concludes his rebuke to Elymas with emphasis and immediate judgment from Jesus, whom he calls Lord. Instantly, Elymas becomes blind.

There are two ways of understanding that Sergius is amazed at the teaching of the Lord. Most scholars think Sergius responds to Paul and Barnabas' teaching of the Lord with amazement. Some scholars think Sergius believes in the Lord Jesus because he is amazed at the teaching. It is important to describe Sergius' amazement at the teaching of the Lord in a general way, not as the reason for Sergius' belief.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has six scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Holy Spirit
- Barnabas
- Saul, also called Paul
- John Mark
- Bar-Jesus, also called Elymas the magician
- Sergius Paulus

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

Barnabas and Saul are sent out of the Antioch church by the Holy Spirit. John Mark goes with them. They go to Seleucia and sail to Cyprus.

Stop the action.

When they arrive in Salamis, they go to the Jewish places of worship and preach the word of God about Jesus. John Mark helps them. Then they travel across the island of Cyprus to the town of Paphos. Sergius Paulus, the wise governor, calls for Barnabas and Saul because he wants to hear the word of God. When Barnabas and Saul arrive, they meet a magician who is with the governor. The magician is a Jewish false prophet named Bar-Jesus.

Stop the action.

Elymas opposes Barnabas and Saul and tries to keep the governor from believing in Jesus.

Stop the action.

Saul, whose Roman name is Paul, is filled with the Holy Spirit. Paul looks directly at Elymas.

Stop the action.

Paul says, "You are full of all deceit and trickery. You are a son of the devil! You are an enemy of all that is good! Will you never stop falsifying the right ways of the Lord? Look! Now the hand of the Lord is on you. You will be blind for a time. You won't even be able to see the light of the sun."

Stop the action.

Instantly mist and darkness comes over Elymas' eyes. He becomes blind. Elymas feels his way around as he moves, looking for someone to take his hand and lead him.

Stop the action.

When the governor sees what has happened, he believes. Sergius is amazed at the teaching about the Lord Jesus.

Stop the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

Barnabas and Saul are sent out by the Holy Spirit. The **Holy Spirit** is the power or authority God gives someone to do extraordinary things. God's Spirit lives in all followers of Jesus and guides them in many different ways. God's Spirit directed the church in Antioch to send Barnabas and Saul. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on the Holy Spirit. Use the same word used in previous stories for the Holy Spirit.

Barnabas and Saul go to Seleucia and sail to Cyprus. When they reach Salamis, they preach the word of God in Jewish synagogues. **Synagogues** are buildings where Jewish people gather to worship God. Use the same word used in previous stories for synagogue. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on synagogue. John Mark helps Barnabas and Saul.

They travel across Cyprus to the town of Paphos and meet Bar-Jesus, a **magician**, or **sorcerer**. Usually magicians are eastern wise men, priests, and astrologers skilled in interpreting dreams and other magic arts. Magicians try to heal diseases, bring physical blessings, curse others, guard against curses or demons, or tell about future events. The word magician can be used negatively, which happens twice in Acts. The first instance is about Simon, a magician who tried to pay Peter for the power to give people the Holy Spirit. The second instance is Bar-Jesus, a Jewish magician and false prophet. A **false prophet** is someone who says their message is from God, but it is not.

Bar-Jesus is with Sergius Paulus, the proconsul of Cyprus. A **proconsul** is a Roman official who governs a province, or a region within an empire. Sergius calls Barnabas and Saul to his court to hear the word of God. Bar-Jesus, also called Elymas, opposes Barnabas and Saul.

Saul, whose Roman name is Paul, is filled with the **Holy Spirit**. Paul is filled with the Holy Spirit because he has turned from his sin and turned to God by believing in Jesus. Followers of Jesus receive the Holy Spirit when they begin their new life in Christ. The Holy Spirit guides Paul in what to do and say, sometimes in a very specific way.

Paul rebukes Elymas and says that Elymas is full of deceit and fraud. **Deceit** is lying to people in a harmful way. **Fraud** is trickery or wickedness, doing things to wrong or harm people in dishonest ways.

Paul says Elymas is a son of the devil. **Son of the devil** is a way of saying Elymas is like the devil.

Paul says Elymas is an enemy of all righteousness. **Righteousness** here refers to everything that is right or holy. Elymas actively opposes everything blameless or good. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on righteousness. Use the same word used in previous stories for righteousness.

Paul says to Elymas, "Will you never stop perverting the right ways of the Lord?" **Pervert** means to bend, twist, or make something crooked. Some translations say, "Will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord?" Elymas is trying to turn the Lord's truth into lies. Here, the **Lord** refers to God. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on Lord. Use the same word used in previous stories for Lord.

Then Paul says, "Behold, now the hand of the Lord is against you. You are going to be blind for a time, not able to see the sunlight." **Hand of the Lord** is an expression used in the Old Testament meaning the power of the Lord God. Here, it refers to the Lord's power to judge and punish. The **Lord** refers to God. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on Lord. Use the same word used in previous stories for Lord.

Immediately mist and darkness fall on Elymas. This is a way of saying Elymas becomes blind. He looks for someone to lead him. When the governor sees what happens, he believes. Sergius is amazed at the teaching of

the **Lord**. Here, Lord refers to the Lord Jesus. Luke often refers to Jesus as "Lord," as a title of respect. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on Lord. Use the same word used in previous stories for Lord.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 13:4–12

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (4626925 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (7800962 KB)

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Acts 13:13–22

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 13:13–22 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

In the previous passage, Barnabas and Saul were sent out by the Holy Spirit through the church in Antioch of Syria. Barnabas and Saul went to Cyprus and preached there, with John Mark as their helper. Luke begins the next passage with the phrase, "Paul and his companions." Note that Paul's position is different now. Before, Luke wrote "Barnabas and Saul." Now Luke lists Paul first, using Paul's Roman name. Paul is the leader. Paul's companions are Barnabas and John Mark.

Paul, Barnabas, and John Mark leave Cyprus. They sail to Perga, over 300 kilometers northwest of Cyprus. Perga is the capital of the province of Pamphylia.

Show a map that includes the town of Paphos on Cyprus; the region of Pamphylia including the city of Perga; the region of Phrygia, including the city of Antioch; the region of Pisidia; and Jerusalem.

In Perga, John Mark leaves Paul and Barnabas. John Mark returns to Jerusalem, his hometown. Luke does not say why John Mark leaves Paul and Barnabas. Later in Acts, we learn Paul is very unhappy that John Mark leaves. Paul and Barnabas travel by land about 200 kilometers north to Pisidian Antioch, or Antioch in Pisidia. The trip from Perga to Antioch of Pisidia is across a rocky mountain range with river valleys. The land they cross is empty and known for robbers who wait for travelers. Antioch in Pisidia is different from Antioch in Syria. Antioch in Pisidia is the leading city in the southern part of the province. There is a large Jewish population in Antioch of Pisidia.

In Antioch of Pisidia, Paul and Barnabas go to the synagogue first, as they did in Cyprus. Synagogues are not just a place of worship for Jews, but a center for education, social gatherings, and managing community matters. On the Sabbath, the Jewish day of worship, Paul and Barnabas sit down in the synagogue for the service. From later on in this passage we know that in the crowd there are both people who are Jews by birth and non-Jewish people who believe in God.

Show a picture of a Jewish synagogue.

In a synagogue service, the leaders usually read out loud from the Law and the Prophets. The Law and the Prophets is a common way of referring to Jewish scripture. The Law is the books of Moses, the first five books of the Bible. The Prophets refers to other writings in the Old Testament, including historical books and books written by other prophets. After the readings, it is common for someone suitable in the crowd to teach from the scriptures. The teaching usually relates to the reading that just took place. The synagogue officials, or Jewish leaders in charge of the meetings, send a message to Paul and Barnabas. The leaders address Paul and Barnabas as brothers because they are fellow Jews. They tell Paul and Barnabas to share a word of exhortation, or encouragement, if they have one.

In your community, for what kinds of gatherings does someone give a speech or message? How is the speaker selected? How much time does the speaker usually have to prepare their message?

In Jewish culture, a speaker sits down. In Greek culture, a speaker stands up. Paul follows the Greek custom and stands up to speak, maybe because there are non-Jewish people in the crowd. Like the messages Peter and Stephen gave in earlier passages, Paul tells how God has worked through Jewish history. Paul shares how God kept his promises and how God's promises were fulfilled by Jesus.

In your community, on what kind of occasions is the history of your people or tribe retold? Who tells the story of your people?

Paul begins by saying, "Men of Israel and you who fear God." Men of Israel refers to those who are Jewish by birth, descendants of Israel. "You who fear God" refers to non-Jews who either believe in and worship God or who are interested in the God of the Jews. Paul is speaking to everyone present, both Jews and non-Jews.

Paul says that the Israelite's God chose the fathers, or ancestors of the Jewish people, to be his special people. God made them a numerous and strong people group while they lived in Egypt. With God's power, or an uplifted arm, God led them out of Egypt. For forty years, God took care of the Israelites in the wilderness. This can mean that God provided for the Israelites in the wilderness, or that God endured their bad behavior. Both meanings are true because the Israelites often rebelled against God, and God always provided for them while they were in the wilderness.

Then God brought his people to the land of Canaan. God gave the Israelites the land of Canaan as an inheritance. God helped the Israelites conquer the seven nations who lived there, and he made it possible for the Israelites to own Canaan. The Israelites were in Egypt 400 years. Then they were in the desert for 40 years. Then they conquered the nations in Canaan for ten years. This makes 450 years.

Show a map that includes the land of Canaan.

In Canaan God gave the Israelites judges, or chiefs to rule over them. The last judge was Samuel. Samuel also gave God's people messages from God. When the Israelites asked Samuel for a king, God appointed Saul. Israel was made up of 12 tribes, and Saul was from the tribe of Benjamin. God removed Saul and made David the Israelites' king. God approves of David. Paul tells us what God said about David in two different places in the Israelite Scripture: David is a man who pleases God very much. David will do everything God wants him to do.

In your language or culture, what kinds of things do you say about someone you like very much? How do you express that you like or approve of someone?

In the first portion of Paul's message, Paul recounts how God saves and loves Israel. After this, Paul's historical account will shift from David to Jesus.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has four scenes.

First scene: Paul, Barnabas, and John Mark sail from the city of Paphos on Cyprus to Perga in Pamphylia.

Second scene: In Perga, John Mark leaves Paul and Barnabas and returns to Jerusalem. Paul and Barnabas travel from Perga to Antioch in Pisidia.

Third scene: On the Sabbath day, Paul and Barnabas go to the synagogue. After the usual readings, the leaders of the synagogue ask Paul and Barnabas to give a word of encouragement to the people.

Fourth scene: Paul addresses the crowd, both Jews and non-Jews. Paul begins with the history of God fulfilling his promises from Israel's ancestors up to the time of King David.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- Barnabas
- John Mark
- Leaders of the synagogue
- Jews attending the Sabbath meeting in the synagogue
- Non-Jews who worship God and are attending the Sabbath meeting in the synagogue
- Israelites
- Judges over Israel
- Samuel
- Saul
- David
- God

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

It is important to note there are many locations in this passage. Have a map of the region available.

Show a map that includes the town of Paphos on Cyprus; the region of Pamphylia including the city of Perga; the region of Phrygia, including the city of Antioch; the region of Pisidia; and Jerusalem.

This story begins in the city of Paphos on the western coast of Cyprus. Paul, Barnabas, and John Mark sail northwest over 300 kilometers to Perga. In most translations, the text says they "came to Perga," meaning they went to Perga or reached Perga. Choose a clear way to phrase this in your language.

On this journey, Perga is only a stopping point. In Perga John Mark leaves Paul and Barnabas and travels back to Jerusalem, his home. Paul and Barnabas leave Perga and go to Antioch in Pisidia. The text says they went on from Perga and came to Antioch. It is important to describe the movements of their journey in a way that is clear in your language.

In Antioch of Pisidia, Paul and Barnabas go and sit down in the synagogue on the Sabbath. After the usual readings from the Jewish scripture, the synagogue leaders send a message to Paul and Barnabas. They politely greet them with, "Brothers, If you have any word of encouragement for the people, say it." It is important to note that this is an imperative request, or a command, not just a polite invitation.

Paul stands up and motions with his hand. Motioning with a hand is a common way to ask people to be quiet. This is similar to when Peter quieted the people at John Mark's mother's house, after the angel helped him escape from prison. Paul also tells them, "*Listen!*" He tries to get everyone's attention. It is important to note that right after Paul begins his speech to the whole gathering of Jews and non-Jews, Paul says, "The God of this people Israel chose *our* fathers." "Our" refers to only the Jewish people in the gathering who are descended from Abraham. However, Paul's message is for everyone at the service.

It is important to note the transition words Paul uses, such as "after." Paul reviews how God delivered the Israelites from Egypt and gave them the land of Canaan. Then Paul transitions to talking about a new time period with "after." *After* the Israelites finally settled in Canaan, God gave them judges, or caused them to have judges, until the time when Samuel the prophet came. "Then" is another transitional word. "Then" introduces what happens while Samuel is still Israel's leader. "Then they asked for a king." Their first king was Saul. Another transition is "after removing him." God removed Saul and made David to be the king. The promised Savior would come from the line of David. The kingship transferring from Saul's family to David's family is another turning point in Israelite history.

It is important to note that when God says, "I have found David," God did not lose David and then find him. It means God has observed, or seen, that David is a man after his own heart.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has four scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- Barnabas
- John Mark
- Leaders of the synagogue
- Jews attending the Sabbath meeting in the synagogue
- Non-Jews who worship God and are attending the Sabbath meeting in the synagogue
- Israelites
- Judges over Israel
- Samuel
- Saul
- David
- God

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

Paul, Barnabas, and John Mark are on the island of Cyprus, in the city of Paphos. They get on a ship, leave Paphos, and sail to the port town of Perga in the province of Pamphylia. In Perga, John Mark leaves and returns home to Jerusalem.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing Paul and Barnabas, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Shocked," "Like John Mark is a quitter," and "Upset that we have no help!" [end] Restart the action.

Paul and Barnabas travel from Perga to Antioch of Pisidia. On the Jewish day of worship, Paul and Barnabas go to the synagogue for the service and sit down. They listen to the usual readings from the books of Moses and the prophets. Then the synagogue leaders send a message to Paul and Barnabas, saying, "If you have a word of encouragement for the people, come give it."

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing the synagogue leaders, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Curious to hear their message," "Wondering if they will deny our request" and "Wanting someone new to strengthen our group." [!end] Restart the action.

Paul stands and motions with his hand for everyone to be quiet. As Paul speaks, your team could act out what Paul is saying. Paul says, "Fellow men of Israel and those who worship the God of the Jews, listen to me. The God of the nation of Israel chose our ancestors. God caused the Israelites to multiply in number and grow strong while they were slaves in the foreign land of Egypt. With mighty power, God led them out of slavery in Egypt. God cared for the Israelites for forty years in the wilderness. Then God helped the Israelites overcome the seven tribes that were living in the land of Canaan. God gave the land of Canaan to the Israelites as an inheritance. All this took about 450 years."

Stop the action.

Paul continues to speak. Paul says, "After that, God appointed judges, or chiefs, to rule the Israelites until the time Samuel the prophet ruled. Then the people begged for a king. God appointed Saul as king. Saul was the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin. Saul ruled for forty years. But God removed Saul from his position as king and appointed David as king. God said about David, 'I have seen that David, son of Jesse, is a man after my own heart. David will do everything I want him to do.'"

Stop the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

Paul and his companions leave Paphos by ship and sail to Perga in Pamphylia. **Paul and his companions** is a Greek phrase that means "those around Paul" and indicates Paul as the main person, or leader.

While they are in Perga, John Mark goes home to Jerusalem. Paul and Barnabas go to Antioch of Pisidia. On the Sabbath, Paul and Barnabas go to the synagogue. The **Sabbath** is a day of rest and worship for Jews, as commanded by God. The Sabbath is usually observed on the seventh day of the week, from sunset on Friday until sunset on Saturday. Jews go to the synagogue to worship God and for other community activities. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on Sabbath. Use the same word used in previous stories for Sabbath. **Synagogue** is a building where Jews gather for worship. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on synagogue. Use the same word used in previous stories for synagogue.

In the gathering, there is a reading from the **Law and the Prophets**. "Law" refers to the law of Moses, the first five books of the Bible. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on law. Use the same word used in previous stories for law. Here, "the prophets" refers to writings of other Old Testament prophets and some historical books of the Old Testament. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on prophets. Use the same word used in previous stories for prophets. Law and the Prophets refers to the entire Jewish Scripture.

The synagogue leaders send a message to Paul and Barnabas, saying, "Brothers, if you have a word of exhortation for the people, say it." **Brothers** is a respectful way to address other Jews, similar to saying, "friends." Here, brothers does not refer to fellow followers of Jesus. **Exhortation** is encouragement, or words to build up someone in their faith.

Paul stands and motions with his hand. Paul begins his message, saying, "Men of Israel and you who fear God." **Men of Israel** means fellow Israelites or people of Jewish descent. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on Israel. Use the same word used in previous stories for Israel. **You who fear God** refers to Gentiles who believe in and worship God-people who are not descendants of Israel, or not born of Jewish descent. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on fear of God. Use the same word used in previous stories for fear of God.

Paul says, "The God of this nation Israel chose our ancestors and made them great during their stay in Egypt." Here, **Israel** is anyone who is an heir to the promise God made with Abraham. Israel refers to the Jewish people group. God **made them great** by causing them to multiply in number and grow strong. Paul says, "With an uplifted arm God led them out of Egypt. For about forty years God put up with them in the wilderness." **Uplifted arm** refers to God's mighty power that God used to deliver the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. The **desert**, or **wilderness**, is a place where no one lives and very few plants grow. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on desert. Use the same word used in previous stories for desert.

"God gave them judges until the time of Samuel the prophet." **Judges** are leaders God chose to rule over Israel after God gave the Israelites the land of Canaan. A judge is similar to the chief of a tribe. A **prophet** is someone chosen by God to give messages from God to the people. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on prophet. Use the same word used in previous stories for prophet.

"The Israelites asked for a king, and God gave them Saul as king. After God removed Saul as king, He raised up David to be their king." **Raised up** is a common Old Testament phrase, meaning God equips and appoints a new ruler. Paul says, "God testified about David: 'I have found David, the son of Jesse, a man after my heart, who will do all my will.'" **Testified** means God spoke well or approvingly about David.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 13:13–22

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (4469861 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 4](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (7566804 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Acts 13:23-41

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 13:23-41 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In the previous passage, Paul and Barnabas traveled to Antioch of Pisidia. Paul is giving a message in the synagogue to a crowd of Jews and non-Jews, telling how God saves and loves his people. After saying how pleased God was with King David, Paul now says that from David's descendants, God has brought a Savior to Israel as he promised. The Savior is Jesus. The only other time the title Savior is used in Acts was when Peter and the twelve disciples answered the high priest in Jerusalem. Peter said that God exalted Jesus as Leader and Savior so that Israel would repent of their sins and be forgiven. In the Old Testament, God promised to send a Savior through David's family, and that promise has been fulfilled.

Before Jesus came, his cousin, John the Baptist, taught many Israelites to turn from their sins, turn to God, and show the change in their life by being baptized, or immersed in water. John's message of repentance and baptism was to prepare for the Savior's coming. John is the link between when God is the God of the Jews and God's new community. In God's new community through Jesus, both Jews and non-Jews belong. While John was finishing his course, or completing his work, John corrected what people thought about him. John made it clear

he was not the Promised Savior, but the Savior is coming after him. The Savior is so much more important than John, that John is not good enough to untie his sandals. In their culture, that's a job for the lowest slaves!

In your culture, what kinds of tasks do slaves or servants carry out? What is one of the dirtiest or lowliest tasks slaves or servants have to do?

Paul addresses his fellow Jews again with, "Brothers, sons of the family of Abraham," and the non-Jews with, "those who fear God." Those who fear God are non-Jews who believe in and worship the God of the Jews. Then Paul proclaims that God sent the message of salvation to *all* of them, both Jews and non-Jews.

The Jewish people in Jerusalem and their religious leaders read the prophets' writings every Sabbath in the synagogue. However, they still did not recognize or understand that Jesus is the Promised Savior. They had Jesus killed. By ordering Jesus' death, the Jewish people and their leaders carried out what the prophets had said would happen to the Promised Savior. The Jews in Jerusalem did not have a legal reason to kill Jesus. They asked Pilate, the Roman governor, to kill Jesus.

They finished doing everything to Jesus that the Scriptures said would happen to the Promised Savior. Friends of Jesus took his dead body from the tree, meaning the cross. They laid his body in a tomb, which means they buried him in a tomb. But God raised Jesus from death back to life. For many days Jesus was seen by the followers who had been with him since the beginning of his outreach in Galilee. Remember from earlier passages that Jesus appeared to his followers for forty days before going up to heaven. Jesus' original followers are now His witnesses to the Jewish people. They know Jesus better than anyone else. They have witnessed Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.

Show a map that includes Galilee and Jerusalem. Show a picture of a cross. Show a picture of a tomb.

Paul and Barnabas bring good news. God fulfilled his promises by raising Jesus from the dead. Paul uses Scripture to prove that Jesus is the Promised Savior. He quotes from Psalms, "You are my Son; today I make you my Son." When a new king was appointed for the Jews, the king became like a son of God. The king ruled as God's representative. Jesus' resurrection proved that God fulfilled his promise. He sent his own Son as the Savior who will live forever. God raised the Holy One, or Jesus, from the dead. Jesus' body did not rot in the grave. God had promised David that someone from his family would rule a kingdom that lasts forever. God said, "I will give you the holy and sure blessings promised to David." Jews and non-Jews can receive the blessings promised to David, which is eternal life through Jesus.

Paul quotes another Psalm of David that says God will not allow his Holy One to die and rot. Peter also quoted this in his message when the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost. Many people in the crowd with Paul would have known that this Psalm refers to the Promised Savior. David died, was buried, and his body rotted, so David was not talking about himself. David was speaking of the Promised Savior who did not rot but was raised from the dead.

In your culture, when someone dies, what happens to the body? What kind of rituals connect someone's remains to their ancestors?

Paul wants the whole crowd to know that because of what Jesus has done, their sins can be forgiven. Everyone who believes in Jesus is justified. They are set free from the guilt and punishment of all their sin. They are in a right relationship with God. Some people thought by obeying the law of Moses they could be justified and escape the punishment of their sin. But no one completely obeyed the law of Moses except Jesus. They could not be freed from sin through obeying the law. Only by believing in Jesus, the Promised Savior, is someone truly forgiven of sin and acceptable to God.

In your culture, how do people try to be on good terms with God, or the deity they worship? What kinds of things do they do to escape punishment for their wrongdoings?

Paul ends his message with a warning to beware and take care that what the prophets said would happen, does not happen to you. The prophets warned God's people what would happen to them if they continued to reject God and do evil. Paul quotes the prophet Habakkuk. Paul uses this Scripture to speak of God's final judgment of people. The people should repent and believe in the Lord Jesus. If they reject Jesus, the Promised Savior who can rescue them from the punishment of their sin, God will severely punish them. God will do something so terrible to them they would not believe it.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has four scenes.

First scene: Paul continues to give a message in the synagogue in Antioch of Pisidia. Jews and non-Jews are gathered on the day of worship. Paul gives an account of how God fulfills his promises and continues talking about King David. The Promised Savior will be King David's descendant. When John the Baptist came, he taught the Jews to turn from sin and be baptized. John told the Jews that God's Promised Savior is coming. This Savior is Jesus.

Second scene: The Jews in Jerusalem did not believe Jesus is the Promised Savior. Jesus did not deserve death, but the Jewish leaders had Jesus killed. Jesus died and was buried. But God raised him from the dead. Jesus appeared to many of his followers and proved he rose from the dead.

Third scene: Paul proves from Scripture that Jesus is the Promised Savior. God fulfilled his promises. Jesus' body did not rot in a tomb. God raised him from the dead.

Fourth scene: There is forgiveness of sin through Jesus, not through obeying Jewish law. Paul urges the crowd to turn from their sin and believe in Jesus for forgiveness.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- Barnabas
- Jews attending the Sabbath meeting in the synagogue
- Non-Jews who worship God and are attending the Sabbath meeting in the synagogue
- Israelites
- David
- Jesus
- John
- Jews and Jewish leaders in Jerusalem
- Old Testament prophets
- Pilate
- Jesus' original followers

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

First scene: This story takes place in Antioch of Pisidia. When this story begins, Paul is standing up giving a message in the synagogue on the day of worship. Jews and non-Jews are there. Paul had just told how David came to be King of Israel, and how God was very pleased with David. Now Paul says God has brought the Promised Savior to Israel through David's descendants.

It is important to note when John taught repentance to all of Israel, he did not teach every person. Here, all people means many people.

When John was finishing his work of getting people ready for the Promised Savior, he asked a question that did not need an answer: "Who do you think I am?" However, John answers the question, "I am not that one." This question and answer is sometimes combined and formed into a statement to make the meaning clear. The

people thought John was the Promised Savior, but he told them he was not. John's next statement begins with "No, but behold!" This is like saying "look!" or "listen!" to emphasize that the Promised Savior is coming after him.

It is important to note that when Paul says, "*To us* the message of salvation has been given," "to us" is placed first to show it is important. God sent the message of salvation to both Jews and non-Jews.

Second scene: The Jews and their leaders in Jerusalem did not recognize Jesus or the words of the prophets about him. This doesn't mean they had never met Jesus or could not identify him. They had a false understanding and a false way of thinking that led them away from a relationship with God through Jesus.

"Though" is an important introductory word that implies the Jewish people did something we would not expect. *Though* the Jewish people and their leaders did not have a legal reason to kill Jesus, they asked the Roman governor, Pilate, to have Jesus killed anyway.

The pronoun "they" can be confusing. Paul says, "They had done everything that was written about Jesus." Here, "they" refers to the Jewish people of Jerusalem. "They took Him down from the cross and laid Him in a tomb." John's gospel says that Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus took Jesus off the cross and buried him. "They" refers to Joseph and Nicodemus.

But God raised him from the dead. "But" contrasts between what people did to Jesus, and what God did. After people had Jesus killed, God brought him back to life.

Third scene: It is important to note when Paul says, "Therefore, he says also in another Psalm, 'You will not allow your Holy One to rot in the grave,'" "he" refers to David. "You" refers to God. David is speaking to God, saying that God will not let his Holy One rot.

Paul uses "but" again to contrast between David, who died, was buried, and whose body rotted, and Jesus, who God raised from the dead and did not allow to rot. It is implied that Jesus will not die again.

Fourth scene: Paul comes to the end of his message when he says, "Therefore." Now that Paul has explained from history and Scripture that Jesus is the Promised Savior, he makes his final point. Paul urges the crowd to believe the message about Jesus for forgiveness of sins. Then Paul says "Therefore, take heed." Because Jesus is the way to receive forgiveness of sins, the people should respond to the message so God will not punish them.

In the Scripture Paul quotes from Habakkuk, God is the speaker. God begins with "Behold!" meaning look, or listen, to attract the listener's attention. Then God commands the listener to be amazed at what God will do, and to be destroyed.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has four scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- Barnabas
- Jews attending the Sabbath meeting in the synagogue
- Non-Jews who worship God and are attending the Sabbath meeting in the synagogue
- Israelites
- David
- Jesus
- John
- Jews and Jewish leaders in Jerusalem
- Old Testament prophets
- Pilate
- Jesus' original followers

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

You could split up your team and act out both the scene of Paul at the synagogue as well as his message.

Paul continues giving his message in the synagogue on the day of worship. He is standing in a crowd of Jews and non-Jews. Paul says, "One of David's descendants, Jesus, is the Savior God promised to his people. Before Jesus came, John preached to many people of Israel that they should turn from their sins, turn to God, and be baptized to show how they now live by God's ways. As John was finishing his work, he said, 'Who do you think I am? I am not the one you are looking for. But listen! He is coming soon, and I am not good enough to even untie his sandals.'"

"My Jewish brothers, and those who believe in and worship the true God, this message of salvation has been sent to all of us!"

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing the non-Jews in the synagogue, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Overjoyed," "Confident in my faith," and "Curious to hear more." [!end] Restart the action.

"The Jewish people in Jerusalem and their leaders did not understand that Jesus was the one the prophets had spoken about. Instead, they condemned him. By ordering Jesus' death, they fulfilled the prophets' words that are read every Sabbath in synagogue. The Jews could not find a legal reason to have Jesus killed, but they asked Pilate to have him killed anyway."

Stop the action.

"When the Jews in Jerusalem and their leaders had done all the prophets had said would happen to the Promised Savior, they took Jesus's body down from the cross and placed him in a tomb. But God raised him from the dead! Over many days Jesus appeared to the followers who had been with him since his work in Galilee up until his time in Jerusalem. These followers are now Jesus' witnesses to the Jews."

Stop the action.

Paul continues teaching. Paul says, "And now we are here to bring you this good news. The promise that God made to our ancestors, God has now fulfilled for us by raising Jesus from the dead. This is what the second Psalm says about Jesus: 'You are my Son. Today I have become your Father.' God had promised to raise his Son from the dead, not to let him rot in the grave. God said, 'I will give you the holy and sure blessings promised to David.' Another Psalm explains it more: 'You will not allow your Holy One to rot in the grave.' This Psalm was not about David. After David did God's will in his own time, David died and was buried with his ancestors. David's body rotted. No, this Psalm is about someone else, whom God raised from the dead and whose body did not rot."

Stop the action.

"Brothers, listen! I want you to know that through Jesus there is forgiveness for your sins. Everyone who believes in Jesus is declared right with God. This was never possible through the law of Moses. Be careful! Don't let the prophets' words become true about you. The prophets said, 'Look, you mockers, be amazed and die! For I am doing something in your days, something you wouldn't believe, even if someone told you about it.'"

Stop the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Paul says, "God has brought Jesus, the Promised Savior of Israel, from David's descendants!" **Israel** is God's chosen people, descended from Abraham. Here, **Savior** refers to the Savior God promised the Jews through the prophets. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on Israel and Savior. Use the same word used in previous stories for Israel and Savior.

Before Jesus came, John preached a baptism of repentance. **Baptism of repentance** is to be immersed in water to show a turn from sins and a turn to God by living a new life following God's ways. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on baptism and repent. Use the same word used in previous stories for baptism and repent.

Paul says, "Brothers, sons of Abraham and God-fearing Gentiles, to us the message of salvation has been sent." **Brothers** is a respectful way to address other descendants of Abraham, or Jews. It is similar to saying "friends." **God-fearing Gentiles** refers to Gentiles who believe in and worship God. Gentiles are not descendants of Israel, or not born of Jewish descent. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on fear of God. Use the same word used in previous stories for fear of God. **Salvation** is rescue from the punishment of sin through repentance and faith in Jesus. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on salvation. Use the same word used in previous stories for salvation.

The Jews in Jerusalem didn't understand what the prophets said about Jesus, even though they heard the prophets' words every Sabbath. A **prophet** gives God's messages to the people. The **Sabbath** is the day of worship for Jews. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on prophet and Sabbath. Use the same word used in previous stories for prophet and Sabbath. The Jews in Jerusalem asked Pilate to have Jesus killed. They took Jesus down from the cross and laid his body in a tomb. A **cross** is two pieces of wood nailed together. The Romans hung criminals by nails on a cross to kill them. Jesus' **tomb** was probably a small cave carved out of rock. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on cross and tomb. Use the same word used in previous stories for cross and tomb.

Paul shares a Psalm about Jesus, that God will give the holy and sure blessings of David. **Holy** is uncommon, set apart for God's purposes. **Sure** means certain, or trustworthy. **Blessings** is when God does good to someone because he is pleased with them. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on holy and blessings. Use the same word used in previous stories for holy and blessings.

Through another Psalm, Paul explains that God raised Jesus from the dead and will not let him decay. **Decay**, or corruption, is when something rots or breaks down over time after death. When David served God's purpose, he fell asleep. **Fell asleep** is a way of saying David died.

"Brothers, forgiveness of sins is through Jesus." Here, **brothers** refers to the whole crowd, both Jews and non-Jews. Anyone can have forgiveness of sins through Jesus. **Forgiveness** is to wipe away someone's sins. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on forgiveness. Use the same word used in previous stories for forgiveness.

Everyone who believes in Jesus is justified through him. **Justified** is a Greek word from the law courts, meaning someone has been declared not guilty of the charges brought against them. They are set free of the charges. Here, the emphasis is on being made right with God, or being acceptable to him by being set free from every sin. Being set free from every sin is not possible under the Law of Moses. The **Law of Moses** is the first five books of the Bible. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on justified and law. Use the same word used in previous stories for justified and law.

Paul ends his message with a warning from the prophets. It says, "Look, you scoffers, wonder and perish." **Scoffers** are people who speak bad about what God says. Scoffers say that God won't do what he says. **Wonder** means to be amazed about something strange or unusual. **Perish** means to be destroyed, or to vanish. God is going to do something so terrible they wouldn't believe it.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 13:23-41

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (4803516 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

Acts 13:42–52

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 13:42–52 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In the previous passage, Paul gave a message in the synagogue at Antioch of Pisidia. Jews and non-Jews gathered for the Sabbath meeting. Paul taught that their sins can be forgiven through the Promised Savior, who is Jesus. Now, Paul and Barnabas leave the synagogue. The people beg Paul and Barnabas to come back the next Sabbath and speak more about what Paul had just taught.

After the synagogue meeting is finished, many Jews and non-Jews who believe in and worship God follow Paul and Barnabas. These non-Jews who follow Paul out of the synagogue are full converts to Judaism. They have done every ritual necessary to become fully Jewish. Paul and Barnabas urge the men who follow them to keep trusting that God shows favor and goodness to them, even though they don't deserve it.

On the next day of worship a week later, almost the whole city of Antioch of Pisidia comes to hear the message about Jesus from Paul and Barnabas. Most people living there are non-Jews. They likely heard that Paul's message is about salvation for both Jews and non-Jews. The Jews, probably the Jewish leaders, see the huge crowd. They get extremely jealous that so many people—especially non-Jews—have come to hear Paul and Barnabas' message. They are very much against the message. They do not believe God can accept both non-Jews and Jews through faith in Jesus. The Jewish leaders begin to say that Paul's message is a lie. They also say bad things about Paul, insulting him.

In your community, what happens when a leader's followers choose another leader? How do the followers act when they change leaders? How do the opposing leaders treat each other?

Paul and Barnabas then speak boldly, or bravely, without caring who hears. They are not afraid. Paul probably does most of the speaking. He says, "It was necessary for the word of God to be spoken to you first." God had commanded Paul to share the good news first to the Jews, then to the Gentiles, or non-Jews. Since the Jews refuse to believe the message from God about Jesus, they don't deserve eternal life. Because the Jews have rejected the word of God about Jesus, Paul and Barnabas share the message with non-Jews. However, this

doesn't mean they won't ever share the good news of Jesus with Jews again. Paul will continue this pattern of telling the Jews first, then the non-Jews, throughout his ministry.

Paul quotes the prophet Isaiah: "I have made you a light for the Gentiles so that all the world may be saved." God is speaking about Jesus, the Promised Savior, but here Paul is referring to himself also. Paul and Barnabas do Jesus' work because they are his servants. "Made you a light" means God has chosen Jesus and Paul to show things about himself, just like a light reveals things to people. In the Bible, light and darkness are commonly used to represent good and evil.

In your culture, what symbols represent good and evil? How are those symbols present in daily life, or in your people's stories?

The non-Jews rejoice, and all who were appointed by God for eternal life believe. "Those who were appointed for eternal life" is a common phrase in Jewish teaching. God chose the people who would believe in him so later on they could live with him eternally. When God chooses people for eternal life, they believe in him. The non-Jews took an active part in believing and committing themselves to Jesus. More and more people throughout the region were hearing about and believing the word of the Lord, or good news about Jesus.

The Jewish leaders use two influential groups to stir up persecution, or cause harmful opposition against Paul and Barnabas. "Devout and prominent women" probably refers to wealthy, non-Jewish women who believe in God. The "leading men of the city" could be the chief men who lived there, not necessarily the officials who ruled the city. Paul and Barnabas are forced to leave the district for a time.

In your community, how do people influence others to become opposed to something? In what kinds of situations do groups of angry people get together and cause harm to others?

Paul and Barnabas go to Iconium, a city in the province of Galatia. Iconium is about 130 kilometers southeast of Antioch of Pisidia. It probably takes them about four or five days to travel there. Even though the people of Antioch of Pisidia force Paul and Barnabas to leave, the followers of Jesus there are very joyful and the Holy Spirit continues to give them power.

Show a map that includes Antioch of Pisidia and Iconium.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has three scenes.

First scene: At the synagogue in Antioch of Pisidia, Paul and Barnabas are invited to speak again the next Sabbath. They leave the synagogue, and many people follow them.

Second scene: The next Sabbath, almost the whole city comes to hear their message. The Jews get jealous and speak against Paul. Paul and Barnabas tell the Jews that because they reject God's message about Jesus, they must now tell the non-Jews, as God has commanded them. Many non-Jews believe in Jesus.

Third scene: God's message about Jesus spreads throughout the region. The Jewish leaders get an angry mob to make Paul and Barnabas leave town. Paul and Barnabas shake the dust off their feet and go to Iconium. However, the followers of Jesus in Antioch of Pisidia are overjoyed and filled with the Holy Spirit.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- Barnabas
- Jews
- Non-Jews who have fully become Jews
- Jewish leaders
- Influential religious women
- Male leaders of the city
- Followers of Jesus in Antioch of Pisidia

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

This story begins in Antioch of Pisidia. Paul has just finished his message about the forgiveness of sins through Jesus. Pay attention to the chronology at the beginning of this story. Paul and Barnabas leave the synagogue. As they leave, the people beg, or strongly ask them to come back and teach the next day of worship. Then the crowd is dismissed, probably by the Jewish leaders. It is implied that Paul and Barnabas leave the synagogue before the leaders let the people leave.

After Paul and Barnabas leave the synagogue, some Jews and non-Jews who have fully become Jews follow them. Follow usually means to walk behind someone, but since Paul and Barnabas talk with the people who follow them, they probably all walk together.

A week later, on the Sabbath, most of the people in Antioch come to hear Paul and Barnabas speak. This crowd is mostly non-Jews. The meeting probably takes place in the synagogue.

The Jewish leaders get very jealous and speak against Paul. The passage says Paul and Barnabas spoke, but Paul is probably the speaker. When Paul answers the leaders, the phrasing is important. Because the Jewish leaders reject the message from God about Jesus, they don't deserve eternal life. These are two related actions, not two separate actions. The first action, rejecting God's message, results in the second action, not deserving eternal life. It's also important to understand that because the Jews in Antioch reject the message from God about Jesus, Paul and Barnabas share the message with the non-Jewish people there. The word "for" when Paul says, "For so the Lord has commanded us," indicates the reason they now tell the non-Jews about Jesus. God has commanded them.

The non-Jews are continuously rejoicing and continuously saying the Lord Jesus' message is wonderful. More and more people hear the message about Jesus throughout the whole region. Here, region means the surrounding territory and does not refer to any specific area of the country. It's not just Paul and Barnabas who share the good news of Jesus. New followers of Jesus tell the good news, and more and more people believe.

But, the Jewish people cause some important religious women and leading men in the city to oppose Paul and Barnabas. "But" contrasts what the believers are doing to tell others about Jesus and what the Jews are doing to oppose them. Paul and Barnabas are forced to leave the district. Before they leave, in response to the Jews who had rejected them, Paul and Barnabas shake the dust off their feet. This probably involves taking off their sandals and shaking them. Shaking the dust off their feet, or sandals, is a symbolic action. It indicates that God has rejected those Jews and will punish them, because they have rejected his message about the Lord Jesus. Jesus told his disciples to shake the dust off their feet when people rejected them and their message.

The angry mob forces Paul and Barnabas to leave Antioch of Pisidia. They go to Iconium, a city with many people near a mountain range. Meanwhile, the followers of Jesus in Antioch continually rejoice and are empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has three scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- Barnabas
- Jews
- Non-Jews who have fully become Jews
- Jewish leaders
- Influential religious women
- Leading men of the city
- Followers of Jesus in Antioch of Pisidia

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

Paul finishes his message at the synagogue in Antioch of Pisidia. Jews and non-Jews are present. As Paul and Barnabas leave the synagogue, the people who heard Paul's message beg him to come back and speak about the same things on the next day of worship. The people leave the synagogue. Some Jews and non-Jews who had fully become Jews follow Paul and Barnabas. Paul and Barnabas talk with them and urge them to continue relying on the good news of salvation through Jesus.

Stop the action.

The next week, on the day of worship, almost the whole city comes to the synagogue. Jews and a great number of non-Jews want to hear Paul and Barnabas teach the message of God about Jesus. But when some of the Jewish leaders see the huge crowds, they get jealous. They speak very harshly against Paul and Paul's message.

Stop the action.

Paul and Barnabas answer the Jewish leaders boldly, without fear: "We had to speak the word of God about Jesus to you first. But you rejected the message! This proves you don't deserve eternal life. So now we give the message to the non-Jews. For this is what the Lord has commanded us: 'I have made you a light to the non-Jews, to bring salvation to the ends of the earth.'" When the non-Jews hear this, they are very glad and praise the word of the Lord. All the people who were chosen by God for eternal life believe and become followers of Jesus. So the message from God about Jesus spreads throughout the region.

Stop the action.

But the Jewish leaders get some influential religious women and leading men of the city to oppose Paul and Barnabas. They create a mob to harm Paul and Barnabas because of their message, and force them to leave the city.

Stop the action.

As Paul and Barnabas leave, they take off their sandals and shake the dust off of them as a sign of rejection. Paul and Barnabas go to Iconium. And the believers in Antioch rejoice and are full of God's Spirit.

Stop the action.

Ask Paul and Barnabas, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Sad about the disbelief in Antioch," "Glad to suffer for Jesus," and "Wondering if this is how Jesus' twelve disciples feel when they are rejected."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Paul and Barnabas leave the synagogue. As they leave, the people beg Paul and Barnabas to teach again on the next Sabbath. A **synagogue** is a building where Jews gather to worship God. **Sabbath** is the Jewish day of worship, from sunset Friday to sunset on Saturday. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on synagogue and Sabbath. Use the same word used in previous stories for synagogue and Sabbath.

Many Jews and God-fearing proselytes follow Paul and Barnabas. **Jews** are Israelites, or descendants of Abraham's son, Isaac. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on Jews. Use the same word used in previous stories for Jews. **God-fearing proselytes**, or devout converts to Judaism, are non-Jewish men who believe in God, worship Him, and have also followed every ritual necessary to become fully Jewish. They are considered full converts and can become official members of the synagogue. Paul and Barnabas urge the Jews and devout converts to rely on God's grace. The **grace** of God is when God shows love to unworthy people. God accepts undeserving sinners through Jesus. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on grace. Use the same word used in previous stories for grace.

The next day of worship, many people come to hear the word of the Lord. The **word of the Lord** is the message about the Lord Jesus, or the message from God about Jesus. The Jewish leaders become jealous and revile, or blaspheme. **Revile or blaspheme** is to rebuke someone, speak very harshly to someone, or attack someone with false claims. Paul and Barnabas said they had to preach the **word of God**, or the message about Jesus, to the Jews first. But since the Jews judge themselves unworthy of eternal life, Paul and Barnabas take the message to the Gentiles. **Eternal life** is real life that never ends. People receive eternal life when they turn away from their sins, turn back to God, and trust in Jesus. When someone lets Jesus rule their life, they experience a new quality of life on earth and after death. **Gentiles** are non-Jews, or people not born of Jewish descent. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on eternal life and Gentiles. Use the same word used in previous stories for eternal life and Gentiles.

The Lord commanded Paul and Barnabas to be a light to the Gentiles and to take God's message of salvation to the ends of the earth. Here, **Lord** means the Lord God. **Salvation** is rescue from the punishment of sins through Jesus. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on Lord and salvation. Use the word used in previous stories for Lord and salvation. **Ends of the earth** is a way of saying everywhere in the world.

The Gentiles are very glad and honor the word of the Lord. But the Jewish leaders stir up persecution against Paul and Barnabas. **Stir up** is a way of saying the leaders caused other people to **persecute**, or harmfully oppose Paul and Barnabas. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on persecution. Use the same word used in previous stories for persecution.

Paul and Barnabas are forced to leave the city. They **shake the dust off their feet** as they leave. This probably involves taking off their sandals and shaking them. Shaking the dust off their feet, or sandals, is a symbolic action. It indicates that God has rejected those Jews and will punish them, because they have rejected his message about the Lord Jesus.

In your culture, what kinds of actions show that you have rejected someone? What kinds of actions show that God has rejected someone? In your culture, what phrase can you use to express shaking the dust off your feet?

The disciples rejoice and are filled with the Holy Spirit. Here, **disciples** refers to the followers of Jesus in Antioch. The **Holy Spirit** is God's Spirit, given to people who turn from their sin and turn to God by believing in Jesus. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on disciples and the Holy Spirit. Use the same word used in previous stories for disciples and the Holy Spirit.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 13:42–52

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (4047510 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 3](#)
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- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

Acts 14:1–7

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 14:1–7 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In the previous passage, Paul and Barnabas told the good news about Jesus in Antioch of Pisidia. However, the Jewish leaders were not pleased. Paul and Barnabas were persecuted and forced to leave the district. They went to Iconium. Iconium is in the region of Phrygia, within the Roman province of Galatia.

Show a map that includes Antioch of Pisidia and Iconium, both in the region of Phrygia; and the towns of Lystra and Derbe, both in the region of Lycaonia.

From this point on, Luke gives briefer accounts of Paul's stops on his missionary journeys. This is probably because Paul taught messages similar to the one he gave in Antioch of Pisidia. Also, Paul's message has a similar effect in every city, wherever he went.

Paul and Barnabas go to the synagogue in Iconium first, just like they did in Antioch of Pisidia. The synagogue is where Jews and non-Jews who believe in and worship God meet to worship.

Show a picture of a synagogue.

The Jews and the non-Jews who believe in and worship God know that God is going to send a Promised Savior. Paul tells them the Promised Savior is Jesus, and many of them believe. Remember, Paul told the people in Antioch of Pisidia that they could not be saved by keeping the laws of Moses, but only through Jesus. Paul probably says something similar in Iconium. Some Jews become very angry. They stir up the non-Jews and poison their minds against the brothers. This means the angry Jews cause many non-Jews to become angry and bitter against the followers of Jesus. The brothers are Paul, Barnabas, and the believers.

Think of a story in your culture where a group of people turned other people against a group they didn't like. In your language, how do you describe someone causing another person to become angry at someone they don't like?

Even though many people oppose them, Paul and Barnabas recognize they have a job to do. The new believers must be taught and strengthened in the faith, as Jesus had commanded after meeting Paul on the road to Damascus. Paul and Barnabas speak boldly, relying on Jesus without fear. This is similar to when Peter and John kept on preaching with boldness after being threatened by the Jewish leaders.

Paul and Barnabas speak the word of His grace, or the message that God saves unworthy people who trust in Jesus. God does not save people who think they can please Him by obeying Jewish laws. Jesus testifies, or bears witness to, the word of His grace. Jesus proves that Paul and Barnabas' message is true. Jesus enables Paul and Barnabas to do signs and wonders, or miracles. Paul and Barnabas probably heal people. Jesus often showed his power through healing, and now he shows his power through Paul and Barnabas. The miracles also support Paul's message that salvation is through faith, not through obeying Jewish law.

In your culture, how does someone prove that what they are saying is true? What kind of evidence do they provide?

Paul and Barnabas continue to teach and perform signs. Meanwhile, the people in the city take sides. Some believe Paul and Barnabas' message, and some agree with the disbelieving Jews who are turning people against Paul and Barnabas. The group against Paul and Barnabas probably turns into a violent mob. They make a plan to stone Paul and Barnabas. But Paul and Barnabas find out about the plan and go to the region of Lycaonia. They do not run away in fear, but use caution and good judgment so they can continue their work. Paul and Barnabas travel freely throughout the region of Lycaonia, including the towns of Lystra and Derbe. Lystra is about 30 kilometers south of Iconium, and Derbe is another 96 kilometers south of Lystra.

Show a map that includes Antioch of Pisidia and Iconium, both in the region of Phrygia; and the towns of Lystra and Derbe, both in the region of Lycaonia.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has three scenes.

First scene: In Iconium, Paul and Barnabas teach the good news of Jesus in the synagogue. Many Jews and non-Jews, or Greeks, believe in Jesus. The Jews who don't believe get the non-Jews upset and turn them against Paul and Barnabas.

Second scene: Paul and Barnabas stay a long time teaching and performing miracles by God's power. Some people in Iconium agree with Paul and Barnabas. Others agree with the Jews who were against Paul and Barnabas.

Third scene: The disbelieving non-Jews, Jews, and their leaders make a plan to hurt and stone Paul and Barnabas. Paul and Barnabas find out and go to Lystra, Derbe, and other areas in the region of Lycaonia. They continue to preach the good news of Jesus wherever they go.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- Barnabas
- Jews
- Greeks (or non-Jews) who believe in and worship God
- Gentiles, also called Greeks or non-Jews
- Jews and non-Jews who believe Jesus is the Promised Savior
- Leaders of the Jews and non-Jews in Iconium
- People who live in Lystra, Derbe, and other areas in Lycaonia

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

Paul and Barnabas were persecuted in Antioch of Pisidia and had to leave. They go to Iconium, where this story takes place and the first scene begins. Many Greeks live here, as well as some Jews and Romans.

It is important to note that some translations begin this passage with, "The same thing happened in Iconium." Paul and Barnabas have the same kind of experience in Iconium that they had in Antioch. Other translations simply say they went "as usual" into the synagogue, referring to their pattern of going to the synagogue first.

It is important to note that Paul and Barnabas speak effectively, or convincingly. They speak in such a way that a great number of Jews and Greeks believe in Jesus. Greeks are Gentiles, or non-Jews, whose families are originally from Greece. However, Luke might have been referring to all non-Jews, since Greeks are not the only non-Jews who live in Iconium. Here, "a great number" probably means several hundred.

The Jews who did not believe stir up the non-Jews. They poison their minds against the brothers, who are Paul, Barnabas, and those who believed in Jesus. This means the Jews turn the non-Jews' feelings against the believers, or cause them to be angry with the believers.

The second scene begins with a connecting word, such as "therefore" or "so." The connecting word shows that because many people in Iconium believe in Jesus, Paul and Barnabas stay a long time to teach them. Here, "a long time" probably refers to several weeks. Paul and Barnabas rely on Jesus to teach the word of His grace

boldly, without fear. "His" refers to the Lord Jesus. Jesus confirms the word of his grace is true. Jesus grants signs and wonders to be done by their hands. "By their hands" is an expression that means Jesus enables Paul and Barnabas to do miracles.

In the third scene, people who refuse to believe Paul and Barnabas' message take sides, or agree with the disbelieving Jews. This group probably grows into an angry mob. There is a plot afoot among these non-Jews, disbelieving Jews, and their leaders. "Plot afoot" is a way of saying they were planning to do something bad, in this case to hurt and stone Paul and Barnabas. Stoning is a Jewish method of killing people, so probably only the Jewish leaders are involved. However, "leaders" could also include the non-Jews who rule the city.

Paul and Barnabas find out about the plan and go to Lystra and Derbe, towns in the region of Lycaonia. Lystra and Derbe are the only large towns in the region. Paul and Barnabas share the good news of Jesus in the smaller towns and countryside of Lycaonia, too. They probably move freely around the region.

Show a map that includes Antioch of Pisidia and Iconium, both in the region of Phrygia; and the towns of Lystra and Derbe, both in the region of Lycaonia.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has three scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- Barnabas
- Jews
- Greeks (or non-Jews) who believe in and worship God
- Gentiles, also called Greeks or non-Jews
- Jews and non-Jews who believe Jesus is the Promised Savior
- Leaders of the Jews and non-Jews in Iconium
- People who live in Lystra and Derbe

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

After being forced to leave Antioch of Pisidia, Paul and Barnabas arrive in Iconium. They go to the synagogue first, like usual. They speak so well that many people in the synagogue believe in Jesus—both Jews and Greeks who believe in and worship God.

Stop the action.

Ask the new believers, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Amazed the Promised Savior has come," "Thankful for the message," and "Freed from the Jewish law." [!end] Restart the action.

In the synagogue there are many Jews who refuse to believe Paul and Barnabas' message about Jesus. They talk to the non-Jews to turn them against Paul and Barnabas.

Stop the action.

Because there are so many new followers of Jesus, Paul and Barnabas spend a long time in Iconium. They teach boldly and rely on Jesus. Jesus proves that Paul and Barnabas' message about grace is true by giving Paul and Barnabas the ability to perform miracles.

Stop the action.

The city divides into two groups. Some people agree with Paul and Barnabas' message, and some people agree with the disbelieving Jews. The people against Paul and Barnabas make a secret plan to hurt and stone Paul and Barnabas.

Stop the action.

Paul and Barnabas find out about the plan to hurt and stone them. Paul and Barnabas go to the nearby region of Lycaonia. Paul and Barnabas visit the towns of Lystra, Derbe, and other smaller areas of Lycaonia. Everywhere they go, they continue to preach the good news about Jesus.

*Stop the action.**Filling the Gaps*

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In Iconium, Paul and Barnabas go to the Jewish synagogue. They share their message about Jesus. Many Jews and Greeks believe. A **synagogue** is a place where Jews and non-Jews who believe in and worship God meet for worship. Show a picture of a synagogue. **Jews** are people descended from Abraham's son, Isaac. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on synagogue and Jews. Use the same word used in previous stories for synagogue and Jews. **Greeks** are non-Jews whose families are originally from Greece. However, Luke could be referring to other non-Jews in the synagogue, not just the Greeks.

The unbelieving Jews "stir up and poison the minds" of the Gentiles against the brothers. **Stir up and poison their minds** means the Jews cause the Gentiles to become mean and think about threatening the followers of Jesus. They turn their feelings against the believers in an evil way. Here, the **brothers** refers to Paul, Barnabas, and all the other believers in Iconium. **Gentiles** are people who are not Jews. They are not descendants of Abraham. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on Gentiles. Use the same word used in previous stories for Gentiles.

They stayed there a long time. Here, some translations say "the apostles," but both "they" and "apostles" refer to Paul and Barnabas. Paul and Barnabas are representatives and messengers of Jesus. They speak boldly, relying on the Lord. The Lord testifies, or proves their message of his grace is true by enabling them to perform signs and wonders. Here, **Lord** refers to the Lord Jesus. The message of his **grace** is the message that God saves unworthy people who trust in Jesus. **Signs** are signals that something is true. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on Lord, grace, and signs. Use the same word used in previous stories for Lord, grace, and signs.

The city takes sides, or divides into two groups. Some agree with the disbelieving Jews and Gentiles, and some agree with the apostles. **Apostle** means someone who is sent out. Remember that the Holy Spirit led the church in Antioch of Syria to send out Barnabas and Paul. Apostles are believers who Jesus chooses to tell others about him. Here, "apostles" refers to Paul and Barnabas. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on apostles. Use the same word used in previous stories for apostles.

There is a "plot afoot" among the disbelieving Gentiles, Jews, and their leaders to attack and stone Paul and Barnabas. **Plot afoot** is a way of saying there was a plan to do something bad. Paul and Barnabas find out about the plan and go to Lystra, Derbe, and other areas in Lycaonia. They continue to preach the gospel. The **gospel** is the good news that Jesus came to earth, died for our sins, and was raised from the dead. Refer to the Master Glossary for more on gospel. Use the same word used in previous stories for gospel.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 14:1–7

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3478783 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (5890859 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Acts 14:8–20

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 14:8–20 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In the section before, Paul and Barnabas discovered that there were Gentiles, non-Jews, and Jews who planned to stone Paul and Barnabas. Therefore, Paul and Barnabas went to Lystra. Paul was speaking and a crippled man was sitting in the street as he listened to Paul. Paul looks directly at the crippled man and notices the crippled man believes he can be healed. Paul said, "stand on your feet." The crippled man jumped up and began to walk.

Stop here and discuss with the translation team the ways that people in your culture treat others who have disabilities.

A crowd of people saw what Paul had done, and the crowd began to shout in their local language; therefore Paul and Barnabas were not aware of what was happening among the crowd. The crowd called Barnabas Zeus, the chief Greek god and Paul Hermes, the messenger of the gods, because people often worshipped Zeus and Hermes together, and Hermes would talk on behalf of Zeus. The temple of Zeus was at the entrance to the city as protector of the city.

Stop and look at a picture of a Roman city gate.

The priest of Zeus brought oxen and garlands, which are flowers that are strung together, to the gate to sacrifice for the sake of Barnabas and Paul. The gate may have referred to the temple gate, though it is possible to be the city gate or the gate of the house where Paul and Barnabas were staying.

Stop and look at a picture of oxen prepared for sacrifice with garlands of flowers.

Though Paul and Barnabas did not understand what the crowd was planning, once Paul and Barnabas heard of the plan to sacrifice the oxen to Paul and Barnabas, Paul and Barnabas tore their own clothing as a protest as to what was occurring and ran into the crowd. Paul and Barnabas explained that Paul and Barnabas were human, not gods. Paul and Barnabas further explained that they were bringing news from God, who made everything. Paul and Barnabas were explaining the difference between a living God and idols. While God allowed people to do as they wanted, God proved he was real by providing rain and food. It was difficult for Paul and Barnabas to stop the crowd from sacrificing.

Within your culture, are there stories of miracles that did not come from God, and how could you convince others that those who have performed the miracles were not of God?

Jews came sometime later from Antioch, which was 100 kilometers away, and Iconium to persuade the crowd to think badly about Paul and Barnabas. Therefore, the Jews threw stones at Paul in an attempt to kill him. The Jews believed Paul to be dead and dragged Paul out of the city.

The disciples, probably new believers from Lystra, stood around Paul and Paul then stood up and went into the city. The next day Paul and Barnabas went to another city, Derbe. This showed that Paul was fully healed.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has 5 scenes.

First scene: Paul and Barnabas are in Lystra preaching the good news. Paul tells a crippled man to stand, and the crippled man is healed, jumps up, and walks.

Second scene: The crowds believe that Barnabas and Paul are the Greek gods Zeus and Hermes, and then the Priest of Zeus brings oxen and flowers to sacrifice.

Third scene: The apostles Barnabas and Paul hear of the sacrifice and beg the crowd to not sacrifice to them.

Fourth scene: Later, some Jews from Antioch and Iconium persuade the crowd to be against Paul and Barnabas, and the Jews stone Paul and drag him outside the city.

Fifth scene: As the disciples gather around Paul thinking he is dead, Paul stands and enters the city.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- Barnabas
- Crippled man
- Lycaonian crowd (multiple people)
- The Priest of Zeus
- Jews from Antioch and Iconium (multiple people)
- Disciples (multiple people)

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it. Include the following:

In scene 1, Paul and Barnabas are preaching in the streets of Lystra. There is a crippled man who is listening to Paul. Paul looks at the crippled man, and Paul notices the crippled man believes he can be healed. Paul tells the crippled man to stand on his feet. The crippled man immediately jumps up and walks. It is important to remember that this man has been crippled from birth, so he has never been able to walk before.

In scene 2, the Lycaonian crowd sees the crippled man jump up and walk. The crowd believes that the gods have come down in the shape of men. The crowd starts to shout in a loud voice in their own language because they are impressed with Paul's actions. The crowd thinks that Barnabas is Zeus the chief of the gods, and that Paul is Hermes the messenger of Zeus. The crowd moves to the city gates where there is the temple of Zeus. The priest of Zeus brings oxen and flower garlands to offer a sacrifice to Zeus. It is important to remember that during this scene, Paul and Barnabas do not know what is happening, because they cannot understand the language.

In scene 3, Paul and Barnabas discover that the Lycaonian crowd is planning to sacrifice the oxen to them. Paul and Barnabas tear their clothing to show they do not approve and run into the crowd. Paul and Barnabas stop the sacrifice and explain that they are not gods. Paul and Barnabas explain that there is a difference between the living God and idols. It was difficult for Paul and Barnabas to convince the crowd.

Scene 4 happens some time later. Jews come from Antioch and Iconium and convince the crowd to be against Paul and Barnabas. Then the Jews throw stones at Paul to kill him. Once the Jews believe he was dead, the Jews drag Paul outside of the city and leave him there.

In scene 5 the Jews leave. There are disciples, or believers in Jesus, who have been watching. These are believers from Lystra and the surrounding area. Some of them may be new believers in Jesus from Paul's preaching time in Lystra. The disciples stand around Paul. Paul is laying on the ground. Paul stands up and walks back into the city. The next day Paul and Barnabas go to the city of Derbe, proving that Paul is completely healed.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has 5 scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- Barnabas
- Crippled man
- Lycaonian crowd (multiple people)
- The Priest of Zeus
- Jews from Antioch and Iconium (multiple people)
- Disciples (multiple people)

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

The first scene: Paul and Barnabas are standing before the Lycaonian crowd and a crippled man is sitting and listening to Paul speaking. Paul looks at the crippled man and says, "Stand up." The crippled man jumps up and starts walking.

Stop the action.

The second scene: the Lycaonian crowd sees the crippled man walk and talk among themselves. "These are gods that look like men." Another person from the Lycaonian crowd says something like, "The quiet one must be Zeus, and the one that is speaking is Hermes." The priest of Zeus enters with oxen covered with garlands and prepares to sacrifice the animals to Barnabas and Paul.

Stop the action.

The third scene: Paul and Barnabas discover what is being said and happening (perhaps someone explained it to them). Paul and Barnabas tear their clothing and run into the crowd. They shout, "Why are you doing this? We are men just like you. We bring you good news to turn from worthless things to a living God, which made the heaven, earth, and sea. God has allowed all peoples to do as they would like. But God has provided a witness by giving rain and food and happiness." The crowd slowly stops the sacrifice.

Stop the action.

The fourth scene: Jews enter and convince the crowd to agree with them against Paul and Barnabas. The Jews pick up stones and throw them at Paul. Paul falls down and the Lycaonian crowd drags Paul out of the city.

Stop the action.

The fifth scene: the crowd leaves and disciples stand around Paul. Paul then stands up and enters back into the city. The next morning Paul and Barnabas leave the city.

Stop the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

A crippled man is sitting in the street. The crippled man listens to Paul. Paul notices the crippled man has faith to be healed. Paul says loudly, "Stand up," and the crippled man jumps up and begins walking. Use the same term for **faith** that you have been using throughout the stories. Faith describes people's response of trust and confidence in God's promises. Faith is in the Master Glossary.

The Lycaonian crowd sees what Paul had done and shout in the Lycaonian language "The gods have come down to us in the shape of man." The word **gods** is of a pagan god. If your language uses different words for the Christian God and other gods, use the word that describes another god.

The Lycaonian crowd called Barnabas **Zeus**, and Paul **Hermes**. The **temple** of Zeus was at the entrance of the city, and the priest of Zeus brought oxen and garlands to offer **sacrifice** with the crowd.

Zeus was the Greek god of the sky and the chief deity.

Hermes was the messenger of the gods who often spoke on behalf of Zeus.

The word **temple** means a place of worship which is dedicated to a particular deity, or god. In this example, the deity is the god, Zeus, and this is not the same temple that was the place of God's presence in Jerusalem. The word temple is in the Master Glossary.

Use the same word for **sacrifice** that you have been using throughout the stories. Sacrifice here is offered to a god to thank him or ask forgiveness. In this case it would include killing the oxen. The worshipper would kill the animal as a gift to a god to show he was fully dedicated to the god. The word sacrifice is in the Master Glossary.

When the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of the plan to sacrifice to them, Paul and Barnabas tore their clothing and ran into the crowd to tell them of the living God. **Apostles** are representatives sent by Jesus Christ to begin new churches. They carry authority within the church as witnesses of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The word apostle is in the Master Glossary.

Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and won the Lycaonian crowds to their side. The Jews stoned Paul, and then the Lycaonian crowd dragged Paul outside of the city. The word **stoned** means to throw stones or rocks at a person in an effort to kill him.

After the crowd left, disciples gathered around Paul. Paul then stands up and enters the city. The next morning, Paul and Barnabas went to the city of Derbe. The word **disciples** as used here refers to believers that were nearby, not some of the apostles. The word disciples is in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 14:8–20

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (2753613 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Acts 14:21–28

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 14:21–28 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Previously, Paul and Barnabas were in Lystra. In Lystra Paul was stoned and left for dead. After prayer from local believers, Paul arose, and the next day Paul and Barnabas went to Derbe. While in Derbe, Paul and Barnabas preached the gospel, or the good news that Jesus died and rose from death to forgive our sins. When we turn away from our sins and turn to God through believing in Jesus, we can enter God's Kingdom, when God rules perfectly among his people. Paul and Barnabas caused many people to become disciples, or followers of Jesus.

Paul and Barnabas later returned to Lystra, the city where Paul was stoned. Then Paul and Barnabas went to Iconium and Antioch of Pisidia, the cities where Paul and Barnabas were persecuted. As Paul and Silas went from city to city, they encouraged the believers to be faithful to God. All believers during this time expected to experience persecution. It was a normal way of life for them. Paul was reminding them that they will enter the kingdom of God eventually.

One way Paul and Barnabas strengthened these new churches was to make sure that they had good leadership. Paul and Barnabas appointed elders, or leaders, of each church. We know that Paul and Barnabas appointed leaders in Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch of Pisidia, but we are unclear if they appointed elders in Derbe. The Bible is unclear if they prayed and fasted before they appointed the leaders, or if they prayed and fasted after they chose the elders. Then, Paul and Barnabas trusted the Lord Jesus to care for them. This either means that Paul and Barnabas trusted Jesus to care for the elders, or to care for everyone in the church.

Stop here and discuss the methods your church uses to choose elders or church leadership. How does the church strengthen church leaders in your area?

Afterwards, Paul and Barnabas traveled through Pisidia, a region where the city of Antioch is located, and came to the region of Pamphylia, south of Pisidia. Paul and Barnabas preached the word in Perga, where John Mark previously left them. When Paul and Barnabas preached the word, Paul and Barnabas preached the good news of Jesus Christ. Then Paul and Barnabas went to Attalia, and from Attalia Paul and Barnabas sailed to Antioch. It was in Antioch where the journey for Paul and Barnabas began and where Paul and Barnabas were entrusted to the grace of God to be cared for. In other words, the church trusted that God would show them his goodness as they completed the work God asked them to do.

Stop here and look at a map of Paul and Barnabas' journey from Derbe to Lystra, to Iconium, to Antioch of Pisidia, to Perga, to Attalia, and to Antioch, Syria. Trace the route with your finger.

Once Paul and Barnabas arrived in Antioch, Paul and Barnabas gathered the church together and described what God had been doing through Paul and Barnabas on the journey they had just taken. Paul and Barnabas explained that God opened a door of faith for Gentiles, or non-Jews. This means that God provided an opportunity for Gentiles to hear about, believe in, and follow Jesus. Paul and Barnabas remained with the church of Antioch for a long time, possibly several months but no one knows the exact length of time.

Stop here and discuss a time when it seemed unlikely that someone would hear about Jesus Christ and believe, but God made it possible.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has 6 scenes.

First scene: Paul and Barnabas are in Derbe, preaching the gospel, many people become believers in Jesus.

Second scene: Paul and Barnabas go to Lystra and meet with believers to encourage the believers. Paul, Barnabas, and the believers at Lystra fast and pray and appoint elders.

Third scene: Paul and Barnabas go to Iconium and meet with believers to encourage the believers. Paul, Barnabas, and the believers at Iconium fast and pray and appoint elders.

Fourth scene: Paul and Barnabas go to Antioch of Pisidia and meet with believers to encourage the believers. Paul, Barnabas, and the believers at Antioch fast and pray and appoint elders.

Fifth scene: Paul and Barnabas travel through the regions of Pisidia and Pamphylia and arrive at Perga. Paul and Barnabas preached in Perga, and then went to Attalia. Paul and Barnabas then sailed to Antioch (Syria).

Sixth scene: When Paul and Barnabas arrived to Antioch (Syria), Paul and Barnabas gathered the church members from Antioch together. Paul and Barnabas explained all that God had done, and how God opened a way for Gentiles, non-Jews, to become believers. Paul and Barnabas stayed with the disciples in Antioch in Syria for a long time, possibly several months.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- Barnabas
- Believers at Derbe
- Believers at Lystra
- Believers at Iconium
- Believers at Antioch (Asia Minor)
- Church members from Antioch (Syria)

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of objects that you can move around, (such as rocks, sticks, children's toys), to visualize the story and the action in it.

First scene: Paul and Barnabas are preaching in Derbe. Many people in Derbe hear the message that Paul and Barnabas bring, the people believed the good news of Jesus Christ and became disciples of Jesus.

Second scene: Sometime later, Paul and Barnabas traveled about 95 kilometers back to Lystra. Once Paul and Barnabas arrived in Lystra, Paul and Barnabas began to encourage the believers. Paul and Barnabas explained that the believers will enter the kingdom of God, but will go through persecution in this life. Then Paul, Barnabas, and the believers at Lystra chose elders to help lead the church in Lystra. They chose the leaders with prayer and fasting, which could have been done before or after, possibly before and after they chose the elders.

Third scene: From Lystra, Paul and Barnabas returned the 32 kilometers to Iconium. Once Paul and Barnabas arrived in Iconium, Paul and Barnabas began to encourage the believers. Paul and Barnabas explained that the believers will enter the kingdom of God, but will go through persecution in this life. Then Paul, Barnabas, and the believers at Iconium chose elders to help lead the church in Iconium. They chose the leaders with prayer and fasting, which could have been done before or after, or possibly before and after they chose the elders.

Fourth scene: Then from Iconium, Paul and Barnabas went back the 144 kilometers to Antioch of Pisidia. Once Paul and Barnabas arrived in Antioch of Pisidia, Paul and Barnabas began to encourage the believers. Paul and Barnabas explained that the believers will enter the kingdom of God, but will go through persecution in this life. Then Paul, Barnabas, and the believers at Antioch of Pisidia chose elders to help lead the church in Antioch of Pisidia. They chose the leaders with prayer and fasting, which could have been done before or after, or possibly before and after they chose the elders.

Fifth scene: From Antioch of Pisidia, Paul and Barnabas traveled south 190 kilometers through the regions of Pisidia and Pamphylia to arrive at Perga. Paul and Barnabas preached the good news of Jesus Christ in Perga. From Perga, Paul and Barnabas went the 16 kilometers to Attalia on the coast. Paul and Barnabas then sailed back to Antioch in Syria.

Sixth scene: When Paul and Barnabas arrived to Antioch in Syria, Paul and Barnabas gathered the church members from Antioch together. Paul and Barnabas explained all that God had done, and how God opened a way for Gentiles, non-Jews, to hear about, believe in, and follow Jesus Christ. Paul and Barnabas stayed with the disciples in Antioch in Syria for a long time, possibly several months, but no one knows the exact amount of time.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has 6 scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- Barnabas
- Believers at Derbe
- Believers at Iconium
- Believers at Antioch of Pisidia
- Church members from Antioch (Syria)

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

Paul and Barnabas are in Derbe preaching the gospel. Many people become disciples, or believers, due to Paul and Barnabas' preaching.

Stop the action.

Paul and Barnabas travel back to Lystra. While in Lystra, Paul and Barnabas meet with disciples. Paul and Barnabas encourage the disciples to continue in the faith. Paul and Barnabas explain that being part of the kingdom of God, the church must go through troubles, or persecutions. Paul, Barnabas, and the new believers pray and fast; they appoint elders. Then Paul and Barnabas entrusted the church to the care of the Lord.

Afterwards, Paul and Barnabas travel to Iconium. While in Iconium Paul and Barnabas meet with disciples, or believers. Paul and Barnabas encourage the disciples to continue in the faith. Paul and Barnabas explain that being part of the kingdom of God the church must go through troubles, or persecutions. Paul, Barnabas, and the new believers pray and fast; they appoint elders. Then Paul and Barnabas entrusted the church to the care of the Lord.

Then Paul and Barnabas travel to Antioch in Pisidia. While in Antioch Paul and Barnabas meet with disciples. Paul and Barnabas encourage the disciples to continue in the faith. Paul and Barnabas explain that being part of the kingdom of God the church must go through troubles, or persecutions. Paul, Barnabas, and the new believers pray and fast; they appoint elders. Then Paul and Barnabas entrusted the church to the care of the Lord.

Stop the action.

Then, Paul and Barnabas travel through the regions of Pisidia and Pamphylia and come to the city of Perga. Paul and Barnabas preach in Perga, and then went to Attalia. From Attalia, Paul and Barnabas sail to Antioch (Syria).

Paul and Barnabas arrive at Antioch (Syria). Paul and Barnabas gather the church together, and describe what God has been doing with Paul and Barnabas. Paul and Barnabas explain that God made a way for Gentiles (non-Jews) to become believers. Paul and Barnabas then stay with the church for a long time.

Stop the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

While in Derbe, Paul and Barnabas preached the gospel, and a lot of people became **disciples**.

Then Paul and Barnabas returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch of Pisidia. In every **church**, Paul and Barnabas encouraged the people to be strong in the **faith**. Paul and Barnabas explained that believers will have troubles in this life in order to enter the **kingdom of God**.

Use the same term for **disciples** that you have been using throughout the stories. A disciple is a person who follows and learns from a specific religious teacher. Here it is a follower of Jesus Christ and not an apostle. Disciple is in the Master Glossary.

Use the same term for **church** that you have been using throughout the stories. A church is a group of believers in Jesus who is part of the same community. Church is in the Master Glossary.

Use the same term for **faith** that you have been using throughout the stories. Faith is trust or confidence. In this case, faith is trust in Jesus Christ. Faith is in the Master Glossary.

Use the same term for **kingdom of God** that you have been using throughout the stories. The kingdom of God is about God ruling in the hearts of his people rather than in a physical place. Now God's Kingdom is in his people, the Church. God's Kingdom is about people following Jesus as their king in their hearts. Kingdom of God is in the Master Glossary.

Paul, Barnabas, and the members of the churches **prayed** and **fasted** and **appointed elders** for the churches.

Use the same term for **pray** that you have been using throughout the stories. Prayer means to communicate with God. Pray is in the Master Glossary.

Use the same term for **fast** that you have been using throughout the stories. Fasting is to go without food to ask for help and guidance from God. Fasting is in the Master Glossary.

Appointed means "chose" or "elected" by show of hands. In this case there is no certainty as to the method Paul and Barnabas used to appoint the elders. It is also possible that Paul and Barnabas chose the elders, because the church was so new.

Use the same term for **elders** that you have been using throughout the stories. An elder is a leader in the community, in this case the church. Elder is in the Master Glossary.

Afterwards Paul and Barnabas traveled through the regions of Pisidia and Pamphylia and came to the city of Perga. While in Perga, Paul and Barnabas spoke the **word**. Then Paul and Barnabas went to the city of Attalia, and from there Paul and Barnabas sailed back to Antioch, Syria.

Use the same term for **word** that you have been using throughout the stories. The word refers to the good news of Jesus Christ. Word is in the Master Glossary.

When Paul and Barnabas arrived in Antioch, Syria, where Paul and Barnabas were given to the care of God's **grace**, Paul and Barnabas gathered the church members together.

Use the same term for **grace** that you have been using throughout the stories. Grace refers to God's favor to undeserving people. Grace is in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 14:21–28

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (2975579 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 4](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Acts 15:1–21

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Acts 15:1–21 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Acts 15:1–21 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Acts 15:1–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Previously, Paul and Barnabas were in Asia Minor where Gentiles, non-Jews, were coming to God through faith in Jesus Christ. Then Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch, a city in Syria, where Paul and Barnabas began their journey to preach and teach about Jesus. Paul and Barnabas remained a long time in Antioch.

While Paul and Barnabas are in Antioch, some men came down from Judea. No one knows if the men from Judea were truly believers or possibly the false brothers as Paul mentioned in the letter to Galatians. Judea is the province where Jerusalem is located. Because Judea is a higher elevation than Antioch, the men came down, even though Antioch is about 550 kilometers north of Jerusalem.

The men from Judea started teaching the brothers, or believers, that in order to be saved, the men must be circumcised, as the law of Moses says. At this time in history, most of the church were made up of Jews who had converted to Christianity. Therefore, many of the Christians believed that circumcision was a part of the Christian life as well. Paul and Barnabas had a fierce argument with the men from Judea, and Paul and Barnabas debated with the men from Judea. The church of Antioch sent Paul and Barnabas and some of the others, possibly some of the men from Judea, to Jerusalem to talk with the apostles about this issue. Jesus had appointed the apostles in order to preach the good news, to be founders of the church, to hold spiritual authority in the church, and to be witnesses to the fact that Jesus had been resurrected from the dead.

Paul, Barnabas, and the others went through Phoenicia and Samaria on their way to Jerusalem. Paul and Barnabas brought joy to the family of believers of Phoenicia and Samaria when Paul and Barnabas explained how the Gentiles, non-Jews, were turning to God.

Stop here and trace the route on a map as a group which Paul, Barnabas, and the others traveled from Antioch Syria, through Phoenicia, and then through Samaria on the way to Jerusalem. Pause this audio here.

The apostles, elders, and the people in the church of Jerusalem received Paul, Barnabas, and the others as guests once they came to Jerusalem. Paul and Barnabas declared all that God had done through Paul and Barnabas. Then some of the believers who belonged to a group of Pharisees, Jewish religious leaders, stood up and said that it is necessary to circumcise any believers in Jesus and to obey the law of Moses. Up to this point in time, most of the Christians were converted Jews. The group of Pharisees were most likely believers in Jesus Christ, who identified themselves as a Jewish believer in the resurrection. God formed a covenant with the Jewish people where the Lord God would be the only god of the Jews and the Jews would obey God through the law of Moses that God provided. One part of the law required circumcision of the men as an outward sign of agreement with the terms of the covenant. Therefore, the Pharisees and many Jews believed that God required circumcision of all believers of Jesus Christ.

Stop here and discuss as a group the manner in which people welcome guests in your culture, or what kind of rituals or ceremonies do you have when a person enters into a new group of people, like a new group of believers or a teacher? Pause this audio here.

Afterward, the apostles and elders had a meeting to consider this issue. After a long discussion, Peter stood up and stated that God chose that through him Gentiles would hear the good news that God has made a way to save people through Jesus' death and resurrection if they trust in Jesus.

Peter referred to when God sent him to Cornelius' house to share the gospel. Cornelius was a Gentile and when everyone in the house believed, the Holy Spirit filled the Gentiles and afterward Peter baptised the Gentiles.

Peter explained that God did the same for the Jews. God showed that there was no difference between Gentiles and Jews, as the Gentiles also believed in Jesus and therefore God had saved the Gentiles and made them clean, or right with God. God did not require the Gentile believers to carry the burden of completely following the law of Moses. The Jews had not been able to consistently obey the law of Moses throughout their history, even though the Jews were God's chosen people. Therefore, they should not provoke God, or test God, by demanding more of others than God demanded of the Gentiles. Both Jews and Gentiles are saved through the grace, or undeserved favor, of the Lord Jesus.

The apostles and elders became silent as they listened to Barnabas and Paul, as Barnabas and Paul told about the signs from God and miracles that God had done through them where Gentiles were. When Paul and Barnabas were finished speaking, James, the half-brother of Jesus and possibly the leader of the elders, answered Simeon, who was also called Peter. James told how God visited the Gentiles to be called by his name, and words of the prophets agree. Then James quoted from the prophet Amos to show that God planned long ago to include the Gentiles, or non-Jews, in his kingdom. Earlier in Acts we've heard that God has restored King David's kingdom. King David was a famous king of Israel, but later David's kingdom had been destroyed because God's people disobeyed God. But God promised David that one of his descendants would always rule over God's people. Jesus was a descendant of King David. Through Jesus, God has rebuilt and restored the kingdom that had been ruined. God also said that all people who bear his name, which means anyone who follows him, will be able to seek and find him. God has been planning this for many years.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: When your church has a debate about scripture how do they resolve the issue? Who helped resolve the issue-people from inside the church, people from outside the church? Who made the final decision and why? Pause this audio here.

The prophet's writings did not answer the specific question about circumcision; however, it did explain that God accepts both Jews and non-Jews. Therefore, James claimed that it is James' opinion that the apostles and elders should not add more requirements than God demanded of the Gentiles who come to God. James said that they will write to the believers and tell them to not eat food that has been offered to idols, and to keep from sexual immorality, and do not eat meat when the animal is strangled, and do not eat blood. For many generations, the law of Moses was proclaimed in cities and read every Sabbath in the synagogues, or Jewish places of worship. James is explaining that the Jewish people have had these instructions from God for a long time. The Gentiles were known to worship idols and do sexual sins. These actions kept them from God because they were sin, and sin keeps people from being able to worship God. The instructions against eating what was strangled or from blood were in place even before the law of Moses. Therefore, in order for Jewish believers to be able to be in community with non-Jewish believers, they needed to follow these rules.

This meeting between Paul, Barnabas, the apostles, and the elders was a very important meeting in the development of the church. In this meeting the church decided how to include people from other groups outside of the Jewish people. As new groups came into belief in Jesus, the church would have to decide exactly what they should require the new believers to do, and how Jewish and non-Jewish believers should worship and be community together in the church.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Acts 15:1–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 6 scenes.

In the first scene: Men from Judea are in Antioch teaching that men must be circumcised to be saved. Paul and Barnabas debate the issue with the men from Judea. The church of Antioch sends Paul, Barnabas, and others to Jerusalem.

In the second scene: Paul, Barnabas, and others are in Phoenicia. Paul and Barnabas speak with the believers at Phoenicia.

In the third scene: Paul, Barnabas, and others are in Samaria. Paul and Barnabas speak with the believers at Samaria.

In the fourth scene: Paul, Barnabas, and the others are in Jerusalem, and meet the apostles, elders, and the church of Jerusalem. A group of Pharisees confront Paul and Barnabas.

In the fifth scene: The apostles and elders debate the issue. Peter speaks to the group in support of Paul and Barnabas.

In the sixth scene: Paul and Barnabas told the apostles and elders what God had done through the Gentiles, or non-Jews. James stands and gives his opinion on the matter. The apostles, elders, and church of Jerusalem agree with James.

The characters in this passage are:

- Paul
- Barnabas
- Men from Judea
- Church of Antioch
- Others who went with Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem, could possibly be men from Judea
- Believers at Phoenicia
- Believers at Samaria
- Group of Pharisees at the church in Jerusalem
- Apostles and elders
- Peter
- James
- The people of the church of Jerusalem

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In the first scene men came down from Judea to Antioch to teach believers in Antioch that they must be circumcised to be saved. Paul and Barnabas had a fierce argument with the men from Judea. Therefore, the church of Antioch sent Paul and Barnabas with others to Jerusalem to ask the apostles and elders about the issue. The others may have been the men who came from Judea, no one knows for sure.

Discuss in your own language how you speak to others when there is a serious disagreement with each other. How do you come to an agreement? Pause this audio here.

In the second scene, Paul, Barnabas, and the others are on the way to Jerusalem and stop in Phoenicia. Paul and Barnabas explain to the believers at Phoenicia how Gentiles, or non-Jews, have converted and come to God through belief in Jesus Christ. This brought joy to the believers at Phoenicia.

In the third scene, Paul, Barnabas, and the others are on the way to Jerusalem, and stop in Samaria. Paul and Barnabas explain to the believers at Samaria how Gentiles, or non-Jews, have converted and come to God through belief in Jesus Christ. This brought joy to the believers at Samaria.

In the fourth scene, Paul, Barnabas, and the others arrive in Jerusalem. Paul, Barnabas, and the others are welcomed by the apostles, elders, and the believers of the church of Jerusalem. Paul, Barnabas, and the others tell the apostles, elders, and the believers of the church of Jerusalem what God had done. Then, a group of Pharisees who were believers stood and said that it is necessary for men to be circumcised and to follow all the law that came through Moses.

In the fifth scene, the apostles and elders debated the matter of circumcision. We do not know how long afterward this happened, but this was probably an open meeting that any believer in the church could attend. They debated for a long time and still had not made a decision. Finally, Peter stood and spoke to the apostles and elders. Peter said that he had also told Gentiles the word of the gospel, or the good news that God has made

a way to save people through Jesus' death and resurrection, and the Gentiles believed. God showed his approval of the Gentiles by giving the Gentiles the Holy Spirit. The Gentiles' hearts were cleaned, or made right with God, because they believed in Jesus. Therefore, do not provoke God by giving the Gentiles an unnecessary burden which Jews could not carry. This means that no one could fully keep the law of Moses. So why make the Gentiles keep the law when the Jews could not? The Gentiles will be saved through the grace, or favor they did not deserve, which the Lord Jesus gave.

Afterwards, in the sixth scene, the apostles and elders became quiet, and they listened to Paul and Barnabas speak about what God had done among the Gentiles, or non-Jews, through them. When Paul and Barnabas finished speaking, James stands and gives his opinion on the matter. James was probably the recognized leader of the church in Jerusalem. James calls Peter "Simon," another name for Peter. James says that Simon has explained to them how God saved Gentiles, or non-Jews, in order to make people for himself even from non-Jews. Then James says that the Jewish prophets agree with and prophesied what happened.

Stop here and discuss in your own language: How would you introduce scripture in a discussion? Pause this audio here.

God showed his care for the Gentiles so that they could also belong to Jesus, as the words of the scriptures said. Therefore, James' decision was to write to them with the following instructions: to not eat food or drink offered to idols, not to engage in sexual sins, and not eat meat from animals that have been strangled or eat blood.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Acts 15:1–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 6 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Paul
- Barnabas
- Men from Judea
- Church of Antioch
- Others who went with Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem, could possibly be men from Judea
- Believers at Phoenicia
- Believers at Samaria
- Group of Pharisees
- Apostles and elders
- Peter
- James
- The people of the church of Jerusalem

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

Men from Judea travel to Antioch to teach the believers in Antioch that in order to be saved, they must be circumcised according to the law of Moses. Afterwards, Paul and Barnabas argue with the men from Judea regarding the issue of circumcision. The Church of Antioch then sends Paul and Barnabas with others, who could possibly be the men from Judea, to Jerusalem to settle the matter with the decision from the apostles and elders.

Pause the drama.

While traveling to Jerusalem, Paul, Barnabas, and the others stop in Phoenicia. Paul and Barnabas explain to the believers at Phoenicia that Gentiles have come to God through belief in Jesus Christ. The believers at Phoenicia were happy about the news. Continuing on the way to Jerusalem, Paul, Barnabas, and the others stop in Samaria. Paul and Barnabas explain to the believers at Samaria that Gentiles have come to God through belief in Jesus Christ. The believers at Samaria were also happy about the news.

Pause the drama.

When Paul, Barnabas, and the others arrive to Jerusalem, they are welcomed by the apostles, elders, and the church of Jerusalem. Paul, Barnabas, and the others tell the apostles, elders, and the church of Jerusalem the things that God has done. Then a group of Pharisees stood and said, "It is necessary for men to be circumcised and to follow the law that came through Moses."

Pause the drama.

After the apostles and elders debate the issue of circumcision for a long time, Peter stands and says that he had also told Gentiles the word of the gospel and the Gentiles believed. It was proven that God had approved of the Gentiles, because God gave the Gentiles the Holy Spirit. God made the Gentiles clean through faith in Jesus. Therefore, do not make God angry by giving Gentiles unnecessary tasks which the Jews could not always perform. Instead, the Gentiles will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus. When Peter finished speaking, the apostles and elders became quiet. Then Paul and Barnabas explained that God had done signs and miracles for the Gentiles using Paul and Barnabas. After Paul and Barnabas finish speaking, James stands and says, God showed that he cares that the Gentiles belong to God. This is explained where it says in the prophets, I will rebuild the fallen house of David, and restore the ruins. Then all the peoples may seek the Lord, and the Gentiles whom I called to be my own. This is what the Lord has said. Therefore, James' decision was to write a letter to them that they should not eat food or drink things offered to idols, not to engage in sexual sin, do not eat meat from animals which were strangled or eat blood.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Acts 15:1–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Men from Judea teach the believers in Antioch that in order to be saved, they must be **circumcised** according to the **law of Moses**. Afterwards, Paul and Barnabas argue with the men from Judea regarding the issue of circumcision. Circumcision is cutting off the loose skin at the end of a boy's penis. Circumcision was a sign that the boy was a part of God's chosen people Israel and that God's promises applied to him. Circumcision was a requirement for non-Jewish males to convert to Judaism. Look up circumcision and law in the Master Glossary for more information. Translate these terms in the same way you have in previous passages.

While traveling to Jerusalem, Paul, Barnabas and the others stop in Phoenicia and Samaria. Paul and Barnabas explain to the believers at Phoenicia, that **Gentiles** have come to God through belief in Jesus Christ. The believers at Phoenicia were happy about the news.

Look up Gentiles in the Master Glossary for more information. Translate Gentiles in the same way you have in previous passages.

When Paul, Barnabas and the others arrive in Jerusalem, they are welcomed by the **apostles**, **elders**, and the **church** of Jerusalem. Paul, Barnabas and the others tell the apostles, elders and the church of Jerusalem the things that God has done. **Pharisees** stand and say that Gentiles need to be circumcised as believers. Look up apostles, elders, church, and Pharisees in the Master Glossary for more information. Translate these terms in the same way you have in previous passages.

After the apostles and elders debate the issue of circumcision, Peter stands and says that he had also told Gentiles the word of the **gospel** and the Gentiles believed. It was proven that God had approved of the Gentiles, because God gave the Gentiles the **Holy Spirit**. The Gentiles were made **clean** through **faith** in Jesus. Therefore, do not make God angry by giving Gentiles unnecessary burden which the Jews could not always perform. Barnabas and Paul explain what **signs** and **wonders** God did through them for the Gentiles. Look up gospel, Holy Spirit, clean, faith, and miracles, signs, and wonders in the Master Glossary for more information. Translate these words in the same way you have in previous passages.

James stands and says, God showed that he cares that the Gentiles belong to God. This is explained where it says, I will rebuild the fallen house of David, and restore the ruins. Then all the peoples may seek the **Lord**, and the Gentiles whom I called to be my own. This is what the Lord has said. Therefore, James' decision was to write a letter to them that they should not eat food or drink things offered to **idols**, not to engage in sexual sin, and not eat meat from animals which were strangled or eat blood. Idols are images made by human hands, like a statue or other physical representation of a god that is worshiped as a god rather than the one true Creator God. Look up idol and Lord in the Master Glossary for more information. Translate idol and Lord in the same way you have in previous passages.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 15:1–21

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (4142211 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

[mp3 zip](#) (7128820 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Acts 15:22–35

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Acts 15:22–35 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Acts 15:22–35 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Acts 15:22–35 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage, Paul, Barnabas, the apostles, and elders met together in Jerusalem to discuss the terms for the Jewish church to accept non-Jewish believers. During this important meeting, they wrote a letter for non-Jewish believers about what could be eaten and about sexual purity. Now, the Jerusalem church sends men with Paul and Barnabas to deliver the letter to the non-Jewish church in Antioch.

Stop here and look at a map that shows where Antioch is located in the province of Syria in relation to Jerusalem as a group. Pause this audio here.

The apostles and elders have been meeting with Paul and Barnabas in Jerusalem. They are trying to find a way for Jewish and Gentile, or non-Jewish, believers to have fellowship with each other. After agreeing on terms and writing them in a letter, the group decides to send two men from the Jerusalem church with Paul and Barnabas

to Antioch. Luke describes the two men, Judas Barsabbas and Silas, as leaders among the brothers, or church. Though little is known of Judas, Paul mentions Silas several times since Silas will accompany Paul on future missionary travels. The Jerusalem church sends the two men as representatives who can give their personal interpretation of the letter to the church in Antioch and answer any of their questions. It was a normal custom to send representatives with an official letter during that time.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: When you get a message from another person, how do you know whether you can trust that the message is actually from the sender? Pause this audio here.

Luke then shares the content of the letter. The letter is formal and first introduces the senders-the apostles and elders-and the people who the letter is sent to-the Antioch believers. "Greetings" was a normal way to start a letter and means "to rejoice." The Jerusalem believers write the letter in a way that their Greek-speaking brothers can clearly understand. It is addressed to the believers in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia. Since Antioch was a city in the province of Syria, Syria, Cilicia, and Antioch all refer to the same general area. The letter specifically mentions Antioch because that is where the debate originally began about what Jewish laws Gentile believers needed to keep.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: When you send an important message, what language or phrases do you use to begin and end the message in your culture? Pause this audio here.

In the letter, the Jerusalem church tells the Antioch believers that they heard about what the Jews from their area, Judea, said to them. However, they assure the Antioch believers that those men were not representatives of the Jerusalem church. In fact, they say that these men "troubled their minds" to mean that the men were trying to tear down the non-Jewish believers or discourage them. The Jerusalem church calls Paul and Barnabas dear friends and describes them as men who risked their lives many times because of their wholehearted devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ. Here, the term Lord means that Jesus is God while Christ shows that he is the Promised Savior sent by God.

The Jerusalem church says they will not burden the Gentile believers with circumcision or the Jewish law. However, they do give four decrees, or rules, to follow to be able to have fellowship with Jewish believers. The Jerusalem church reminds the Antioch believers that the Holy Spirit, or God's Spirit, led them to this decision.

The four rules are the same rules earlier suggested by James. The Gentile believers must not eat food sacrificed to idols. This refers to animals priests would sacrifice to false gods then share with worshipers. The Gentile believers could not drink blood or eat food made with blood. They could not eat strangled animals cooked without draining their blood. And finally, they needed to stay away from sexual immorality, or any sexual activity outside of marriage. Following these four rules, the Gentile believers would be able to have fellowship with the Jewish believers. The four rules were not a requirement to be saved. The Jewish church leaders in Jerusalem required these four rules because Gentiles were known to worship idols and do sexual sins. These actions kept Jews from being able to worship God, so by making them requirements for Gentile believers, both Jewish and Gentile believers would be able to worship God together. The Jerusalem church tells the Antioch believers that if they do these things they will prosper. The church ends the letter with "farewell" which means "be strong," and was a normal way to end letters in that time.

Judas and Silas, along with Paul and Barnabas, take the letter from Jerusalem down to Antioch, where the believers gathered together. The Gentile believers are glad to hear the news. As you remember, the message of the first Jews who visited them was that they needed to be circumcised as the Law of Moses says to be saved. Now, the non-Jewish believers are relieved to know they are no longer under the burden of the Jewish laws including circumcision. Judas and Silas stay a while and encourage them. Luke describes them as prophets, or those who teach God's message to people. The Antioch believers send Judas and Silas back to Jerusalem saying "peace be with you." This was a common farewell. While Judas and Silas report the news of the Antioch believers receiving the letter with joy, Paul and Barnabas stay in Antioch. They and other believers continue to teach the believers the word of the Lord, or the message that Jesus is the Promised Savior.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Acts 15:22-35 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has four scenes.

In the first scene: The apostles and elders are gathered with the whole church in Jerusalem. The leaders choose Judas and Silas to go with Paul and Barnabas to Antioch to deliver their letter.

In the second scene: The letter says: We, the apostles and elders, have sent Judas and Silas with Paul and Barnabas as our representatives. They will speak to you. We heard about what the Jews told you and we do not agree. We agreed that you must not eat what is sacrificed to idols, that you must not eat blood or what has been strangled, and that you need to avoid sexual immorality. If you do these things, all will be well with you.

In the third scene: Judas and Silas deliver the letter to Antioch, where the Gentile church is gathered. The Gentile believers rejoice because of the encouraging news. Judas and Silas stay to teach and encourage the Gentile believers.

In the fourth scene: Judas and Silas are sent to go back to Jerusalem. Paul and Barnabas stay in Antioch to teach the word of God.

The characters in this passage are:

- Apostles
- Elders
- Church in Jerusalem
- Paul
- Barnabas
- Judas
- Silas
- Gentile believers in Antioch
- Jews who confused Gentile believers

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It is important to remember that Jewish believers from Judea came to teach the Gentile believers in Antioch some time before. They told the Gentile believers that they had to be circumcised for Jesus to save them. This was not what Paul had taught the believers, so they were troubled.

In Jerusalem, the apostles and leaders agreed not to burden the Gentile believers with the extra requirements of the Jewish laws. This means they would not be bound to follow the laws God gave to Moses.

As this passage starts, James has just explained what the Jewish believers would require of the non-Jewish believers. Luke uses a word that shows us that the action of sending the letter was a result of the agreement the elders and whole church came to—they would not require Gentile believers to follow Jewish laws. The Jerusalem church decided to send the letter with Judas and Silas. They would go back with Paul and Barnabas as the Jerusalem church's representatives to Antioch.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Describe a time when people in authority made an important decision where you live. How did they show what they were going to do next to carry out that decision? Pause this audio here.

The letter begins with the word "greetings." It then introduces the senders of the letter and the people who will receive the letter. By mentioning the bringers of the letter, the Jerusalem church is giving authority to and validating Judas and Silas.

At the beginning, the Jerusalem church explains the cause for writing the letter. The apostles heard that some false teachers had confused the Antioch church. They use the phrase "troubled your minds." This expression shows the Jerusalem church's frustration with the men who tried to force the Gentile believers to follow the Jewish laws.

Because of this confusion, they decided to select two men to go back with Paul and Barnabas. The Jerusalem church gave Judas and Silas authority by sending them to read the letter aloud to the Antioch believers and explain the agreement.

Then the letter gives four decrees or rules and explains what the Gentile believers must not do if they want to have fellowship with Jewish believers. The letter ends with the word "Farewell."

Then the Jerusalem church sends Judas and Silas to Antioch. They travel with Paul and Barnabas. The group travels "down from Jerusalem" to Antioch, since Jerusalem was considered the most important city and because it was higher in altitude than other cities.

When Judas and Silas arrive, the believers are gathered together. Judas and Silas deliver the letter. This means they read or recited the letter out loud to the Antioch believers as official representatives of the Jerusalem church. The Gentile believers rejoice because the letter was one of encouragement.

Judas and Silas stayed some days in Antioch encouraging and teaching the people, then they went back to Jerusalem. The believers send Judas and Silas in peace. "Go in peace" was a normal way for believers to say goodbye.

Paul, Barnabas, and others stay in Antioch to continue teaching the believers about Jesus.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Acts 15:22–35 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has four scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Apostles
- Elders
- Church in Jerusalem
- Paul
- Barnabas
- Judas
- Silas
- Gentile believers in Antioch
- Jews who confused Gentile believers

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out the apostles, elders, and the whole church in Jerusalem agreeing to send Judas and Silas with Paul and Barnabas to Antioch. They want Judas and Silas to take the letter to Gentile believers who live there.

Pause the drama.

Act out someone writing the letter out loud while in the background other people act out what the letter says. Act out the Apostles and elders hearing about how someone was teaching and confusing the Gentile believers. The apostles and elders send Judas and Silas to explain their decision to the Gentile believers: that they should keep from eating sacrifices given to idols, from eating blood, from eating strangled animals, and from acts of sexual immorality.

Pause the drama.

Act out Judas and Silas traveling to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. Judas and Silas gather the believers together and read out loud the letter to the believers. The believers hear it read and they are encouraged. Judas and Silas encouraged them too by teaching them.

Pause the drama.

Act out the church in Antioch sending Judas and Silas to go back to Jerusalem in peace. Paul and Barnabas stay and preach the word of God.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Acts 15:22–35 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The **apostles** and **elders** are gathered together in Jerusalem with the whole church. Apostles are appointed by Jesus himself as his representatives. They preach the good news, were founders of the church, held spiritual authority in the church, and were witnesses to the fact that God resurrected Jesus from the dead. Elders refers to leaders in the church who help the church community live together well. Use the same word or phrase for apostles and elders as you used in previous passages. For more information on apostles or elders, refer to the Master Glossary.

The whole **church** does not refer to a building but rather to a group of believers who live in one place. In this case, the whole church refers to the believers in Jerusalem. Use the same word or phrase for church as you used in previous passages. For more information on church, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Jerusalem church chooses Judas and Silas from the brothers, or the believers who lived in that area, to take their letter to the **Gentile believers** in Antioch. Gentile refers to any non-Jewish person. After Pentecost, a believer was a common way to refer to a person who trusted and followed Jesus. The Greek word used actually means "brother," which refers to believers in Jesus, but you can use believer in your translation. Use the same word or phrase for Gentile and believer as you used in previous passages. For more information on Gentiles or believers, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Jerusalem church loves Paul and Barnabas and describes them as men who have risked their lives for the name of the **Lord Jesus Christ**. "Lord" means they believe Jesus is God while "Christ" is a title for the person God chose to send as king and savior. Use the same word or phrase for Lord and Christ as you used in previous passages. For more information on the Lord or Christ, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Jerusalem church says the decision they have made seemed good to the **Holy Spirit**. The Holy Spirit refers to God's Spirit. In the New Testament, God gives the Holy Spirit to live in everyone when they believe in Jesus as their Savior. The Holy Spirit renews a person and he helps them to live a life pleasing to God. Use the same

word or phrase for the Holy Spirit as you used in previous passages. For more information on the Holy Spirit, refer to the Master Glossary.

One of the four terms for Gentile believers to have fellowship with Jewish believers is that they will not eat sacrifices to **idols**. An idol is an image made by human hands, like a statue or other physical representation of a god that is worshiped instead of the one true Creator God. Use the same word or phrase for idols as you used in previous passages. For more information on idol, refer to the Master Glossary.

Another requirement for the Gentile believers was that they should avoid sexual immorality. **Sexual immorality** refers to any sexual activity outside of marriage. This sinful behavior would keep Gentile believers from being able to worship God with Jewish believers.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What behaviors are only appropriate in marriage in your culture? How do you describe this when speaking about these issues in a public setting? Then, discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for sexual immorality. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

Luke describes Judas and Silas as **prophets**, or messengers of God. God spoke to his prophets through visions or dreams and the prophets gave God's message to the people on God's behalf. Use the same word or phrase for prophet as you used in previous passages. For more information on prophet, refer to the Master Glossary.

Paul and Barnabas stayed in Antioch and continued to preach the **word of the Lord**. This refers to the gospel, or the good news that Jesus is God's promised Savior. Use the same word or phrase for the word of the Lord as you used in previous passages. For more information on the Word, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 15:22–35

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3361109 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Acts 15:36–41

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Acts 15:36–41 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Acts 15:36–41 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Acts 15:36–41 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Previously, Paul and Barnabas stayed in Antioch to encourage the non-Jewish believers there after they received the letter from the Jerusalem church. The believers were joyful to hear that they did not have to be circumcised and that they did not have to live according to Jewish law. Now, Paul wants to travel with Barnabas to check on other areas where they have previously preached. Because of a disagreement, Paul and Barnabas travel separate ways.

As we know, Paul and Barnabas are in Antioch. They stayed in Antioch to encourage the non-Jewish believers there and to teach them more about Jesus. After several days, Paul suggests to Barnabas that they should travel to the places where they had previously preached the word of the Lord, or shared about Jesus. Paul wants to see how the new believers are doing, or find out how well they are following Jesus. Once Paul checked in on the believers, then he could encourage, teach, or correct them as needed.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How does a teacher or elder make sure students or disciples are doing what they have been taught? Describe how believers help each other to do what they agreed to do in your culture. Pause this audio here.

Barnabas agrees with Paul, but he wants to take John Mark with them on their travels. John Mark is Barnabas' cousin; John was his Jewish name and Mark was his Roman name. Paul is strongly against the idea. Paul reminds Barnabas that John Mark left them in the middle of their previous journey. You will remember that in Pamphylia, John Mark left their work and went back home to Jerusalem.

Stop here and look at a map of Paul's first journey highlighting where Pamphylia is located. Pause this audio here.

The work refers to going from town to town preaching about Jesus being the Promised Savior. Because of John Mark's departure, Paul does not think that he is worthy to go with them on this trip.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How does the community send someone to do a specific work where you live? When God leads believers to go to other towns or countries to share about Jesus, how do churches where you live support them? Pause this audio here.

Paul and Barnabas disagreed so strongly that they ended up traveling separately to different places. We do not know if they were angry or not. But we do know that Paul and John Mark eventually overcame their differences since Paul will later speak highly of him as a coworker in his letters to the churches. Barnabas traveled with John Mark on a boat to Cyprus. Cyprus refers to a large island in the Mediterranean Sea west of Syria and it was where Barnabas was from.

Stop here and look at a map of Cyprus in relation to Antioch as a group. Pause this audio here.

Meanwhile, Paul chose Silas to travel with. As you remember, Silas was one of the two men the Jerusalem believers chose as a representative to deliver their letter to the Antioch church. The believers at Antioch handed Paul and Silas over to the grace of the Lord. This means they prayed over Paul and Silas that God would guide and protect them as they traveled.

Paul and Silas then traveled north by foot throughout Syria and Cilicia encouraging the churches, or groups of believers, in every town they came to.

Stop here and look at a map showing Jerusalem and Antioch in the province of Syria as a group. Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Acts 15:36–41 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has four scenes.

In the first scene: Paul and Barnabas are in Antioch. Paul suggests to Barnabas that they should travel to visit all of the churches where they have previously shared about Jesus. Barnabas agrees but wants John Mark to travel with them. Paul strongly disagrees.

In the second scene: Paul reminds Barnabas what happened the last time they traveled with John Mark. John Mark helps Paul and Barnabas while they are traveling, then changes his mind and goes home.

In the third scene: Barnabas separates from Paul and travels with John Mark by boat to Cyprus to visit believers. Paul chooses Silas to travel with him. The Antioch church prays for them before they leave on their journey.

In the fourth scene: Paul and Silas travel by foot, walking from town to town visiting the believers in Syria and Cilicia.

The characters in this passage are:

- Paul
- Antioch believers
- Barnabas
- John Mark
- Silas
- Believers in Cyprus
- Believers in Syria and Cilicia

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It's important to remember that Paul and Barnabas are in Antioch with the church of non-Jewish believers. The Antioch church has just received the joyful news from Jerusalem that they will not have to live according to the Jewish laws. Paul and Barnabas stayed with the believers to continue teaching about Jesus.

Judas and Silas went back to Jerusalem. It is possible that Silas stayed in Antioch or perhaps he went back to Jerusalem then returned to Antioch to travel with Paul.

"After some time" probably means after several days, but it could mean longer. That is when Paul suggests to Barnabas that they should travel to visit areas where they had previously preached about Jesus.

Barnabas agreed with Paul's suggestion, but he wanted to bring John Mark with them. Paul disagreed sharply or strongly with Barnabas. Paul did not want John Mark to travel with them.

It is important to remember that the last time Luke mentioned John Mark, he was helping Paul and Barnabas share about Jesus in different towns, but he left them in Pamphylia to go home to Jerusalem. It is unclear why John Mark left them.

Stop here and look at a map of Paul's first journey highlighting where Pamphylia is located. Pause this audio here.

Luke gives this explanation of what happened in the past as the reason why Paul did not want John Mark to travel with them again.

When Luke says "work," he is talking about the work that the Holy Spirit called Paul and Barnabas to do while they were in Antioch. This work was to tell people about Jesus being the Promised Savior.

The disagreement between Paul and Barnabas was so strong that they separated from each other and traveled to different places. It is important to remember that Paul and Barnabas had gone through many difficulties and trials during their previous journey. This means their disagreement had to be very strong; the original word used for "strong disagreement" means "irritation."

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What is the strongest way to express a disagreement in your culture? How would you describe a very strong disagreement among friends that causes them to go in different ways? Pause this audio here.

Barnabas and John Mark sail, or travel together by boat, to the island of Cyprus. In those times, most boats moved with the help of a sail.

Stop here and look at a picture of a large boat with a sail and a map of where Cyprus is located in relation to Antioch. Pause this audio here.

It is unclear if Silas returned to Jerusalem then came back to Antioch or if he remained in Antioch the entire time.

The brothers, or believers, in Antioch entrusted, or recommended, Paul and Silas to the grace of God. This is a way to say the believers in Antioch prayed over Paul and Silas and placed them in God's care.

Paul travels by walking through Syria and Cilicia, encouraging and strengthening the churches.

Stop here and look at a map of Paul's journey from Antioch through Syria and Cilicia. Pause this audio here.

It is important to remember that Paul and Silas departed together, even though Luke says "he went," meaning Paul. This doesn't mean that Paul went alone but that Paul was leading the journey.

Stop here and discuss how you will translate the phrase "he went" to mean both Paul and Silas. Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Acts 15:36–41 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has four scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Paul
- Antioch believers
- Barnabas
- John Mark
- Silas
- Believers in Cyprus
- Believers in Syria and Cilicia

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out Paul and Barnabas teaching the Gentile believers in Antioch. After several days, Paul suggests to Barnabas that they should travel to visit all of the churches where they have previously shared about Jesus. Barnabas agrees but wants John Mark to travel with them.

Pause the drama.

Act out the event that happened in Pamphylia. One possible way to do this is by pausing the acting and silently acting in the background what happened as a memory and not as a current event. Act out John Mark helping Paul and Barnabas to share about Jesus in different towns before he leaves them and goes home to Jerusalem. Paul and Barnabas kept going ahead with the journey and telling people about Jesus.

Pause the drama.

Act out Paul strongly disagreeing with Barnabas. They disagree so strongly that Paul and Barnabas go separate ways. Barnabas travels with John Mark by boat to the island of Cyprus. Paul chooses Silas to travel with him. The believers in Antioch place Paul and Silas in the care of God for their coming journey. Then Paul takes Silas with him and they travel by walking through Syria and Cilicia encouraging the churches there.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Silas, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Excited. We are going to visit fellow believers," or "I am thankful that God allowed me to come to Antioch," or "I'm honored that Paul chose me to travel with him."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Acts 15:36–41 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Paul suggests to Barnabas that they should visit all of the places where they have previously preached to see how the **brothers** were doing. Brothers can be translated as believers. It refers to anyone, man or woman, who has trusted in and followed Jesus as the Promised Savior.

Paul wants to visit the places where they have previously preached the **Word of the Lord**. The Word of the Lord, or God's Word, refers to the good news that Jesus died for our sins, was buried, and rose again. Many people believed this good news in the places where Paul and Barnabas preached. Use the same word or phrase for Word of the Lord as you used in previous passages. For more information on the Word, refer to the Master Glossary.

Paul wants to encourage these new **believers**, or brothers, and see if they are following Jesus well. Believer refers to a person who has chosen to trust in Jesus as the Promised Savior and follow him. Use the same word or phrase for believer as you used in previous passages. For more information on believers, refer to the Master Glossary.

Barnabas and Paul go different ways since Paul does not want to travel with John Mark. Barnabas and John Mark **sail** to Cyprus. Sail means to travel by using a boat that has a sail to help move it.

Stop here and look at a picture of a large boat with a sail. Pause this audio here.

Paul chooses Silas as his new traveling companion. The church of Antioch prays over the men and entrusts them to the **grace** of the **Lord**. Here, the Lord refers to God. In this context, God showing grace to Paul and Silas would mean that he shows his favor by protecting and guiding them on their trip. Use the same word or phrase for grace and Lord as you used in previous passages. For more information on grace or Lord, refer to the Master Glossary.

Paul and Silas travel to Syria and Cilicia to encourage the churches there. **Church** refers to a group of believers who live in one place. Use the same word or phrase for church as you used in previous passages. For more information on church, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 15:36–41

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Acts 16:1–5

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 16:1–5 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In the previous passage, Paul and Barnabas wanted to visit the believers in the cities where they had shared the good news of Jesus. However, they did not agree on who should join them on the trip, so they separated.

Paul and Silas traveled around Antioch in the areas of Syria and Cilicia, encouraging the churches there. Now they travel to the nearby areas of Derbe and Lystra. Paul visited these cities on his first journey, two or three years before this visit. These were Gentile regions, or non-Jewish regions. Among them there were also Jewish people, and Jewish background believers as well. There was a church in Lystra, and it was connected with the churches at Derbe and Iconium.

Stop now and look at the map of Paul's second journey with your team. Point out the areas of Syria, Cilicia, and Antioch. Now look at Derbe, Lystra, and Iconium.

Ask your team: How do believers who live in different communities encourage one another? Are your communities separated by geography or in some other way? How is new teaching normally shared between different communities?

In the church in Lystra was a man named Timothy. He was a young man, well-known in the churches. Timothy is described in the text as a "disciple" and a "believer." Timothy was not one of the twelve disciples as are mentioned in the Gospels with Jesus. Instead, he was a devoted "learner" who was growing in his faith and was a true believer in Jesus. The brothers, or other believers in Jesus, in this area liked him and spoke encouraging things about him. Timothy was known and well-respected by the believers in Jesus in Lystra and Iconium because these cities were near one another.

Stop and ask your team to look at the map again of Paul's second journey. Describe a time when a Christian leader from another town or area visited your region. What kind of ministry does a traveling minister usually have? Do they teach, preach, lead worship, train others, etc.?

Paul was impressed with the man, and wanted to have Timothy join them in their work. Timothy's mother was a Jew, but his father was a Greek. Most of the people there seemed to know this about Timothy. According to Jewish law, Timothy was considered Jewish because his mother was Jewish. But Timothy was likely not a practicing Jew, because he had not been circumcised. Circumcision is the Jewish custom of cutting off the loose skin at the end of a boy's penis. Circumcision was a sign that the boy was a part of God's chosen people Israel and that God's promises applied to him.

Because Paul often began his ministry among Jewish people, it was important for Timothy to honor his Jewish heritage and be circumcised. Paul had Timothy circumcised and then he joined Paul and Silas in their journey.

As Paul, Silas, and Timothy traveled to the cities on this journey, they were sharing the instruction the council in Jerusalem had given. You will remember that the council in Jerusalem was made up of the apostles and elders of the church in Jerusalem. They wrote a letter to the Gentile churches. Paul and his companions were sharing that information with the churches. They also were encouraging and strengthening the churches they met with.

Luke uses the word "so" to begin a summary several other times in the book of Acts. It is his common way of making a transition from one portion of the story to the next portion. Luke ends this passage in the same way he ends several other passages in Acts. Luke gives a summary report of all that was accomplished during this part of the trip.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has 3 scenes.

First scene: Paul and Silas are traveling through the areas near Antioch. They came to Derbe, then Lystra. In Lystra, they met Timothy. Timothy had a good reputation with the church.

Second scene: Paul expressed his desire for Timothy to join them on the journey. But Timothy was not a practicing Jew, even though his mother was Jewish.

Third scene: Timothy joins Paul and Silas in their continued journeys. They shared the reports from the leaders of the church in Jerusalem. The churches were encouraged and growing.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul & Silas
- Timothy
- Timothy's mother
- Timothy's father
- The believers in Lystra and Iconium

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it. Your team might even copy the map provided in order to see where Paul and his team traveled.

Be sure to remember Silas is a member of the traveling team. He was mentioned in the last passage, and will be mentioned again in the coming parts of this journey.

Timothy was likely a young man, and a faithful servant of the church in Lystra and Iconium. He was a sincere follower of Jesus and the people in his area said good things about him.

Although Timothy was considered a Jew, he was not practicing his Jewish faith completely because he was not circumcised. Some Jews thought that uncircumcised Jews were poor Jews because circumcision was a mark of their covenant with God. Paul did not want the Jews to think of Timothy in that way. If Timothy was circumcised, the Jews would accept him. This would be particularly helpful for speaking to Jews who did not believe in Jesus.

Even though many translations of this passage say that, "Paul circumcised him," a better translation is, "Paul had him circumcised," by means of someone else in their community.

Part of the work on this journey was to share the message from the church leaders in Jerusalem related to the Gentile believers. This was important for the Jewish believers and the Gentile believers. Since Timothy had family among Jews and Gentiles, he was an important part of the team from this point onward.

The last part of this passage is important, as it is Luke's way of summarizing a section in his writing. He begins with "so" and then he gives the summary that "the churches were being strengthened in the faith, and were increasing in number daily." When you retell or act out the story, be sure to make this summary clear.

Stop and discuss with your team the ways that people make transitions in your language. Do they use words like "so," "then," or "therefore?"

Practice using some of those words now as a team if you have some similar words or phrases.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has 3 scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul & Silas
- Timothy
- Timothy's mother
- Timothy's father
- The believers in Lystra and Iconium

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

Have the team act out the part of the story where Paul and Silas come to Derbe and Lystra. They hear good reports about Timothy and meet him.

Stop the action.

Have the team act out the portion of the story where Paul decides he would like Timothy to join them in the journey. Then Paul says that Timothy is not a practicing Jew, and he has not been circumcised.

Stop the action.

Act out the portion of the story where Timothy is sent to be circumcised. Your team can act this out in an appropriate way for your situation.

After Timothy is circumcised, act out the part of the story when Timothy joins Paul and Silas.

They travel around to other churches in other cities and share the reports from the church leaders in Jerusalem.

Stop the action.

Have the team complete the acting by showing how the churches are encouraged and growing in numbers daily.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Paul was traveling with Silas and they came to Derbe, then Lystra.

As Paul and Silas came to Lystra, they met Timothy. He is called a **disciple**, which means "a learner," but he was not one of the 12 original disciples, also called "apostles." He was a strong disciple of Jesus, and he was known by the brothers, or believers in Jesus. Brothers in this instance does not mean actual family members, but members of the family of God. Use the same word for brothers in this passage that you have used in other passages.

See the Master Glossary entry for disciple for more information. Be sure to use the same word for disciple as you have used in previous passages.

We see that Timothy's mother was a Jewish **believer**, follower of Jesus. His father was a **Greek** or non-Jew. We do not know if his father was a believer or not. Timothy was a **Jew** because the Jewish ancestry was passed on by his mother.

See the Master Glossary entries for believer, Jew, and Greek for more information. Use the same word for believer, Jew, and Greek that you have used in previous passages.

Paul wanted Timothy to accompany them on the journey, so Paul took Timothy to be circumcised. Timothy was not a practicing Jew. We know this because he was not circumcised.

Circumcision was a ritual conducted in the Jewish faith from the time of Abraham. It was a symbol of the covenant God made with Abraham. All Jewish males were required to be circumcised. If Timothy was circumcised, the Jews would accept him. This would be helpful for speaking to Jews who did not believe in Jesus.

See circumcision in the Master Glossary for more information on this term. Use the same word for circumcision that you have used in previous passages.

As Paul, Silas and Timothy traveled to the other cities in their journey, they shared the decision of the Council in Jerusalem and encouraged the churches. This part could be translated, "They told the believers what the **apostles** and **elders** in Jerusalem had decided about how believers should behave."

See the Master Glossary for more information on apostles and elders. Use the same words for apostles and elders in this passage that you have used in previous passages.

We see from Luke's account that the **churches** were strengthened in the **faith**. This strengthening in the faith led to growing numbers in the churches.

See the Master Glossary for more information on the words faith and church. Use the same words for faith and church in this passage that you have used in previous passages.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 16:1–5

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (2188815 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

Acts 16:6–15

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 16:6–15 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In the previous passage, Paul & Silas visit Derbe & Lystra. Paul decides that Timothy should join them on their journey, so Paul has Timothy circumcised. They hoped to share the good news in other cities in that region. But the Holy Spirit told them not to share the gospel in the province called Asia at that time. Because of this, they traveled through Phrygia and Galatia. They arrived in the region of Mysia, and planned to go inland to Bithynia. But the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them to go there. These areas are in modern-day Turkey. Instead, they went to the city of Troas, by the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. From Lystra to Troas, Paul and his team would have walked at least ten days!

Two phrases are used with the meaning that God did not allow them to preach the gospel in these areas. The first is, "the Spirit of God," and the second one is, "the Spirit of Jesus." These are both references to the Holy Spirit, but different names are used. It is important to translate them accurately.

Stop now and look at the map of Paul's trip with your team. Point to Lystra, then to the regions of Phrygia and Galatia. Show your team Mysia and Bithynia as well.

How far have you ever walked on a journey? How do you pass the time when you are walking? What kind of challenges do you face when walking a long way?

While they were in Troas, Paul had a **vision** during the night. A vision is when a person has a divine revelation while they are awake. In this case, it happened at night. In this vision Paul saw a man whom he knew was from Macedonia.

He saw a man calling out to him: "Come over to Macedonia and help us." The man in the vision was urgently calling to Paul. Some English translations use the words "begging" or "pleading" for this kind of calling. Paul told his friends about this, and they knew God was speaking to them. So they began making plans to go to Macedonia.

Stop now and discuss with your team these questions: Share with one another about a dream you think was from God. If you had a dream like Paul, how would you feel about acting upon it?

It is important to notice that the writer of Acts changed from saying "they" to "we" at this point in the story. Luke, who wrote Acts, likely joined Paul and his group in Troas.

Macedonia was across the sea from Troas, so they got on a boat and traveled across this small portion of the sea. They went to Samothrace, about halfway to the other side, then to Neapolis. After they landed in Neapolis, they went by land to Philippi, a journey of approximately 16 kilometers, or 10 miles. Philippi was a city in Macedonia and a Roman colony. Paul and his group stayed there for several days.

Stop and discuss with your team: Look at the map of Paul's second journey together again. Point out Troas, Samothrace, Neapolis and Philippi. Look at the picture of the boat with your team. Ask your team to describe what they think a journey by boat like this would be like?

This group has now traveled on foot, by road, through mountains, and by ship. They have left their home areas and gone to distant places.

What is the farthest journey you have ever traveled on? How did you adjust to the different places, people, and cultures when you traveled?

On the Sabbath, the Jewish day of rest and worship, Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke went outside the city to a riverside. This was a common place for worship, and Paul hoped they would find people praying. Paul and his group were looking for Jewish worshippers, or others who worshiped God. There was no synagogue in Philippi. This is likely because there were not enough Jewish men there to form a synagogue. They would need ten Jewish men to form a synagogue. They did meet some women who were there together for worship.

Stop and discuss with your team: What are the common places of worship where you live? (hills, riversides, large trees, etc.) If there were no churches in your area, where would you find people who worshiped or prayed? How would you know when to find people worshipping? Why do you think that Paul and his group went to this place for prayer on the Sabbath?

One of the women there was Lydia, a businesswoman who sold purple cloth. This cloth was high quality and commonly made in her home area of Thyatira. She was a non-Jew who worshiped God. God spoke to her as Paul preached and she opened her heart to respond to his message. The phrase "opened her heart" means that she listened and believed in what Paul was saying about Jesus. She and her household were baptized. Lydia's "household" would include her family and servants who lived with her. They were baptized, which is immersion in water to symbolize a new way of living following Jesus. She then encouraged Paul and the group to stay at her house if they believed she was a sincere believer. Paul and his group went to stay with her. This was a very kind act of hospitality by Lydia. Because she was a businesswoman, and the leader of her household, she could make this offer. In her culture it was completely normal for her to do this. Lydia was making her new faith clear by offering this hospitality. There were no immoral implications in this offer.

Stop and discuss with your team: In Lydia's culture, a female businesswoman could lead her own house and make important decisions. What would be normal hospitality for a woman to offer in your culture? What might have

looked different if this happened in your culture? How is hospitality shown in your culture? How quickly would you offer a foreign traveler food or a place to stay?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has 4 scenes.

First scene: Paul, Silas, Timothy pass through Asia, coming to Troas.

Second scene: Paul has a vision of the man from Macedonia. Luke joins them.

Third scene: Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke travel to Philippi.

Fourth scene: Paul and the group go to the riverside and meet Lydia.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- Silas
- Timothy
- The man from Macedonia
- Luke
- Lydia
- Lydia's household

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

God spoke to this group of men and told them not to preach in Asia. For this reason, Paul, Silas, and Timothy traveled through Phrygia and Galatia. They actually tried to go north in Asia to Bithynia, but God did not allow them. Instead, they went south to Troas by the sea.

While they were in Troas, two important things happened. The first is that Luke, the author of Acts, joined them. We know this because he stopped saying, "they," when he referred to the group and began to say, "we." The second is that Paul had a vision in the night. In this vision he saw a man whom he knew was from Macedonia. The man called out to him: "Come over to Macedonia and help us." Paul shared this vision with his group immediately and they knew it was a message from God. They made preparations to go to Macedonia as soon as possible. Their obedience was very fast.

They traveled by boat from Troas to Samothrace, where they stayed the night. Then they went on to Neapolis by boat. From there they traveled by road to Philippi. This was approximately a 16 kilometer (or 10 mile) journey, by road. They probably walked for this part of the journey. It would have taken them a few hours to walk to Philippi. They stayed there for several days.

On the Sabbath day, likely the first Sabbath day of their visit, they went just outside the city to the riverside. Because there was no synagogue in Philippi, they hoped to find God-fearing Gentiles or Jews worshiping at this place on the day of rest and worship for the Jews. They met a group of women who were there for worship. Paul shared the message of the good news of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.

Lydia, who was a businesswoman and a God-fearing non-Jew, responded to Paul's message. She "opened her heart" to Paul's message. This means that she believed Paul's message about Jesus. She and her entire household were baptized. It is important to remember that household refers to anyone living in the house, family members and any servants who live with her.

After this, Lydia asked Paul and the group to stay at her house while they were in Philippi. They agreed and went to stay at her house. This was a very kind act of hospitality by Lydia. In her culture it was completely normal for her to do this. Lydia was making her new faith clear by offering this hospitality. There were no immoral implications in this offer.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has 4 scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- Silas
- Timothy
- The man from Macedonia
- Luke
- Lydia
- Lydia's household

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember these parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

Have your team act out the part of the story where Paul and his companions travel through Asia, but the Holy Spirit stops them from sharing the gospel.

Stop the action.

Act out the part of the story where Paul and his team meet Luke in Troas, and Paul has the vision of the man from Macedonia.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing the man from Macedonia, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Worried, maybe they will not come," or "Hopeful that the good news is coming to them." [!end] Restart the action.

Act out the part of the story where the group traveled from Troas to Philippi.

Act out the part of the story where they met Lydia and the women at the riverside. Then act out the part when she and her household believed and were baptized.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing Timothy, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Joyful," because God is working, or "Surprised" at the new believers, or "Fulfilled." [!end] Restart the action.

Act out the part of the story when Lydia asked Paul and his group to stay at her house and they agreed.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing Lydia, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Grateful," because she has room in her home to host the traveling group, or "Blessed," because she can afford to have them share her resources.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this passage, Paul, Silas, and Timothy traveled through Asia. In the beginning of this passage, two phrases are used with the meaning that God did not allow them to preach the gospel in these areas. The first is, "the Spirit of God," and the second one is, "the Spirit of Jesus." These are both references to the **Holy Spirit**, but different names are used. It is important to translate them accurately.

Please see the Master Glossary entry on the Holy Spirit for more information. Be sure to use the same word for spirit that you have used previously for spirit.

Instead of traveling to Bythnia, they went south to Troas by the sea. While they were in Troas, Paul had a vision in the night. A **vision** is when a person has a divine revelation while they are awake. In this case, it happened at night.

Please see the Master Glossary entry for vision for more information. Be sure to use the same word for vision that you have used previously for vision.

They traveled to Philippi. On the **Sabbath** day, likely the first Sabbath day of their visit, they went just outside the city to the riverside. Paul and his companions may have expected to find some people who worshiped God there. They met a group of women who were there for prayer. Paul shared about Jesus and the gospel message.

Please see the Master Glossary entry for Sabbath Day for more information. Be sure to use the same word for Sabbath here that you have used in previous passages.

Lydia, a Gentile woman from Thyatira, was a **God-fearer** and was among those gathered for prayer. Her name, Lydia, is not only a personal name, but it indicated the region she came from. Lydia, the region around Thyatira, was known for its purple cloth and this woman was selling it in Philippi. She could be referred to as a Lydian, not just Lydia. She believed in Jesus and she and her entire **household** were **baptized**.

Household might include everyone who lived in Lydia's household, including servants. She may not have had a family, since she is identified as the head of her household.

Please see the Master Glossary entry for fear of God for more information.

Please see the Master Glossary entry for household for more information.

Please see the Master Glossary entry for baptism for more information.

Be sure to use the same words for fear of God, God-fearer, household, and baptism that you have used in previous passages.

After this, Lydia told Paul that if he and his companions considered her to be faithful to the Lord, they would stay at her house. Paul and the group stayed at her house while they were in Philippi.

Please see the Master Glossary entry for faith for more information. Be sure to use the same word for faith or faithful as you have used in previous passages.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 16:6–15

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (2774070 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Acts 16:16–24

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 16:16–24 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?

5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In the last passage, as Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke were sharing the good news in Philippi, Lydia and her household believed in Jesus. The traveling group stayed at her home while they were in this city.

As Paul, Silas, and the group were going to the place of prayer where they previously met Lydia, a demon-possessed girl followed them. This girl told fortunes, or divinations, and was paid money for it. There were men who owned her, and used her skill as a way to make money. She was a slave, she had no freedom. The girl was calling out to everyone, "These men are servants of the Most High God. They are proclaiming to you the way of salvation!" This title "Most High God" would be understood by the Jews and non-Jews. Many people were searching for salvation and the Most High God. She did this for many days.

Stop and discuss the following with your team: Describe a time when you have heard of people in your community who tell the future, or advise others by some spiritual method. Ask, "Where do these people say that their wisdom comes from?" Ask, "How do these people earn money from their advice?"

Paul became very annoyed with this girl's actions. So one day he stopped, turned to the girl, and spoke to the spirit in her, saying, "In the Name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!" The spirit left the girl immediately. Paul was annoyed by this girl following them because it was a distraction. She was not proclaiming the gospel of Jesus, and she was not helping them.

When the spirit left the girl, Paul and Silas were in trouble with the owners of the girl because they saw that they could not make money from her anymore. They grabbed Paul and Silas and forced them to come with them to the marketplace. The marketplace was the central area of the city; it was a place for buying, selling, and meeting. This was also the place that the government leaders would be available to meet with people and decide court cases. These rulers can be called judges or magistrates. The owners of the girl shouted to the city rulers, "The whole city is in an uproar because of these men!" "They are teaching the people to do things that are against our customs," they continued. These men did not mention the servant girl who had the spirit in her. They also did not mention that Paul had told the spirit to leave her in the Name of Jesus Christ.

A mob formed and opposed Paul and Silas. The judges ordered that Paul and Silas be stripped and beaten. This was done by officers who served the judges. These officers were normally there to punish lawbreakers. They were professional punishers. They beat people with rods, heavy sticks, or canes. Paul and Silas were stripped and severely beaten. The officers did not stop beating them until the judge told them to stop. Then Paul and Silas were thrown into prison. This means that the officers who beat them forced them to go into the prison. It does not mean that the officer picked them up and threw them in the prison. The judge told the jailor to make sure they didn't escape. So the jailer forced them into the inner prison and put their feet in stocks. Stocks are wood planks put together with two holes for a prisoner to put their legs in. The holes are too small for their feet to go through, so the prisoner is stuck in place. They cannot stand or walk.

Stop and look at the illustration of stocks. How would it feel to be bound by these?

In these verses, you find several people mentioned by their job title. The authorities are the Roman ruling group. The chief magistrates are the highest Roman rulers in the city. The officer would have been the one to beat Paul and Silas, but he is not mentioned directly in the text. The jailor is the person in charge of the jail where they were kept.

The jailer in this Roman prison would be held responsible for the security of the prisoners under his guard. If they escaped or did something wrong, he would be held responsible. He could even be sentenced to the same punishment that the prisoners were sentenced to. The jailer may have even been a prisoner himself. Some prisoners earned the right to be leaders, or jailers, in the prisons.

Stop and discuss with your team the following: Paul and Silas were likely injured a lot from the beating. What risks did they have to their health just from the beating?

The prisons in Roman colonies were very plain, and usually made of stone. There were cells for prisoners along the walls, sometimes with windows. But the inner prison cell was one room with no windows. It had a hole in the floor for a sewer, and one door. This was considered the most secure part of the prison, usually kept for the most dangerous criminals.

Stop and discuss the following with your team: Describe jails and prisons in your culture. Ask, "How would foreign religious teachers be treated in prisons in your community?"

Look at the illustration of an ancient Roman prison. How many different secure areas are there? Which parts are used for dangerous criminals?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has 3 scenes.

First scene: Paul and his companions are going to the place of prayer. The demon-possessed girl is following them calling out, "These men are servants of the Most High God."

Second scene: Paul is very annoyed at the girl, and he tells the demon to come out of her in the Name of Jesus Christ. The owners of the girl saw what happened, and discovered that they could no longer earn money with her.

Third scene: A mob forms, they beat Paul and Silas. Then the city officials order Paul and Silas to be put into prison and guarded securely. The jailer put them in the inner prison and put their feet in stocks.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- Silas
- The servant girl and the demon inside her
- Owners of the servant girl
- City officials
- Crowd or mob
- Jailer

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

As Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke were sharing the good news in Philippi, Lydia and her household believed in Jesus. The traveling group stayed at her home while they were in this city.

Paul and Silas (and possibly Timothy and Luke) were going to the place of prayer where they previously met Lydia. On the way, a demon-possessed girl was following them. This girl told fortunes, or divinations, and was paid money for it. There were men who owned her, and used her skill as a way to make money. The girl was calling out to everyone, "These men are servants of the Most High God. They are proclaiming to you the way of salvation!" She did this for many days.

One day, Paul was annoyed by this girl following them and calling out loudly all the time. Paul cast the demon out of the girl in the Name of Jesus. Her owners saw that she could no longer tell the future, and they got angry at Paul and Silas. They grabbed Paul and Silas and dragged them before the authorities at the marketplace. The marketplace was the central area of the city, it was a place for buying, selling, and meeting. This was also the place that the government leaders would be available to meet with people and decide court cases. The men

accused Paul and Silas of being Jews, and teaching things that were contrary to their own culture. "The whole city is in an uproar because of these men!" they shouted to the city officials.

As the men made their complaint, the crowd grew and was against Paul and Silas. The city officials tore off the robes of Paul and Silas and ordered that they be beaten. The officers beat them, then they were thrown into prison. The magistrate ordered the jailer to make sure they didn't escape. So the jailer put them into the inner prison and put their feet in stocks.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has three scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- Silas
- The servant girl and the demon inside her
- Owners of the servant girl
- City officials
- Crowd or mob
- Jailer

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

Act out the part of the story where Paul and his group are going to the place of prayer. The servant girl follows Paul and Silas around shouting, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation." Act out when Paul gets annoyed, turns to the girl and speaks to the spirit. He says, "In the Name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!"

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing Paul, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Worried that this girl and the spirit will scare away people who want to know about Jesus," or "Annoyed because she is driving me crazy," or "Angry because the evil one is trying to stop us from preaching about Jesus." [!end] Restart the action.

Act out the part of the story when the spirit leaves the girl. Then the owners of the servant girl discover that they can no longer make money from her. Then they drag Peter and Silas to the marketplace in front of the rulers. They told the chief magistrates, "These men are throwing our city into confusion. They are teaching Jewish customs that are against the law for us as Romans."

Stop the action.

Act out the part of the story where the crowd opposed Paul and Silas. The chief magistrates tore the robes off of Paul and Silas. Then they ordered that Paul and Silas be beaten with rods. After the beating, the officers put them into prison. The jailer put Paul and Silas in the inner prison and put their feet in stocks because he was told to guard them very well.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing the jailer, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Scared of these new prisoners who must be very dangerous," "Angry, because I have to guard these prisoners so much," or "Anxious that they will try to escape."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

One day, Paul and Silas-and possibly Timothy and Luke-were going to the **place of prayer** where they previously met Lydia. This place of prayer was near the river, just outside the gate of the city. Be sure to translate the place of prayer in the same way that you translated it in previous passages.

On the way, a **demon-possessed** girl was following them. In the English Bible, this is translated as a spirit of **divination**, or prediction. People who practice divination tell others things that cannot be normally known. It can happen by magic, or some other means. In this case, it is called a "spirit of divination," and that means that a **spirit** was inside the girl, telling her what to say. The spirit controlled her thoughts and actions. This was not the Spirit of God. It was an evil spirit, or a **demon**. **Possessed** refers to being totally controlled by something. When referring to evil spirits, you may simply say that the evil spirit was "in" the person.

See the Master Glossary entry for possessed, divination, spirit, and demon for more information. Be sure to use the same words for possessed, divination, spirit, and demon that you have used in previous passages.

The girl was calling out to everyone, "These men are servants of the **Most High God**. They are proclaiming to you the way of **salvation**!"

The title **Most High God** refers to the position of God, that is, "the highest God," indirectly a reference to "the God in heaven" or "the God who is higher than all other gods," that is to say, "the most important God." Here the reference would certainly seem to be to "God who is greater than all others."

Please see the Master Glossary for more information on the term salvation. Be sure to use the same terms for Most High God and salvation that you have used in previous passages.

Paul was annoyed by this girl following them and calling out loudly all the time. Paul commanded the demon to leave the slave girl **in the Name of Jesus** Christ.

"In the name of Jesus," translated literally, may not carry the full intended meaning. You may choose to say something along the lines of

- by the name/authority of Jesus
- by the authority that Jesus has given me
- by the power which is in the name of Jesus

Be sure to use the same words for "in the name of Jesus" here that you have used in previous passages.

This got Paul and Silas into trouble with the owners of the girl because they saw that they could not make money from her anymore. They grabbed Paul and Silas and dragged them before the authorities at the marketplace. These city officials are called chief magistrates in the English translation. The **chief magistrates** were the leading political officials in the city.

As the men made their complaint, the crowd grew and was against Paul and Silas. The city officials tore Paul and Silas' robes off of them, and ordered that they be beaten. Paul and Silas were severely beaten, and then they were thrown into prison.

The jailer was ordered to make sure they didn't escape. So the jailer put them into the inner prison and put their feet in stocks. **Stocks** were wood planks with holes in them for a person's feet. When closed, they held a prisoner's feet tightly in one place. The prisoner would not be able to move their feet if they were in stocks.

Stop and look at the illustration of stocks.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 16:16–24

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Acts 16:25-40

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 16:25-40 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In the last passage, Paul and Silas were put in prison in Philippi. They were put in the most secure part of the prison, with their feet in wooden stocks.

Around midnight, Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns, or songs of praise, to God. The other prisoners were listening. Suddenly, there was a massive earthquake, and the prison was shaken to its foundations. An **earthquake** is a violent, shaking movement of the earth. It is often very destructive. All the doors immediately flew open, and the chains of every prisoner fell off!

The jailer woke up to see the prison doors wide open. He thought the prisoners had escaped, so he took out his sword to kill himself. The sword is a weapon used by soldiers. It has a long steel blade, and is sharp on one side or both sides. It was kept in a sheath, or cover, worn on the belt. The jailer was going to kill himself because he was ashamed that the prisoners had escaped, or he thought the city officials would humiliate him. The jailer would have been trained well, and would not want the officials to think that he had failed at his duty. But Paul shouted to him, "Stop! Don't kill yourself! We are all here!"

Look with your team at the illustration of a Roman prison and the picture of a sword and sheath.

Stop and ask your team the following questions: What kind of things would the jailer be thinking at this time? Tell a story of a time that you were criticized for doing something wrong in your work. How did that feel?

The jailer asked his servants or other guards to bring lights. These would be small clay lamps with a wick in one end and oil for fuel. Several were needed because they only gave a small amount of light.

Stop and look with your team at the picture of the clay lamp, like the ones used here. Ask your team: How effective would this kind of lamp be in a dark prison? Can you recall a time when you had only a small light for a very dark place? How did it work for you then?

The jailer ran to the dungeon and fell down, or bowed down in front of Paul and Silas. He was shaking, which showed his fear, humility, and respect. Then he brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" The word for "sirs" is also a sign of respect and humility-it can also be translated "lord" or "master." When the jailer asked how to "be saved" here, he was talking about being saved from something bad, like the earthquake, or the gods that Paul and Silas spoke about.

They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved, along with everyone in your household." The jailer's household included his family and servants who lived with him. Paul and Silas shared the Word of the Lord and the good news about Jesus with him and with all who lived in his household. The jailer took Paul and Silas and washed their wounds. Then Paul and Silas baptized them. The jailer fed them at his house and they rejoiced because they all believed in God. The jailer usually lived next to the prison. He could also live in a room on the side of the prison.

Stop and ask your team the following questions: In your culture, is it common for one person to lead their family in making a group decision? How will a family determine who is allowed to lead in making decisions?

The next morning, the city officials sent word for Paul and Silas to be released. Paul demanded that the same officials who had them put in prison release them. He did this because they had legal rights as Roman citizens to be put on trial before punishment. But they were beaten without a trial, then put in prison. If they left the city quietly, it might look like they were running away and guilty of a crime. But Paul wanted the city officials to make it clear to everyone that they were not guilty, and were released officially. This also may have helped the new church in Philippi avoid criticism in the future. These officials came and begged Paul and Silas to leave the city, and released them from prison.

Stop and ask your team the following questions: If you were in Paul's situation, would you delay your release from prison like he did? Why or why not? When Paul and Silas left the prison, they returned to the home of Lydia. There they met with the believers and encouraged them once more. Then they left to go to another town.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has 3 scenes.

First scene: Paul and Silas are singing hymns and praying to God in prison. A huge earthquake happens, and all the prisoners' chains come loose, and the doors open. The jailer woke up, thought that the prisoners had escaped, and drew his sword to kill himself.

Second scene: Paul calls out loudly, "Don't harm yourself, we are all here!" The jailer came and fell at the feet of Paul and Silas and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

Third scene: The next morning the city officials released Paul and Silas from jail and asked them to leave the city. Paul and Silas visited the home of Lydia, encouraged the believers, and left for another city.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- Silas
- City officials
- Crowd or mob
- Jailer
- Jailer's household
- Other prisoners
- Lydia and her household

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

In the last passage, Paul and Silas were put in prison in Philippi. They were put in the most secure part of the prison, with their feet in wooden stocks.

Around midnight Paul and Silas were in prison praying and singing hymns, or songs of praise, to God, and the other prisoners were listening. Suddenly, there was a massive earthquake, and the prison was shaken to its foundations. All the doors immediately flew open, and the chains of every prisoner fell off!

The jailer woke up to see the prison doors wide open. He thought the prisoners had escaped, so he took out his sword to kill himself. But Paul shouted to him, "Stop! Don't kill yourself! We are all here!"

It would be very dark in the prison, especially in the inner prison and at midnight. The jailer asked his servants or other guards to bring lights. The jailer ran to the dungeon and fell down, or bowed down, trembling in fear in front of Paul and Silas. Then he brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

He knew that something was very different about these men. They could have easily escaped. He also may have heard them singing and praying before the earthquake. For this reason, he knew that their God was more powerful than a Roman prison, and their God sent an earthquake.

Paul and Silas told him, "Believe in Jesus and you will be saved, along with everyone in your household." The jailer then took Paul and Silas to his house. Paul and Silas shared the Word of God and the good news about Jesus with him and with all who lived in his household. The jailer took Paul and Silas and washed their wounds. Then he and everyone in his household were immediately baptized. The jailer fed them at his house and they rejoiced because they all believed in God. After this, the jailer took Paul and Silas back to the prison.

The next morning, the city officials sent word for Paul and Silas to be released. Paul demanded that the same officials who had them put in prison release them.

Be sure to notice the question by Paul: "And now they want to send us away secretly?" This is a rhetorical question. Paul did not expect an answer to it from anyone. When he asked this question, his meaning was, "They will not hide what they did to us." Paul made it clear to everyone that he and Silas did not commit a crime. He also wanted the officials to clear their names. The officials came and released Paul and Silas.

When Paul and Silas left the prison, they returned to the home of Lydia. Lydia's house had become the first church in Philippi. There they met with the believers and encouraged them once more. Then they left to go to another town.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has 3 scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- Silas
- City officials
- Jailer
- Jailer's household
- Other prisoners
- Lydia and the believers at her house

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

Act out the part of the story when Paul and Silas are singing and praying in the prison, and the earthquake happens.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing Paul and Silas, "How are you feeling?" You may hear, "Fearful," or "Asking for God's help," or "Confident." [!end] Restart the action.

Act out the part of the story when the jailer and his household believe in Jesus and are baptized.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing the jailer, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Free from sin," or "Forgiven." [!end] Restart the action.

Act out the last part of the story, when the city officials release Paul and Silas and they visit the home of Lydia before leaving the city.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing Lydia and the believers, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Grateful for the freedom of Paul and Silas," or "Sad to see them leave," or "Protected by God."

End of Story.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Around midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns, or songs of praise, to God, and the other prisoners were listening. Suddenly, there was a massive earthquake, and the prison was shaken to its foundations. An **earthquake** is a violent, shaking movement of the earth. It is often very destructive.

The jailer was about to kill himself, when Paul told him that all the prisoners were there and safe. Then he brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" **Sirs** is a polite term of address for men. Use whatever term is most appropriate in your language.

Paul and Silas told him, "**Believe** in Jesus and you will be **saved**, along with everyone in your **household**." And they shared the good news about Jesus with him and with all who lived in his household. The jailer took Paul and Silas and washed their wounds. Then he and everyone in his household were immediately **baptized**. The jailer fed them at his house and they rejoiced because they all believed in God.

Believe in Jesus: You might choose to make this phrase clearer by using a statement such as "believe that Jesus will save you from God punishing you for your sins."

Household probably refers to the jailer's family.

Please see the Master Glossary entries for believe, household, saved, and baptism for more information. Be sure to use the same words for believe, household, saved, and baptized that you have used in previous passages.

When Paul and Silas left the prison, they returned to the home of Lydia. Lydia's house had become the first church in Philippi. There they met with the **brothers**, or **believers in Jesus**, and encouraged them once more. Then they left to go to another town.

Please see the Master Glossary entry for believers for more information. Be sure to use the same word for brothers, or believers in Jesus, that you have used previously.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 16:25-40

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Acts 17:1-9

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 17:1-9 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?

5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

This story records historical events, which took place during Paul's second missionary journey around year 50 after Jesus' birth. Paul, Silas, and Timothy are traveling west through Macedonia, which is a province of the Roman Empire in southern Europe. They are strengthening churches in their belief in God. They are also teaching people the good news about Jesus, especially in cities they have not been to before.

In the previous story, Paul and Silas were imprisoned in Philippi. Even though Timothy was with Paul and Silas in Philippi, he is not mentioned in this story.

After leaving Philippi, Paul and Silas traveled through the cities of Amphipolis and Apollonia where they most likely only stopped just for the night. Amphipolis was about 65 kilometers southwest of Philippi. Apollonia was 50 kilometers southwest of Amphipolis and 55 kilometers east of Thessalonica. It probably took them one or two days to travel from city to city on foot, so about six days altogether.

Stop here and show the translation team a map of Paul and Silas' journey from Philippi to Thessalonica via Amphipolis and Apollonia.

This story takes place in Thessalonica, which was one of the most important cities in the Roman Empire and the capital city of Macedonia, which was part of the Roman Empire. Thessalonica had a huge harbour on the Aegean Sea and was on a major trade route.

In Thessalonica there was a synagogue of the Jews. A synagogue was a building where Jews gathered to pray, read scripture, teach, and worship God. When they arrived in the city, Paul went to the synagogue first, according to his usual habit. Being a Jew, it was his custom to go to the synagogue on a Sabbath, the Jewish day of worship and rest. Also, he wanted to tell Jewish people first about Jesus. Then he would tell non-Jews about Jesus. Paul talked with the Jews in the synagogue for three Sabbath days in a row. Sabbath was considered to be the seventh day of the week. This means that Paul and Silas stayed in Thessalonica for at least three weeks.

Stop here and show the translation team a picture of the inside of a Jewish synagogue from Jesus' time.

Paul discussed the meaning of the Scriptures with the Jews. The Jewish Scriptures, or holy writings, included the law God gave to Moses for his people and the writings of the prophets. The prophets told about the Christ, or Promised Saviour, coming. Paul explained the meaning of certain prophecies in the Scriptures and showed the Jews that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and die, and to rise back to life. The word Christ is a title. It means "the anointed one." The Jews used it to refer to the special person that God had promised to send to save them from their enemies. Paul concluded his talk saying, "This Jesus, whom I proclaim to you, is the Christ." Paul was trying to convince the Jews that Jesus was the Christ.

Some of the Jews believed that what Paul had said was true and now were in the family of believers in Jesus, like Paul and Silas. A large number of Greeks, or non-Jews, who worshipped God, and many of the influential women also believed Paul's message. The important women were most likely married to leading citizens of Thessalonica.

The Jews who did not believe in Jesus resented Paul and Silas because people were now associating with Paul and Silas instead of with them. The Jews took some troublemakers from the city and formed a crowd and caused people to riot in the city. They went to Jason's house and forced their way in. Jason was one of the believers and the Jews thought that Paul and Silas were there. They wanted to bring Paul and Silas to the city authorities.

Stop here and discuss with the translation team how in your culture people react to the teaching about Jesus. How do those who do not like the teaching behave towards those who bring the message of Jesus?

When they could not find Paul and Silas there, they forced Jason and some of the believers, who were in his house, to go before the leaders of the city. When the rowdy mob arrived in front of the city officials, the mob leaders shouted exaggerated and misleading things about Paul and Silas. The mob leaders shouted, "These men

who have turned the world upside down have come here also, and Jason has received them, and they are all acting against the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus."

The word "world" probably refers to the Roman empire. Paul and Silas had been to some of the cities in one part of the Roman empire. But the people exaggerated by shouting that Paul and Silas had been everywhere. The Jews accused Jason of having Paul and Silas in his house, as if Paul and Silas were criminals. The Jews also accused all believers in Jesus of acting against the decrees of Caesar by claiming that Christians said that there is another king, Jesus. Caesar was the leader of the Romans and all the people groups that the Romans had conquered. The Jews implied that the believers were rebelling against the Roman government by claiming that someone named Jesus is king.

The city officials were responsible for justice in the city. In this story they were probably at the public area called the marketplace. This was the usual place where the city officials worked. The public area had the market and other kinds of public activities. In this public area were many people. The crowd that was present and the city officials heard what the leaders of the mob said and they were distressed and troubled. The leaders of the mob purposely said those things to make the city leaders distressed about believers in Jesus.

The city officials made Jason and the others pay a sum of money as security. The officials made Jason and the others promise something. They would get their money back when they did as promised. The city officials probably made them promise to make Paul and Silas leave the city. They may have also made them promise to cause no further trouble for a certain period of time. Once they paid the money the city officials let them go.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has seven scenes.

First scene: Paul and Silas are traveling to Thessalonica, stopping briefly in Amphipolis and Apollonia.

Second scene: On arrival in Thessalonica, Paul goes into the synagogue of the Jews on three consecutive Sabbaths and debates with them from the scriptures.

Third scene: Some Jews and many believing Greeks and leading women believe Paul's teaching.

Fourth scene: Jews who did not believe Paul become jealous. They gather a mob from troublemakers in the marketplace and cause people in the city to riot.

Fifth scene: The angry Jews and the crowd go looking for Paul and Silas in Jason's house. They force their way into his house, but can't find Paul and Silas. They drag Jason and some of the believers who are in his house and take them to the leaders of the city.

Sixth scene: The mob and the Jews, Jason and the believers stand in front of the city officials. The Jews shout exaggerated and misleading things about Paul and Silas accusing them of "turning the world upside down and acting against the decrees of Caesar."

Seventh scene: The city leaders and the people present are distressed at the claims made by the Jews. The city leaders make Jason and the others pay them money as security and let them go.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- Silas
- Jews in the synagogue
- Jews who believed Paul's message
- God-fearing Greeks who believed Paul's message
- Leading women who believed Paul's message
- Jews who did not believe Paul's message and were jealous
- Wicked men of the rabble who became the mob
- Jason
- Believers in Jason's house
- City authorities
- People present with the authorities

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

Paul and Silas traveled from Philippi to Thessalonica, passing through the cities of Amphipolis and Apollonia. Most likely they only stopped briefly in those cities, possibly just for the night. The cities were between 50 and 65 kilometers away from each other. It probably took them one or two days to travel from city to city on foot, so about six days altogether.

Stop here and show the translation team a map of Paul and Silas' journey from Philippi to Thessalonica via Amphipolis and Apollonia.

When they arrived in Thessalonica, Paul went to the synagogue first. He discussed the meaning of Scriptures with the Jews. He was most likely standing in the middle of the synagogue holding the scrolls of Scripture. The Jews were probably sitting on stone benches built into the walls of the synagogue. It is important to note Paul's way of explaining Scripture and reasoning with the Jews. He first proved from Scripture that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and die, and to rise back to life. He would have pointed out prophetic scriptures predicting the Christ's death and resurrection. Then he proclaimed to them that Jesus was the Christ. Paul went to the synagogue on three consecutive Sabbaths, which means that he and Silas stayed in Thessalonica for at least three weeks.

Stop here and show the translation team a picture of the inside a synagogue from Jesus' time.

On hearing Paul's message only some Jews believed him. This was in contrast with a large number of Greeks, or non-Jews who worshipped God and many leading women, who put their faith in Jesus and joined Paul and Silas. The Greeks and the important women also attended the synagogue and heard Paul when he was teaching.

After Paul taught in their synagogue on three Sabbaths, the Jews who did not believe Paul became jealous and reacted with great anger and violence. The Jews gathered a mob consisting of rowdy men from the marketplace and stirred the city to riot.

Then they went to the house of Jason, one of the believers, looking for Paul and Silas. When they did not find them they dragged Jason and some believers who were in his house to stand before the city officials, probably in the marketplace, where there were a lot of people.

When standing in front of the city authorities, the mob leaders continued to behave violently and shouted exaggerated and misleading things about Paul and Silas and accused Jason of having them in his house. It is important to note that Paul and Silas were not there. It is important to note that neither Paul and Silas, nor Jason, did anything wrong. The unbelief of the Jews made them jealous of Paul and Silas. Their jealousy caused their violent behaviour and false accusations against Paul, Silas, and Jason before the city leaders. The Jews

wanted to discredit the believers in front of the city authorities and get rid of them. They wanted to stop the spreading of Paul's teaching about Jesus being the Christ.

The city leaders believed the Jews and became distressed. They made Jason pay a sum of money as a pledge and then let him and the other believers go.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has seven scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- Silas
- Jews in the synagogue
- Jews who believed Paul's message
- God-fearing Greeks who believed Paul's message
- Leading women who believed Paul's message
- Jews who did not believe Paul's message and were jealous
- Wicked men of the rabble who became the mob
- Jason
- Believers in Jason's house
- City authorities
- People present with the authorities

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

Paul and Silas traveled from the city of Philippi to the city of Thessalonica, stopping briefly in the towns of Amphipolis and Apollonia.

When they arrived in Thessalonica, Paul went to the Jewish synagogue first, as was his custom. He spoke to the Jews from the Scriptures and explained the prophecies about the Christ. He proved that the Christ needed to die and rise back to life. Then he proclaimed, "This Jesus I am telling you about is the Christ." Some of the Jews believed in his message, as did a large number of Greeks who believed in God and many leading women.

Stop the action.

- I am so happy they understood the Scripture,
- Praise God He opened their hearts to believe in Jesus,
- Disappointed that more Jews did not believe the good news about Jesus being the Messiah.

Ask the actors playing the new believers in Jesus, "How do you feel?" You may hear things like:

- I am so happy that my sins are forgiven,
- I am so grateful to Jesus for what he did for me,
- I feel light and free of my burdens. [!end] Restart the action.

But the Jews who did not believe Paul's message became envious that those who followed them are now following Paul and Silas. So they gathered some troublemakers from the marketplace to form a mob and started a riot in the city.

Stop the action.

- Really angry with Paul and Silas,
- They are stealing our followers,
- We must stop them!
- We will teach them a lesson. [!end] Restart the action.

The Jews went to the house of Jason, who was a believer, looking for Paul and Silas. They forced their way in, but did not find Paul and Silas there. They made Jason and a few other believers who were in the house come with them to stand before the city council.

When they all arrived in front of the city leaders the Jews were shouting false accusations against Paul, Silas, and Jason: "These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also, and Jason has received them, and they are all acting against the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus."

Stop the action.

- Scared,
- Indignant about the lies told by the Jews,
- I must trust Jesus,
- The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want." [!end] Restart the action.

The city officials and people present with them became alarmed about the accusations. They made Jason pay them money as security and let him and the others go.

Stop the action.

- Shocked that Caesar's decrees are not obeyed,
- Fearful of the mob and of Caesar,
- Unsure what to do.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Paul and Silas travelled through the towns of Amphipolis and Apollonia and reached the city of Thessalonica. **Amphipolis** and **Apollonia** are cities in Macedonia near the Aegean coast. Apollonia was 50 kilometers south west of Amphipolis and 55 kilometers east of Thessalonica. **Thessalonica** was one of the most important cities

in the Roman Empire and the capital city of Macedonia, which was part of the Roman Empire. Thessalonica had a huge harbour on the Aegean Sea and was on a major trade route. It had between 20,000 and 100,000 inhabitants.

Stop here and show the translation team a map of Paul and Silas' journey from Philippi to Thessalonica via Amphipolis and Apollonia.

When Paul and Silas arrived in Thessalonica Paul went to the synagogue of the Jews first. Remember to use the same words you have used previously for **synagogue** and for the **Jews**. Full definitions of these words can be found in the Master Glossary.

Stop here and show the translation team a picture of the inside of a Jewish synagogue from Jesus' time.

Paul went to the synagogue on three **Sabbath** days. Remember to use the same words you have used previously for Sabbath. A full definition of Sabbath can be found in the Master Glossary.

When Paul was in the synagogue, he discussed the meaning of the **Scriptures** with the Jews. Remember to use the same words you have used previously for Scriptures. A full definition of Scriptures can be found in the Master Glossary.

Paul said to the Jews, "This Jesus, whom I proclaim to you, is the Christ." **Christ** is the Greek word for the Hebrew word "Messiah." It means someone whom God has anointed, or appointed for a special task. In the Old Testament, prophets, priests, and kings were anointed for special tasks. Jesus is all of those things. Remember to use the same words you have used previously for Christ. A full definition of Christ can be found in the Master Glossary.

Some Jews, a large number of God-fearing Greeks, and leading women believed Paul's message. **Greeks** refers here to people who were not Jews. A full definition of Greeks can be found in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 17:1–9

Audio Content

[webm.zip](#) (5106300 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

Acts 17:10–15

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 17:10–15 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

This story records historical events, which took place during Paul's second missionary journey around year 50 after Jesus' birth. In the previous story Paul, Silas, and Timothy went to Thessalonica, though Timothy was not mentioned. In Thessalonica Paul taught the Scriptures to the Jews in the synagogue. Some of the Jews believed what Paul had said about Jesus being the Christ, as did a large number of Greeks, non-Jews who worshipped God, and many believing non-Jewish influential women. However, the Jews who did not believe Paul became jealous and stirred a riot in the city.

This story takes place in Berea, a small Macedonian city of no particular importance about 70 kilometers west of Thessalonica, probably about one or two days journey by walking. After the riot in Thessalonica, as soon as it became dark the believers sent Paul, Silas, and Timothy to Berea. Paul had not originally planned to go to Berea to preach the gospel, but had to go there to keep safe from the Jews. As Berea was off the main road, it would be harder for the Jews to find them.

Stop here and show the translation team a map of Paul and Silas' journey from Thessalonica to Berea.

As soon as they arrived in Berea, Paul and Silas began going into a synagogue, the Jewish place of prayer, as was Paul's custom. He wanted to tell Jewish people first about Jesus. Then he would tell non-Jews about Jesus.

The Jews in Berea were more willing to listen and had better hearts than the Jews in Thessalonica. They were happy to hear the word of God, or the message of the good news about Jesus. They carefully read, and probably discussed the meaning of those Scriptures daily to see if they agree with what Paul said it meant.

Stop here and discuss with the translation team what ways people in your culture use to check whether a new teaching about an important subject or a piece of news is true.

As a result of hearing the message from the Scriptures taught by Paul and checking the Scriptures themselves, many of the Jews believed that Jesus was the Christ, the promised saviour. There were also "not a few," which means many, Greek women of high social status and Greek men, who believed that Jesus was the Christ. "Greek" here refers to non-Jews who worshipped God.

When the Jews who opposed Paul in Thessalonica heard that Paul announced the good news about Jesus being the Christ to people in Berea, they traveled to Berea with an evil intent. They stirred up people in the city to make them angry with Paul and the believers.

When this happened, the believers in Berea immediately took Paul away as far as the coast of the Aegean Sea. They would have gone to a city on the coast which was about 50 kilometers away from Berea. It would have taken them about one day or so by walking. Silas and Timothy did not come with him and stayed behind in Berea. The believers probably wanted Paul to leave as soon as possible for his safety. Even though the story does not say that Timothy had arrived with Paul and Silas in Berea, we know that he was with them too as the story mentions him here.

The men from Berea who were accompanying Paul went with him as far as Athens, a coastal city on the Aegean Sea. It was a famous city at that time and an important city for Greek art and science. Paul and his companions may have gone to Athens by ship or by road. It was about a 500 kilometer trip by sea. This would take three to six days in good weather. The trip by road to Athens was about 450 kilometers. This would take seven to twelve days by walking.

Stop here and show the translation team a map of Paul's journey from Berea to Athens by sea.

On arriving in Athens, Paul instructed the believers from Berea to command Silas and Timothy to join him as soon as possible, and the men departed back for Berea. Paul had not originally planned to go to Athens to share the good news about Jesus, but had to travel there to keep safe from the Jews from Thessalonica. He wanted Silas and Timothy to join him as soon as possible, so they could continue their journey to share the message of Jesus.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has seven scenes.

First scene: Believers urgently send Paul, Silas, and Timothy in the night from Thessalonica to Berea.

Second scene: Paul and Silas begin attending the synagogue of the Jews in Berea.

Third scene: The Jews in Berea very eagerly receive Paul's teaching from the Scriptures about Jesus being the Christ and carefully study the Scriptures daily to check that what Paul taught was true.

Fourth scene: Many of the Jews as well as many non-Jewish women of high standing and non-Jewish men believe the teaching about Jesus being the Christ.

Fifth scene: The Jews from Thessalonica who did not believe Paul's teaching about Jesus find out that Paul is teaching the same message to people in Berea. They come to Berea and stir the crowd against Paul and the believers.

Sixth scene: The believers from Berea immediately send Paul off to the coast of the Aegean Sea, while Silas and Timothy remain in Berea.

Seventh scene: Paul and some believers from Berea who accompanied him arrive in Athens. Paul asks them to command Silas and Timothy to join him as soon as possible and the believers leave for Berea.

The characters in this story include:

- Believing men in Thessalonica ("the brothers")
- Paul and Silas
- Jews attending the synagogue in Berea
- Non-Jewish believing women of high social standing from Berea
- Non-Jewish believing men from Berea
- Jews from Thessalonica who did not believe Paul's message about Jesus
- Crowds from Berea that the Jews from Thessalonica stirred up
- Believers from Berea accompanying Paul to Athens
- Timothy

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

After the riots in Thessalonica, the believers immediately sent Paul and Silas away to a nearby city of Berea. Berea was a Macedonian city about 70 kilometers west of Thessalonica. It is important to note the urgency with which the believers acted. They did not lose any time, as they perceived the danger that Paul and Silas faced from the angry Jews. Paul and Silas were sent in the night—most likely so that no one could see them in the dark. The journey probably took one or two days by walking.

Stop here and show the translation team a map of Paul and Silas' journey from Thessalonica to Berea.

As soon as Paul and Silas arrived in Berea, they began going into a synagogue, as was Paul's custom. They probably went on the first Sabbath day after their arrival in the city and kept going each Sabbath, which was a Jewish day of prayer and worship. When teaching in the synagogue, Paul was most likely standing in the middle of the main room holding the scrolls of the Jewish Scriptures, or religious writings about their prophecies and laws. The Jews were probably sitting on stone benches built into the walls of the synagogue. Paul would have explained the meaning of certain prophecies in the Scriptures and showed the Jews that it was necessary for the Christ, the promised saviour that God sent, to suffer and die, and to rise back to life. Paul would have tried to convince the Jews that Jesus was the Christ.

The Jews in Berea were more honourable than those in Thessalonica and they were eager to listen to Paul's teaching from the Scriptures. It is important to note that they not only listened to Paul, but they also studied the Scriptures diligently every day by themselves. They were examining the Scriptures to see if they really did point to the death and resurrection of the Christ as Paul claimed. Paul may have been with them, teaching them even on days other than the Sabbath.

Many Jews believed in Jesus being the Christ. It is important to note that their belief was a result of listening to Paul teaching the Scriptures and their own diligent study of the Scriptures to check if what Paul was teaching was the truth. Also, numerous non-Jewish women of high status, who worshipped God, believed in Jesus as their saviour. So did many non-Jewish believing men.

But when the Jews from Thessalonica who did not believe Paul's teaching heard that Paul was teaching the good news about Jesus being the Christ to people of Berea, they came down to Berea. They were most likely the

same Jews who made people riot against the believers in Thessalonica. They were jealous of Paul and Silas and so they stirred up the crowd to make them feel angry towards the believers.

When this happened the believers in Berea immediately sent Paul as far as the coast of the Aegean Sea. It is important to note the urgency with which the believers removed Paul from this dangerous situation. Silas and Timothy stayed behind in Berea. The believers who went with Paul made further plans once they arrived at a city on the coast.

The believers took Paul to the city of Athens, which was about a 500 kilometer trip by ship. This would take three to six days in good weather. The trip by road to Athens was about 450 kilometers. This would take seven to twelve days on foot.

Stop here and show the translation team a map of Paul's journey from Berea to Athens by sea.

When they arrived in Athens, Paul gave the believers from Berea an urgent command for Silas and Timothy to join him as soon as possible and the believers set off on their journey back to Berea.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has seven scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Believing men in Thessalonica ("the brothers")
- Paul and Silas
- Jews attending the synagogue in Berea
- Non-Jewish believing women of high social standing from Berea
- Non-Jewish believing men from Berea
- Jews from Thessalonica who did not believe Paul's message about Jesus
- Crowds from Berea that the Jews from Thessalonica stirred up
- Believers from Berea accompanying Paul to Athens
- Timothy

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

After the riots in Thessalonica, the believers immediately sent Paul and Silas away to the city of Berea. As soon as Paul and Silas arrived in Berea they began going into a synagogue. Paul was teaching the Jews from the Scriptures and proving to them that Jesus was the Christ.

The Jews in Berea were more honourable than those in Thessalonica and they were eager to listen to Paul's teaching from the Scriptures. They studied the Scriptures every day, checking that what Paul taught was true.

Stop the action.

As a result of hearing Paul's teaching in the synagogue and their own study, many Jews believed in Jesus being the Christ. Numerous believing in God non-Jewish women of high status and non-Jewish men believed in Jesus too.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing Paul, "How do you feel?" You may hear things like, "Praise the Lord for opening the hearts of those people to the truth of the Scriptures!" "I am so pleased they are checking the Scriptures for themselves," and "I am so happy!" [!end] Restart the action.

But when the Jews from Thessalonica who did not believe Paul's teaching heard that Paul was teaching the good news about Jesus to people of Berea, they came down to Berea. They stirred up the crowd to make them feel angry towards the believers.

Stop the action.

When the rioting started, the believers in Berea immediately sent Paul away to the coast of the Aegean Sea, while Silas and Timothy stayed behind in Berea.

The believers from Berea who accompanied Paul traveled with Paul as far as Athens. When they arrived in Athens, Paul asked the believers to give Silas and Timothy a command to join him as soon as possible. Then the believers from Berea returned to their city.

Stop the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

After the riots in Thessalonica broke out, the believers immediately sent Paul and Silas to Berea. **Berea** was a small city with no particular political, military, or economic importance placed about 70 kilometers west of Thessalonica.

Stop here and show the translation team a map of Paul and Silas' journey from Thessalonica to Berea.

On arriving in Berea, Paul and Silas started attending the **synagogue** of the **Jews**. Remember to use the same words you have used previously for synagogue and Jews. A full definition of synagogue and Jews can be found in the Master Glossary.

The Jews from Berea were more honourable than the Jews from Thessalonica, because they received Paul's teaching with great eagerness and read the **Scriptures** daily to check if what Paul said was true. **Thessalonica** was one of the most important cities in the Roman Empire and the capital city of Macedonia, which was part of the Roman Empire. Thessalonica had a huge harbour on the Aegean Sea and was on a major trade route. It had between 20,000 and 100,000 inhabitants.

Remember to use the same word you have used previously for **Scriptures**. A full definition of Scriptures can be found in the Master Glossary.

Many Jews, as well as many prominent Greek women and men believed that Jesus was the Christ. **Greek** here refers to people who were non-Jews. Remember to use the same word you have used previously for Greeks referring to non-Jews. A full definition of Greeks can be found in the Master Glossary.

When the Jews from Thessalonica came to Berea and stirred up the crowd against Paul and Silas, the believers from Berea sent Paul immediately to the coast of the Aegean Sea and then a few of them accompanied him to Athens, a coastal city on the Aegean Sea. **Athens** was a famous city at that time and an important city for Greek art and science. However, it was no longer prosperous, like in the previous centuries. Paul and his companions may have gone to Athens by ship or by road. It was about a 500 kilometer trip by ship. This would take three to six days in good weather. The trip by road to Athens was about 450 kilometers. This would take seven to twelve days by walking.

Stop here and show the translation team a map of Paul's journey from Berea to Athens by sea.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 17:10–15

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (4073341 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Acts 17:16–21

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 17:16–21 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

This story records historical events, which took place during Paul's second missionary journey around year 51 after Jesus' birth. In the last story Paul, Silas, and Timothy were in Berea, where Paul taught the good news about Jesus. Many Jews and non-Jews believed. Then Jews from Thessalonica who did not believe Paul's teaching came to Berea. They stirred people in the city against him. The believers from Berea immediately escorted Paul away to Athens. Athens is a city on the Aegean Sea in the region of Attica about 400 kilometers south east of Berea. Silas and Timothy stayed behind in Berea, but they were commanded by Paul to join him in Athens as soon as possible.

This story takes place in Athens. Athens used to be politically and economically important. Now it was not. However, it was still a large centre of culture, art, and literature. People in Athens talked about how the world works, what life means, and what makes living worthwhile. Their ideas influenced the Roman empire very much. The people in Athens worshipped idols and there were a great many statues and temples there devoted to those false gods.

Stop here and show the translation team a map showing where Athens was in relation to Thessalonica and Berea.

While Paul waited for Silas and Timothy to join him he noticed that idols were everywhere in the city and he became upset and full of grief. An idol is an image made by human hands, like a statue that is worshipped as a god rather than the one true Creator God. The Athenians worshipped many gods but not the true God.

Stop here and show the translation team a photograph of the Parthenon, a former temple dedicated to the goddess Athena that still stands on the Athenian hill of Acropolis.

Stop here and discuss with the translation team what gods your people worship and how they worship them.

On seeing this, Paul went to the synagogue, the Jewish place of prayer. There he spoke to the Jews and non-Jews who believed in God. He explained to them logically from their Scripture that the Christ, the promised saviour, had to suffer and die, and to rise back to life. He would then try to prove to them that Jesus was the Christ. Paul also went to the marketplace every day and talked to people who happened to come by and would listen to him.

Certain Epicurean and Stoic philosophers, or teachers known as Epicureans and Stoics, also spoke with Paul. Philosophers are people who think about how the world works, what life means, and what makes living worthwhile. They suggest ways that people should live. They usually value their teachings more than religion. Epicureans believed that pleasures, especially pleasure of the mind, were the goal of life. Stoics believed that life should be without feelings of joy or grief. Some of them were mocking Paul by asking, "What does this babbler wish to say?" Babblers means an ignorant show-off. They implied that Paul was a person who repeated wise sayings, but did not understand them. Others remarked that Paul was speaking about foreign gods. They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and about his resurrection from the dead.

All the people of Athens and foreigners living there spent their time foolishly doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas. This information is not part of the storyline. It is extra information that the author gives us to help us understand the story better.

Then the philosophers brought Paul before the Areopagus, the city council. They asked Paul to tell them what the new teaching was which he was proclaiming. They said that "he was bringing new things to their ears," meaning that he was telling them some rather strange things. They had never heard anything like the good news about Jesus before. Even though they had already heard Paul before, they wanted Paul to start from the beginning and explain his whole teaching again. This would help them understand it. This would also allow the city council to hear the whole teaching. Then the council could decide if the teaching was dangerous or not.

Stop here and discuss with the translation team how people discuss ideas in your culture. What kind of ideas do people discuss? Where do they discuss these ideas? Who discusses them? When do they discuss them?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has four scenes.

First scene: Paul is waiting in Athens for the arrival of Silas and Timothy and while walking around the city he is distressed to see idols everywhere.

Second scene: Paul reasons from the Scriptures with the Jews and devout non-Jews in the Synagogue and with people in the marketplace.

Third scene: Paul speaks with the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers and tells them the good news about Jesus.

Fourth scene: The philosophers take Paul to present his teaching about Jesus and his resurrection to the city council, the Areopagus.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- Idols in the city
- Jews and believing non-Jews in the synagogue
- People who Paul spoke to in the marketplace
- Epicurean and Stoic philosophers

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

When Paul was waiting for Silas and Timothy in Athens, he saw that there were many idols everywhere. It greatly disturbed him to see that the Athenians did not know the true Creator God and worshipped false gods instead. It is important to notice that Paul was really sad about this, but did not get angry. Instead he spoke to the people in the city about Jesus. He started going to the synagogue where he reasoned with the Jews and believing non-Jews and was showing to them from their Scripture that Jesus was the Christ. As he was speaking, Paul would have stood in the middle of the synagogue holding the scroll and the people would be sitting on stone benches built into the four walls of the synagogue.

Stop here and show the translation team a map showing where Athens was in relation to Thessalonica and Berea.

Stop here and show the translation team a photograph of the Parthenon, a former temple dedicated to the goddess Athena that still stands on the Athenian hill of Acropolis.

Paul also went to the marketplace, a public place where people would gather for many activities. He went there every day to talk to people who happened to come by and would listen to him. He spoke to them about the good

news about Jesus and his resurrection. Certain Epicurean and Stoic philosophers, or teachers known as Epicureans and Stoics, also spoke with Paul. However, some of them mocked him calling him a "babbler" and some others said he was preaching foreign gods. The people of Athens liked to hear about foreign gods and even began worshipping some of them. But they rejected foreign gods who might ruin what they considered to be good morals. They would criticize and oppose anyone who proclaimed these gods.

All the Athenians and foreigners who lived there spent all their free time doing nothing else other than talking about and hearing new ideas. This information is not part of the storyline. It is extra information that the author gives us to help us understand the story better.

Stop here and discuss. In your culture, how do you give extra background information in your stories?

The philosophers brought Paul before the city council called the Areopagus. The name of the council came from the hill on which originally the council met. However, at the time when Paul was in Athens the council gathered in one of the buildings in the marketplace. Paul was probably standing with the philosophers in the marketplace, then he walked to the place where people spoke to the council and he stood before the whole council of the Areopagus, the leaders of the city. After hearing him, the council could decide if the teaching was dangerous or not. Also, the philosophers would have another chance to hear Paul's teaching, which they considered as strange. It is very likely that there probably was a good number of ordinary citizens of Athens including women present with the city council who also wanted to hear Paul speak.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has four scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- Idols in the city
- Jews and believing non-Jews in the synagogue
- People who Paul spoke to in the marketplace
- Epicurean and Stoic philosophers

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

As Paul was waiting for Silas and Timothy in Athens, he became very grieved because when he looked around the city he saw that there were idols everywhere.

Stop the action.

So Paul went to the synagogue and started reasoning from the Scripture with both Jews and believing non-Jews. He also went to the marketplace daily and was talking about Jesus with anyone who was there. He was also conversing with certain Epicurean and Stoic philosophers. Some of them mocked him by saying, "What does this babbling wish to say?" Others thought that he was a preacher of foreign gods, because he proclaimed to them Jesus and his resurrection.

So the philosophers brought Paul before the city council, the Areopagus. They asked him to tell them what his teaching was, adding, "For you bring some strange things to our ears. We wish to know therefore what these things mean."

Stop the action.

All the Athenians and foreigners who lived there spent all their free time talking about and hearing new ideas.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Paul was waiting for Silas and Timothy in Athens. **Athens** is a city on the Aegean Sea in the region of Attica about 400 kilometers south east of Berea. This is the only place where Athens is mentioned in the Bible.

Stop here and show the translation team a map showing where Athens was in relation to Thessalonica and Berea.

Paul was greatly distressed when he saw the many idols in Athens. An **idol** is an image made by human hands, like a statue or other physical representation of a god, which is worshiped as a god rather than the one true Creator God. People bow down in front of the idol to worship that god. Remember to use the same word you have used previously for idol. A full definition of idol can be found in the Master Glossary.

Stop here and show the translation team a photograph of the Parthenon, a former temple dedicated to the goddess Athena that still stands on the Athenian hill of Acropolis.

So Paul went to the **synagogue** and started reasoning from the Scripture with the **Jews** and believing non-Jews. Remember to use the same words you have used previously for synagogue and Jews. A full definition of synagogue and Jews can be found in the Master Glossary.

Paul also talked daily to people in the marketplace. Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers also conversed with him. **Philosophers** are people who think about how the world works, what life means, and what makes living worthwhile. They suggest ways that people should live. They usually value their teachings more than religion. **Epicureans** believed that pleasures, especially pleasure of the mind, were the goal of life. **Stoics** believed that life should be without feelings of joy or grief.

The philosophers brought Paul to the **Areopagus**, which was the city council. It took its name from a hill in Athens called Areopagus where the city council originally met. However, when Paul was in Athens the Areopagus, or the city council, gathered in one of the buildings in the marketplace. The council was responsible for administration, education and religion in the city. After hearing Paul, the council could decide if the teaching about Jesus was dangerous or not.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 17:16–21

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3623347 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Acts 17:22–34

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 17:22–34 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

This story records historical events which took place during Paul's second missionary journey around year 51 after Jesus' birth. In the last story Paul was in Athens where he was waiting for Silas and Timothy to join him from Berea. He was greatly disturbed by observing that there were many idols everywhere in the city and that the Athenians did not know the true Creator God. Paul reasoned with the Jews and believing non-Jews in the synagogue, telling them the good news about Jesus, as well as with anyone who would hear him in the marketplace. Paul also spoke about Jesus and his resurrection to some Stoic and Epicurean philosophers who thought his teaching was strange and took him to present it before the city council, the Areopagus.

This story begins when Paul stood before the whole council of the Areopagus, the leaders of the city, and made this speech.

He addressed the council by saying "Men of Athens." This was the usual respectful way to begin a speech in Athens, however women from the public may have been listening too. He observed that the Athenians were very religious in every way. This means that they honoured their gods using every method they knew including praying to them, worshipping them and offering sacrifices to them. As Paul was visiting various parts of the city he observed their objects of worship. And he even noticed an altar dedicated to an unknown god. This was a particular god, but the Athenians did not know his name or anything about him. Therefore, Paul announced that he was there to proclaim to them who that god was.

Stop here and show the translation team a photograph of an altar to an unknown god.

Stop here and show the translation team a photograph of a temple from Athens with a god in it.

Paul recognizes that his audience is not Jewish. In the synagogues he uses Jewish Scripture to teach them about Jesus. However, in the council of the Areopagus, he uses ideas that the Athenians would understand.

Paul first introduces the council to the creator God, the Master, or Lord, of heaven and earth. This God does not live in temples that people build because he does not need people to care for him. The creator God himself is the one who gives life, breath, and everything that people need to survive. God first created one man and from that one man came all the people groups. God caused them to go to different places over the whole earth to live there. Before God created people he decided when and where they would live. Then God explains that he's not as far away as we think, because he's the one who created us. He is the one who makes it possible for us to live and move and be people. When God created people, he created them so that they would want to look for him and find him.

Now Paul connects his speech with things that the people know about very well. He uses something from their own culture to explain God to them. He has seen something written on one of their statues. The Athenians had poets, or people who speak or write sayings that are meaningful, wise and well-expressed. Some Athenian poets said, "all of us are God's children." That means that God cannot just be an image made of gold, silver, or stone!

Stop here and discuss with the translation team if you have poets in your culture and what you call them. If you do have poets in your culture, can you remember any sayings they wrote or spoke?

When people do not know about God, God tolerates their sin more. But now that people know who the creator God is, God commands them to repent, or turn away, from their sins and begin to obey God.

Stop here and discuss with the translation team how you understand repentance. Tell a story about a time when you repented from a sin.

God has determined a particular day when he will judge with fairness everyone in the world. He has appointed a man to carry out the judgment and he has publicly proved that this is his judge by bringing that man back to life.

The people of Athens did not believe that people could rise back to life, so this statement was crazy to them. Some of them made fun of Paul and some wanted to hear more.

At this time Paul left the city council and that place.

Some people who heard Paul devoted themselves to him and to what he taught and believed in Jesus. One of them was Dionysius, one of the men who participated in the city council, the Areopagus. There was also a woman called Damaris and some other people who believed in Jesus.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has four scenes.

First scene: Paul makes a speech to the city council proclaiming to them the true God, Creator of the universe.

Second scene: On hearing about the resurrection of the dead, some men mock Paul and some say they want to hear him again.

Third scene: Paul leaves the city council.

Fourth scene: Some men and women join Paul and believe in Jesus.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- Members of the city council, the Areopagus
- Athenians and foreigners living in Athens
- Men and women who joined Paul and believed in Jesus including Dionysius, the Areopagite and Damaris.

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

This story starts with Paul standing in front of a large group of people, the council of Athenians. He is in their special meeting place, and they have invited him to explain to them what he has been teaching.

Paul addressed the council as "Men of Athens," in a respectful way. It is important to remember that Paul used the Athenians' own religious practices as a starting point when he spoke to them.

It's important to remember that God does not live in temples that people make because he is the Master, or Lord, over the earth. God does not have anything he needs, because he is the one who gives life to everything.

It's important to remember that God made every people group in the world, and he decided when they would live and where they would live.

It's also important to remember that God made people groups in a certain way. He made them with the purpose to look for God and find him. Paul assures his listeners that God is not far away from anyone!

It's important to remember that Paul quotes from Athenian poets. The poets say, "We are his offspring," or "We are his children." This means that God cannot be an image made of gold, silver, or stone!

God tolerated the bad things that people were doing because they did not know him, but now he commands all people in the whole world to stop sinning and obey him. God will fairly judge the people on the earth one day. God has appointed a man to judge, and God proved that this man has authority to judge by raising him from the dead!

Stop here and show the translation team a photograph of an altar to an unknown god.

Stop here and show the translation team a photograph of a temple from Athens with a god in it.

Immediately, there were two reactions to Paul's message. As soon as they heard that God had raised the judge from the dead, some made fun of Paul. But some said that they wanted to hear more. Then Paul left the city council and that place. And then some people who heard Paul devoted themselves to him and to what he taught and believed in Jesus. One of them was Dionysius, one of the men who participated in the city council, the Areopagus. There was also a woman named Damaris and some other people who believed in Jesus.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has four scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- Members of the city council, the Areopagus
- Athenians and foreigners living in Athens
- Men and women who joined Paul and believed in Jesus including Dionysius, the Areopagite and Damaris.

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

Paul addressed the council and began his speech. He noted that the Athenians were religious in every way and that he observed their many objects of worship, including an altar to an unknown god. He proclaimed to them that the god who they worship, but don't yet know, is "the God who made the world and everything in it." And he is the Lord of heaven and earth. He does not live in temples made by men and does not need any help from people, since he himself gives people life and sustains it and gives them everything they need to live.

Stop the action.

And from one man he made every nation and determined where everyone should live.

Stop the action.

He made people in order that they would look for him, and find him, even though he is not far from us. We live, move and exist because of him, and as some of the Athenian poets said, we are his children. Therefore, as God's children we should not think that God is like something that people imagine or make from gold, silver, or rock. God tolerated the bad things that people were doing because they did not know him, but now he commands all people in the whole world to stop sinning and obey him. For he has appointed a day when he will judge all the people in the world with fairness. He has appointed a man to judge for him and he has publicly proved this by bringing that man back to life.

Stop the action.

But when the men heard Paul talk about a person being raised from death, some made fun of him and some said they wanted to hear more of what he had to say on this topic.

Stop the action.

At this time Paul left the city council and that place.

Some people who heard Paul devoted themselves to him and to what he taught and believed in Jesus. One of them was Dionysius, one of the men who participated in the city council, the Areopagus. There was also a woman called Damaris and some other people who believed in Jesus.

Stop the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Paul, standing before the **Areopagus**, the city council, addressed the men there. The city council took its name from a hill in Athens called "Areopagus" where the city council originally met. However, when Paul was in Athens the Areopagus, or the city council, gathered in one of the buildings in the marketplace. The council was responsible for administration, education and religion in the city. After hearing Paul, the council could decide if the teaching about Jesus was dangerous or not. Translate Areopagus, or city council, the same way you did in the previous passage.

Paul spoke to the city council and noted that the people of Athens were very religious. Someone who is **religious** honours their gods using every method they know including praying to them, worshipping them, and offering sacrifices to them.

When Paul was walking around Athens he observed that there was even an altar to an unknown god. An **altar** may refer to a place where animals are killed and burned as an offering to God, or a place where incense is burned. It is often built of stones, perhaps like a table or small platform. Remember to use the same words you have used previously for altar. A full definition of altar can be found in the Master Glossary.

Stop here and show the translation team a photograph of an altar to an unknown god.

Paul said to the Areopagus that the God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples made by man. A **temple** is a place of worship where sacrifices are made to honour the god of the temple. Paul was saying that God, the creator of the universe, is not like the idols, and he does not live in a temple. Remember to use the same word you have used previously for temple. A full definition of temple can be found in the Master Glossary.

Stop here and show the translation team a photograph of a temple from Athens with a god in it.

And he made from man every **nation**, or people group, of mankind to live on all the face of the earth. Remember to use the same word you have used previously for nation. A full definition of nation can be found in the Master Glossary.

Some Athenian poets said, "All of us are God's children." **Poets** are people who speak or write sayings that are meaningful, wise and well-expressed.

Stop here and discuss with the translation team if you have people like that in your culture and what you call them. If you do have poets in your culture, can you remember any sayings they wrote or spoke?

Since we are God's children, that means that God cannot just be an image made of gold, silver, or stone, like **idols** are. You can use the same word you used for idol here. A full definition of idol can be found in the Master Glossary.

God tolerated the bad things that people were doing because they did not know him. But now he commands all men in every place to repent. To **repent** means to turn away from sins and turn to God, and to begin living a new life in following God's ways. Remember to use the same words you have used previously for repent. A full definition of repent can be found in the Master Glossary.

When people of the city council and the philosophers heard about the resurrection of the dead, some mocked. **Resurrection** means to rise from the dead as the same person. God will choose the time when everyone who has died will rise from the dead. Remember to use the same words you have used previously for resurrection. A full definition of resurrection can be found in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 17:22-34

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (4195422 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

Acts 18:1-17

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 18:1-17 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?

2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

This story records historical events, which took place during Paul's second missionary journey around year 51 after Jesus' birth. In the last story Paul was in Athens, and the Athenian philosophers took him to present his teaching before the city council, the Areopagus. When some men from the council mocked him, Paul left that place. A few people who heard Paul believed in Jesus.

Paul probably spent a few days after his speech in the Areopagus teaching the new believers in Athens. After a few days, he went to Corinth. Corinth was a major city about 80 kilometers west of Athens. It was the capital of the Roman province of Achaia, which is now called Greece. It had two large ports and was a major commercial centre. People knew that the citizens of Corinth lived an immoral life. They practiced sexual immorality, homosexuality, and prostitution. Paul may have gone by ship or by road. It was a one day trip by sea in good weather, or it would take two days by walking, or one day by cart or horse.

Stop here and show the translation team a map showing Paul's journey from Athens to Corinth both by road and by sea.

In Corinth Paul met a Jew called Aquila who was born in Pontus. Aquila's ancestors were from Israel. He probably also followed the Jewish religion growing up. He recently came from Italy with his wife Priscilla. The ruler of the Roman empire, Claudius, forced Aquila and Priscilla to leave Rome in Italy, where they lived. He commanded that all Jews must leave Rome. Rome was the capital city of the Roman empire. It was the largest and most influential city in the known world by the time of Jesus' birth. We do not know why emperor Claudius ordered the Jews to leave. It is not clear if Aquila and his wife were Christians at this time.

Stop here and show the translation team a map showing Pontus and Italy including Rome.

Paul approached them and probably asked if he could stay in their house. Because he was a tentmaker as they were, he lived with Aquila and Priscilla and earned his living by making tents, just as they did. Jewish parents taught their children a trade, and often many generations of the same family did the same trade. Paul learned to be a tentmaker. As a tentmaker he would be sewing together lengths of cloth and attaching ropes and loops.

Every Sabbath, the Jewish day of worship and rest, Paul went to the synagogue, the Jewish place of prayer. He explained to them logically from their Scripture that the Christ, the promised saviour, had to suffer and die, and to rise back to life. He would then try to prove to them that Jesus was the Christ.

When Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, Paul gave his whole time to preaching. Silas and Timothy brought a financial gift from the believers in Philippi so that Paul did not have to work.

When the Jews turned against Paul and started to insult him he shook out his clothes in protest. This is a symbolic action that indicates breaking a relationship. The Jews in Corinth rejected Paul and his message about Jesus, so he in turn indicated here that he was finished with them, in trying to convince them about Jesus.

Paul said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads!" This phrase is a symbol and refers to being guilty of someone else's death. Here the judgment the Jews will receive from God will be a result of their own actions and not Paul's, because they rejected his teaching. Paul also said that he was innocent, by which he declared that God would not call him guilty for causing the judgment they would receive. Paul also told them that from now on he would go to the Gentiles, or non-Jews. This meant that for the rest of his time in Corinth Paul would preach to the non-Jews.

Then Paul left the synagogue and started meeting in the house of a certain man named Titius Justus. He was a worshipper of God, which means that he was not a Jew, but worshipped the true God. He was also most likely a believer in Jesus. His house was next door to the synagogue.

Crispus, who was the leader of the synagogue, believed that Jesus is Lord and saviour. And so did his entire household, which would include Crispus's wife and children, other members of his family that lived in his house, and his servants. It would also include anyone else who lived in his house.

Over the next days and weeks many of the Corinthians who heard Paul teach that Jesus is the Christ believed in Jesus and the believers baptized them in water to show that they had become followers of Jesus.

Later, one night the Lord Jesus spoke to Paul in a vision. A vision refers to a supernatural experience in which a person receives a divine revelation when they are awake. The Lord Jesus said to Paul, "Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent for I am with you, and no one will attack you to harm you, for I have many in this city who are my people." We know from other letters Paul wrote that he was afraid in Corinth because of all the persecution he had experienced in other cities. Jesus reassured Paul telling him not to fear and commanded him to continue speaking the message about him, because Jesus supported him, empowered him, guided him and helped him. And even if someone attacked him, Paul would not be hurt. Jesus also encouraged Paul to preach because many people would become believers.

Stop here and discuss with the translation team how in your culture gods communicate with people. How, if at all, do they appear to people? What kind of things do they say to people if they appear or speak to them?

When Gallio was proconsul, or governor of the province of Achaia where Corinth was, some of the Jews who did not believe in Jesus came together against Paul. The Jews accused Paul to Gallio. They said "this man" is persuading people to go against our laws. The Jews called Paul "this man" instead of using his name to show that they did not respect him. They wanted to show that Paul had an evil intention, and they wanted Gallio to be easily able to find Paul guilty. That's why they just said that Paul was against the "law." They did not say if they were referring to the Jewish or the Roman law.

But when Paul was about to defend himself, Gallio spoke to the Jews. Since this concerned questions of religion that caused arguments about words and names and the Jewish law, he wanted the Jews to deal with it themselves and he refused to judge this matter. So Gallio forced them out of the court.

Stop here and discuss with the translation team if and how the authorities in your area get involved in judging crimes committed because of religious differences.

As the Jews were leaving the court, the crowd grabbed Sosthenes, the new leader of the synagogue, and beat him in the court area with Gallio watching. It is unclear if the Jews beat up Sosthenes or if the Gentiles did, but most people believe that the Gentiles beat up Sosthenes because they did not like the Jews and used this opportunity to harm them however they could. But Gallio was not concerned about any of these things.

Paul stayed for a total of a year and six months in Corinth teaching God's message among people. Paul not only taught those who were already believers, but he also preached about Jesus to crowds of non-believers.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has ten scenes.

First scene: Paul leaves Athens and arrives in Corinth.

Second scene: Paul approaches a Jew called Aquila and his wife Priscilla who were tentmakers and had recently come to Corinth from Rome. He moves into their home and works with them as a tentmaker.

Third scene: Paul starts to go to the Jewish synagogue every Sabbath and explains to the Jews and non-Jews who believed in the Jewish God the good news about Jesus.

Fourth scene: Silas and Timothy arrive in Corinth. Paul at this point is not working as a tentmaker any more, but devotes his whole time to proving from the Scriptures to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ.

Fifth scene: The Jews turn against Paul and insult him. Paul breaks his relationship with them by the symbolic act of shaking out his clothes and stops going to the synagogue to try and convince them that Jesus is the Christ. From now on, while in Corinth, he will preach the good news about Jesus to the non-Jews.

Sixth scene: Paul starts meeting in the house of Titius Justus, a non-Jewish believer in God who lived next door to the synagogue.

Seventh scene: Crispus, the synagogue leader and his whole house believe in Jesus. Many other Corinthians who hear Paul's teaching from the Scripture believe in Jesus too and the believers baptize them.

Eighth scene: The Lord Jesus appears to Paul in a vision in the night and encourages him not to be afraid of the people. He commands Paul to carry on speaking about him and not be silent. Jesus reassures Paul that no one will harm him, even if he is attacked, and that many people will become believers.

Ninth scene: The Jews who don't believe in Jesus drag Paul before Gallio, the Roman governor of the province of Achaia. They want Gallio to judge him for "persuading people to worship God contrary to the Jewish law." Gallio refuses to judge Paul, and forces the Jews out of court.

Tenth scene: The crowd in court grab Sosthenes, the leader of the Jewish synagogue and beat him up in front of Gallio, but Gallio is not concerned.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- A Jew named Aquila and his wife Priscilla
- Jews and non-Jews who believed in God and attended the Jewish synagogue
- Silas
- Timothy
- Titius Justus, a non-Jew who believed in God
- Crispus, the leader of the synagogue
- All the people who lived in Crispus' house
- Other Corinthians who heard Paul's teaching who believed in Jesus
- The Lord Jesus appearing to Paul in a vision
- Gallio, the Roman governor of the province of Achaia
- Jews who did not believe in Jesus and dragged Paul to be judged by Gallio
- Sosthenes, the leader of the synagogue
- The crowd in court who beat up Sosthenes

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

Shortly after his speech to the Areopagus, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. Paul would not have left Athens immediately, but probably spent at least a few days teaching the new believers in Athens. Corinth was a major city about 80 kilometers west of Athens. Paul may have gone by ship or by road. It was a one day trip by sea in good weather, or it would take two days by walking, or one day by cart or horse.

Stop here and show the translation team a map showing Paul's journey from Athens to Corinth both by road and by sea.

In Corinth Paul met a Jew named Aquila and his wife Priscilla who have recently come from Rome. They were tentmakers and Paul went to see them in their house and started to live with them. It is not clear if Aquila and his wife Priscilla were Christians at this time. Because Paul was also a tentmaker, they could work in their trade together. At that time tents were made of leather or goat hair cloth. To make a tent, a tent maker would buy the leather or cloth, cut it, sew the pieces together, attach ropes, buy poles, and other things. He would then sell his tents. Paul divided his time between working as a tentmaker and teaching the good news about Jesus.

Every Sabbath, the Jewish day of worship and rest, Paul went to the synagogue. Paul would teach while standing in the middle of the synagogue holding the scroll of Scripture. The people, both men and women, were sitting on stone benches built into the four walls of the synagogue.

While Paul was still tentmaking with Priscilla and Aquila, Silas and Timothy arrived. Paul stopped working and preached all the time to the Jews.

After some time, the Jews turned against Paul and insulted him. We don't know for how many weeks or months Paul had been teaching them in the synagogue before this happened. It's important to remember that Paul showed his broken relationship by shaking out his clothes in protest. Paul broke the relationship with the Jews, and from then on for the rest of his time in Corinth he would only preach to the non-Jews. It is important to note that Paul stopped trying to persuade the Jews that Jesus was the Christ as soon as he realized that their hearts were hard.

Paul left the synagogue and started meeting in the house of a certain man named Titius Justus who was a believing non-Jew. He was also most likely a believer in Jesus. His house was nextdoor to the synagogue. Therefore all the people who used to go to hear Paul in the synagogue could now easily come to the house of Titius Justus instead.

During that time Crispus, who was the leader of the synagogue, believed that Jesus is his Lord and saviour. And so did his entire household, which would include Crispus' wife and children, other members of his family that lived in his house, and his servants. It would also include anyone else who lived in his house. Probably over the next few weeks many of the Corinthians who heard Paul teach that Jesus is the Christ believed in Jesus too, and the believers baptized them.

One night the Lord Jesus spoke to Paul in a vision. It was a supernatural experience, which took place when Paul was awake. Jesus told Paul to not be afraid. It is important to notice that Jesus wanted Paul to preach the good news about him, because he had already prepared the hearts of many people in Corinth to believe that he was their saviour.

During that time Gallio was the Roman governor of Achaia. Some of the Jews who did not believe in Jesus came together against Paul. They brought him before Gallio hoping he would find him guilty and charge him. They probably forced Paul to come with them to the tribunal, which was an elevated platform in the marketplace. They accused him. The words they used made Paul look evil and showed disrespect to him. But when Paul was about to defend himself, Gallio spoke to the Jews saying he would not hear their case since it concerned questions of the Jewish religion, which they should judge themselves. And Gallio forced them out of the tribunal.

As the Jews were leaving the court the crowd, which most people believe were Gentiles, grabbed Sosthenes, the leader of the Jewish synagogue, and beat him in the court area with Gallio watching. But Gallio was not concerned about any of these things.

Paul stayed for a total of a year and six months in Corinth teaching God's message among people. Paul not only taught those who were already believers, but he also preached about Jesus to crowds of non-believers.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has ten scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- A Jew named Aquila and his wife Priscilla
- Jews and non-Jews who believed in God and attended the Jewish synagogue
- Silas
- Timothy
- Titius Justus, a non-Jew who believed in God
- Crispus, the leader of the synagogue
- All the people who lived in Crispus' house
- Other Corinthians who heard Paul's teaching who believed in Jesus
- The Lord Jesus appearing to Paul in a vision
- Gallio, the Roman governor of the province of Achaia
- Jews who did not believe in Jesus and dragged Paul to be judged by Gallio
- Sosthenes, the leader of the synagogue
- The crowd in court who beat up Sosthenes

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

After Paul spoke to the city council in Athens, the Areopagus, he left Athens and traveled to Corinth. He met a Jew called Aquila and his wife Priscilla who recently came to Corinth from Rome. Aquila and Priscilla were forced to leave Rome, because the Roman emperor commanded all Jews to leave that city. Paul went to see them at their house and decided to lodge with them. They were tentmakers as he was, so this way they could work together.

Every Sabbath he went to the Jewish synagogue and was explaining logically the Scripture to the Jews and non-Jews who believed in God. He was trying to convince them that his way of understanding God's word was correct.

When Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, Paul stopped working as a tentmaker and spent his entire time teaching God's word, and convincing the Jews that Jesus was the Christ.

And when the Jews opposed and insulted Paul he shook out his clothes as a sign that he was breaking his relationship with them. He said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads! I am innocent. From now on I will go to the Gentiles!"

Stop the action.

He left the synagogue and started meeting in a house of a man called Titius Justus who was a non-Jewish believer in God and whose house was next to the synagogue.

After this, Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, and his entire household believed in Jesus. Also, many Corinthians who heard Paul speak believed in Jesus and the believers baptized them.

Stop the action.

One night the Lord Jesus said to Paul in a vision, "Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent, for I am with you, and no one will attack you to harm you, for I have many in this city who are my people."

Stop the action.

When Gallio was the governor of the province of Achaia, some Jews came together against Paul and brought him before the tribunal and made accusations against him. They said to Gallio that he was persuading people to worship God against the law. However, when Paul was about to defend himself, Gallio spoke and refused to judge the case because it concerned matters of the Jewish law. He said that the Jews should judge it themselves and he threw them out of the tribunal. At that moment the crowd seized Sosthenes who was the new synagogue leader and beat him up, but that did not bother Gallio at all.

Stop the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Every **Sabbath** Paul went to the **synagogue** and reasoned with the **Jews** and non-Jews who believed in God. Remember to use the same words you have used previously for Sabbath, synagogue and Jews. A full definition of Sabbath, synagogue and Jews can be found in the Master Glossary.

When Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, Paul gave his whole time to preaching the good news and testifying to the Jews that the **Christ** was Jesus. Remember to use the same words you have used previously for Christ. A full definition of Christ can be found in the Master Glossary.

The Jews in the synagogue rejected Paul's message, so Paul left the synagogue and began preaching to the **Gentiles**, or non-Jews. Be sure to use the same word you have used in previous passages, and remember that Gentiles is in the Master Glossary.

Many of the Corinthians on hearing Paul believed in Jesus and the believers **baptized** them. **Baptism** is a once for all ceremony when a new believer makes a public demonstration of his commitment to Jesus and his union with him. Baptism, which is a complete immersion in water, is a symbol of Jesus' burial and resurrection, and our death to our old life and resurrection into our new life with Jesus. Remember to use the same word you have used previously for baptized. A full definition of baptized can be found in the Master Glossary.

One night the Lord Jesus spoke to Paul in a **vision**. Remember to use the same word you have used previously for vision. A full definition of vision can be found in the Master Glossary.

While Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, some of the Jews came together against Paul and brought him before the tribunal. **Achaia** was a province of the Roman empire in southern Europe, which is now the country of Greece. A **proconsul** was the governor of a Roman province. **Gallio** was the proconsul of Achaia during years 51 and 52 after the birth of Jesus. The **tribunal** is a law court.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 18:1–17

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (5110462 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

Acts 18:18–23

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 18:18–23 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

This story records historical events, which took place during Paul's second missionary journey around year 52 after Jesus' birth. In the last story Paul already spent many months in Corinth where he lived with Priscilla and Aquila and worked with them as a tentmaker. He preached the good news of Jesus to Jews and non-Jews. Most of the Jews did not want to know about Jesus, but many non-Jews believed. Jesus encouraged Paul in a vision and told him not to fear and to carry on speaking about him. The Jews who did not believe in Jesus wanted to get rid of Paul and brought him to be judged by the Roman governor Gallio. However, Gallio refused to hear them.

This story begins after Gallio threw the Jews out of the tribunal, or a place of judgement. Paul stayed in Corinth for quite a while. Then he said good-bye to the brothers, or believers, and started his journey to Syria, a Roman province in west Asia bordering the Mediterranean Sea. Priscilla and Aquila also went along. They walked to a nearby port city of Cenchreae, which was 10 kilometers west of Corinth.

Paul had allowed his hair to grow long during the time of a vow he had made to God. A vow is a solemn promise made to God usually in return for God's favour. We do not know why Paul asked God for something, but he may have asked God to keep him safe when he was in Corinth. In exchange he probably promised God that he would not cut his hair until the vow finished. At Cenchreae he cut his hair off, because the vow had finished. Then Paul and his companions boarded a ship and started their journey to Syria by sea.

Stop here and discuss with the translation team how people make vows in your culture. Who do people make vows to? What kind of vows do people make? What happens if you break a vow before it finishes? Tell a story about how you made a vow, or a solemn promise in your life.

When they arrived in Ephesus, Paul and his companions left the ship. Ephesus was a major city in Asia Minor, now western Turkey, on the Aegean Sea. It was about 550 kilometers away from Cenchreae by sea and the journey would have taken between 3 to 6 days.

Paul left Priscilla and Aquila and went to the synagogue, the Jewish place of prayer. He explained to the Jews from their Scripture that the Christ had to suffer, die, and rise back to life. Then he tried to prove to them that Jesus was the Christ, the promised saviour. When they asked him, "Could you spend more time with us," he said "Sorry, I cannot." He told them good-bye and said, "If God lets me, I will come back." Then he boarded a ship and left from Ephesus.

Paul got off the ship when he arrived in Caesarea. Caesarea was a port city in the Roman province of Judea, now Israel. It was on the Mediterranean Sea, about 1,750 kilometers away from Ephesus. The journey would have taken between 9 to 18 days by ship.

Stop here and show the translation team a map showing Paul's journey from Corinth via Cenchreae and Ephesus to Caesarea.

Straight away he went to see the church, or believers in Jerusalem. Even though the original text does not mention Jerusalem, most people believe that the church Paul went to see was in Jerusalem. Jerusalem was about 120 kilometers away from Caesarea, about a four days journey by walking. He greeted the believers and talked with them, but he did not stay long.

Then he traveled by road to Antioch, in the Roman province of Syria. It was about 650 kilometers north of Jerusalem, which would take Paul about 21 days by walking. After spending some time in Antioch he left and travelled through the region of Galatia and Phrygia. Paul visited believers who had believed Jesus when he went to those towns to preach before. He strengthened all the disciples, or followers of Jesus, and helped them to love and obey Jesus better. It was the beginning of Paul's third missionary journey.

Stop here and show the translation team a map showing Paul's journey by walking from Caesarea to Jerusalem, from Jerusalem to Antioch, and through towns of Galatia and Phrygia.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has ten scenes.

First scene: After leaving the place of judgment, Paul stays in Corinth for many days. At some point in Corinth, Paul makes a vow to God and allows his hair to grow long.

Second scene: Paul and Priscilla and Aquila leave Corinth because they want to go to Syria.

Third scene: They arrive in Cenchreae. Paul's vow finishes and he cuts his hair off in Cenchreae.

Fourth scene: Paul, Priscilla, and Aquila board a ship bound for Syria.

Fifth scene: Paul, Priscilla, and Aquila get off the ship in Ephesus. Paul says good-bye to Priscilla and Aquila.

Sixth scene: Paul goes to the synagogue in Ephesus and explains to the Jews from their Scripture about Jesus being the Christ. The Jews ask Paul to stay longer, but he says he can't. But if God wants him to, he will return.

Seventh scene: Paul boards a ship in Ephesus and sails to Caesarea.

Eighth scene: Paul goes to greet and speak briefly with the believers in Jerusalem.

Ninth scene: Paul travels from Jerusalem to Antioch in Syria and stays there some time.

Tenth scene: Paul leaves Antioch and travels from town to town in Galatia and Phrygia strengthening the disciples, or followers of Jesus.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- Believers in Corinth
- Priscilla and Aquila
- Jews in the synagogue in Ephesus
- The church, or believers Paul visited on arriving in Caesarea, most likely the church in Jerusalem
- Believers in Antioch
- Disciples, or believers in towns in Galatia and Phrygia who Paul visited

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

After appearing before the proconsul Gallio, Paul stayed in Corinth probably for several more weeks or months. He likely spent a lot of time strengthening the believers and showing them how to love Jesus more. We know that he stayed in Corinth for a year and six months in total. At some point Paul made a vow to God and allowed his hair to grow until the vow was finished.

Then Paul said good-bye to the believers and started on his journey to Syria. Priscilla and Aquila joined him and possibly some other believers too. They walked to the port city of Cenchreae, which was 10 kilometers away. At Cenchreae a vow, or special promise Paul had made to God, finished and he cut off his hair. Then Paul and Priscilla and Aquila boarded a ship which was most likely a cargo ship. It would have had one or two masts with large square sails and a triangular sail at the front of the ship. There were also oarsmen on board who would use oars to propel the ship when there was no or little wind. Paul, Priscilla and Aquila set sail for Syria. Although the story does not say this, there may have been other believers with Paul and Priscilla and Aquila.

Paul and his companions left the ship when it stopped in Ephesus. Paul said good-bye to Priscilla and Aquila and he went to the synagogue. He was telling the Jews about the good news of Jesus being the Christ. The Jews wanted him to stay longer, but he said he could not, but was willing to come back if God wanted him to. Paul spent a short amount of time in Ephesus. It is important to note that Paul used his brief time in Ephesus to share

the good news about Jesus with the Jews. It is important to note that Paul followed God's guidance in how long to stay in Ephesus.

Priscilla and Aquila stayed in Ephesus and did not join Paul on his next journey. Paul boarded a ship, which took him to Caesarea in Judea, about 1,750 kilometers away. The journey would have taken between 9 to 18 days by ship.

Stop here and show the translation team a map showing Paul's journey from Corinth via Cenchreae and Ephesus to Caesarea.

When he arrived in Caesarea, straight away he went to see the believers. The story does not mention the name of the city he went to, but most people believe that the believers were in Jerusalem. He probably walked 120 kilometers, which would take him about 4 days. He would have talked to the believers and told them what God did in the cities he had visited. He would have encouraged them and would have talked with the leaders of the church. He did not spend a long time there, before he set off for Antioch in Syria. Antioch was about 650 kilometers away by walking or by sea. It would have taken him about 21 days to get to Antioch.

Paul spent some time in Antioch, but we don't know how long. Paul had lived in Antioch a whole year before and he was one of the leaders of the church, or the group of believers in Antioch. It is important to know that Paul would have known many believers in Antioch. He would have spent time with them encouraging and strengthening them. Paul would have probably told them about what God did and how many non-Jews were also trusting Jesus as their saviour. He probably rested too and got ready for his next journey.

Then Paul left Antioch and began visiting towns he had been to before. He visited towns one after another in the regions of Galatia and Phrygia. We know from other stories and Paul's letters that he visited the cities of Derbe, Lystra, Iconium and Pisidian Antioch. He spent his whole time with the believers encouraging them and teaching them how to love and obey Jesus better.

Stop here and show the translation team a map showing Paul's journey by walking from Caesarea to Jerusalem, from Jerusalem to Antioch, and through towns of Galatia and Phrygia.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has ten scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- Believers in Corinth
- Priscilla and Aquila
- Jews in the synagogue in Ephesus
- The church, or believers Paul visited on arriving in Caesarea, most likely the church in Jerusalem
- Believers in Antioch
- Believers in towns in Galatia and Phrygia who Paul visited

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

Paul stayed in Corinth for quite some time and then said good-bye to the believers, and set off on his journey to Syria. Priscilla and Aquila joined him too. When they arrived in Cenchreae, Paul cut his hair off, because his vow finished.

Paul and Priscilla and Aquila boarded a ship and set sail for Syria. When they arrived in Ephesus Paul said good-bye to Priscilla and Aquila. Then he went to the synagogue where he taught the Jews from their Scripture about Jesus being the Christ. The Jews wanted him to stay with them longer, but Paul said he could not, but would return to them if God told him to.

Stop the action. Stop the action.

Paul boarded a ship and sailed to Caesarea and when he arrived he went to briefly visit the believers in Jerusalem.

Stop the action.

Then he traveled to Antioch and spent some time there. On leaving Antioch he went from town to town in the regions of Galatia and Phrygia and encouraged and strengthened the believers.

Stop the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

At Cenchreae Paul had cut his hair, for he was under a **vow**. Remember to use the same word you have used previously for vow. A full definition of vow can be found in the Master Glossary.

When Paul arrived in Ephesus he went to the **synagogue**. Remember to use the same word you have used previously for synagogue. A full definition of synagogue can be found in the Master Glossary.

When he had landed at Caesarea, Paul went up and greeted the **church**, and then went down to Antioch. Remember to use the same word you have used previously for church. A full definition of church can be found in the Master Glossary.

After spending some time in Antioch, Paul left and went from one place to the next through the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the **disciples**. Remember to use the same words you have used previously for disciples. A full definition of disciples can be found in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 18:18–23

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3602798 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

Acts 18:24–28

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 18:24–28 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In the previous story Paul spent a year and six months in Corinth. Then he left and traveled to Ephesus with Priscilla and Aquila. After a short period there he traveled to Caesarea by sea by himself, while Priscilla and

Aquila remained in Ephesus. He visited the church in Jerusalem and then went to see the church in Antioch in Syria. After spending some time in Antioch, he set off on his third missionary journey. He went from town to town in the regions of Galatia and Phrygia and devoted himself to strengthening the believers.

This story takes place at the same time as Paul travels through Galatia and Phrygia. A Jew called Apollos, who grew up in Alexandria, arrived in Ephesus. Alexandria was a large city in Egypt and was one of the leading cities of the ancient world. It was particularly important as a centre of culture and learning. Ephesus was a major commercial centre and one of the largest cities of the Roman empire. It was located in Asia Minor, now western Turkey, on the Aegean sea.

Stop here and show the translation team a map showing Ephesus and Alexandria.

Apollos was a very good speaker and had a thorough knowledge of the Jewish Scriptures. He was a believer in Jesus. Someone had taught Apollos accurately "the way of the Lord," or the good news about Jesus and the ways a believer should live. Apollos was enthusiastic in spirit, or very earnest, and he spoke and taught the Jews about Jesus correctly, according to what Jesus did and said. What Apollos said had no false teaching in it. However, he only knew the baptism of John, also known as John the Baptist. John baptized people, or washed them in water, to show that a person wanted to stop sinning and obey God. John called people to repent from their sins and be baptized so that they could prepare themselves to really listen to Jesus. After Jesus died, rose from death, and went to heaven, baptism has been a public demonstration of someone's commitment to follow Jesus as his master. It is a symbol of Jesus' burial and resurrection. It shows that when we begin to follow Jesus we die to our old life, or stop doing the bad things we did before. Then we live a new life—we start doing things that Jesus wants us to do! The believers in Ephesus baptized new believers in Jesus, but Apollos had only baptized people who wanted to turn away from their sins, like John the Baptist had.

Apollos started attending the synagogue, a Jewish place of prayer. He bravely spoke to the people about the good news about Jesus being the Christ, the promised Saviour. Priscilla and Aquila also attended the synagogue in Ephesus. They heard Apollos speak and after he finished they took him aside, possibly into their home, where they could talk privately. They had realized that Apollos did not have some important information about Jesus and they told him this information.

When Apollos wanted to go across the Aegean Sea to Achaia, now the country of Greece, the brothers, or believers, in Ephesus urged him to go. Most translators will say "brothers and sisters," when referring to fellow believers. He wanted to help the believers in Corinth. The believers from Ephesus wrote a letter to the disciples, or believers in Corinth and urged them, "Please welcome Apollos when he comes to you." The believers in Ephesus needed to send Apollos with a letter of introduction that would show the believers in Achaia that he was trustworthy. It was a common practice in the early church.

Stop here and discuss with the translation team the different ways people in your culture introduce a new person or teacher to another group. Tell a story about how you introduced somebody new to people you knew.

When Apollos went to Achaia he would have traveled by ship, most likely to the port city of Cenchreae which was 550 kilometers away from Ephesus. It would have taken him 3 to 6 days. Then he would have walked 10 kilometers from Cenchreae to Corinth where the church was.

Stop here and show the translation team a map showing Apollos' journey from Ephesus to Corinth in Achaia.

When he arrived in Corinth, Apollos greatly helped the disciples, or believers who had come to know Jesus through God's kindness. Apollos defeated the Jews in public debates and quoted the Jewish Scripture in order to prove that Jesus was the Christ, the promised saviour. He explained the meaning of certain prophecies in the Scriptures and showed the Jews that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and die, and to rise back to life.

Apollos probably also helped the believers by teaching them and encouraging them to live as believers should. He would have helped them to love Jesus more, to be better prepared to tell others about Jesus, and to respond well to people who criticized them.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has five scenes.

First scene: A Jew and believer in Jesus called Apollos who grew up in Alexandria arrives in Ephesus.

Second scene: Apollos knows the Jewish Scriptures well and is very enthusiastic. He speaks and teaches accurately about Jesus being the Christ. Apollos attends the synagogue and teaches the Jews boldly the good news about Jesus.

Third scene: Priscilla and Aquila hear Apollos speak in the synagogue. They realize that he does not know some things about Jesus. They take him aside and give him all the information.

Fourth scene: Apollos tells the believers that he wants to go to Achaia to help the believers there. The brothers encourage him and write a letter to the believers in Achaia asking them to welcome Apollos.

Fifth scene: Apollos arrives in Corinth in Achaia and is of great help to the believers. He defeats the Jews in public debates proving to them from their Scripture that Jesus is the Christ.

The characters in this story include:

- A Jew and believer called Apollos
- Priscilla and Aquila
- Believers in the church in Ephesus
- Believers in the church in Corinth, Achaia
- Jews in Corinth, Achaia

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

This story happens at the same time as Paul is traveling through Galatia and Phrygia. A Jew and a believer in Jesus called Apollos arrived in Ephesus. He grew up in Alexandria in Egypt, a city particularly famous for its culture and learning.

Stop here and show the translation team a map showing Ephesus and Alexandria.

It is important to note that Apollos had lots of great qualities. He could speak very well and knew the Jewish Scripture thoroughly. Also, someone had taught him about Jesus and about the believers' way of life. Apollos was also very enthusiastic and really wanted others to know about Jesus. Therefore, when he arrived in Ephesus he taught the Jews accurately the good news about Jesus being the Christ. However, he only knew about the baptism of John the Baptist. Nobody had explained to him yet the believers' baptism.

Apollos began to attend the synagogue. He would have gone there several times, but we don't know how long he spent in Ephesus. It may have been a few weeks or months. It is important to note that when he spoke to the Jews, Apollos meant strongly what he was saying. He spoke as one who knew that what he was talking about was very important. He would have stood in the middle of the synagogue holding the scroll of Scripture. The Jews would have sat on stone benches built into the four walls of the synagogue.

Priscilla and Aquila also attended the synagogue and when they heard Apollos speak they realized that he did not know some important things about Jesus. It is important to note that they did not correct him in public, as this would embarrass him and undermine his authority. They took him aside to a private area and told him the information about Jesus. It's important to note that both Aquila and Priscilla taught Apollos.

When Apollos decided he wanted to travel to Corinth in Achaia, the believers supported and encouraged him. It is important to note that some of them must have known the believers in Corinth because they wrote a letter to them asking them to welcome him.

When Apollos went to Achaia he would have traveled by ship, most likely to the port city of Cenchreae, which was 550 kilometers away from Ephesus. It would have taken him 3 to 6 days. Then he would have walked 10 kilometers from Cenchreae to Corinth where the church was.

Stop here and show the translation team a map showing Apollos' journey from Ephesus to Corinth in Achaia.

When Apollos arrived in Corinth he greatly helped the believers. He proved that the arguments of the Jews against Jesus were not true. Apollos and the Jews would have spoken together in a place where many other Jews could have watched. This probably happened several times. He would have shown them prophecies from the Scripture, which proved that the Christ had to suffer, die, and rise from the dead. Then he would tell them about how Jesus' life proved to them that he was the Christ.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has five scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- A Jew and believer called Apollos
- Priscilla and Aquila
- Believers in the church in Ephesus
- Believers in the church in Corinth, Achaia
- Jews in Corinth, Achaia.

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The second time the team acts out this story, stop them at certain points.

A Jew and a believer in Jesus called Apollos arrived in Ephesus. He grew up in Alexandria in Egypt. He could speak very well and knew the Jewish Scripture thoroughly. Also, someone taught him about Jesus and about the believers' way of life. Apollos was also very enthusiastic and keen for others to know about Jesus. Therefore he taught the Jews accurately the good news about Jesus being the Christ. However, he only knew about the baptism of John the Baptist.

Stop the action.

Apollos began to speak with courage in the synagogue. Priscilla and Aquila also attended the synagogue and when they heard Apollos speak they realized that he did not know some important things about Jesus. They took him aside and explained those things to him more accurately.

Stop the action.

When Apollos decided he wanted to travel to Corinth in Achaia, the believers supported and encouraged him. The believers from Ephesus wrote a letter to the believers in Corinth asking them to welcome him.

When Apollos arrived in Corinth, he greatly helped the believers. Sometime before, these believers had learned about Jesus because God was kind to them.

Stop the action.

He debated with the Jews in public places using the Scripture and defeated them, proving to them that Jesus was the Christ.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing the believers in Corinth, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "It is so encouraging to have Apollos with us," "Did you hear him convincing the Jews? He truly knows the Scripture well!" and "I want to learn to debate like he does and tell others the good news about Jesus being the Christ!"

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Now a **Jew** named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. Remember to use the same word you have used previously for Jew. A full definition of Jew can be found in the Master Glossary.

Apollos was competent in the **Scriptures**. Remember to use the same word you have used previously for Scriptures. A full definition of Scriptures can be found in the Master Glossary.

He had been instructed in the way of the Lord. Here **Lord** refers to Jesus. Remember to use the same word you have used previously for Lord. A full definition of Lord can be found in the Master Glossary.

Apollos only knew the **baptism** of **John**, which was a baptism to show that people had repented of their sins. Remember to use the same word you have used previously for baptism. A full definition of baptism and John the Baptist can be found in the Master Glossary.

He began to speak boldly in the **synagogue**. Remember to use the same word you have used previously for synagogue. A full definition of synagogue can be found in the Master Glossary.

And when he wished to cross to Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the **disciples** to welcome him. Remember to use the same word you have used previously for disciples. A full definition of disciples can be found in the Master Glossary.

...for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, showing by the Scriptures that the **Christ** was Jesus. Remember to use the same word you have used previously for Christ. A full definition of Christ can be found in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 18:24–28**Audio Content**

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Acts 19:1–7*Hear and Heart*

Hear Acts 19:1–7 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this narrative we hear of how Paul returns to Ephesus. Do you remember the story earlier of Priscilla and Aquila, the tentmakers who Paul stayed and worked with, and Apollos, who was a learned man? Paul had left Priscilla and Aquila in Ephesus to go and travel to other cities. Apollos arrived in Ephesus after Paul had already left, and then traveled on to Corinth. After Apollos went to Corinth, Paul came back to Ephesus. Paul then traveled the road through the interior part of the country, the areas called Galatia and Phrygia.

Stop here and show the translation team a map with the route that Apollos took from Ephesus to Corinth and then the route Paul took from Corinth to Ephesus, to the areas of Galatia and Phrygia, then back to Ephesus through an inland route.

When Paul arrives in Ephesus he sees some believers in Jesus there. The fact that Paul recognizes these men as disciples shows that they must have been known to him or something about them made them stand out as believers. Paul sees that they follow Jesus and that they believe in Jesus, but they do not have the Holy Spirit. Paul asks them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" The disciples replied saying "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." The disciples have no idea who or what the Holy Spirit is. They have not heard the rest of the story about Jesus and about how God sent his Holy Spirit as he had promised.

Paul goes on to ask what baptism they did receive, or what their baptism meant. In that time, all believers in Jesus would have been baptized. Paul assumed that these believers had been baptized too-the only question was which kind of baptism? The disciples replied, "John's baptism." This did not mean the moment when John himself was baptized. Before Jesus began his ministry, John the Baptist was baptizing people who repented or turned away from disobeying God and turned back to God. These believers had received this kind of baptism. So Paul told them that their baptism was a baptism that showed they had repented, or turned away from their sins.

Stop here and discuss as a translation team: What would it look like in your culture to turn away from or stop doing something? What do you have to do to show that you have turned away from doing that thing? What would you need to do to assure others that you are no longer a part of it and wanting to live differently?

Do you remember the story from before when Paul reminds them what John the Baptist said as he was completing his work of preaching: "Who do you suppose that I am? I am not the one you are looking for. But there is one coming after me whose sandals I am not worthy to untie." Paul says that the disciples are to believe in the one coming after John, and that the "one" is Jesus. Paul is saying that they need to believe in Jesus, John was just pointing them in the right direction towards meeting Jesus.

Stop here and discuss as a translation team: When you ask someone for directions and they point the way, what do you do?

Paul says that John told "the people" to believe in the one-Jesus-coming after him. These people are **Israel's** people. In this context, it refers to the Jewish people, or people who were descended from Abraham, and were God's chosen people.

As the disciples heard they realized that what John had been pointing them to was Jesus. The disciples understood what Paul was saying and they believed and accepted that Jesus was their Lord, or master, and they wanted to be baptized.

It was most likely Paul who then baptized them in the name of the Lord Jesus to show that they believed in Jesus.

Stop here and discuss as a translation team: What kind of physical act would you do in your culture to prove that you belonged to a particular group of people or a religion?

Paul places his hands on the disciples. It is unclear exactly where Paul places his hands but it may have been on the disciples shoulder or most likely on their heads. Then, as Paul places his hands on them, the Holy Spirit enters them and they are filled with the spirit of God and they "began to speak in other languages." These are either other human languages that no one around understands, or a language inspired by the Holy Spirit. The important thing to remember is that these are unknown languages of some kind and that they show the people around them that the Holy Spirit has come to live in them and give them power. They also prophesy, or speak words or messages from God.

The narrative ends with us learning there were around 12 men in total.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has 3 scenes.

First scene: Paul's journey back to Ephesus. Show again the maps of how far he has traveled. The journey was on land but it's not clear whether he walked or not but he would most likely have been walking and traveled by daylight as it's easier to find your way around.

Second scene: Paul meets some believers and discovers that they have only received John the Baptist's baptism. They do not know about the Holy Spirit.

Third scene: The disciples hear and understand what Paul is saying. The disciples are baptized. They speak in unknown languages and prophecy, or speak God's message.

The characters in this story include:

- Apollos
- Paul
- 12 disciples

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

In this narrative there is no indication of time of day or what the weather was like. As Paul was traveling in through the interior roads towards Ephesus, it may have been easier to walk those roads. As it is easier to travel by day to get an idea of where you are, we can probably assume it is during the daytime or possibly early evening. It is also unclear as to where they are meeting: is it on the street or are they inside a house?

Apollos is in Corinth at this time and whilst he is there, Paul arrives back in Ephesus. Paul then sees some disciples there. Paul probably walked through the area to reach Ephesus, which is on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea.

Show the image of the map again.

Paul asked, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" The disciples replied "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." Paul then asks "How then were you baptized?" Paul is asking them what the meaning of their baptism was for them. He is not asking "how" they were baptized. The disciples answer by saying "John's baptism." This did not mean the moment when John himself was baptized. John's baptism refers to the message John was telling everyone about when he preached. John's message included what was involved when people were baptized. The preaching of John asked people to repent, or turn away from sin and be forgiven by God.

Paul then says that although the disciples' baptism meant that they were turning away from their sins, the important thing now is that they are following the one John the Baptist told them about. That person is Jesus. Paul is saying that they need to believe in Jesus, John was merely pointing them in the right direction towards meeting Jesus.

The disciples then accept what Paul has told them and they are willing and ready to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Afterwards, Paul places his hands probably on their heads or shoulders, and the Holy Spirit came on them. They were then filled with God's spirit and were able to speak in unknown languages, or speaking words from God, and prophecy, or hearing words from God.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has 3 scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Apollos
- Paul
- 12 Disciples

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The narrative here is to focus on what is happening in the lives of these men and the transformation (having the Holy Spirit come upon them) that they are about to experience.

First scene: Paul's journey back to Ephesus. The journey was on land but it's not clear whether he walked or not, but for ease of this narrative walking would be easier to act out.

Stop the action.

Second scene: When Paul arrives in Ephesus he sees some disciples, or believers.

Stop the action.

Paul then asks the disciples, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" The disciples replied "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." Paul then asks the disciples, "Then what baptism did you receive?" The disciples replied, "John's baptism."

Stop the action.

The actor playing Paul continues. He says that although the disciples have been baptized by John they are to believe in the one coming after John, and that the "one" is Jesus. Paul is saying that they need to believe in Jesus, John was merely pointing them in the right direction towards meeting Jesus.

Stop the action.

Third scene: The disciples hear and understand what Paul is saying. The disciples accepted that Jesus is the "one" to come and they were willing to be baptized to show their loyalty or commitment in taking this step. Paul placed his hands on their heads or shoulders and the Holy Spirit came on the disciples. The disciples could then speak in tongues and prophesied, or speak words that have come from God. They are sounds that won't make much sense to you as it is a language you won't have heard before, but they are words from God to you.

Ask the actors playing the disciples, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "They are in shock at being able to speak an unknown language," or "We feel transformed and amazed at hearing words from God."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Paul had left Priscilla and Aquila in Ephesus to go and travel to other cities. Apollos arrived in Ephesus after Paul had already left, and then traveled on to Corinth. After Apollos went to Corinth, Paul came back to Ephesus. Paul then traveled the road through the interior part of the country, the areas called Galatia and Phrygia.

Stop here and show the translation team a map with the route that Apollos took from Ephesus to Corinth and then the route Paul took from Corinth to Ephesus, to the areas of Galatia and Phrygia, then back to Ephesus through an inland route.

When Paul arrives in Ephesus he sees some **disciples**, or followers of Jesus, there. Translate disciple in the same way as you have in previous passages. Disciple is in the Master Glossary.

Paul asks them, "Did you receive the **Holy Spirit** when you **believed**"-meaning the moment when they accepted the faith and became **believers**. In the New Testament the concept of "holy" refers to people or things that belong to God, or are like him. Translate Holy Spirit in the same way as you have in previous passages. Holy Spirit is in the Master Glossary. After the first disciples received the Holy Spirit, the people who followed Jesus were also called believers. Believer means a person who has chosen to believe in and follow Jesus exclusively. These believers or disciples were most likely disciples of Jesus because that's how Luke uses this term throughout the book of Acts.

Paul goes on to ask what **baptism** they did receive. Translate baptism in the same way as you have in previous passages. Baptism is in the Master Glossary. The disciples replied, "John's baptism."

Paul then tells the disciples that John's baptism was a baptism of **repentance**, a turning away from **sin**. Translate repentance in the same way as you have in previous passages. Repentance/Repent is in the Master Glossary. **Sin** refers to an act of disobedience to God. Translate sin in the same way as you have in previous passages. Sin is in the Master Glossary. Paul refers to John saying that he told "the people" to believe in the one who was coming. These people are **Israel's**, or God's, chosen people.

As the disciples heard they realized that what John had been pointing them to was Jesus. The disciples understood what Paul was saying and they believed and accepted that Jesus was their **Lord** or **master**. Translate Lord in the same way as you have in previous passages. Lord is in the Master Glossary.

Then, as Paul places his hands on them, the Holy Spirit then comes on them and they "began to speak in strange languages." It means "speaking in a strange manner" by using unknown or unrecognized sounds. Translate **tongues** in the same way as you have in previous passages. Tongues is in the Master Glossary.

The disciples also **prophesied**, to prophecy. Prophecy would usually mean an inspired written or spoken message of God's will for God's people but in the present context the disciples are just receiving words from God directly to themselves.

The narrative ends with us learning there were around 12 men in total.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 19:1–7**Audio Content**

[webm zip](#) (2551923 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Acts 19:8–10*Hear and Heart*

Hear Acts 19:8–10 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this narrative Paul continues his mission in Ephesus.

Stop here and show a map to remind everyone where Ephesus is.

Paul arrives at a synagogue. Do you recall earlier in Acts Apollos spoke boldly in a synagogue? The Jews in the synagogue in Ephesus when Paul was there before, had asked Paul to come back and teach them more. Now Paul has kept his promise and has come back to them. As you will have heard previously, synagogues are not just a place of worship for Jews, but a center for education, social gatherings, and managing community matters.

Stop here and show an image of a Jewish synagogue.

They were the place to go to reach out to many people. It was a place of preaching. For a period of three months, Paul preached boldly. Paul argued persuasively, meaning he spoke in a way that encourages people to believe that what they are hearing about the kingdom of God is true. If you recall, as mentioned in the beginning of Acts, the kingdom of God in the New Testament is about God ruling in the hearts of his people rather than in a physical place.

But after a while, some of the people listening became stubborn, meaning that they would not listen with their mind. They refused to understand what Paul was saying. They refused to believe. They did not want to soften their hearts and believe the message Paul was telling them. The message regarded the kingdom of God and Paul tried to convince the people of it. They were actively rejecting what Paul was saying.

Stop here and discuss as a translation team: If someone was telling you something that you didn't want to hear, how would you respond?

They began "publicly speaking against the Way." The Lord Jesus, or master, shows us that the Way is living our lives according to his purposes for us. If you were a believer or a disciple of Jesus you would live your life by following the Way, and this was a name for the movement of Jesus followers at the time.

So not only are these people refusing to listen, they are speaking against the message of Jesus and rejecting the message.

Stop here and discuss as a translation team: What would you do in your culture if you are trying to tell people a message that they do not want to receive?

Paul then withdraws from them, taking those that did believe, with him as he leaves. The believers that Paul takes with him could have been the same believers he had baptized earlier. It's not fully clear that they are but the important thing to note here is that there were other believers in the synagogue and that they departed with Paul.

Paul remains in Ephesus but goes to the lecture hall of Tyrannus. We do not know much about the man named Tyrannus, but he must have been fairly important because he owned the lecture hall. This would have been a large room where Tyrannus himself would have made speeches. It was a great place to speak to many people, and there were many kinds of gatherings that happened there.

Stop here to show an image of a lecture hall.

Paul spoke to those gathered there every single day for two years. Paul did this so that every Jew and Greek, or non-Jew, who lived in the province, or area, of Asia would have the chance to hear the message concerning Jesus the Lord, or master.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has 4 scenes.

First scene: Paul enters the synagogue in Ephesus and begins to preach there, speaking boldly. Paul is persuading those listening that Jesus is the Way.

Second scene: After a while, some of the people listening harden their hearts and refuse to listen to Paul's message about the kingdom of God. They not only reject it, they publicly insult what it means to live the Way of Jesus, the Lord or master.

Third scene: Paul leaves the synagogue, and takes the believers with him. He withdraws from that place and the people who are rejecting the message.

Fourth scene: Paul and the believers then go to the lecture hall of Tyrannus. Paul preaches every day for 2 years and everyone in the province of Asia is hearing the message.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- A group of unbelievers who refuse to listen
- A group of believers
- A group of Jews and Greeks throughout Asia who are hearing the message preached by Paul

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

Paul arrives at a synagogue in Ephesus. He is passionate and speaks boldly to the people there. Paul talks about Jesus and how following Jesus is the Way that they should all live their lives.

In this narrative Paul continues his mission in Ephesus.

Stop here and show a map here to remind everyone where Ephesus is.

Paul arrives at a synagogue. Do you recall earlier in Acts, Apollos spoke boldly in a synagogue?

Stop here and show an image of a synagogue.

They were the place to go to reach out to many people. It was a place of preaching and for a period of three months, Paul preached boldly. Paul argued persuasively, meaning to speak in a way that encourages people to believe that what they are hearing is true about the kingdom of God. The synagogue would also have been a good place to go in order to escape the heat of the day. This was helpful because Paul had more people present to hear what Paul had to say. Paul spoke regularly in the synagogue. Paul was most likely standing in the middle of the main room holding the scrolls of Scripture. The Jews were probably sitting on stone benches built into the walls of the synagogue.

Paul goes to the synagogue regularly for three months, and then some of the people listening in the synagogue became stubborn, meaning that they would not listen with their mind or accept the message Paul was preaching. They closed their ears and covered their hearts. "They refused to believe." They did not want to soften their hearts and believe the message Paul was telling them. They were actively rejecting what Paul was saying.

They began "publicly speaking against the Way." The "Way" is the way of living your life shown by the Lord Jesus, or Master. If you were a believer or a disciple of Jesus you would live your life by following the Way.

So not only are these people refusing to listen, they are speaking against it and rejecting the message.

Stop here and discuss as a translation team: What would you do in your culture, if you are trying to tell people a message that they do not want to receive?

Paul then withdraws from them, taking those that did believe, with him as he leaves.

Paul remains in Ephesus but goes to the lecture hall of Tyrannus. This would have been a large room where people came to hear speakers speak, and where many other gatherings happened.

Stop here to show an image of a lecture hall.

Paul spoke to those gathered there every day for two years. Paul did this so that all those that heard him speak in person could then share it with their friends and families. This meant that every Jew and Greek who lived in the province, or area, of Asia would have the chance to hear the message concerning the Lord Jesus.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has 4 scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- A group of unbelievers who refuse to listen
- A group of believers
- A group of Jews and Greeks throughout Asia who are hearing the message preached by Paul

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

In this narrative Paul continues his mission in Ephesus. It's not clear what time of day it is but if Paul had just finished his working day it may have been in the early afternoon.

First scene: Paul enters the synagogue in Ephesus and begins to preach there, speaking boldly. Paul is persuading those listening about the kingdom of God, and Jesus is the Way that they should be living their lives.

Stop the action.

Second scene: After a while, some of the people listening harden their hearts and refuse to listen to Paul's message. They not only reject it, they publicly insult what it means to live the Way of the Lord or master.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing Paul, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Sad that the unbelievers are responding in this way," or "If they would only open their hearts to accept the truth of his message," and "Should he stay and continue or should he move on?"

Ask the actors playing the believers, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "We can't believe they are refusing to accept the truth," or "How can they treat Paul like this?" and "We have been transformed by God, they could be too." [!end] Restart the action.

Third scene: Paul leaves the synagogue, and takes the believers with him. He withdraws from that place and the people who are rejecting the message.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing the believers, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Paul has worked so hard but he is determined to continue sharing the message," or "I'm not sure where Paul is going next but we're excited to go with him." [!end] Restart the action.

Fourth scene: Paul and the believers remain in Ephesus but they then go to the lecture hall of Tyrannus, a large room where many people would have gathered. Paul preached every day for 2 years. Paul did this so that every Jew and Greek who lived in the province, or area, of Asia would have the chance to hear the message concerning the Lord, or master.

Ask the actor playing Paul, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I am excited to be speaking to such a large amount of people," or "I aim to give all the Jews and Greeks a chance to hear the word of the Lord," and "I will dedicate the next few years of my life serving these people in this way."

Ask the actors playing the believers, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Excited to be on this missionary journey with Paul," or "They are learning so much from him."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Paul enters the **synagogue** in Ephesus. Translate synagogue in the same way as you have in previous passages. Synagogue is in the Master Glossary.

Paul begins to preach there, speaking boldly. Paul is persuading those listening about the kingdom of God. The **kingdom of God** in the New Testament is also about God ruling in the hearts of his people rather than in a physical place. Translate kingdom of God in the same way as you have in previous passages. Kingdom of God is in the Master Glossary.

After a while some of the people listening began to harden their hearts and refused to listen to Paul's message. They not only reject it, they publicly insult what it means to live following the **Way**. Translate "Way" in the same way as you have in previous passages.

Paul leaves the synagogue, and takes the **disciples**, or believers, with him. When Paul arrives in Ephesus he sees some disciples, or followers of Jesus, there. Translate disciple in the same way as you have in previous passages. Disciple is in the Master Glossary.

Paul and the believers remain in Ephesus but they then go to the **lecture hall of Tyrannus**, which is a large room where many people would have gathered. Little is known about Tyrannus but it is believed that he owned the lecture hall and that it was named after him. Tyrannus most likely spoke there as well. Paul preached there every day for two years. Paul did this so that all the **Jews** and **Greeks** who lived in the Province of Asia could hear the message about the Lord Jesus. Translate Jews in the same way as you have in previous passages. Jews is in the Master Glossary. Translate Greeks in the same way as you have in previous passages. Greeks is in the Master Glossary. **Province** means an area within a country, in this case the country being Asia. Paul wanted a large number of people to have the chance to hear the Word, or message concerning the **Lord**, or master. Translate Lord in the same way you have before, and remember that Lord is in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 19:8–10

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Acts 19:11–20

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 19:11–20 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this narrative we see Jesus' authority and power at work through Paul. Paul knows that Jesus has power to heal people, and he "calls on the name of Jesus" to bring healing to people and to release them from evil spirits. Do you recall earlier on in this book of Acts, Simon the sorcerer? Although he was performing miracles, they were not from God and he wanted to be able to buy this gift from God. Simon did not understand that it was the power of God at work. The miracles that Paul is performing though are from God, and God is using Paul to carry them out. Paul is performing miracles for God so that people will know and see God working.

Handkerchiefs and aprons were most likely worn by Paul in his work. The handkerchief would have been a "sweat rag" which was worn on his head, and the apron would have been an apron he used whilst working. It would have been a fabric that would have come into contact with Paul's skin. As God is performing these miracles through Paul, when Paul was sweating, with the sweat transferring from his skin onto the apron and sweat rag that he had been wearing, these items then carried the same power from God. When Paul removed

his apron and sweat rag, someone would take these items and take them to the sick and those who had evil spirits in them or had been demon-possessed.

Stop here and show the translation team an image of a sweat rag and a workman's apron.

When the rag or apron touched the person who was sick, they would be cured. And if the rag or apron touched a person who had evil spirits inside them, the evil spirits would come out of that person.

Luke now tells of certain Jews who were acting as exorcists, or people who remove evil spirits from people. They "went around driving out Evil Spirits, calling upon the name of the Lord Jesus over those who were demon-possessed." "Driving out" means to remove these evil spirits from the person who has them. These Jews thought that the name of Jesus was some kind of magical formula by which they could chase out evil spirits, potentially as a way to make money for themselves. In the ancient world the Jews believed in and practiced magic. They would learn their magic arts from books or scrolls containing spells and incantations.

Stop here and show the translation team an image of an old spellbook or rolled up scrolls.

This would emphasize the usage of the name of the Lord Jesus merely as a magical tool, as if they were trying to cast a spell, to try and cause evil spirits to come out of people. They would say, "In the name of the Jesus whom Paul preaches, I command you to come out," meaning to come out of the person that the evil spirit is in.

Stop here and discuss as a translation team: How do people treat those who have evil spirits in your culture? ? How can you tell that someone is controlled by an evil spirit?

The "Seven Sons of Sceva" were doing exactly this: they were commanding evil spirits to come out of people. Sceva is the name of a father-like figure of a group of seven people who practiced magic. Sceva would have been the leader of the group.

Sceva is also described as a "Jewish high priest," though he could just be a member of the senior priestly families. "Sceva" is probably a title he may have given himself to elevate or raise up his status. The "Sons of the High Priest Sceva" sounds impressive and people may have respected him more.

One day, Sceva and his men were commanding the evil spirits to come out of a demon-possessed man. They did not expect a reply, but the demon-possessed man said, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know about. But who are you?" The demon-possessed man, as he lived in Ephesus, would have heard about Paul and his preaching on Jesus so would have known who they were. Then the demon-possessed man "jumped on them and overpowered them all," beating them so badly and tearing their clothes off "that they ran out of the house naked and bleeding."

When the Jews and Greeks, or non-Jews, living in Ephesus heard about how the sons of Sceva had been defeated they were afraid and the people honored the name of the Lord Jesus even more. The people praised Jesus and called him their Lord, or master.

"Many of those who believed in Jesus now came and openly confessed what they had done." They publicly, meaning in front of everyone, confessed their sins, evil deeds, and magical spells that they had carried out. "A number who had practiced sorcery, or magic, brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly." These magic books and scrolls containing spells, incantations, and how to perform them, were all gathered in a pile and were burned in front of everyone. When they calculated the value of the scrolls, the total came to fifty thousand Drachmas. A Drachma was a highly valuable silver coin, with each coin worth about a day's wages at that time. Today that would be worth several million US dollars. That's a large amount of money, so they must have burned a large amount of scrolls and books.

Stop here and show the translation team an image of a Greek Drachma.

We don't know exactly how big the coins would have been, but they would have been valuable.

Because of this, many people heard the message about Jesus and it was very powerful for them.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has 5 scenes.

First scene: Paul is healing people, with power from God. People are even healed from some of Paul's garments touching the skin of those who are ill or who have evil spirits in them.

Second scene: Some Jews went around commanding evil spirits to leave people by invoking the name of the Lord Jesus over them.

Third scene: The Seven Sons of Sceva were some of the Jews going around and commanding evil spirits out of people. "One day the evil spirit answered them, 'Jesus I know, and Paul I know about, but who are you?' Then the man who had the evil spirit in him jumped on them and overpowered them all, beating them so badly they left naked and bleeding."

Fourth scene: When the Jews and Greeks find out what happened to Sceva and the 7 men, they are all very afraid and the people honored the name of the Lord Jesus even more.

Fifth scene: Many of those who believed now came to confess their sins, evil deeds, and practising of magic. Many of them who had practiced sorcery even brought their scrolls, spellbooks, and magic books and put them in a pile to be burned in front of everyone. The value of what was burnt was fifty thousand valuable coins. Because of these powerful events, more and more people kept hearing about the message concerning the Lord.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul, wearing a sweat rag on his head and an apron or fabric
- One person who will pick up the rag when the actor playing Paul takes it off
- One person who will pick up the apron when the actor playing Paul takes it off
- At least 2 sick people, who are later on healed
- At least 2 people who have evil spirits in them, who are later on healed
- Sceva the priest
- The group of 7 people with Sceva
- A demon-possessed man
- A group of people to represent the Jews and Greeks being fearful
- A group of believers coming forward to confess what they had done
- A group of people putting scrolls and books into a pile to be burned

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

To help you act out the story, it would be helpful to have the following items.

- A scrap of fabric represent the handkerchief
- Some fabric or a jacket to represent an apron
- A shawl or blanket, to represent the evil spirits
- Sheets of paper or fabric rolled up, to represent the scrolls, and books

Depending on how many people you have in your group you can hand out parts to individual people or some people could play multiple parts.

In this narrative, Paul is still in Ephesus. There's no indication of the time of day, but the events most likely happened during the day as it would have been easier to walk around and see people who needed healing. We see Jesus' authority and power at work through Paul.

This story starts during those 2 years that Paul was in the lecture hall in Ephesus. Paul was also working as a tentmaker during that time, and he wore aprons and handkerchiefs. People took them and put them on sick people and those who were demon-possessed, and they were healed.

During this time period, Jewish groups also were going around casting out evil spirits. As they heard about Jesus and how Paul was using Jesus' name, or power, to heal people, they also tried it.

One of these groups in Ephesus tried to use Jesus' name, but it didn't work. It is important to remember how powerful the evil spirits were when they jumped on the seven sons of Sceva. The sons fled because they were naked and very hurt.

People everywhere heard about it—both Jews and non-Jews. Some were already believers in Jesus, and some became believers when they heard how powerful Jesus was.

Many of these people had been practising magic. After this happened, they brought their books all together in the public place and burned them.

Then, even more people heard about how powerful Jesus was.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has 5 scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul, wearing a sweat rag on his head and an apron or fabric
- One person who will pick up the rag when the actor playing Paul takes it off
- One person who will pick up the apron when the actor playing Paul takes it off
- At least 2 sick people, who are later on healed
- At least 2 people who have evil spirits in them, who are later on healed
- Sceva the priest
- The group of 7 people with Sceva
- A demon-possessed man
- A group of people to represent the Jews and Greeks being fearful
- A group of new believers coming forward to confess what they had done
- A group of people putting scrolls and books into a pile to be burned

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

First scene: Paul is healing people, with power from God. Paul is calling on the name of Jesus to bring healing to people and to release people from evil spirits. People are even cured, or healed, or have evil spirits come out of them when they are touched by some of Paul's garments, which have touched his skin.

Stop the action.

Second scene: Some Jews went around commanding evil spirits to leave people by invoking or calling upon the name of the Lord Jesus. Some Jews were acting as exorcists, or people who remove evil spirits from people. They "went around driving out Evil Spirits, calling upon the name of the Lord Jesus over those who were demon-possessed." They would say "In the name of the Jesus whom Paul preaches, I command you to come out."

Third scene: The "Seven Sons of Sceva" were doing exactly this: they were commanding evil spirits to come out of people. Sceva is the leader of the group. One day, Sceva and his men were commanding the evil spirits to come out of a demon-possessed man.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing Sceva, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Feeling confident that he could drive this demon out of this man," or "It's just another normal day, showing off in front of his men," and "Looking forward to others learning that he has healed yet another person."

Ask the actors playing Sceva's men, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Excited to be part of the group," or "They think highly of Sceva," and "They too relish the glory of others learning about the healings." [!end] Restart the action.

They did not expect a reply, but the demon-possessed man said, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know about. But who are you?"

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing Sceva, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Terrified that the demon-possessed person has responded," or "Wondering how they know who Jesus and Paul are," and "Feeling powerless and not knowing what to do next."

Ask the actor playing Sceva's men, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Equally terrified that the demon-possessed person has responded," or "Wondering how Sceva will respond to this," and "Mixed feelings of do they run away or stick with their leader?" [!end] Restart the action.

Then the demon-possessed man "jumped on them and overpowered them all," beating them badly and tearing their clothes off, "that they ran out of the house naked and bleeding."

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing Sceva's men, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Equally shocked at the strength the demon-possessed man had to overcome them all," or "That there are stronger powers of evil at work here," and "Our leader is perhaps not as powerful as we thought and realizing that Jesus is the most powerful one."

Ask the actor playing the demon-possessed man, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "A sense of shame at having attacked these men," or "Wondering if there is someone powerful enough to remove these demons from him," and "I'm isolated and alone again."

Fourth scene: When the Jews and Greeks find out what happened to Sceva and the 7 men, they are all seized with fear.

Stop the action.

And the people honored the name of the Lord Jesus even more.

Stop the action.

Fifth scene: "Many of those who believed now came and openly confessed what they had done." They confessed, in front of everyone, their sins, evil deeds, and magical spells that they had carried out. "A number who had practiced sorcery, or magic, brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly." These magic books and scrolls containing spells, incantations and how to perform them, were all gathered in a pile to be burned in front of everyone.

Stop the action.

The value of all these scrolls and books was fifty thousand valuable silver coins. "In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power." Because of these powerful events, more and more people kept hearing about the message concerning the Lord.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

"God did extraordinary **miracles** through Paul." Translate miracles in the same way as you have in previous passages. Miracles is in the Master Glossary.

"So that even handkerchiefs and aprons were taken to those who were ill, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them." A **handkerchief** would have been a rag worn on the head to absorb sweat. An **apron** would be used to protect your clothes against dust and dirt as you worked. **Cured** means to be healed from an illness or to have evil spirits removed from you. **Evil spirits** or those with an **unclean spirit** are unfit for service for God. Translate evil spirit in the same way as you have in previous passages. Evil spirit is in the Master Glossary.

"Some **Jews**..." Translate Jews in the same way as you have in previous passages. Jews is in the Master Glossary. These Jews were acting as **exorcists**, meaning to expel or remove an evil spirit from a person or place. These Jews "went around driving out," meaning to remove evil spirits.

"And trying to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who were demon-possessed." **Invoke** means to call on a God or a spirit. Translate **Lord** in the same way as you have in previous passages. Lord is in the Master Glossary. People who are **demon-possessed** are controlled by an evil spirit.

"When the Jews and Greeks living in Ephesus heard about what had happened." When **Greeks** are mentioned it means anyone in Ephesus who was not a Jew. It also just so happened that most of these people spoke Greek as their first language. Translate both Jew and Greek as you have in previous passages. Jew and Greek are in the Master Glossary.

These Jews and Greeks were seized with fear when they heard about what happened and the people honoured the name of the Lord Jesus even more. To **honour** also means to "give praise to," or to "speak highly about," or "consider very great."

"Many of those who believed now came and openly confessed what they had done." **Confess** means to admit to doing something that was wrong. They confessed **publicly**, meaning in front of everyone, so that they could have witnesses to their confessions.

"A number who had practiced sorcery, brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly." These books and scrolls, containing a collection of spells or incantations and how to perform them, were all gathered in a pile to be burned in front of everyone. **Sorcery**, which means the use of magic, in particular magic that is used for evil purposes. **Scrolls** were rolled up sheets of parchment and **books** were sheets of parchment paper bound together. **Incantations** were used as magical formulas, like casting a **spell**, to have a **magical** or otherworldly effect on a person or object.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 19:11–20

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3004808 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (5298339 KB)

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Acts 19:21–41

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 19:21–41 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?

6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this narrative we begin with Paul making plans to visit other places. It starts with "after all this had happened." Do you recall the events we learned about earlier in Acts about the demon-possessed man and those practicing sorcery burning all their scrolls and books? Those are the events that have just happened. Paul feels compelled by the Spirit of God to go to Jerusalem, passing through Macedonia and Achaia and on to Rome to continue to spread the message concerning the Lord Jesus, or master. Paul sends two of his helpers, or assistants to go to Macedonia. Their names were Timothy and Erastus. At this point Paul remained in Ephesus for a little while longer.

Stop here and show an image of a map showing the route Paul intends to make to Jerusalem, passing through Macedonia and Achaia and then on to Rome, and another image showing the route that Timothy and Erastus are going to take from Ephesus to Macedonia.

"About that time there arose a great disturbance about the Way." Do you recall earlier in Acts when the non-believers began "publicly speaking against the Way"? The Lord Jesus shows us that the Way is living our lives according to his purposes for us. There are non-believers who are unhappy that Paul's message concerning the Lord Jesus, or master, is spreading. A man named Demetrius is particularly angry as his livelihood, or wealth, is at risk. Demetrius is a silversmith, which means he makes things out of silver. It requires a lot of skill and expensive silver, so making things and selling them would have made him and his staff a lot of money. One of his specialties was making silver shrines of Artemis's temple. Artemis was a goddess of fertility. The large temple that was built to honour her was a beautiful structure and it was known by many people. Demetrius would carve small temples out of silver, which looked just like the actual temple of Artemis, and then sell them.

Stop here and show an image of the full scale of the temple of Artemis.

Stop here and show an image of scaled down model version of the temple of Artemis, most likely made of silver.

Demetrius called together people he employed and also other craftsmen, who also made small silver temples of Artemis. Demetrius says to them, "You know, my friends, that we receive a good income from this business," meaning the making of small silver temples. He then continues to say "you see and hear" because these men will have seen and heard for themselves what Paul has been saying over the 2 years he has been there. Demetrius refers to Paul as "this fellow," which is an impolite way to refer to a man. He goes on to say that Paul has succeeded in leading people astray, meaning to lead people in the wrong direction. Demetrius says that it has affected a large number of people, not just in Ephesus but in the entire province of Asia. He goes on to remind them of what Paul has been saying-that the statues of gods that men make have no power as gods.

Because of what Paul says, Demetrius fears that their trade as silversmiths is at risk and that people will speak against their business of making small silver temples. He then continues by saying that not only is their livelihood at risk "but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be discredited." Demetrius is worried that people who worship Artemis will lose respect for her and that people will no longer think she is a true and majestic goddess. Demetrius appears to be just as concerned about how Paul's preaching will affect the worship of Artemis as much as how it will affect his own wealth.

When these men heard this they began shouting: "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" They were filled with rage and quickly ran out and spread the word of what Demetrius had said and they gathered others to join them in shouting. Soon the entire city was in uproar, or chaos. A riot soon started; thousands of people probably gathered together. Two Macedonian men who were known traveling companions of Paul were walking past. This gathering of angry men grabbed Gaius and Aristarchus, and against their will they drag them to the theatre.

Stop here and show an image of a Greek Amphitheater.

The theater in Ephesus was large; it could seat around 26,000 people. In ancient times, theaters were constructed mainly for the presentation of public events, including drama, but they were also used for town meetings. It would have been the main place where people would head to for a gathering.

Stop here and discuss as a translation team: If your town or village needed to communicate a message to lots of people, where would you gather?

News of the riot has now reached Paul, who at this point is still in Ephesus. He desperately wants to go to the theatre and appear before the crowd and speak to them. The disciples, or followers of Jesus who are with Paul, do not let him. They are concerned for his safety if Paul goes. Even some of the officials of the province, who were friends of Paul, sent him a message begging him not to go into the theatre, as they feared for his safety. These officials had a high standing in the community and they knew the risk Paul was under and that they would be unable to protect him.

The crowd that had gathered were confused: "Some were shouting one thing, some another. Most people did not even know why they were there." Sometimes, people can get swept up in the excitement of a riot so they join in, even if they don't know what it's for.

Stop here and discuss as a translation team: Tell a story about at time in your town or village where you have experienced joining a gathering or a protest. Why did you or others join it, because you believed in the cause or because it felt good to be a part of something and you wanted to find out more?

The Jews in the crowd pushed Alexander to the front, and they shouted instructions at him. It is unclear here who Alexander is, and we know very little about him. It may be that it appeared as if he had something to say, so the Jews had put him forward to speak on their behalf. "He motioned for silence," which means he would have gestured with his hand for the crowd to be silent so they could hear him speak. Jews are against idolatry, so it may be that a riot supporting Artemis would appear to be an indirect attack on the Jews. Alexander wanted to "make a defence for the people," meaning to say that they are not to blame for why the riot is happening.

It is also unclear as to how the non-Jewish crowd recognizes that Alexander is a Jew, it could be from his appearance or it may be that as he started to talk to the crowd they recognized his accent. It would seem that amongst the citizens of Ephesus, they did not like the Jews. "They all shouted in unison" meaning they all shouted the same thing, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians" at the same time, again and again for about two hours.

The city clerk is like a town mayor or someone responsible for issuing agreements made by the townspeople. He managed to quiet the crowd and spoke to them. He reminds the people that the city of Ephesus "is the guardian of the temple of the great Artemis" meaning to guard and look after the temple. "And her image which fell from heaven," this may refer to a stone or rock, perhaps a fragment of a meteorite, or space rock, that fell to the ground. They would have believed that it had fallen from heaven and would consider it to be sacred and therefore something to worship. The town clerk is reminding the people that Artemis is an important goddess and nothing would stop people from respecting her.

Stop here and discuss as a translation team: In your culture what objects are considered sacred or special? What is their meaning?

The town clerk then asks the crowd to calm down and not to act rashly, which means to do something without thinking it through. The town clerk says that the men the people have brought in, Gaius and Aristarchus, have not robbed objects from the temple or said bad things against the goddess Artemis. He goes on to say if Demetrius and his men have a grievance against anybody, there are special days when courts are open and proconsuls, or legal authorities, can judge disputes. The town clerk then makes it clear that if anyone has anything to add there must be a proper legal gathering. As this is not a proper legal gathering, the Romans could charge the people of Ephesus with rioting because of what has happened. Nobody would then be able to state the reason for the riot, since legally there is no reason for it. After this, the town clerk dismisses, or sends the people away.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has 4 scenes.

First scene: Paul makes plans of traveling to Jerusalem and passing through Macedonia and Achaia. Then afterwards he will go to Rome. He then sends two of his assistants, Timothy and Erastus, off to Macedonia.

Second scene: Demetrius, concerned that he will lose his wealth due to less people worshipping Artemis, and Artemis not being honoured, he gathers a group of workmen to make a plan.

Third scene: The city is in uproar as the news spreads of the threat to Artemis. Paul wants to go but the disciples, or followers of Jesus, stop him in order to protect him. Even the local officials send a message advising him to stay away for his own safety.

Fourth scene: A group of confused people start shouting, a mob mentality, not knowing why they are even there. The Jews push Alexander, who is also a Jew, to speak but it only makes the non-Jewish crowd angrier and shout more when they realize he is a Jew. The clerk is eventually able to quieten the crowd and then speaks to them.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- Timothy, Paul's helper
- Erastus, Paul's other helper
- Demetrius the silversmith
- A group of craftsmen employed by Demetrius
- A group of other workers
- Gaius, Paul's traveling companion
- Aristarchus, another of Paul's traveling companions
- A few angry people who seize Gaius and Aristarchus
- A group of disciples with Paul
- Some officials of the province
- A group of Jews
- Alexander the Jew
- A group of people to be the crowd, shouting, chanting, and appearing angry
- The city clerk

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

In this narrative it's unclear about time of day, but it most likely could be when the craftsmen have finished their work. Paul is still in Ephesus when all this occurs, but he doesn't participate in the riot at all. It is unclear if Demetrius himself is part of the riot, or if he just lets his men cause the riot and he stays behind. Either way the city clerk says later on "If, then, Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen have a grievance..." It could be that he is saying this generally, even though they may or may not be present. If the theatre was full it would be hard for the city clerk to be able to see faces clearly.

We don't know much about Gaius and Aristarchus, other than that they traveled with Paul. We also don't know anything about Alexander or why he was pushed to the stage to speak.

We begin with Paul making plans to go to Jerusalem, passing through Macedonia and Achaia and on to Rome after that. Paul sends Timothy and Erastus to Macedonia, but he remains in Ephesus.

Stop here and show again an image of a map showing the route Paul intends to make to Jerusalem, passing through Macedonia and Achaia and then on to Rome, and another image showing the route that Timothy and Erastus are going to take from Ephesus to Macedonia.

There are non-believers who are unhappy that Paul's message concerning the Lord Jesus, or master, is spreading. Demetrius the silversmith is concerned for his own wealth so takes matters into his own hands. Demetrius calls together people he knows will want to hear what he has to say. He delivers a stirring message and finishes his speech by saying that the "temple of the great goddess Artemis will be discredited."

This really angers the men listening and they start shouting "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" They are filled with rage and quickly run out to tell others and soon a riot starts. This gathering of angry men grabbed Gaius and Aristarchus and against their will they drag them to the theatre.

Stop here and show an image of a Greek amphitheater again.

It's important to note that although it was a theatre, this gathering was not a performance. The men who had grabbed Gaius and Aristarchus were on their way to the theatre because that's where important gatherings happened. They were wanting everyone to know how unhappy they were. **Amphitheater** means "on both sides" as the action can be viewed from both sides due to the arc shape of the seating around the stage. The seats would have been tiered, which meant that your view wouldn't be blocked by the person sitting in front of you as they would be lower than you. The Amphitheater in Ephesus was large; it could seat around 26,000 people and had standing room for an additional 1,000 people. The great theater of Ephesus still exists and is a very impressive building. It has a width of 145 meters, and the seats once reached up as high as 30 meters. The stage itself is 40 meters wide by 25 meters deep. In ancient times theaters were constructed mainly for the presentation of public events, including drama, but they were also used for town meetings. It would have been the main place where people would head to for a gathering. The Amphitheatre has a stage, and whoever is speaking stands upon the stage to speak to the crowd. The crowd would usually sit but as everyone is so angry and excited, they most likely would have been standing.

News of the riot has now reached Paul, who at this point is still in Ephesus. He desperately wants to go to the theatre but the disciples do not let him. They are concerned for his safety. Even some of the officials of the province send him a message begging him not to go into the theatre as they fear for his safety.

The crowd that had gathered were confused, shouting different things and not knowing why they were there. The Jews in the crowd pushed Alexander onto the stage, and they shouted instructions at him. He motions for silence to make a defence to tell them that none of this is the fault of the Jews.

The crowd soon realizes that Alexander is a Jew. They are angry at this and start chanting "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians" for about 2 hours.

The city clerk walks onto the stage and manages to quiet the crowd and speaks to them. He is a well respected man and the crowd that were gathered there would have wanted to hear what he had to say. He reminds the people that the city of Ephesus "is the guardian of the temple of the great Artemis" and he asks the crowd to calm down and not to act rashly. He reminds them that Gaius and Aristarchus have done no wrong. He says if Demetrius and his men have a grievance against anybody, there is a procedure for this and a legal gathering needs to be arranged. As this riot has no reason to be happening they are at risk of being charged, or accused by the Romans of rioting. After this the town clerk dismisses, or sends the people away.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has 4 scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- Timothy, Paul's helper
- Erastus, Paul's other helper
- Demetrius the Silversmith
- A group of craftsmen employed by Demetrius
- A group of other workers
- Gaius, Paul's traveling companion
- Aristarchus, another of Paul's traveling companions
- A few angry people who seize Gaius and Aristarchus
- A group of disciples with Paul
- Some officials of the province
- A group of Jews
- Alexander the Jew
- A group of people to be the crowd, shouting, chanting, and appearing angry
- The city clerk

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

First scene: Paul feeling compelled by the Spirit of God to go to Jerusalem, passing through Macedonia and Achaia. After that to travel on to Rome to continue to spread the message concerning the Lord Jesus, or master. Paul sends two of his helpers (or assistants) to go to Macedonia. Their names were Timothy and Erastus. At this point Paul remained in Ephesus for a little while longer.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing Timothy and Erastus, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Sad to be leaving Paul," or "Excited to be heading to Macedonia," and "Looking forward to seeing Paul again at some point." [!end] Restart the action.

Second scene: "About that time there arose a great disturbance about the Way." A man named Demetrius is particularly angry as his livelihood (or wealth) is at risk. Demetrius the Silversmith calls together the people he employs and also other craftsmen. Demetrius says to them, "You know, my friends, that we receive a good income from this business." He says that they will have seen and heard for themselves what Paul has been saying and has succeeded in leading people in the wrong direction. It has affected a large number of people, not just in Ephesus but in the entire province of Asia. He goes on to remind them of what Paul has been saying, that the statues of gods that men make have no power as gods.

Stop the action.

He then continues by saying that not only is their livelihood at risk "but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be discredited," that people who currently worship her will not think she is important anymore "and the goddess herself, who is worshipped throughout the province of Asia and the world, will be robbed of her divine majesty."

Stop the action.

Third scene: When these men heard this they began shouting "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" They were filled with rage and quickly ran out and spread the word of what Demetrius had said and gathered others to join them in shouting.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing the craftsmen, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "They feel angry and they want to let other people know what is going on," or "They can't believe that people would stop worshipping Artemis," and "They want to stir up the anger inside other people so that they join in the action." [!end] Restart the action.

Soon a riot starts. Two Macedonian men who were known traveling companions of Paul were seen by this gathering of angry men who seized (or grabbed) them. Against their will, Gaius and Aristarchus are taken to the theatre.

Stop the action.

News of the riot has now reached Paul, who at this point is still in Ephesus. He desperately wants to go to the theatre, but the disciples do not let him. They are concerned for his safety. Even some of the officials of the province send him a message begging him not to go into the theatre as they fear for his safety.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing the disciples, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Worried about the danger Paul would be in if he went to the Amphitheater," or "Seeing Paul's disappointment but knowing that staying away is the right thing to do," and "Hoping that the matter is settled quickly." [!end] Restart the action.

Fourth scene: The crowd that had gathered were confused: "Some were shouting one thing, some another. Most people did not even know why they were here."

Stop the action.

The Jews in the crowd push Alexander to the front, and they shout instructions at him. He motions with his hand for them to be silent so he can speak a defense, possibly to say that they, the Jews, are not to blame for why the riot is happening.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing the crowd of Jews "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "We're not really sure what is happening," or "How about we get this guy Alexander to say something?" and "We can tell him to tell everyone that the Jews have nothing to do with this."

Ask the actor playing Alexander, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I'm not entirely sure why I'm being pushed to the front," or "I suppose I could let them know that this riot has nothing to do with the Jews," and "I'm a bit anxious about this." [!end] Restart the action.

But when they realize he is a Jew they shouted "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians" at the same time, again and again for about two hours.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing the crowd of non-Jews, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "We want to know what's going on but not to be told by a Jew," or "Let's start chanting and drown out what he is trying to say." [!end] Restart the action.

The city clerk walks onto the stage and manages to quiet the crowd and speaks to them. He reminds the people that the city of Ephesus "is the guardian of the temple of the great Artemis" and he asks the crowd to calm down and not to act rashly. He reminds them that Gaius and Aristarchus have done no wrong. He says if Demetrius and his men have a grievance against anybody, there is a procedure for this and a legal gathering needs to be arranged. As this riot has no reason to be happening they are at risk of being charged, or accused by the Romans of rioting. After this, the town clerk dismisses, or sends the people away.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing the crowd of Jews, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Relieved that they did not get the blame for this," or "Wondering why Demetrius and his men started the riot," and "Realizing the power and influence that Artemis had over some of the people."

Ask the actors playing the crowd of non-Jews, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Dissatisfied that in their eyes justice has not been done," or "Fearful that they may be charged by the Romans," and "Dejected that their livelihood is still at risk."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Paul feels compelled by the Spirit of God to travel to various places. Paul sends two assistants, Timothy and Erastus, to go to Macedonia. Paul remains in Ephesus for a little while longer.

"About that time there arose a great disturbance about the **Way**." Do you recall earlier in Acts when the non-believers began "publicly speaking against the Way"? The Lord Jesus, or master shows us that the Way is living our lives according to his purposes for us. If you were a believer or a disciple of Jesus you would live your life by following the Way, and this was a name for the movement of Jesus followers at the time.

Demetrius is a **silversmith**, which means he makes things out of silver.

Demetrius called together people he employed and also other **craftsmen**, meaning men who also worked in the trade and made items honouring Artemis. Demetrius says to them, "You know, my friends, that we receive a good income from this **business**," meaning a place for the sale and purchase of goods.

He goes on to say that Paul has succeeded in leading people **astray**, meaning to lead people in the wrong direction. This suggests that Demetrius is saying that not only is Paul taking people *away* from worshipping Artemis but that *following* Jesus the Lord, or master, is the wrong way.

He then continues by saying also "that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be **discredited**," meaning to lose respect from people, "and the goddess herself, who is worshipped throughout the province of Asia and the world, will be robbed of her divine majesty." The **world** mentioned here would have been the "known" world at the time. To be **divine** means to be like a God. **Majesty** means an awe inspiring greatness.

Soon the whole city was in **uproar**, meaning a loud passion-filled noise or disturbance.

A **riot** started, which means a disorderly gathering. Although the group may start off small at first, they usually gather more people along the way and the crowd gets bigger.

The **officials** were highly respected men; they had a high standing in the community and would have been selected for the role by the most wealthiest and influential families in the province.

They all shouted in **unison**, meaning they all shouted the same thing: "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians" at the same time, again and again for about two hours.

The **city clerk** is like a town mayor or someone responsible for issuing agreements made by the townspeople. He managed to quiet the crowd and spoke to them. He talks about "her image or **sacred stone** which fell from **heaven**." The use of Heaven here is not the heaven that God and his angels live in as defined in the Master Glossary. The meaning for heaven here is the actual "skies above" and that this "sacred stone" dropped out of the sky and therefore came from the heavens, as in the "sky above the earth." The Ephesians still see it as sacred, or holy, as it is seen as something not from earth.

The town clerk says that the men have not "**blasphemed** our goddess," meaning to swear against someone who is considered sacred. Blasphemed is in the Master Glossary but the meaning here is slightly different, as they are not meaning blasphemy against God. He goes on to say if Demetrius and his men have a **grievance**, which means to make a complaint or claim that another person has done something to them, the **courts** are open and there are **proconsuls**. Meaning that there are certain days when legal matters can take place. On those days people can **press charges**, meaning one person can accuse another. Which means that on those particular days the authorities sit in the court to judge cases of people. They would be able to hear the case

Demetrius may put forward, in order to press charges against Paul, meaning Demetrius can then legally accuse Paul.

The town clerk then makes it clear that if anyone has anything to add there must be a **legal assembly**, meaning an official legal gathering. As this is not a legal assembly, the people of Ephesus could be charged by the Romans with rioting because of what has happened.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 19:21-41

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Acts 20:1–6

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 20:1–6 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this narrative we learn of Paul's next few journeys as he continues to spread the message concerning the Lord Jesus, or master.

"When the uproar had ended." We don't know how much time has passed from the end of the rioting in Ephesus that we learned about in the previous passage. It was probably at least a few days so that the mood was a bit calmer.

It's important to note here that Paul is not leaving as a result of the riot. He is not running away in fear. Do you remember that he discussed his travel plans in the previous passage before the riot even started? Paul probably stayed on a little while to make sure things had settled and that his disciples, or believers in Jesus, were safe before he leaves them.

Paul then sent for his disciples, or believers, and encouraged them. This most likely would have been a very inspiring speech, encouraging these men in their mission to serve God and tell others about Jesus. Paul may have also mentioned how he has enjoyed his time with them and that he will miss them. He says goodbye, meaning he is leaving them.

Stop and discuss here: What is your experience of saying farewell to someone like a family member, or a well known member of the community? How do you feel? What words would you use instead of "goodbye"?

Paul then travels the following route:

He travels from Ephesus to Macedonia, ending at Corinth in Greece, via land route. He stays there for three months, then went back up through Macedonia to Philippi. He traveled through several cities in Macedonia, ending up in Philippi, and then he set sail from Philippi to Troas.

We are not sure of the exact size of the boat, but it was most likely a coasting boat which would have had oars to row with to help direct the boat and sails so the wind could propel it forward.

Stop here and show an image of a sailing boat from 54 AD.

Stop here and show an image of a map that shows Paul's journey from Ephesus to Macedonia.

"He traveled through that area, speaking many words of encouragement to the people and finally arrived in Greece." Paul was going around Macedonia, which most likely included revisiting the areas of Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea. The people he was speaking to were most likely believers from those areas. Do you remember earlier when Paul had spoken messages of encouragement to other believers? He was doing this now as he traveled around on his way to Greece, most likely the area commonly known as Corinth.

Paul then arrives in Greece, at the city of Corinth.

Stop here and show an image of a map that shows Paul's journey from Macedonia to Greece, or Corinth. Point out the marked areas of Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea.

Whilst there he also encouraged other believers by sharing words and messages of encouragement. Paul stays for 3 months. This was probably during the winter months when travel by sea would have been difficult due to the bad weather.

Paul's original plan was to sail on a boat from Greece, or Corinth, to Syria, near to where Jerusalem was.

As the weather improved with the changing season it was probably Paul's intention to sail by boat at that point. It was customary for many Jews to travel back to Jerusalem each year to celebrate the Passover, and for this purpose there were many ships which carried them from the cities of this region to Jerusalem. It was probably Paul's intention to go by one of these ships. We will talk more about Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread later on in this passage.

Stop here and show an image of a passenger sailing boat from 54 AD.

Paul's original plan would have been to go directly from Greece, Corinth to Jerusalem, bypassing the west coast of Asia, but before he leaves Paul hears that some of the Jews who will be aboard the ship want to stir up others against him and have him killed. Previous letters from Paul tell us that Paul was known to be carrying a collection of money that was donated, which he was taking from the Gentile, or non-Jewish, churches to help the church in Jerusalem with caring for the poor. So the Jews may have been planning to steal that money. In fear of the Jews' plot against him he decides to avoid them by returning the way he had come through Macedonia and down the coast of Asia via Troas. The Jews from Corinth, who had attempted to press charges against Paul in previous passages, may have been involved in this latest plot. You may be thinking here, why didn't Paul just get on another boat? The ship that he was going to get was most likely sailing for the specific purpose of ferrying people back and forth from these cities to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover. So it was highly likely that the Jews plotting against him would be on that same boat.

Paul decides that it would be safer to go back through Macedonia.

Stop here and show Paul's planned journey to sail from Corinth to Syria by boat which has now been interrupted by a plot from some Jews and caused him to now go back on himself.

Stop here and show an image of a map showing Paul's new journey from Greece, Corinth back to Macedonia.

Paul was accompanied by Sopater son of Pyrrhus, who came from Berea, which is in Macedonia. Sopater is someone we don't know very much about. We can assume though that as he is traveling with Paul that he is a believer and wants to help Paul in his mission to make the message concerning the Lord Jesus, or master, known. Aristarchus and Secundus came from Thessalonica, which is also in Macedonia. Then there is Gaius who was from Derbe. Gaius and Aristarchus you will remember from the previous passage as Paul's traveling companions. They were grabbed by Demetrius's men and dragged to the theatre even though they had done nothing wrong.

Timothy was also with them and he came from Lystra. Do you remember earlier when we learned about how Paul had befriended Timothy and worked closely with him and Paul called him a "beloved brother"? They seem to have a very good friendship.

Tychicus and Trophimus, who were both from the province of Asia, were with Paul.

"These men went on ahead and waited for us at Troas." It is not clear who Paul is saying went on ahead to Troas-if it was most of these men or just some of them. Later Paul says "But we sailed from Philippi," suggesting that Paul is not alone, so it may be that some of these men also went with him or it could also be that it is Luke, the author of Acts, who is with Paul.

As Tychicus and Trophimus were both from the province of Asia, they may have been the ones to go on ahead first to Troas, which is in Asia. Maybe everyone else remained with Paul in Macedonia. Tychicus and Trophimus may have wanted to go ahead to start their preparations for Passover. It appears that Paul may have chosen to celebrate Passover in Philippi with his remaining companions before they all depart Philippi together and go onto Troas.

However we choose to try and understand who was traveling when, we can most likely assume that Paul had companions with him throughout all the above journeys.

Stop here and show an image of a map showing all the cities Paul was probably visiting in Macedonia on his way to Philippi.

Earlier on in this book, do you recall when fasting and praying were mentioned? "While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting," which is what you would be doing during Passover and the Feast or Festival of Unleavened bread. The Passover was a Jewish religious festival. In Jesus' time, the celebration was a combination of Passover and the seven-day Festival of Unleavened Bread. Passover celebrated the time when God rescued the Jewish ancestors from slavery in Egypt. The Jews celebrate the festival each year as they gather together to eat unleavened bread. The Passover is like a celebration of independence for the Jews. Do you remember Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread from the book of Mark?

Paul may have celebrated this festival with his friends at Philippi.

Five days later, Paul and his companions joined the rest of the men at Troas in Asia. There they stayed for 7 days.

Stop here and show an image of a sailing boat from 54 AD.

Stop here and show a sailing route by sea that Paul and his companions took from Philippi to Troas.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has 3 scenes.

First scene: Paul sends for his disciples and encourages them with a message. He then says goodbye to his disciples (or believers) and heads off to Macedonia. He travels through the area and speaks messages of encouragement before arriving in Greece to the city of Corinth where he stays for three months.

Second scene: Whilst in Greece, Paul learns of a plot that some Jews are against him and he avoids the ships that are taking people to and from Greece to Jerusalem and goes back through Macedonia. He is accompanied by a group of men.

Third scene: Some of the men traveling with Paul then go on ahead to Troas, but Paul and some of the others stay behind. They then sail to Troas from Philippi a few days later and join the rest of the men.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- Some disciples
- Group of Macedonians
- Group of Greeks
- Group of Jews
- Sopater, son of Pyrrhus from Berea
- Aristarchus, from Thessalonica
- Secundus, also from Thessalonica
- Gaius from Derbe
- Timothy from Lystra
- Tychicus, from the province of Asia
- Trophimus, also from the province of Asia

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

In this narrative we learn of Paul's next few journeys as he continues to spread the message concerning the Lord Jesus, or master.

If you are able, you could draw out a map on the ground and then walk around it to get a sense of Paul's journeys.

"When the uproar had ended..." We don't know how much time has passed from the end of the rioting that we learned about in the previous passage. It was probably at least a few days so that the mood was a bit calmer.

It's important to again remember here that Paul is not leaving as a result of the riot. He is not running away in fear.

Paul then sends for his disciples, or believers, and encourages them. It's not clear where this all took place, it may have been inside a house, or whilst they were sitting outside. He says goodbye to the disciples.

Paul then travels from Ephesus to Macedonia. This would have been via land from Ephesus to Troas and then a boat from Troas to Macedonia.

Stop here and show an image of a sailing boat.

"He traveled through that area, speaking many words of encouragement to the people and finally arrived in Greece." Paul was going around Macedonia which most likely included revisiting the areas of Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea. Paul then arrives in Greece, at the city of Corinth.

Whilst there he also encouraged other believers by sharing words and messages of encouragement. Paul stays for three months.

Paul's original plan would have been to go directly from Greece, Corinth to Syria, but he hears that some of the Jews who will be aboard the ship want to stir up others against him and have him killed. Paul decides that it would be safer to go back via Macedonia, again traveling on land.

Paul also has some traveling companions with him.

Paul was accompanied by Sopater son of Pyrrhus, who came from Berea, which is in Macedonia. Aristarchus and Secundus came from Thessalonica, which is also in Macedonia. Then there is Gaius who was from Derbe.

Timothy was also with them and he came from Lystra. Timothy is a good friend of Paul's.

Tychicus and Trophimus who were both from the province of Asia.

"These men went on ahead and waited for us at Troas." It is not clear who Paul is saying went on ahead to Troas. Paul also later says "But we sailed from Philippi," suggesting that he is not alone, so it could be that Luke, the author of Acts, is with him.

However we choose to try and understand who was traveling when, we can most likely assume that Paul had companions with him throughout all the above journeys.

Five days later Paul joined the others at Troas, where they stayed for seven days. It is unclear how long they waited to travel but it appears that at some point after the Festival of Unleavened Bread, they departed Philippi and set sail for Troas, suggesting that the journey took five days and then they arrive at Troas in Asia.

There they stayed for seven days.

Stop here and show a sailing route by sea from Philippi to Troas.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has 3 scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- Some disciples
- Group of Macedonians
- Group of Greeks
- Group of Jews
- Sopater, son of Pyrrhus from Berea
- Aristarchus, from Thessalonica
- Secundus, also from Thessalonica
- Gaius from Derbe
- Timothy from Lystra
- Tychicus, from the province of Asia
- Trophimus, also from the province of Asia

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

In this narrative we learn of Paul's next few journeys as he continues to spread the message concerning the Lord, or master.

First scene: "When the uproar had ended, Paul sends for his disciples."

Stop the action.

After encouraging them with a message, he then says goodbye to his disciples, or believers.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing the disciples, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Feeling really encouraged by Paul's words," or "Excited to hear about his next journey," and "We are sad that he is leaving." [!end] Restart the action.

Paul then sets out from Ephesus heading for Macedonia. "He traveled through that area, speaking many words of encouragement to the people and finally arrived in Greece where he stayed for three months."

Second scene: Paul's original plan was to sail on a boat from Greece, Corinth to Syria, where Jerusalem was. Whilst in Greece though, Paul learns of a plot that some Jews are against him and he goes back through Macedonia.

Stop the action.

"Paul was accompanied by Sopater son of Pyrrhus, from Berea, Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica, Gaius from Derbe, Timothy also, and Tychicus and Trophimus from the province of Asia."

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing Paul's traveling companions, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Glad to be spending time with Paul," or "Glad that they can be a part of this journey," and "Looking forward to where they go next." [!end] Restart the action.

Third scene: Some of the men traveling with Paul go on ahead to Troas, but Paul and some of the others stay behind in Macedonia. After the Festival of Unleavened Bread, Paul and the others then sailed from Philippi to Troas, and five days later they rejoined the men at Troas where they stayed seven days.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

"When the **uproar** had ended," meaning a loud passion-filled noise or disturbance, this is referring to the riot that happened in the previous passage.

Paul then sent for his **disciples**, or believers, and encouraged them. Translate disciple in the same way as you have in previous passages. Disciple is in the Master Glossary.

"He traveled through that area, speaking many words of encouragement to the **people** and finally arrived in Greece." The "people" here means the people in the areas he would have visited in Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea. These people Paul was speaking to were most likely believers from those areas. Paul then arrives in Corinth where he stays for three months. **Corinth** was a city in Greece.

"Because some **Jews** had **plotted** against him..." Translate Jew in the same way as you have in previous passages. Jew is in the Master Glossary.

Paul hears of this just as he was about to set **sail** for **Syria**. Sail meaning to sail away from where you are to somewhere else by sea, traveling on a boat or ship.

"After the **Festival of Unleavened Bread**..." Translate Festival of Unleavened Bread and Passover in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that Festival of Unleavened Bread and Passover are in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 20:1–6

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (2944933 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Acts 20:7–12

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 20:7–12 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?

2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this narrative, Paul, Luke, and the other men are in Troas for seven days. Do you remember in the previous passage the group of men who were traveling with Paul? They were Sopater, son of Pyrrhus from Berea; Aristarchus and Secundus, from Thessalonica; Gaius from Derbe; Timothy from Lystra; Tychicus and Trophimus, from the province of Asia.

They all went on ahead of him to Troas, and they are now reunited with Paul and Luke as they both arrive in Troas. Do you remember in an earlier passage when Paul and his companions went to Troas? It was there that God gave him a vision of the Macedonian man who begged him to come and teach about Jesus to the Macedonian people. So Paul has now returned to Troas to speak about Jesus.

The believers in Jesus are gathered in a large room in a house to eat together and afterwards Paul speaks to them for a long time. Paul is only here for 7 days, so he has a lot to do during his time in Troas. The young man goes to sleep and falls out of the window and dies. God enables Paul to cause Eutychus to live again. The believers are very happy after this.

Stop here and show an image of a house that has 3 levels.

Remember that Luke, the author of Acts, is with Paul, so he talks about this story using the word "we."

Paul and a group of people meet together "on the first day of the week." We do not know exactly which day of the week this was because we do not know if this is based on Greek, Roman, or Jewish calendars. Each calendar has a different first day of the week.

The Greeks, or non-Jews, believe the day to start at sunrise, the Romans believe the day to start from midnight, or 12 o'clock, and the Jews believe each day starts at sunset. What we can work out is that it was most likely either a Saturday or a Sunday.

Stop and discuss here: How do you mark the start and end of your days?

Paul and his friends "came together to break bread." They probably ate a meal together and then ended by celebrating the Lord's Supper. Jesus told his followers to eat this special meal to remember and honour him. Do you recall in previous passages when Peter had spoken to the crowd who then became believers in Jesus? The new believers devoted themselves to the teaching of Peter and to "fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer." This is what Paul and these other believers in Jesus are doing here in Troas. They are probably sharing in the Lord's supper together.

Paul was very excited to be speaking to these believers in Jesus and he had a lot to say to them. He was also planning to leave the next day, so Paul needed to keep talking until very late into the night.

"There were many lamps in the room since it was dark outside." At that time, a lamp was a small clay bowl shaped for a wick on one side. There were two kinds of bowls that people used. People put oil in the bowls. The oil burned and gave light. The room would have been warm, and this could have made Eutychus feel sleepy. As there were many of these lamps in this room, it would have made the room hot and stuffy and hard to stay awake.

Stop here and show the images of both types of oil lamps.

Stop and discuss here: In your culture, how do you light your homes?

The room that they are in is upstairs; it would have been a large room built on top of the main part of a house.

"Seated in a window was a young man named Eutychus, who was sinking into a deep sleep as Paul talked on and on." We don't know very much about Eutychus other than that he is a young man, probably aged between 13 and 19 years old. He is clearly wanting to hear what Paul has to say, but as the room is so hot and stuffy and Paul had been talking for a long time, Eutychus started to get sleepy.

"When he was sound asleep, he fell to the ground from the third story." Sound asleep means that he was fully asleep. The ground floor would have been included in the measuring of the height of the house, so it would have most likely been the 3rd level of the house that the room was in. So Eutychus fell from the 3rd floor of the house down to the ground. That is still a height to fall from though! In those days they didn't have glass in their windows. They may have had shutters, but these would have been open so it would have just been a hole in the wall. Eutychus had been sitting on the thick window ledge before he fell. The believers rush down to help Eutychus but when they picked him up, he was dead.

Paul sees this happen and immediately runs down to Eutychus and throws himself over him and puts his arms around him. Paul stretches himself out over Eutychus and covers him. Remember in previous passages when even a garment that had been touched by Paul was used to heal people? Here Paul is using his whole body to show God's life-giving power working through Paul to bring Eutychus back to life.

"Don't be alarmed," Paul reassures everyone, as those who have gathered around are sorrowful and had already begun mourning.

Stop here and discuss: In your culture, what do you do when someone dies? How do you mourn for them?

Paul then tells everyone around him that Eutychus has come back to life from being dead. This must have been such a shocking few minutes for those that witnessed the event. Firstly they see a young man fall out the window and die on the street. They see that he's dead and go to pick him up to take him away. All of a sudden, Paul appears and brings Eutychus back to life.

Stop here and discuss: Tell us of a time that something happened right in front of you that you couldn't believe. How did you react? How did the other people around you react?

Paul, along with the believers, go back upstairs again and return to the room they were in, where Paul broke bread and ate it.

Stop here and show an image of some unleavened bread.

Paul probably ate together with everyone at this time, and that this may be when they had the Lord's Supper.

Paul then starts teaching again and continues until daylight, and then he leaves the believers and departs from the house. He must have been exhausted!

Stop here and discuss: Tell us of a time when you needed to keep awake all night. Perhaps you were caring for someone or working a night shift. What do you do to keep yourself awake?

The people then take the now living young man home and are very happy. It is unclear who "the people" are here, but it may be the other believers who saw what happened or it may have been relatives of Eutychus who rushed to his side to help as soon as he fell. They keep him company on his way home.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has 3 scenes.

First scene: Paul has arrived in Troas, and he is speaking in a house to other believers in Jesus. A young man named Eutychus who is in the room listening starts to get sleepy, dozes off, and falls out of the window and dies on the street.

Second scene: Paul and the believers rush down, and Paul covers Eutychus and with God's power restores Eutychus back to life.

Third scene: Paul and the believers return to the upstairs room to break bread and eat. Paul continues talking until daylight and he then leaves the believers and departs from the house. Eutychus is taken home alive.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- Luke
- Sopater, son of Pyrrhus from Berea
- Aristarchus, from Thessalonica
- Secundus, also from Thessalonica
- Gaius from Derbe
- Timothy from Lystra
- Tychicus, from the province of Asia
- Trophimus, also from the province of Asia
- Eutychus
- Relatives or friends of Eutychus
- Group of believers

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

It may be helpful here to draw a house that has a ground floor, as in the floor that is level with the ground. Then draw 2 levels above that. The third level is where Eutychus fell from.

In this narrative, Paul, Luke, and the other men are in Troas. It's important to remember Paul has just been reunited with the group of men who left them at Philippi. There was Sopater, son of Pyrrhus from Berea; Aristarchus and Secundus, from Thessalonica; Gaius from Derbe; Timothy from Lystra; Tychicus and Trophimus, from the province of Asia.

It's also important to remember that since Luke, the author, was there, he says "we" throughout the story.

"On the first day of the week" was most likely a Saturday or Sunday. "We came together to break bread" is probably referring to them eating a meal together that probably ended with celebrating the Lord's Supper. Jesus told his followers to eat this special meal to remember and honour him. It is not clear whether they ate the meal before Paul started speaking, after Eutychus came back to life, or both times.

"Paul spoke to the people and, because he intended to leave the next day, kept on talking until midnight." Here Paul is speaking to other believers in Jesus, encouraging and instructing them on how to follow Jesus. He had a lot to say so kept talking very late into the night.

"There were many lamps in the upstairs room where we were meeting." At that time, a lamp was a small clay bowl shaped for a wick on one side. People put oil in it. The oil burned and gave light.

Stop here and show again the images of the oil lamps.

The room that they are in is upstairs, which would have been a large room built on top of the main part of a house.

Stop here and show again the image of the house.

One of the people in the room was Eutychus, a young man between 13 and 19 years old. He was sitting on a thick window ledge. As Paul talked and the room was hot and stuffy, Eutychus began falling asleep. Then he fell into a deep sleep and fell out of the window.

The believers rush down to help Eutychus, but when they pick him up, he is dead.

Stop here and discuss: In your culture, what happens if someone dies on the street or in an accident? How do people react?

Paul sees this happen and immediately runs down to Eutychus and throws himself over him and puts his arms around him. Paul stretches himself out over Eutychus and covers him.

"Don't be alarmed," Paul reassures everyone, as those who have gathered around are sorrowful and had already begun mourning. Paul then tells everyone around him that Eutychus has come back to life from being dead.

Then Paul, along with the believers, and probably Eutychus, go upstairs again and return to the room they were in. There they broke bread and ate together as they did earlier.

Paul then starts teaching again and continues until daylight, and then he leaves the other believers and departs from the house.

The people then take the now living young man home and are very happy.

It's important to note that the order of the written text may be confusing here. As Paul goes back upstairs into the house, it could imply that Eutychus also went back upstairs and listened to more of Paul speaking and then went home after Paul had finished speaking.

Or it may have been that as Paul returned to the room upstairs, that Eutychus was then taken home.

Even though it is not clear at which point Eutychus goes home, the important thing to remember is that Eutychus has been brought back to life and is well and is able to walk by himself. The people who go with him are just going to keep him company, not because he needs any assistance.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has 3 scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- Luke
- Sopater, son of Pyrrhus from Berea
- Aristarchus, from Thessalonica
- Secundus, also from Thessalonica
- Gaius from Derbe
- Timothy from Lystra
- Tychicus, from the province of Asia
- Trophimus also from the province of Asia
- Eutychus
- Relatives or friends of Eutychus
- Group of believers

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

First scene: Paul has arrived in Troas, is reunited with the men that had previously gone ahead of them to Troas, and he is breaking bread with them and speaking in a house to other believers.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing the men traveling with Paul and the other believers, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Happy to see Paul again," or "Looking forward to hearing him speak again," and "Excited to see where Paul will go next." [!end] Restart the action.

"Paul spoke to the people and, because he intended to leave the next day, kept on talking until midnight." Here Paul is speaking to other believers in Jesus, encouraging and instructing them on how to follow Jesus. He had a lot to say so kept talking very late into the night.

The room that they are in is upstairs, which would have been a large room built on top of the main part of a house. "There were many lamps in the upstairs room where we were meeting."

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing the group of believers, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "It's getting late and I'm getting a bit tired," or "But Paul has such good things to say so it's worth staying up for," and "Excited by the challenge of staying awake so that I don't miss anything Paul has to say." [!end] Restart the action.

"Seated in a window was a young man named Eutychus, who was sinking into a deep sleep as Paul talked on and on." Eutychus is a young man, probably aged between 13 and 19 years old. Eutychus starts to get very sleepy.

Stop the action.

"When he was sound asleep, he fell to the ground from the third level." Eutychus had been sitting on the thick window ledge before he fell.

Second scene: Paul and the believers rush down to help, but as others try to pick Eutychus up, they see that he is dead.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing the group of believers, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Shocked that this has happened," or "How sad for someone so young to die," and "Glad that Paul has rushed to his side but not sure what will happen next."

Ask the actors playing Eutychus' friends or relatives, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "So shocked at this sudden death," or "We need to take his body home," and "I'm overcome with grief so I'm going to mourn now." [!end] Restart the action.

Paul covers Eutychus and puts his arms around him and with God's power restores Eutychus back to life. "Don't be alarmed," Paul reassures everyone, as those who have gathered around are sorrowful and had already begun mourning. Paul then tells everyone around him that Eutychus has come back to life from being dead.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing Eutychus, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Why is everyone so pleased I'm alive?" or "I remember falling asleep upstairs but then I woke up down here on the ground, what happened?" and "Grateful to God that he enabled Paul to heal him."

Ask the actors playing Eutychus' friends or relatives, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Can't believe what they are seeing," or "They are so thrilled when they realize that Eutychus is alive," and "Looking forward to getting him home."

Ask the actors playing the group of believers "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Amazed at Paul's' actions," or "Are shocked at how quickly Eutychus has been healed," and "Pleased for the family and friends of Eutychus." [!end] Restart the action.

Third scene: Then Paul, along with the other believers, go upstairs again and return to the room they were in, where Paul breaks bread and eats. Paul then starts teaching again and continues until daylight, and then he leaves the other believers and departs from the house. The people take the now living young man Eutychus home and they are very happy.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing the group of believers, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Amazed at what they have just seen," or "Sad to see Paul go as they have enjoyed hearing his teachings," and "Looking forward to sharing this event with others."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this narrative, Paul, Luke, and the traveling companions of Paul are all in Troas. Paul is teaching in an upstairs room of a house.

On the first day of the week, probably Saturday or Sunday, Paul and the believers came together to **break bread**. Breaking bread was a way to talk about eating a meal together, and possibly eating the Lord's Supper together. For more information on the Lord's Supper, see the Master Glossary.

Paul spoke to the people and, because he intended to leave the next day, kept on talking until **midnight**, this is 12 o'clock at night.

"There were many oil **lamps** in the **upstairs room** where we were meeting." We don't know for sure the exact lamp that would have been used, but these two examples give us an idea of what they may have used. At that time, lamps used in houses were either a small clay bowl that would have had a section of it pinched together. The part that had been pinched would have held a piece of twisted flax, a string or thin rope type material which is called a wick. People then put oil in the bowl.

But under the influence of Greek and Roman design, the lamps had become a round shape at one end and a pointed shape at the other and it was more of a pot rather than a bowl. A small, round opening at the top of the lamp allowed the oil to be re-filled and an enclosed spout, or hole replaced the pinched edge as a way of holding the wick in place. The typical household lamp was built to hold enough oil to burn throughout the night. A twisted cord of flax was used as a wick that would absorb the oil and deliver it to the top of the wick where ignition of the oil occurred.

Stop here and show the images again of both types of oil lamps.

"Seated in a **window** was a young man named Eutychus, who was sinking into a deep sleep as Paul talked on and on." In those days windows didn't have glass in them. They may have had shutters, but these would have been open, so it would have just been a hole in the wall. The edge near the window would have been thick so there was enough room for Eutychus to sit on it.

The people took the young man home alive and were **greatly comforted**, meaning that they were relieved and happy that Eutychus was alive again.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 20:7–12

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3081654 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (5708374 KB)

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Acts 20:13–17

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 20:13–17 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?

2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Do you recall in the previous passage how Paul raised Eutychus back to life in Troas? Now, Paul sends his companions on ahead in a boat while Paul decides to walk. In this narrative we see Paul and his companions traveling around various places, setting off from Troas going through Assos, Mitylene, Kios, Samos, and Miletus on their way to Jerusalem. When he arrives in Miletus, Paul asks the elders of the believers in Ephesus to come to him in Miletus. There Paul speaks to them before he plans to set sail again to head off to Jerusalem. Once on Miletus Paul then sends a message to the Ephesian elders asking them to come and see him in Miletus.

Stop here and show an image of a map highlighting the route Paul walked from Troas to Assos.

The ships sailed on in this narrative would most likely be similar to the boats mentioned earlier in Acts. They would have had oars to steer them and used sails to catch the wind to move them forward.

Stop here and show an image of a sailing boat with oars and sail from around AD 54.

Stop here and show an image of a map highlighting a sailing route from Troas to Assos, then on to Mitylene, then past the island of Kios, then crossing over to Samos and arriving at Miletus.

Luke starts this story by saying, "We went on ahead to the ship and sailed for Assos, where we were going to take Paul aboard." The "we" here is probably referring to Luke and the men traveling with him. Do you recall earlier on in Acts when Paul was traveling with the following men: Sopater, son of Pyrrhus from Berea, Aristarchus, from Thessalonica, Secundus, also from Thessalonica, Gaius from Derbe, Timothy from Lystra, Tychicus and Trophimus from the province of Asia? It's most likely that these are the men traveling with Luke and as Luke is writing this book he is also including himself in this narrative. Luke and the other men leave Paul in Troas and they set sail from Troas to Assos.

At that time most ships used sails and the wind to move forward and oars to steer the boat. This would most likely have been similar to the boats Paul traveled in earlier in Acts. Do you recall when Paul sailed from Philippi to Troas after the Festival of Unleavened Bread? It would most likely have been a very similar boat.

Paul decides to not join the men, but instead travel from Troas to Assos by himself. He was most likely planning to walk the distance. It was a distance of between 20 to 30 miles, or between 32 to 48 kilometers, and would have taken a few days. Paul's means of travel may have been by horseback, or even by some type of carriage, but it's most likely that he walked.

Assos was on a hill over 650 feet, or 200 meters, above sea level. Its harbor was connected to the town by a road. Assos was a town on the coast of the province of Mysia. It was about 20 miles, or 32 kilometers, south of Troas.

Paul said that he would meet Luke and the rest of the men at Assos and join them on the ship.

It's not clear whether Luke and the men looked for Paul after they docked or if Paul looked for them. As the boat would have been easier to find, Paul probably met Luke and the others at the harbor rather than in the city.

When Paul joined them at Assos and came aboard the ship they sailed around 44 miles, or 71 kilometers, further south to Mitylene, which was the capital city, or main town, on the island of Lesbos. Paul and the rest of the men would have spent the night in Mitylene. It is unclear whether they would have slept on the boat or looked for lodgings or a place to sleep in the city. Either way, the boat was docked and would not be moving anywhere overnight.

The next day they sailed by boat from Mitylene heading south toward Kios. They arrived near or across from the coast of Kios. The ship was near the mainland and the people on the ship could see Kios across the sea or channel. Kios is one of the larger islands off the coast of Asia. Kios is an island south of the island of Lesbos.

Stop here and show again the image of the map and pointing out the sailing route from Mitylene to Kios.

Then the day after that they crossed over to Samos, which means they sailed from the shore of Kios to the shore of Samos. For this ship coming from the north, sailing to Samos by boat meant crossing 12 to 19 miles, or 20 to 30 kilometers, of open sea.

The ship probably stopped at Samos for the night. The name Samos refers to both an island and a city on that island. It is southeast of the island of Kios. The city is in the northeast part of the island.

Stop here and show again the image of the map showing the sailing route from Kios to Samos.

On the following day they arrived at Miletus. Miletus was a city on the coast of the province of Asia. Miletus was 30 miles, or 48 kilometers, south of the city of Ephesus.

The route taken by the ship was the most natural to follow; to have gone by Ephesus would have required extra sailing time and distance. It lay slightly south of Ephesus. The sailors probably felt that to sail by boat directly from Kios to Miletus was too long a journey, and therefore the trip was broken up by a stop at Samos. The trip from Samos to Miletus was also most likely too long to complete the journey in a day, so that's probably why they arrived at Miletus the next day.

Paul had already decided to sail past Ephesus to avoid spending time in the province of Asia. This wasn't because he was in danger, or felt afraid to go there; it was to save time and not be delayed in Ephesus. If he had stopped at Ephesus, other believers would have wanted to see him and catch up with him. Paul was keen to get to Jerusalem in time for Pentecost so he needed to continue his journey as quickly as possible. To save time, Paul would most likely have chosen a ship that would sail straight to Miletus without stopping at Ephesus.

Stop here and show the image of the map that highlights the detour and distance that they would have needed to cover if they had gone to Ephesus.

Stop here and tell us about a time that you have needed to get somewhere quickly but you see someone you know on the way. What do you normally do in this situation? What is the most polite thing to do in your culture?

You will remember from an earlier passage in Acts that it was during the Feast of Pentecost that God sent the Holy Spirit to live in the followers of Jesus.

The word Pentecost refers to a holy day for the Jews. It means "fiftieth." It is the Greek name for the Feast of Weeks, fifty days after the Passover.

Paul and the others probably stayed for a few days in Miletus.

When he then gets to Miletus, Paul then sends a message to the elders of the church in Ephesus to come and see him. Paul spent several years in Ephesus and he knows these elders well. He has probably taught them many things about Jesus and about church leadership. Elders is one of the terms used to describe church leaders; it is a term taken over from Judaism, in which the elders were the recognized leaders of the Jewish religious community. The word elder can mean someone who is quite advanced in age but it doesn't always mean that; in this case it is to describe church leaders or leaders of the believers at a village, town, or city. Church may refer either to a group of believers who live and worship together in one place, or to the wider community of the whole church of Jesus.

Stop here and discuss: In your culture what do you call a gathering of believers? What do you call the place or building that you gather together in to worship? What do you call the different leaders of your churches?

Paul would most likely have given the message to another person to pass on to the elders. It may have been a written message but it was most likely spoken. Either way, it was passed on to another person, who then traveled to Ephesus to deliver the message. It is not clear what Paul would have said in his message to prompt them to come, but they must have been eager to catch up with Paul and to see what he had to say to them. As Paul would be in Miletus for a few days, there was enough time for the message to reach the elders at Ephesus and for them to come and see him in Miletus before Paul continues on his journey towards Jerusalem.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has 6 scenes.

First scene: Luke and the rest of the travelling companions board a ship from Troas to Assos. Paul however, stays behind in Troas.

Second scene: Paul decides to avoid the sea journey and instead chooses to go by land from Troas to Assos. Most likely he would have walked.

Third scene: Luke and the other men and Paul are all reunited in Assos where Paul finds their ship and joins them on board. They sail straight to Mitylene where they most likely spend the night.

Fourth scene: They then set sail from Mitylene and travel near to Kios.

Fifth scene: The day after that they cross over to Samos.

Sixth scene: The following day they arrive at Miletus, Paul avoids Ephesus as he is trying to get to Jerusalem before Pentecost. From Miletus, Paul sends a message, most likely telling a message to a person who then goes to pass it on to the elders in Ephesus. Paul invites them to come and join him in Miletus. Paul and the rest of the men then stay in Miletus for a few days.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- A messenger
- The elders of the church in Ephesus

The following group of people are not mentioned in the story, but we know they are traveling with Paul from earlier parts of Acts.

- Luke
- Sopater, son of Pyrrhus from Berea
- Aristarchus, from Thessalonica
- Secundus, also from Thessalonica
- Gaius from Derbe
- Timothy from Lystra
- Tychicus, from the province of Asia
- Trophimus, also from the province of Asia

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

It may be helpful here to stop and draw out a map on the floor and walk around it to get a sense of the amount of traveling that takes place.

Or you could work on a much smaller image of the map cut out pieces of paper to be the boat and move them from one place to another.

Stop here and show an image of a map highlighting the route Paul walked from Troas to Assos.

Stop here and show an image of a sailing boat from 54 AD. At that time most ships used sails and the wind to move forward.

Stop here and show an image of a map highlighting a sailing route from Troas to Assos, then onto Mitylene, then onto Kios, then crossing over to Samos and arriving at Miletus.

Luke and the rest of the traveling companions board a ship from Troas to Assos. Do you recall earlier on in Acts when Paul was traveling with the following men: Sopater, son of Pyrrhus from Berea, Aristarchus, from Thessalonica, Secundus, also from Thessalonica, Gaius from Derbe, Timothy from Lystra, Tychicus and Trophimus from the province of Asia. We know that Luke is with the group because Luke writes as if he is there. Luke says that "we went aboard the ship."

Paul decides to avoid the sea journey and instead chooses to go by land from Troas to Assos by himself and most likely he would have walked. Remember that this was a distance of between 20 to 30 miles or between 32 to 48 kilometers and would have taken a few days.

Assos was on a hill over 650 feet (or 200 meters) above sea level. Its harbor was connected to the town by a road. Assos was a town on the coast of the province of Mysia. It was about 20 miles or 32 kilometers south of Troas.

Luke and the other men and Paul are all reunited in Assos where Paul finds their ship and joins them on board. They sail straight to Mitylene where they most likely spend the night.

They sailed around 44 miles (or 71 kilometers) further south to Mitylene, which was the capital city, or main town on the island of Lesbos. Paul and the rest of the men would have spent the night in Mitylene. It is unclear whether they would have slept on the boat or looked for lodgings or somewhere to sleep in the city. Either way, the boat was docked overnight and would not be moving anywhere.

The next day they sailed by boat from Mitylene heading south toward Kios. The ship was near the mainland and the people on the ship could see Kios across the sea or channel. The island itself is about 34 miles (or 54 kilometers) from north to south. It is narrower east to west. It is only about five miles from the mainland province of Asia.

Stop here and show again the image of the map showing the sailing route from Mitylene to Kios.

Then the day after that they crossed over to Samos. Which means they sailed from the shore of Kios to the shore of Samos. For this ship coming from the north, sailing to Samos by boat meant crossing 12 to 19 miles (or 20 to 30 kilometers) of open sea.

The ship probably stopped at Samos for the night. The name Samos refers to both an island and a city on that island. It is southeast of the island of Kios. The island is about 28 miles (or 45 kilometers) across east to west and 12 miles (or 20 kilometers) north to south. The city is in the northeast part of the island. The southeastern part of the island is 0.9 miles (or 1.4 kilometers) from the mainland.

Stop here and show again the image of the map showing the sailing route from Kios to Samos.

The following day they arrive at Miletus. Miletus was 30 miles (or 48 kilometers) south of the city of Ephesus. From Miletus, Paul sends a message, most likely telling a message to a person who then goes to pass it on to the elders in Ephesus. Paul invites them to come and join him in Miletus. Paul and the rest of the men then stay in Miletus for a few days.

Paul had already decided to sail past Ephesus to avoid spending time in the province of Asia. Remember that this wasn't because he was in danger or felt afraid to go there; it was to save time and not be delayed in Ephesus. Paul would most likely have chosen a ship that would sail straight to Miletus without stopping at Ephesus.

Stop here and show again the image of the map showing the detour and distance that they would have needed to cover if they had gone to Ephesus.

You will remember from an earlier passage in Acts that it was during the Feast of Pentecost that God sent the Holy Spirit to live in the followers of Jesus.

The word Pentecost refers to a holy day for the Jews. It means "fiftieth." It is the Greek name for the Feast of Weeks, fifty days after the Passover.

Paul and the others probably stayed for a few days in Miletus.

When he then gets to Miletus, Paul then sends a message to the elders of the church in Ephesus to come and see him before Paul continues his journey on to Jerusalem.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has 6 scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- A messenger
- The elders of the church in Ephesus

The following group of people are not mentioned in the story, but we know they are traveling with Paul from earlier parts of Acts:

- Luke
- Sopater, son of Pyrrhus from Berea
- Aristarchus, from Thessalonica
- Secundus, also from Thessalonica
- Gaius from Derbe
- Timothy from Lystra
- Tychicus, from the province of Asia
- Trophimus, also from the province of Asia

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

In this narrative we see Paul and his companions traveling around various places, setting off from Troas going through Assos, Mitylene, Kios, Samos, and Miletus as they travel to Jerusalem. When he arrives in Miletus, Paul asks the elders of the believers in Ephesus to come to him in Miletus. There Paul speaks to them before he plans to set sail again to head off to Jerusalem.

First scene: "We went on ahead to the ship and sailed for Assos, where we were going to take Paul aboard."

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing Paul, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Excited for the next stage of his journey," or "Sad that this was most likely his last visit to Troas," and "Reflecting and taking some time to himself on his long walk to Assos." [!end] Restart the action.

Second scene: Paul decides to avoid the sea journey and instead chooses to go by land from Troas to Assos and most likely he would have walked.

Stop the action.

Third scene: Paul then met Luke and the rest of the men at Assos and joins them on the ship.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing Paul's traveling companions, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Glad to see Paul again," or "Seeing that he is tired, they make sure to look after him before continuing on in their journey," and "Looking forward to continuing their journey." [!end] Restart the action.

Paul and the rest of the men would probably have spent the night in Mitylene. A much needed rest for everyone, Paul especially after his long walk. It is unclear whether they would have slept on the boat or looked for lodgings or a place to sleep in the city. Either way, the boat was docked and would not be moving anywhere overnight.

Fourth scene: The next day they sailed by boat from Mitylene, heading south toward Kios.

Fifth scene: Then the day after that they crossed over to Samos.

Sixth scene: On the following day they arrived at Miletus.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing Paul's traveling companions, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Tired from their journey," or "Excited to see what Paul will do whilst they are in Miletus for a few days," and "looking forward to a bit of a rest." [!end] Restart the action.

When he then gets to Miletus, Paul then sends a message to the elders of the church in Ephesus to come and see him.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing Paul's traveling companions, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Glad to have arrived in Miletus for a few days," or "Wondering why Paul has invited the elders to come and see him, as maybe it made more sense to stop at Ephesus?" and "Looking forward to hearing what Paul has to say to the elders."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

We went on ahead to the ship and sailed for Assos, where we were going to take Paul aboard. **Sailed** means they traveled by boat or ship. When Luke and the rest of the men took Paul **aboard** the ship, it means that he joined them on the ship or that Paul came onto the ship where they were.

He had made this "arrangement" because he was going there on foot. **Arrangement** means that Paul had pre-planned to walk this part of the journey, and he then instructed the rest of the men to travel by boat to Assos and then he would meet them in Assos.

The next day we set sail from there and "arrived off" Chios. To **arrive off** somewhere means to sail nearby to that place.

The day after that we "crossed over" to Samos. **Crossed over** means to go from one shore to another shore.

Paul had decided to "sail past" Ephesus. **Sail past** means to not stop at that place.

Translate **Pentecost** as you have done in previous passages. Pentecost is in the Master Glossary.

"From Miletus, Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders of the church." Translate **elder** in the same way as you have in previous passages relating to church elders. Elder is in the Master Glossary. Translate **Church** in the same way as you have in previous passages. Church is in the Master Glossary

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 20:13–17

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3372174 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

[mp3 zip](#) (5947575 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
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- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

Acts 20:18–38

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 20:18–38 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Do you recall in the previous passage when Paul invited the elders of the believers in Ephesus to come and join him in Miletus? The elders have now arrived in Miletus. There Paul speaks to them before he plans to set sail again to head off to Jerusalem. Paul tells them of how well he has behaved whilst he was with them in the province of Asia.

Do you recall from an earlier passage that Miletus was a city on the coast of the province of Asia? Miletus was 30 miles, or 48 kilometers, south of the city of Ephesus.

Do you recall in a previous passage about elders and the church? Elders is one of the terms used to describe church leaders; it is a term taken over from Judaism, in which the elders were the recognized leaders of the Jewish religious community. The word elder can mean someone who is quite advanced in age but it doesn't always mean that; in this case, it is to describe church leaders or leaders of the believers at a village, town, or city. Church may refer either to a group of believers who live in one place, or to the wider community of the whole church of Jesus.

In this part of the narrative Paul talks about the work that he has done in the three years that he has been in the province of Asia. Paul then talks about his current situation and he finishes by talking about the future. This narrative then ends with Paul, along with the Ephesian elders, all praying to God together.

To begin with, we will look at Paul's story as he looks back on his time in the province of Asia.

When the elders of the church in Ephesus arrived, Paul says to them that since the first day that he arrived in the province of Asia he has been doing the Lord Jesus' or master's work. Paul knows that the elders fully know what he has done during his time in Ephesus. Paul starts his speech by saying "you know." This means that the elders of the church in Ephesus personally saw for themselves how Paul lived and worked among them the whole time he was there.

Paul then says that he has been doing things that honored the Lord Jesus. It would probably include praying with people, telling Greeks, or non-Jews, about Jesus, teaching both Jews and Greeks, or non-Jews, and helping others.

Paul continues saying that he served the Lord Jesus with all humility and with tears and with trials. Paul did not act like he was better than others. Paul says that he has cried many tears. Some of these tears probably would have been because of his deep desire to see people come to know the Lord Jesus and it made him sad to see them when they were weak or sinning. It may also have been that he was sad to see fellow believers in Jesus suffer.

Paul also talks of the times he experienced deep suffering and troubles that came from the plots of the Jews that oppose him and his work. There were some Jews who plotted to harm Paul, but he served God even in those difficult times.

Paul spoke everything that was helpful to the believers at Ephesus. He did not withhold anything helpful. He was not afraid of what someone might do to stop him from preaching and teaching about the Lord Jesus. Do you recall in previous passages how Paul would speak boldly to large crowds? At the Amphitheatre, the synagogues, the temples, the lecture hall of Tyrannus? Paul also spoke to smaller gatherings as well, in people's homes.

Stop here and tell us what types of places do you gather in together to talk, worship, and pray?

Stop here and tell us of a time that you felt afraid of something. What did you do, or not do?

Paul had an important message to share with both Jews and Greeks, or non-Jews. He wanted everyone to learn about the Lord Jesus and he did not exclude anyone. Paul's main teaching was that people must turn away from their sins, or disobedience to God, and turn to God. Then they must believe in Jesus.

In the next part of Paul's speech he talks about his current situation. This is why he starts the next section with "and now." He is saying, "This is what I need to do next."

Paul says that "I am bound by the Spirit to go to Jerusalem." This most likely means that Paul is listening to and obeying the Holy Spirit, or the spirit of God. Paul continues by saying that he doesn't know what people will do to him when he gets to Jerusalem. In various cities along the way, the Holy Spirit has been warning, or making it clear to, Paul that he would be put in prison and experience troubles and suffering by the people there.

Stop here and discuss: In your culture, do people have the freedom to preach? If someone doesn't like what they have to say, what happens to them? What happens if people consider someone a criminal? Where do they take them?

Paul then goes on to say, "But my life is worth nothing to me." This does not mean that Paul thought that his life was worthless or had no value. Paul means that he values the work he is doing for Jesus more than his own life. Paul doesn't think it's important whether he lives or dies as long as he is doing the work of the Lord Jesus. Paul still wants to "finish the race," meaning that he wants to complete all the work that the Lord Jesus has planned for him to do. This work was to declare "the good news of God's grace." God's grace is good news because God is kind, merciful, and good to people. He sent his son Jesus to be our savior.

Now Paul talks about his future and the future of the Ephesian church. Paul says how he went from various towns and cities telling people about the Kingdom, or the way God cares for his people as king.

Paul then tells the Ephesian elders that once he departs from Miletus, they will never see him again.

Paul says, "I declare to you today that I am innocent of the blood of any of you." At every possible opportunity, Paul spoke boldly and told people about Jesus. Paul is not responsible for whether or not people chose to become believers in Jesus. God told Paul to tell people about Jesus and Paul was obedient to God's will. Paul is then innocent, he has not neglected to tell everything that God told him to tell people.

Paul then warns them to be on the lookout for danger. Paul tells the Ephesian elders to protect the church of God that the Holy Spirit has made them leaders over. God bought this body of believers with the blood, or death, of his own son, when Jesus died on the cross.

Paul is saying to the Ephesian elders that they are to be like shepherds. And like any good shepherd, they need to take care of and protect their flock of sheep. In this case the flock is the church, or group of believers.

Stop here and discuss: In your culture how do you look after your animals? Do they roam freely or are they cared for? What do you call someone who looks after them?

Paul is warning the elders against people who are false teachers, or teachers who don't fully believe in Jesus. Paul compares these types of people to wolves. Wolves are wild animals similar to large dogs but more fierce. They weigh 30 to 45 kilograms, or 65 to 100 pounds, depending on the kind of wolf. They attack and eat other animals, including sheep. If the group of believers are like sheep, then wolves will want to come and harm them. Paul is saying to the elders that they must watch out for people like that and protect the group of believers.

Stop here and show an image of a wolf and a sheep to get an idea of their size.

Stop here and discuss: What savage animals do you have in your culture that would behave like a wolf?

Paul warns them that even within their own groups of believers there will be some who will decide that they don't want to fully live for God. They will twist the truth so that they can live a life that partly follows God but that also allows them to do what they want, even though it will harm them. They will try to get true disciples of Jesus to come join them in not truly following Jesus.

Paul warns them strongly—he says "Watch out!" or "Be aware!" Paul reminds the elders that when he was with them for 3 years, he very often warned them about false teachers. He "had tears in his eyes" because he was sad. He knew that false teachers might come and harm them.

"Now" introduces the final part of Paul's speech to the Ephesian elders. Since he can no longer be with these believers in Ephesus, he places them in the care of God. Paul trusts that God's message, through the Scriptures, about his grace and kindness to people, will help the church in Ephesus. Paul trusts that God will build up the believers by making them spiritually strong and mature.

Paul also trusts that God will give the believers an inheritance. Usually a person leaves an inheritance to their family when they die. But God will give his family of believers not money or land, but blessings that last forever. God will give eternal life forever to believers because he has set them apart to serve him and be a part of his kingdom.

Paul says that he has never desired to have anyone's silver or gold, or valuable treasure or expensive clothing. He says, "Indeed you yourselves know that I have worked with these hands of mine to provide everything that my companions and I have needed." His companions would have been those who traveled with Paul, serving with him. As we know, Paul worked as a tentmaker and he would have made money this way. With this money he would have bought simple clothes, food to eat, shelters to stay in. Paul then says, "In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of work we must help the weak." Paul was also able to help those that were sick or unable to work and unable to support themselves.

Paul asks the Ephesian elders to "remember," which means "to continue thinking about" the words of the Lord Jesus: "It is more blessed to give than to receive." He who gives something to someone is more blessed by God than those who receive something from someone. Paul repeats the words from the Lord Jesus as an encouragement. The Lord Jesus does not mean that those that receive something from someone are less blessed. He means that it is better for someone who is able to give in order to help others to do so, rather than just keeping everything for themselves.

Paul then stopped speaking and knelt down on the ground. The Ephesian elders probably knelt down with him and altogether they prayed to the Lord Jesus. It was customary during these times to stand to pray but it was likely that Paul may have been wanting to be humble before the Lord Jesus and demonstrated this by kneeling down; it may have also been because he was very sad to leave these men.

Stop here and discuss: In your culture how do you pray? How do you show that you revere or respect God?

After they had finished praying they all cried a lot. The Ephesian elders embraced Paul and kissed him on the cheek as was customary at the time when saying goodbye. This gesture showed that they respected and loved Paul like a brother. The Ephesian elders were grieving over the words Paul had said to them about how they would never see Paul again. The Ephesian elders then took Paul to the ship so that he could continue his journey toward Jerusalem.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

This story has 4 scenes.

First scene: The elders arrive from the church of Ephesus. Paul then talks through his time with them whilst in the province of Asia and how he has served the Lord Jesus, with humility and with tear-filled prayers.

Second scene: In the next part of Paul's speech he talks about his current situation. Paul is listening to and obeying the Holy Spirit. Paul continues by saying that he doesn't know what people will do to him when he gets to Jerusalem, but that he will end up in prison. Paul values the work he is doing for Jesus more than his own life.

Third scene: Now Paul talks about his future and the future of the Ephesian church. He says that once he leaves the Ephesian elders and departs from Miletus, they will never see him again. Paul warns the Ephesian elders

against false teachers, to look after the believers, and to be on their guard. Paul tells them that he is placing them under the care of God.

Fourth scene: After Paul had finished speaking, he knelt down on the ground to pray. After they had finished praying they all cried a lot. The Ephesian elders then took Paul to the ship so that he could continue his journey toward Jerusalem.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- The elders from the church of Ephesus

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action in it.

This narrative is more unusual as Paul is the one doing all the talking. Luke, the author of the book of Acts, adds in his narrative at the end when they gather and pray. It's unclear as to what time of day it is.

The elders have now arrived in Miletus. It is not clear how many Ephesian elders there were and how they traveled to Miletus. As it says "elders" it would suggest that there are at least two. They may have traveled there by a boat similar to the ones that Paul and his companions have been sailing on, or they traveled on land. There Paul speaks to them before he plans to sail from Miletus to Jerusalem. Paul tells them of how well he has behaved whilst he was with them in the province of Asia.

Do you recall from an earlier passage that Miletus was a city on the coast of the province of Asia? Miletus was 30 miles (or 48 kilometers) south of the city of Ephesus.

Stop here and show again an image of a map that highlights the journey the elders took from Ephesus to Miletus if they went by boat, and another route if they went by land.

It is unclear what time of day they are meeting and where they are meeting. Towards the end of this section, they take Paul back to the ship, so Paul was probably meeting them in the city of Miletus. As Paul wanted to only speak to the Ephesian elders at this point, they would not have needed a large place to meet. They could have met in lodging somewhere or may have even sat outside in a quiet area so that they would not be interrupted. The other traveling companions of Paul are not mentioned here.

To begin with, we look at Paul's story as he looks back on his time in the province of Asia. Paul says to them that since the first day that he arrived in the province of Asia he has been doing the Lord Jesus' or master's work. Paul is reminding the Ephesian elders that they personally saw for themselves how Paul lived and worked among them the whole time he was in the province of Asia-how he served the Lord Jesus, praying for people, teaching both Jews and Greeks (or non-Jews), and helping others.

Paul continues saying that he served the Lord Jesus with humility, not raising himself above others. Paul cried a lot while he was in Ephesus, partly because of his deep desire to see people come to know the Lord Jesus, feeling sad to see them weak or sinning, or seeing fellow believers in Jesus suffer. Paul also experienced deep suffering and troubles that came from the plots of the Jews that opposed him and his work. But Paul served God even in those difficult times.

Paul did not hold back anything that was helpful. He was not afraid of anyone. Paul spoke about Jesus in any and every situation. Paul says that he deeply desired for Jews and Greeks, or non-Jews to repent, or to turn away from their sins and turn to God, being obedient and believing in the Lord Jesus.

In the next part of Paul's speech he talks about his current situation. This is why he starts the next section with "and now." He is saying, "this is what I need to do next."

Paul is listening and obeying the Holy Spirit, or the spirit of God. He doesn't know what people will do to him when he gets to Jerusalem. In various cities along the way, the Holy Spirit has been warning, or making it clear to Paul, that he would be put in prison and experience troubles and suffering by the people there.

Paul says, "But my life is worth nothing to me." Paul will continue to do the work that the Lord Jesus has planned for him as long as he is alive, even if it costs him his life. Paul compares his life to running a race. He wants to

finish the race well, meaning that he wants to finish his life well by completing the work God asked him to do. Paul is not afraid of death. Paul declares "the good news of God's grace" over the elders. He means that God shows his kindness, mercy, and goodness towards people by sending his son the Lord Jesus to be our saviour.

Paul then says "and now." Again Paul highlights that the speech has shifted slightly and is now moving onto looking at the future for himself and of the Ephesian church. Paul says how he went from various towns and cities telling people about the kingdom of God. He says that the elders will never see him again.

At every possible opportunity, Paul spoke boldly about Jesus. It is not Paul's responsibility whether the people then chose to become believers in Jesus or not.

Paul then warns them to be on guard, or alert for danger. Paul is saying to the Ephesian elders that they are to be like shepherds looking after their flock, the flock being the church or group of believers. Paul warns them against false teachers who will come from outside and even within the church, who are like wolves.

If the group of believers are like sheep, then wolves will want to come and harm them. Paul is saying to the elders that they must watch out for people like that and protect the group of believers. Paul cries a lot as he knows that false teachers will come and harm the other believers.

Paul compares the elders of the church to shepherds of a flock of sheep, and the believers to the flock of sheep. He compares false teachers to wolves who try to come and eat the sheep.

Stop here and discuss: Talk about a time you compared a person to an animal or to something else in order to explain what they do. Pay attention to the words you use to compare them.

"Now" introduces the final part of Paul's speech to the Ephesian elders, and he places them in the care of God. Paul says that he is handing them to God to take care of them and the word of God's grace will guide their lives. God can build them up to become spiritually strong, stable, and mature.

Paul refers to eternal blessings, which are what God has prepared in heaven for believers in Jesus whom God has chosen and set apart for his purposes.

Paul says that he has never desired to have anything that belonged to someone else. He worked hard with his own hands to buy everything that he and his companions needed and also to help the sick and weak. Paul says the words of the Lord Jesus: "It is more blessed to give than to receive." He who gives something to someone is more blessed by God than those who receive something from someone.

Paul then stopped speaking and knelt down to pray with the Ephesian elders. After they had finished praying they all cried a lot, as the Ephesian elders would deeply miss Paul and he would miss them very much. The Ephesian elders then took Paul to the ship so that he could continue his journey toward Jerusalem.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

This story has 4 scenes.

The characters in this story include:

- Paul
- The elders from the church of Ephesus

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

First scene: The elders of the church in Ephesus arrive and meet with Paul.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing the Ephesian elders, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Excited to be seeing Paul again," or "Wondering what it is that he wants to say to them," and "Looking forward to catching up with him." [!end] Restart the action.

"You know how I have lived the whole time I was with you." The Ephesian elders personally saw for themselves how Paul lived and worked among them the whole time he was there.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing the Ephesian elders, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "We can recall all the times Paul was working to spread the message concerning the Lord Jesus," or "It makes them reflect on what Paul has achieved during his time with them," and "Perhaps at this point they are looking forward to experiencing more." [!end] Restart the action.

"I served the Lord Jesus with humility, not raising myself above others. I cried a lot. Partly because of my deep desire to see people come to know the Lord Jesus, feeling sad to see them weak or sinning, or seeing fellow believers in Jesus suffer. I also experienced deep suffering and troubles that came from the plots of the Jews that oppose me and my work. But I served God even in those difficult times."

Stop the action. Stop the action.

"I did not hold back anything that was helpful. I'm not afraid of anyone and I speak about Jesus in any and every situation. I deeply desire for Jews and Greeks (or non-Jews) to repent, or to turn away from their sins and turn to God, being obedient and believing in the Lord Jesus."

Second scene: "I am listening and obeying the Holy Spirit. I don't know what people will do to me when I get to Jerusalem. In various cities along the way, the Holy Spirit has been warning me, and making it clear to me that I will be put in prison and experience troubles and suffering by the people there."

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing the Ephesian elders, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Worried for Paul's safety," or "Wondering what will happen to him," and "Wondering what will happen on the next part of his journey." [!end] Restart the action.

"But my life is worth nothing to me." I will continue to do the work that the Lord Jesus has planned for me as long as I am alive, even if it costs me my life. I am not afraid of death but continue to declare "the good news of God's grace."

Third scene: "Now I know that none of you who I have gone about preaching with will ever see me again."

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing the Ephesian elders, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Saddened to hear that Paul is leaving and never coming back," or "They respect Paul a lot and they will miss him," and "Although hard, they know he desires to continue this work and they admire him for it." [!end] Restart the action.

"At every possible opportunity, I spoke boldly about Jesus. I am not responsible for whether or not people chose to become believers in Jesus.

Be on the lookout for danger. You are to be like shepherds looking after their flock, the flock being the church or group of believers. Look out for false teachers who will come from outside and even within the church, who are like wolves.

If the group of believers are like sheep, then wolves will want to come and harm them. You must watch out for people like that and protect the group of believers. I cry a lot as I know that false teachers will come and harm the other believers."

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing the Ephesian elders, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Feeling unsettled and afraid at Paul warning them of false teachers," or "Finding it hard to believe that any of the group of the

believers that they know would twist the truth in that way," and "Praying to God for protection as they look after the group of believers." [!end] Restart the action.

"Now I place you in the care of God as I can no longer be with you. The word of God's grace will guide your lives and God can build you up to become spiritually strong, stable, and mature.

You will receive eternal blessings, what God has prepared in heaven for believers in Jesus whom God has chosen and set apart for his purposes."

Stop the action.

"I have never desired to have anything that belonged to someone else, I worked hard with my own hands to buy everything that me and my companions needed and also to help the sick and weak. As the Lord Jesus says, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' He who gives something to someone is more blessed by God than those who receive something from someone."

Stop the action.

Fourth scene: Paul then stopped speaking and knelt down to prayer with the Ephesian elders. After they had finished praying they all cried a lot, as the Ephesian elders would deeply miss Paul and he would miss them very much. The Ephesian elders then took Paul to the ship so that he could continue his journey toward Jerusalem.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing the Ephesian elders, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "We can't believe the time has come to say goodbye," or "We are feeling full of sorrow that we will not see Paul again who we have loved like a brother," and "We will continue to pray for him as he continues his journey."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

When the **elders** of the **church** in Ephesus arrived. Translate elder in the same way as you have in previous passages relating to church elders. Elder is in the Master Glossary. Translate church in the same way as you have in previous passages. Church is in the Master Glossary.

Paul says to the Ephesian elders that since the first day that he arrived in the **province of Asia**. Although he did spend time with the Elders in Ephesus Paul is including all his work in the province of Asia, not just in Ephesus.

Paul continues saying that he served the Lord Jesus with all humility. **Humility** means to not raise yourself above others or think that you are better than someone else.

Paul encouraged people to come to know the Lord Jesus, **repent**, or to turn away from their sins and turn to God, being obedient and believing in the Lord Jesus. Translate repent as you have in previous passages. Repent is in the Master Glossary.

Paul says that "I am **bound by the Spirit** to go to Jerusalem." This is most likely meaning that Paul is listening to and obeying the Holy Spirit. Translate **Holy Spirit** in the same way as you have in previous passages. Holy Spirit is in the Master Glossary.

The Holy Spirit has been warning, or making it clear to Paul that he would be put in prison and experience troubles and suffering by the people there. **Prison** is somewhere that people go when they have been accused of a crime. **Troubles** and **suffering** are the difficult times that Paul will experience when he gets to Jerusalem.

Paul still wants to **finish the race**, meaning he feels like a runner who is running fast as he can in order finish all the work that the Lord Jesus has planned for him to do in the time that Paul has left. This means the work which he was given to do to declare the **good news of God's grace**. Translate **grace** in the same way you have in previous passages. Grace is in the Master Glossary.

Paul says how he went from various towns and cities telling people about the **kingdom of God**, or the way God cares for his people as king. Translate kingdom of God in the same way as you have in previous passages. Kingdom of God is in the Master Glossary.

Paul is saying to the Ephesian elders that they are to be like **shepherds** and to look after their **flock**. Translate shepherd in the same way as you have in previous passages. Shepherds is in the Master Glossary. Like any good shepherd, they need to look after their **flock**, which is a group of sheep. **Sheep** are small cattle animals that are often cared for by shepherds, as they are easily snatched by predators.

Paul is telling the Ephesian elders to be the shepherds of the church of God that the Holy Spirit has made them leaders over, which God **bought with the blood, or death, of his own son**, the Lord Jesus when Jesus died on the cross. This means that by God sending his own son, the Lord Jesus, to die on a cross, He bought the church, or the group of believers in Jesus. This does not mean that it was sold for money. It means that God obtained his people by the blood of his own Son, the Lord Jesus, whose blood was shed when the Lord Jesus died on the cross.

Paul also warns the elders of false teachers. He compares these types of people to wolves. **Wolves** are wild animals similar to large dogs but more fierce. They weigh 30 to 45 kilograms, or 65 to 100 pounds, depending on the kind of wolf. They attack and eat other animals, including sheep.

Stop here and show again an image of a wolf and a sheep to get an idea of their size.

"I ask God to take care of you through the word and the **word of God's grace**." This indicates that Paul expected God to use the Word, or Scripture, to guide and correct the believers at Ephesus. Paul would no longer be present to guide and correct them. God graciously made it possible for people to be reconciled, or brought back into relationship with him, through believing in the Lord Jesus.

Paul then goes on to say "which can build you up and give you an **inheritance** among all those who are **sanctified**." **Inheritance** generally refers to possessions, especially land, but Paul is referring to eternal blessings. What God has prepared in heaven for believers in Jesus whom God has chosen and set apart for his purposes. It refers to all the good things that God will give to believers in the age to come. It would include being given perfect bodies. **Sanctified** means to set apart as God's people or declare holy.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 20:18–38**Audio Content**

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Acts 21:1–9*Hear and Heart*

Hear Acts 21:1–9 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

In the previous passage, we can see Paul often moving from one place to another. Paul visited the disciples of Jesus in Macedonia, Greece, Troas in Mysia, and Asia. Paul was in a hurry to reach Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost. You will remember from earlier that it was during the Feast of Pentecost that the presence of the Holy Spirit filled the believers of Jesus in Jerusalem. The desire of Paul to celebrate the Pentecost in Jerusalem is the reason why he moved from one ship to another. This passage is the story of Paul's return trip on his third missionary journey. Paul travels to Caesarea by sea and to Jerusalem by land. This was not the first time Paul traveled from this region to Caesarea. Caesarea is a city on the Mediterranean coast of the province of Judea. In

Paul's second missionary journey, he traveled through this region. Paul had traveled this route before so he was already familiar with how to go back to Jerusalem.

Show a map of Paul's third missionary journey. Show a photo of a ship that would have been used on the Mediterranean Sea.

Discuss what happens when someone from your culture goes on a long journey. What do they do when they come to a place they have been before?

Starting from Miletus, Paul and his companions traveled by sea to the cities of Cos, Rhodes, and Patara. Patara had an ancient trade route carrying grain from Alexandria to Rome. The journey from Patara to Tyre was about 644 kilometers. Tyre is one of the oldest cities in the Ancient Near East in the province of Phoenicia. Tyre is an important trade route having two harbors. While the ship was at Tyre, Paul and his companions visited the disciples, the followers of Jesus at Tyre. Paul and his companions stayed there for seven days. Paul and the followers of Jesus prayed and had fellowship with them.

Later, Paul traveled from Tyre to Ptolemais which was about 40 kilometers away. Paul also visited the believers in Ptolemais for one day.

Have the team look at the map again, if needed.

Paul traveled from Ptolemais to Caesarea, with a distance of 64 kilometers. This Caesarea is different from Caesarea Philippi where Jesus and the disciples went. King Herod named the city in honor of the Roman Emperor Augustus. When Paul arrived in Caesarea, he went to the house of Philip. Philip had four unmarried daughters who can prophesy, share a message from God. We will remember from an earlier passage that Peter went to the house of Cornelius at Caesarea.

Looking back to the earlier stories in Acts, Philip was chosen as one of the seven helpers of the church. Philip shared the good news of Jesus to the Ethiopian eunuch. Stephen was also included among the seven. Before Paul's conversion, Paul took part in the killing of Stephen. When Paul arrived, we see Paul reconciled with Philip. Both the persecution of Paul, and the arrival of Philip at Caesarea, are in the control of God. The grace of God resulted in the friendship of former enemies.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

The story has three scenes.

First scene: Paul said goodbye to the Ephesian elders at Miletus. Paul and his companions boarded a ship from Miletus and the ship went from port to port and eventually they arrived at Tyre.

Second scene: Paul and his companions reached the coast of Tyre. While the ship was unloading its cargo, Paul visited the disciples (the followers of Jesus) at Tyre. Paul and his companions stayed with the disciples for seven days.

Third scene: This scene describes the voyage of Paul from Tyre to Caesarea. From Tyre, the ship arrived at Ptolemais. Paul and his companions also visited the believers in Ptolemais. The next day, the ship arrived at Caesarea.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Paul's traveling companions including Luke
- The Holy Spirit
- The ship's crew
- Disciples at Tyre
- Believers at Ptolemais, including their wives and children
- Philip
- Philip's four unmarried daughters who prophesy

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action on it.

It is important to remember that the narrative happens while Paul and his companions were aboard the ship. The ship moves from one harbor to another. Paul had taken this voyage before during his second missionary journey.

In the previous passage, Paul claims that the Spirit led him to go to Jerusalem. The disciples (the followers of Jesus) in Tyre, led by the Spirit, told Paul not to go to Jerusalem. There is no contradiction to the work of the Spirit between Paul and the disciples in Tyre. We can say the disciples were led by the Spirit. The disciples prophesied about the future suffering of Paul in Jerusalem. Therefore, it is understandable why the disciples in Tyre urged Paul not to continue toward Jerusalem. It is important to remember to mention the places where they stopped on this journey.

It is important to remember that they visited Philip and his daughters. Earlier in the story, Philip was one of the seven, the first helpers of the church, who went to Caesarea. When Paul arrived at Caesarea, he went and stayed at the house of Philip. Philip had four unmarried daughters who can prophesy. Before Paul reached Jerusalem, he has a habit of visiting the believers of Jesus. Paul visited the believers at Tyre, Ptolemais, and in Caesarea. This practice shows both the missionary and pastoral gifts of Paul. His genuine faith also allowed Paul to be reconciled with Philip. The grace of God resulted in the friendship of former enemies.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

The story has 3 scenes.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Paul's traveling companions including Luke
- The Holy Spirit
- The ship's crew
- Disciples at Tyre
- Believers at Ptolemais, including their wives and children
- Philip
- Philip's four unmarried daughters who prophesy

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points at the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

Paul and his companions left Miletus and went to the ports of Cos, Rhodes, and Patara. They also traveled from Patara to Tyre in the Province of Phoenicia.

Paul met the believers at Tyre. Paul and his companions stayed at Tyre for seven days. The disciples at Tyre urged Paul not to go to Jerusalem. Before Paul left, they knelt together with the believers and prayed with them. Then they bade farewell to one another.

Stop the action.

Ask also the actor who plays as Paul, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Confident because I know the Spirit of God is leading me to Jerusalem."

Paul arrived at the house of Philip. When they arrive, Philip welcomes Paul. Philip also introduced his four daughters to Paul and his companions.

Stop the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

Paul and his companions were traveling from Miletus to Caesarea so they could celebrate the Pentecost at Jerusalem. The narrative describes Paul traveled from one important harbor to another. When they arrived at Tyre, Paul and his companions visited the **disciples**. Use the same word as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on disciples.

Through the **Spirit**, the disciples do not want Paul to go to Jerusalem. The Spirit here is the **Holy Spirit**. Use the same word as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on the Holy Spirit.

When Paul and the disciples at Tyre gathered together, they knelt on the beach and **prayed**. Use the word as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on pray.

When Paul and his companions arrived at Ptolemais, they greeted the brothers and sisters. The followers of Jesus treat each other as family. The use of brothers and sisters here is not the same with blood brothers and sisters. Use the words as you used previously.

Philip, one of the seven, was described as an **evangelist**. An evangelist is someone who tells the good news about Jesus. The gospel is the good news that Jesus was on this earth, died for our sins, and was raised from the dead. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on evangelist.

Philip had four unmarried daughters who were **prophets**. To prophesy describes the activity of prophets. To prophesy is to bring the Word or message of God to people. Use the word prophet as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on prophet.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 21:1–9

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (2542382 KB)

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Acts 21:10–14

Hear and Heart

We hope that the translators listen in three different versions of the Bible, not just one source audio.

Hear Acts 21:10–14 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in the story?
2. What details in the story are not clear?
3. What does the story tell us about the Apostle Paul?
4. What does the story say about doing missions?
5. Who do you know needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

In the previous passage, we can see Paul traveled from Miletus to Caesarea. You will remember that earlier, God's Spirit told Paul to return to Jerusalem. When Paul was at Tyre, some followers of Jesus warned him not to go to Jerusalem. Then Paul and his companions arrived in Caesarea. Paul met with Philip and his four unmarried daughters who can prophesy.

Paul and his companions stayed in the home of Philip for a few days. After Paul had been there a few days, a prophet named Agabus arrived from Judea and went to Paul. You will remember that Agabus appeared earlier in the story. Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Paul and he brought Paul to Antioch. Meanwhile, Agabus went to Antioch from Jerusalem to prophesy about a great famine during the reign of Claudius. Because of the early events in the story, Paul and Agabus probably knew each other as fellow servants of Jesus.

Led by the Holy Spirit, Agabus told what will happen to Paul in the days ahead. Agabus took Paul's belt and he bound his own hands and feet. Agabus said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit." In the Old Testament, the prophets would say, "Thus says the Lord." Agabus spoke with the same authority from God as being led by the Holy Spirit.

Then Agabus gave an explanation, "This is how the Jews at Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles." What Agabus did in binding himself with Paul's belt is called an "acted-out prophecy." In an acted-out-prophecy, Agabus demonstrated what will happen to Paul. Agabus demonstrated to Paul that the Jews will persecute him and hand Paul to the Gentiles, or non-Jews.

Show a picture of an ancient belt similar to the one used by the Jews. Show also a picture of an ancient prison. What would the companions think when they saw Agabus binding Paul with a belt?

Discuss ways that acting or drama is used in your culture to communicate messages.

After Luke and his companions heard the prophecy of Agabus about Paul, all of the people there urged Paul not to go to Jerusalem. We remember that the believers at Tyre also urged Paul not to go. Now everyone, including

Luke and his companions, do not want Paul to go. They do not want Paul to be captured by the Jews when he goes to Jerusalem.

Led by the Spirit, Paul was already convinced and ready to go to Jerusalem. Earlier, Paul said to the elders of the church in Ephesus that he was ready to face imprisonment or difficulties in Jerusalem. Here, Paul said to everyone there, "What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart?" Paul was determined to go to Jerusalem. Paul was asking them to stop trying to persuade him not to go. Paul added, "For I am ready not only to be imprisoned but even to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." Paul was willing to go because the Spirit led him. Paul also knew that he has a higher purpose because Paul is going to Jerusalem for the sake of Jesus.

The companions there could not urge Paul to stop from going to Jerusalem. So they said, "Let the will of the Lord be done." The believers accepted what will happen to Paul as God's will.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

The story has two scenes.

First scene: In the first scene, Agabus comes from Judea and goes to Caesarea where Paul and his companions were. Agabus bound his own hands and feet with Paul's belt. Then Agabus spoke a prophecy about what will happen to Paul in Jerusalem. The believers who were present urged Paul not to go.

Second scene: Paul told his determination to go to prison or even death. Paul was willing to do even difficult things for the name of the Lord Jesus. The believers could not stop Paul from proceeding to Jerusalem. They accepted what the will of God is for Paul.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Paul's traveling companions, including Luke
- The Holy Spirit
- Agabus
- Philip
- Other believers in Caesarea

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action on it.

Remember that Paul was staying at the home of Philip in Caesarea. It is important to remember that the narrative happens when Agabus came and bound himself with Paul's belt. Then Agabus spoke a prophecy. Those who listened urged Paul not to continue his journey. Remember that the people had previously tried to convince Paul not to go to Jerusalem. It is also important to remember that Paul refused to stop but showed himself determined to continue to Jerusalem.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

The story has 2 scenes.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Paul's traveling companions, including Luke
- The Holy Spirit
- Agabus
- Philip
- The believers in Caesarea

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points at the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

Agabus comes into the story, then he bound himself with Paul's belt. Then Agabus pronounces a prophecy.

Stop the action.

The believers at Caesarea were concerned about what will happen to Paul. The believers tried to stop Paul from continuing his journey to Jerusalem.

Stop the action.

Ask also the actor who plays as Paul, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Brave and determined because I know I am going to Jerusalem for Jesus," and "Sad because even Paul's companions do not want him to continue on his journey."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

Agabus was a **prophet**. To **prophecy** describes the activity of prophets. To prophesy is to bring the Word or message of God to people. Use the word prophet as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on prophet.

Agabus came from **Judea**, a district or province in southern Israel. Use the word Judea as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on Judea.

Agabus spoke in the power of the **Holy Spirit**. Use the same word as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on the Holy Spirit.

Paul will be captured by the **Jews** when he goes to Jerusalem. The Jews refers to an ethnic group and a group of people who practice the religion of Judaism. Use the word Jews as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on Jews.

The Jews will deliver Paul to the **Gentiles**. Gentiles refer to any non-Jewish person. Use the word Gentiles as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on Gentiles.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 21:10–14

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Acts 21:15–26

Hear and Heart

We hope that the translators listen in three different versions of the Bible, not just one source audio.

Hear Acts 21:15–26 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

Paul and his companions were about to enter Jerusalem from Caesarea. Both cities were located in the province of Judea. Some of the believers in Caesarea went with Paul. They stayed at the house of Mnason of Cyprus, a fellow believer. The name of Mnason appears only once in the Bible.

Paul and his companions arrived at Jerusalem where they planned to celebrate the Feast of the Pentecost. They were received by fellow believers in Jerusalem.

The next day, Paul went to James and the other elders, or leaders, of the church in Jerusalem. We will remember that during earlier trips, Paul and Barnabas also reported the signs and miracles happening among the Gentiles, those who are not Jews. This James in the story is the son of Joseph and Mary. He is the brother of Jesus to the same mother, Mary. James is also the author of the book of James. The James in this story is different from the Apostle James. Earlier in the story, we will remember that Herod put to death the Apostle James, son of Zebedee.

Show a map of Paul's return trip from Miletus to Jerusalem.

Stop and discuss: How do you feel after returning from a long journey? What do you do? Who are the first people you visit?

Just as with the earlier trips, Paul reported the events to James and the elders of Jerusalem. After he greeted James and the elders, Paul reported about his ministries. Ministry is the service Paul did for God among the Gentiles, such as teaching, preaching, praying, and helping others. Paul's companions from the Gentile churches show that Paul's ministry was effective. James and the elders of Jerusalem were happy to hear Paul's report from his third missionary journey. They praised the Lord for what he was doing among the Gentiles through Paul's ministry.

The elders told Paul about an issue concerning the believing Jews. The elders heard that the Jews were spreading rumors about Paul's teaching. These rumors came from Jews who thought that it was very important to follow the law perfectly. We remember that in the earlier meeting with Paul and James, some Jews complained that Paul was against the circumcision of Gentile believers. Some Jews also spread rumors that Paul taught Jewish believers not to circumcise their own children. The Jews also said Paul told the new believers not to follow Jewish customs.

James and the elders knew these accusations against Paul are false. According to the elders, the Jews opposed to Paul will surely be aware that he is in Jerusalem. When the Jews opposed to Paul hear about this, they will surely put Paul's life in danger.

The elders wanted to assist Paul to show that Paul followed the Jewish laws. They suggested to Paul to take four men who are under a vow. The four men were under a Nazirite vow. For a period of thirty days, these men would abstain from drinking wine and strong drink. They will also stay away from being defiled such as being in contact with a dead person. At the end of the thirty day period, the four men will present their offerings to the temple. In addition to the offering, the four men will also have to cut their hair and have the hair burned in the sacrificial fire.

The elders urged Paul to join the four men in their ritual of purification. They urged Paul to pay for the expenses related to the vow of these four men. Then the Jews will see Paul's payment as an act of charity. Because Paul came from the lands of Gentiles, Paul needed to make himself clean. For Paul to be clean, he needs to purify

himself to make sure he is ceremonially clean. When Paul performs the ritual of purification, the Jews would know that Paul observed the Laws of Moses. This act from Paul will also show that the rumors against Paul were false. Paul did not teach Jewish believers to stop following the Law of Moses.

Stop and have the team discuss vows or purification rituals in your culture. What do people in your culture do when they perform a vow? What are practices in your culture that make a person unclean? What should you do to become clean? If you don't have these practices in your culture, how would you describe them in your language?

You will remember that in a previous passage, the elders of the church sent a letter to the Gentile believers. In the letter they told them to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from eating food with blood, and from eating animals that were strangled. The Gentile believers should also avoid sexually immoral activities. We will remember that James and the elders also commanded such things to Paul and Barnabas when they were in Jerusalem during their earlier trip.

On the next day, Paul went with the four men to the temple, the Jewish place of worship. Paul and the four men performed the ritual of purification and presented their offerings to the temple. The performance of the ritual shows Paul followed, or obeyed, the Law of Moses.

Show a picture of Herod's temple in Jerusalem.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

The story has four scenes.

First scene: Paul and his companions traveled from Caesarea to Jerusalem. They lodged at the house of Mnason of Cyprus at Jerusalem. The believers of Jerusalem welcomed Paul and his companions.

Second scene: The next day, Paul went to James and the elders of the church in Jerusalem. Paul reported to them all his ministries of teaching, preaching, and helping in the Gentile churches.

Third scene: The church elders were concerned about the rumors. They suggest Paul pay for the purification ceremony for the four men.

Fourth scene: Paul left with the four men who were under a vow. They went to the temple and performed the ritual of purification.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Paul's traveling companions, including Luke
- Believers from Caesarea
- Believers of Jerusalem
- Mnason of Cyprus
- James
- The elders of the Jerusalem church
- The four men under a vow

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action on it.

It is important to remember that the Holy Spirit led Paul to return to Jerusalem. Remember that in the previous passage, the prophet Agabus warned that Paul would be arrested in Jerusalem.

Remember what Paul and his companions did when they arrived in Jerusalem. When he arrived in Jerusalem, Paul stayed at the house of Mnason of Cyprus. The next day, Paul made a report to the church elders. Remember

the elders' response to Paul's report. The elders of the church told Paul about false rumors being told about him. They expressed concern about how the Jews might react to Paul being in Jerusalem. Remember the elders' suggestion to Paul to help stop the rumors.

It is important to remember that before this story happened the Jewish church leaders sent the non-Jewish, or Gentile, believers a letter that stated what Jewish laws were necessary for them to follow. The church leaders remind Paul of what was in that letter-just three rules:

1. Don't eat food that had been offered to idols,
2. Don't eat blood or meat of strangled animals, and
3. Don't be sexually immoral.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

The story has 4 scenes.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Paul's traveling companions, including Luke
- Believers from Caesarea
- Believers in Jerusalem
- Mnason of Cyprus
- James
- The elders of the church in Jerusalem
- The four men under a vow

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points at the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

Act out Paul and his traveling companions leaving Caesarea and going to Jerusalem. The believers from Caesarea took them to the house of Mnason in Jerusalem where Paul stayed.

Act out Paul going to James and the Jerusalem church elders. Paul reports to them what God was doing in their activities among the Gentiles, those who were not Jews. The elders praise God.

Stop the action.

Ask also the actor who plays as Paul, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Excited to share the wonders and signs from God I witnessed while I was among the Gentile churches." [!end] Restart the action.

Act out the elders warning Paul about rumors. They suggest that Paul join with the four men in performing their ritual of purification at the temple.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing as the elders, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Anxious that the Jews were falsely accusing Paul," and "Thinking of ways how to protect Paul from those accusations."

Act out Paul and the four men going to the temple to notify the priest of their upcoming ceremony.

Ask the actor playing Paul, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Thankful of being able to take part once more in temple activities," and "Happy to make friends with these 4 men."

Ask the actors playing the four men, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Privileged to be with a powerful man of God," and "Honored to fulfill the vow before God."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

Paul and his companions arrived at Jerusalem so they could celebrate the Feast of Pentecost there. The narrative describes Paul traveled by land from Caesarea to Jerusalem. The **disciples** at Jerusalem welcomed them. Use the same word as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on disciples.

Afterwards, Paul went to James and the **elders** of the Jerusalem **church**. Use the same word as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on the elders and church.

Paul reported to James and the elders what the Lord was doing among the **Gentiles**. Use the same word as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on Gentiles.

The elders of the church mentioned to Paul about **Jews** who believed. Use the same word as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on Jews.

There were Jews who spread rumors that Paul prohibited Jewish believers to **circumcise** their children. Use the same word as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on the word circumcise.

The elders also urged Paul to join with the four men to **purify** themselves. Paul and the four men went to the temple to give their **purification offering**. This is an offering given at the temple after the completion of a ritual to become **clean**, fit for service for God. Use the same word as you used previously in other passages. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on the word purification offering and clean.

Paul and the four men went to the **temple**. Use the same word as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on the word temple.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 21:15–26

Audio Content

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Acts 21:27–36

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 21:27–36 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God and his son Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

In the previous passage, Paul and his companions came to Jerusalem. Paul went to James and the Christian elders and told them about the activities of teaching and preaching the gospel, or good news in other lands. The elders of the church encouraged Paul to participate with the four men in their purification ritual.

In the Jewish tradition, Paul needs to purify himself for seven days before he can be ceremonially clean. He needed to do this because he had just come from the Gentile area. Before Paul completed the seven days of purification, some Jews from Asia saw him at the temple, their place of worship. These Jews from Asia caused Paul some trouble. Earlier, James and the elders of the church warned Paul about some Jews spreading rumors against him.

Paul may have met these Jews from Asia before during his travels. These Jews accused Paul of teaching falsely against the people, the Law of Moses, and the temple. We will remember that in the Gospels, the Jews also accused Jesus of speaking against the temple, the place of worship for the Jews. Now, these Jews accused Paul because of his testimony about Jesus.

The Jews also accused Paul of bringing a Greek man into the temple. The Jews believed that the presence of non-Jews in the temple, such as the Greeks, made the temple unclean, or not acceptable to God. When the Jews saw Paul with Trophimus the Ephesian in the city, the Jews assumed that Paul also brought Trophimus to the temple area. The Jews who were there arrested Paul and dragged him out of the temple. They call out for other Jewish men to come help them. They called out, "Men of Israel, help!" Then they closed the gates of the temple and tried to kill Paul.

Show a picture of Herod's temple.

Stop and discuss: How do people in your culture react when a person is accused of doing something bad to someone? In your culture, what are some locations that are off limits to certain groups of people? What are the consequences if someone who is not supposed to be there is found there?

During the time of Paul, the Roman government controlled Jerusalem and the temple. Someone reported to the commander of the Roman battalion stationed at Jerusalem that there was a problem at the temple. In the NIV, the word for commander means "leader of one thousand." This kind of officer commanded six hundred to a thousand soldiers in the Roman army. This leader would have six to ten centurions under him who each would lead about 100 soldiers. The task of the commander is to maintain order in the city. The commander went out to the place where Paul was along with some soldiers and centurions. A centurion is a Roman officer who commands 100 soldiers. When the crowd of angry Jews saw the Roman commander and his soldiers, they stopped beating Paul.

Show a picture of Roman soldiers.

Stop and discuss: In your culture, what happens when a crowd forms and begins to take the law into their own hands? Who has the authority in your community to administer justice? What would the authorities do if a crowd tried to administer justice?

The commander arrested Paul and the soldiers took him. The soldiers bound Paul with two chains like a criminal. The commander asked who Paul was and what he did. But the crowd of angry Jews shouted noisily. The commander could not know the truth because the Jews were saying different things about Paul to the commander. So the commander brought Paul to their barracks, the place where the soldiers lived. This barracks was called the Antonia Fortress. The Antonia Fortress was located next to the temple. The violent crowd caused the soldiers to carry Paul—they carried him to protect him. The crowds shouted to the soldiers, "Away with him," or "Kill him!"

Show a picture of the temple of Jerusalem and the Antonia Fortress.

We remember what Paul told the Ephesians elders before returning home. The Holy Spirit told Paul that chains and troubles shall come to him when he gets to Jerusalem. We can see the message of the Holy Spirit happening in this event. Paul was also carried to the steps near to the location where Jesus stood trial.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

The story has three scenes.

First scene: While Paul was at the temple, the Jews from Asia accused Paul of teaching falsely against their Law and the temple, the Jewish place of worship. The Jews also accused Paul of bringing a Gentile (a non-Jew) into the temple area which was forbidden. The Jews brought Paul out of the temple and beat him.

Second scene: The Roman commander heard that there was trouble in Jerusalem, a possible riot. The commander and his soldiers went to the place where Paul was surrounded by the Jews.

Third scene: Paul was arrested and carried by the Roman soldiers away from the crowds who tried to kill him. They brought Paul to their barracks.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Jews from Asia
- The crowd of Jews
- The Roman commander
- The centurions and soldiers

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action on it.

It is important to remember that the Holy Spirit led Paul to return to Jerusalem. Paul continued his journey even when the disciples at Tyre, the Prophet Agabus, and his own companions urged Paul not to go.

It is important to remember that the story happens while Paul was completing his seven days of purification. It is also important to remember that Paul encountered there Jews from Asia who opposed his preaching of the gospel.

It is important to remember that there were Jews in different places who knew Paul. These Jews accused Paul of speaking against the people, the Law of Moses, and the temple. It is important to remember that people came running from all over the temple area. The people dragged Paul from the inner parts of the temple to the outer parts of the temple and shut the gates to the inner part of the temple so the crowds could not riot in the holy parts of the temple.

It is important to remember that the Roman commander and his soldiers heard what was happening at the temple area. The Roman commander went to the temple area to stop the Jews who were attacking Paul. The soldiers carried Paul to stop the Jews from hitting him.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

The story has 3 scenes.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Jews from Asia
- The crowd of Jews
- The Roman commander
- The centurions and soldiers

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points at the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

Act out Paul when he was still completing his seven days of purification at the temple. The Jews from Asia recognize him at the temple. The Jews accuse him of teaching falsely against the people, the Law of Moses, and the temple. The Jews called out to the "Men of Israel" to help them. They say, "This man teaches everyone against our people, the Law of Moses, and this place. He also brings in non-Jews to the temple and makes it unclean."

Stop the action.

Ask also the actor who plays Paul, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Afraid but not surprised of seeing opposing Jews," and "Trusting the protection from the Lord Jesus." [!end] Restart the action.

Act out the other Jews coming to help the Jews from Asia. They arrested Paul and took him outside the gates of the temple. Then they beat Paul and tried to kill him.

Stop the action.

The crowd of Jews gathered around Paul. They brought Paul outside the temple and they beat him. Act out the Roman commander rushing to where Paul was. The commander brings the soldiers with him to see what was happening. The soldiers stop the crowds from beating Paul. The commander tries to get answers but the crowd gives different responses. Paul is arrested.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing as Paul, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I am hurting in pain but trusting in God." [!end] Restart the action.

Act out the soldiers carried Paul away from the Jews who were trying to hurt him. Act out the crowd of Jews who shouted, "Away with him!" The soldiers take Paul to the barracks.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing as the Jews, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Feeling frustrated because the soldiers tried to protect Paul."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

Paul was at the **temple**, the Jewish place of worship, when he was completing his seven days of purification. There were **Jews** from Asia who accused Paul of many things. The Israelites or **Men of Israel** refers to the Jewish people who live in Israel. Use the same words as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on Jews, Israel, and temple.

The Jews accused Paul of teaching against the **law**, which was the Law of Moses. Use the same word as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on the law.

The Jews also accused Paul of bringing a **Gentile** into the temple courts. Use the same word as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on Gentile.

The Jews believed that when Paul brought a Gentile to the temple, the temple was defiled, making the place unclean or unfit for service to God. The Jews considered the temple **holy**. Use the same word as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on holy.

The **commander**, or tribune, was the Roman officer who led the entire battalion of soldiers stationed at Jerusalem. A commander led from six hundred to one thousand soldiers. This officer commanded six to ten centurions. The commander went to Paul with his **centurions** and soldiers. Each centurion commands one hundred soldiers. Use the same word as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on the commander and centurion.

When they arrested Paul, the soldiers brought him to their **barracks**. The barracks may refer to the Roman headquarters or fortress at Jerusalem where the soldiers lived.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 21:27-36

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Acts 21:37–22:21

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 21:37–22:21 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus or God?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

In the previous passage, a large group of angry Jews attacked Paul and tried to kill him. The Roman commander and his soldiers rushed to the place and they took Paul to their barracks. As they were about to go inside the barracks, Paul spoke to the commander in Greek. The commander was surprised to hear him speak in the Greek language. The commander asked Paul, "Are you not the Egyptian who recently led a rebellion and led four thousand men of the Assassins out into the wilderness?" The Assassins refer to a group of rebels, a terrorist group who fought against the Romans. The commander does not understand why so many Jews attacked Paul. The commander thought Paul was a leader of a terrorist group.

Paul introduced himself to the commander as a Jew from Tarsus. Tarsus is an important city in the province of Cilicia. In other words, Paul tells the commander he was not the Egyptian that the commander thought he was. Paul asked the commander for the permission to speak to the Jews. The commander allowed him to stand at the steps so Paul could speak to the people. Paul was probably standing at the top of the steps leading into the barracks. Paul motioned his hands to show that he was asking the Jews to remain silent.

Have the team discuss how people in your culture get the attention of a crowd so that they may speak to them.

In this passage, Paul tells the Jews about his life story and explains his side to the people. Remember that the Jews from Asia spread rumors that Paul spoke against the Jewish law, the people, and the temple, the place of worship for the Jews. Paul spoke to the Jews in Hebrew. "In Hebrew" is an expression used to describe the mother tongue of the Jewish people, which is a dialect also called Aramaic. Paul spoke in Aramaic to show that he was a true Jew like the people. When the Jews heard Paul speaking Aramaic, they were silent.

Paul addresses the crowd by calling them "brothers and fathers." This is a respectful way of addressing the men in the crowd, acknowledging that some of them were younger and others were older.

Have the team discuss the terms of respect used in your language when addressing groups of people.

Then Paul tells his story about his background. Paul was a Jew from Tarsus. Paul was educated at the feet of Gamaliel, meaning that Paul studied in Jerusalem under Gamaliel, a rabbi, or religious teacher, who was popular among the Jews in their time. You can remember that earlier, Luke mentions Gamaliel as a Pharisee in the council of the Jews who was a teacher of the Jewish law. In his story, Paul trained strictly in the Jewish law. Paul was religious like most of the Jews who were listening to him. Paul defends himself from the accusations of some Jews that Paul spoke against the Jewish people and the temple, the place of worship.

Have the team discuss how people in your community settle your complaints and differences.

Then Paul talked about his part in persecuting the Way, the followers of Jesus. Before Paul became a believer of Jesus, he persecuted the believers. Paul put some of the believers to prison, and put some to death. We will remember that in an earlier story, Stephen, one of the seven servants, was stoned to death by the Jews.

After Stephen's death, Paul persecuted other believers of Jesus. We will remember that Paul asked for letters from the high priest and the council of the Jews. Paul asked for letters so Paul can have authority to arrest and imprison the followers of the Way at Damascus. Damascus was a big city in the territory of Gentiles which was north of Galilee.

Next Paul tells of his encounter with Jesus. We will also remember that earlier, Paul saw a great light at noon when he was traveling towards Damascus. Paul fell to the ground because of the bright light. Paul also heard a voice talking to him. The voice said, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" Saul is the Hebrew version of the Greek name Paul. Paul responded, "Who are you, Lord?" Then the voice said, "I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting." Nazareth was the hometown of Jesus. When Paul persecuted the believers, it was like he was persecuting Jesus himself.

The men who were with Paul saw the light but they did not understand the voice. Paul said, "What shall I do, Lord?" And the Lord answered, "Rise and go to Damascus and there you will be told all that is appointed for you to do." Paul could not see after he saw the bright light. The men who were with Paul led him by the hand to Damascus.

When Paul came to Damascus, a man named Ananias, a person devoted to the Jewish law, came to Paul. We will remember that Ananias was also mentioned in an earlier passage. Ananias said, "Brother Paul, receive your sight." Then Paul was able to see again.

Ananias added, "The God of our fathers appointed you to know his will, to see the Righteous One, and to hear a voice from his mouth." The God of our fathers refers to the same God worshipped by the Jews in previous generations. God appointed or chose Paul for a special reason. The Righteous One is a title used by the Jews for the Messiah or Promised Savior. Ananias was saying that Jesus was the Messiah. To hear a voice from his mouth may refer to Paul's hearing of the voice when Paul was on his way to Damascus.

Ananias also said to Paul, "You will tell everyone what you have seen and heard about the good news of Jesus." Paul will tell everyone, both Jews and Gentiles, or non-Jews, the good news.

Ananias tells Paul, "Why do you wait?" which means "Don't wait any longer!" "Be baptized, or washed in water to show that your sins are forgiven. Call the name of Jesus to ask him for help."

Paul left Damascus and returned to Jerusalem. While Paul was praying at the temple in Jerusalem, he fell into a trance, which means God caused him to see amazing things. God told Paul to leave Jerusalem. God said that people would not accept what Paul says about Jesus.

Paul tried to tell God that the same people who did not accept him were the same people who knew about how he used to persecute believers in Jesus. Paul used to go to different synagogues, or Jewish places of prayer, and imprisoned believers. Then Paul even approved of the killing of Stephen, one of Jesus' followers.

God responded to Paul and said again that Paul must leave. The people will not accept him. He needs to go far away to the non-Jews, or Gentiles, and share the good news about Jesus there.

This is the second time we hear this story of Paul in Acts. We know from the earlier story that when Jesus tells Paul to leave Jerusalem, the Jewish believers in Jesus send Paul first back to his hometown of Tarsus.

Have the team discuss what people in your culture, what kinds of things happen to people that make them need to leave their home or town?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

The story has five scenes.

First scene: Paul asks permission from the commander so he can explain himself before the crowd. The Roman commander allowed Paul to speak to the people.

Second scene: Paul stood at the steps before the crowd of Jews. Paul introduced himself as a Jew who followed the Mosaic Law seriously. Paul even worked closely with the high priest and the council of Jews.

Third scene: Paul tells the Jews about his experience when he was going to Damascus. On his way, Paul was struck by a very bright light from heaven which blinded him. Paul heard a voice speaking to him. The voice said, "I am Jesus of Nazareth whom you are persecuting." Then Jesus told him to go to Damascus to meet with a certain person there.

Fourth scene: Because Paul could not see, the Jews who were with him led him to Damascus. We will remember that God spoke to Ananias earlier in the story. Ananias went to Paul and said, "Brother Saul, receive your sight." Ananias also told Paul that God appointed Paul to be his witness.

Fifth scene: Paul returned to Jerusalem. While Paul was praying at the temple, Paul saw a vision of the Lord telling him to get out of Jerusalem quickly. God told Paul to go to far away places to tell the Gentiles about Jesus.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Paul's companions on the road to Damascus
- Jesus
- The crowd of Jews
- The Roman commander
- The centurions and soldiers
- The high priest and council of Jews
- The believers at Damascus
- Ananias

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action on it.

It is important to remember that the Jews from Asia had accused Paul of speaking against the Law of Moses, the people, and the temple.

It is important to remember that Paul stopped the commander before the commander took Paul into the barracks. Paul spoke to the commander in Greek. He spoke in polite language.

It is important to remember that the commander thought Paul was a terrorist from Egypt. Paul corrected the commander and told him where he was from.

It is important to remember that the commander gave Paul permission. Then Paul stood on the steps. Then he made a motion to the crowd. They became silent. He began speaking in their language, a dialect of Hebrew called Aramaic.

Paul introduced himself by telling where he was from and who taught him the Law of Moses. Paul explained to the Jews that, like them, he was also faithful to keeping the Law of Moses. But Paul began to make the followers of Jesus suffer. Paul asked for letters from the high priest to get permission to arrest the followers of Jesus. Paul began to travel to Damascus. About noon, a bright light struck Paul and he became blind. Paul continued to travel to Damascus. His companions helped him travel because he was blind.

When Paul arrived in Damascus, a man named Ananias came to him and healed him. Ananias told Paul that God appointed Paul to tell the good news about Jesus to all people, especially the Gentiles. Ananias asked a question, "What are you waiting for?" Ananias does not expect Paul to answer this question. Ananias is telling Paul that he should be baptized right away.

Then Paul returns to Jerusalem. He continued to worship at the Jewish temple. God put Paul into a trance and Paul saw Jesus speaking to him. Jesus warns Paul to leave Jerusalem immediately because people will not accept him. Paul is in danger.

Paul reminds Jesus that he used to persecute Jesus' followers. But Jesus says to leave Jerusalem right away. He will send them to the Gentiles far away.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

The story has 5 scenes.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Paul's companions on the road to Damascus
- Jesus
- The crowd of Jews
- The Roman commander
- The centurions and soldiers
- The high priest and council of Jews
- The believers at Damascus
- Ananias

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points at the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

Act out Paul being brought to the barracks entrance. The Roman commander wants to know who Paul was. Paul tells the commander that he was a Jew from Tarsus.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor who plays as Paul, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I am not worried because I am innocent," or "I need to clarify to the commander who I was." [!end] Restart the action.

Paul stood at the steps before the Jews. Paul spoke to the Jews in Aramaic, the language of the Jews. Paul introduces himself as a Jew from Tarsus but trained in Jerusalem by Gamaliel, a well-known rabbi during their time.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing as the Jews who were listening, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Pitiful because this man was attacked but he may be innocent," or "Angry at Paul because he teaches against the Law of Moses and the temple."

Paul tells of his story about his way to Damascus. Paul tells about his experience of seeing a bright light and hearing a voice. You will remember that Paul was telling the Jews about his former life when he persecuted the believers of the Way. Because of the light, Paul could not see. The voice said to Paul, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" Paul answered, "Who are you. Lord?" The voice said, "I am Jesus of Nazareth whom you are persecuting."

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing as Jesus, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Angry because Paul was out to persecute the believers."

Ask the actors playing the Jews who were with Paul, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Afraid and don't know what was happening." [!end] Restart the action.

Paul was led by his companions to Damascus. God sent Ananias to Paul. Ananias said to Paul, "Brother Saul, receive your sight." Paul was able to see again. Ananias also said to Paul, "The God of our fathers appointed you to know his will, to see the Righteous One, and to hear a voice from his mouth." Ananias also said, "You will be a witness for him to everyone of what you have seen and heard."

Stop the action.

Paul returned to Jerusalem. While he was praying at the temple, the place of worship of the Jews, Paul fell into a trance. A trance is a mental state where a person can see a vision. Jesus said to Paul, "Make haste and get out of Jerusalem quickly because the Jews will not accept your testimony about me." Paul answered, "Lord, they themselves know that in one synagogue after another, I imprisoned and beat those who believed in you." Jesus said to Paul, "Go, for I will send you away to the Gentiles."

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing Paul, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Obedient to the call of Jesus." [!end] Restart the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

The soldiers arrested Paul and took him to the barracks, the place where the Roman army stayed in Jerusalem. Paul asked the Roman commander if he could speak with him. Use the same word for **commander** as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on commander.

The commander asked Paul if he was the Egyptian who took 4,000 terrorists, or rebels, out to the **wilderness**. Use the same word for wilderness that you have in previous passages, and see the Master Glossary for more information about wilderness.

Paul said he was a **Jew** who followed the **law**. Use the same word for Jew and law that you have in previous passages, and see the Master Glossary for more information on these words.

Paul spoke to the Jews in **Hebrew** which was Aramaic, their native language.

Paul said that the Jewish **High Priest** and **Council**, or **Sanhedrin**, knew that he **persecuted** the believers in Jesus in his early life. Use the same words as you used previously for persecuted, high priest, and Jewish council. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on these words.

Paul persecuted the followers of the Way. **The Way** refers to the name that followers of Jesus used for themselves. Use the same term for "The Way" that you have used in previous passages.

When Paul traveled to Damascus, a light shone from **heaven**, or the sky. Use the same word for heaven, or sky, that you have used previously.

When Ananias came to Paul, God said to Ananias that Paul will be a **witness** for Jesus. A witness refers to a person who reports what he has seen and heard.

Ananias also told Paul to rise and be **baptized** and to wash away his **sins**. Use the same word for baptize and sin as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on baptism and sin.

Paul returned to the **temple**, the place of worship of the Jews at Jerusalem. Use the same word for temple as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on temple.

When Paul was at the temple of Jerusalem, the place where the Jews worshiped, God caused Paul to fall into a **trance**. A trance is used to describe a mental state where a person sees an incredible thing and is astonished, amazed at the sight.

Paul went from one **synagogue** to another looking for the followers of Jesus. Use the same word for synagogue as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on synagogue.

Jesus said to Paul, "Go for I will send you far away to the **Gentiles**." Use the same word for Gentile as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on Gentile.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 21:37–22:21**Audio Content**

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Acts 22:22–29*Hear and Heart*

Hear Acts 22:22–29 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

In the previous passage, the Roman commander gave Paul permission to speak before the Jews. Paul explained himself to them. The Jews listened to him until Paul mentioned the Gentiles. It was the mentioning of the Gentiles that upset the crowds. The Jews shouted, "Away with such a fellow from the earth! He should not be allowed to live!" The sentence can also mean, "Kill him!" or "End his life!"

The Jews were not happy about Paul's speech. In addition to shouting, the Jews also threw off their cloaks, which were their outer garments, and threw dust in the air. These actions show the crowd of Jews do not approve of Paul's speech.

Show a photo of a cloak.

Stop and discuss: What are some ways that people display their anger in your community? If you have ever seen an angry crowd, describe that experience to your team.

The Roman commander, the leader of the Roman army stationed at Jerusalem, ordered the soldiers to bring Paul to the barracks, the place where the Roman army lived in Jerusalem. The Roman commander could not understand why the crowd of Jews were angry. He said that Paul should be examined by flogging. The Romans usually flogged the person with leather whips first, then took him to the leader so he could question the person. The Roman commander wanted to know from Paul what really happened.

Show a picture of a whip used by Roman soldiers.

Show also a picture where the soldiers tied their prisoners to a post to flog them.

Discuss how offenders are punished in your community. How is the type of punishment determined? Who has the authority to carry out the punishment?

The soldiers tied Paul to a post with his arms chained. When the soldiers were about to strike Paul with a whip, Paul spoke to the centurion, the officer in charge of one hundred soldiers. Paul said, "If a man is a Roman citizen and not proven guilty by a trial, is it lawful for you to flog him?" This is a type of question that doesn't expect to be answered because the centurion knew it was not allowed. As a Roman citizen, Paul possessed the rights of a Roman, but the Roman commander did not know Paul was a Roman citizen.

During Paul's time, Roman authorities could not flog a Roman citizen unless they had found them guilty in a trial. We will remember that earlier, Paul complained to the jailer at Philippi that the crowds attacked him and Silas although they were Roman citizens. In the barracks, Paul used his rights as a Roman citizen to protect himself from further physical harm.

The centurion went to the Roman commander. This means the soldiers did not do anything to Paul. The centurion went to inform the commander what he had learned. He spoke to the commander respectfully and asked, "What are you going to do?" He did not expect the commander to answer the question. He was informing the commander that Paul was a Roman citizen and saying that it was illegal to flog him. If the commander disobeyed the law, the Roman authorities would punish him.

The Roman commander went to Paul and asked, "Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?" The phrase, "Tell me," is a command. It is strong language but not rude. The commander wanted to hear Paul's response himself. It is possible that Roman citizens were rare in Jerusalem because it was very far from Rome. Paul answered the commander, "Yes."

The Roman commander said to Paul, "I bought this citizenship for a large sum." Not everyone could buy a Roman citizenship-people usually had to pay a bribe to put their names on the list of Roman citizens.

Paul answered the commander, "But I am a citizen by birth." Paul became a citizen because his parents were Roman citizens, and his citizenship was better than the Roman commander's citizenship.

When they heard this, the soldiers who were questioning Paul went away because they could not flog him. Paul was able to prove his Roman citizenship. The soldiers were probably afraid, and the commander was also afraid. People were not allowed to put chains on Roman citizens when they were arrested. Since it was illegal for the commander to put a Roman citizen in chains, he probably removed Paul's chains at this point.

Stop and discuss: When someone is accused of wrongdoing in your culture, how do people in authority protect people when they are not yet proven guilty? In your culture, what do people in authority fear the most?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

The story has three scenes.

First scene: The Jews were angry when Paul spoke about the Gentiles. To show their anger, they took off their cloaks and threw dust into the air.

Second scene: The soldiers brought Paul into the barracks. The commander ordered that the soldiers flog Paul before the commander asked him questions. When the soldier was about to flog him, Paul said to the centurion that he is a Roman citizen. The centurion went to the commander and told that Paul was a Roman citizen.

Third scene: The Roman commander came and asked whether Paul was truly a Roman citizen. Paul proved to the commander that he was born a Roman citizen. The soldiers did not flog Paul. The commander was afraid that he bound Paul in chains even when he was a Roman citizen.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- The crowd of Jews
- The Roman commander
- The centurion
- The soldiers

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action on it.

Remember that Paul tried to explain himself before the people but the crowd of Jews became angry when Paul mentioned the Gentiles. They shouted loudly and took off their cloaks and threw dust into the air. The scene was loud and chaotic. The commander told the soldiers to take Paul into the barracks.

It is also important to remember that the Roman commander and his soldiers could still not understand why the Jews were angry. The Roman commander ordered his soldiers to flog Paul. He thought this would make Paul tell him the truth about why they were shouting at Paul.

It is important to remember that the soldiers stretched Paul's hands in front of him and tied them to a post above his head. There was a centurion standing next to them supervising the soldiers. While the soldiers were tying Paul's hands to the post, Paul asked the centurion standing there if it was legal to flog a Roman citizen. The centurion stopped the flogging and went to talk with the commander. He told the commander that he was about to do something illegal by flogging Paul.

Then, the commander went to Paul and spoke to him. He commanded Paul, "Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?" Paul said "Yes," and the commander said, "I paid a lot of money for my citizenship." Then Paul said, "But I was born a citizen." It was this statement that made the soldiers and the commander afraid. They recognized that Paul's citizenship was even better than the citizenship of the commander. The commander also realized that he was doing something illegal by binding Paul in chains.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

The story has three scenes.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- The crowd of Jews
- The Roman commander
- The centurion
- The soldiers

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points at the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

When the Jews heard Paul's speech, they were angry so they were shouting, threw their cloaks and dust into the air. They also shouted, "Get rid of this man!"

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing as the crowd of Jews, "How are you feeling?" You can hear things like, "This Paul has violated the Mosaic Law," and "The soldiers should punish this man." [!end] Restart the action.

The Roman commander and his soldiers brought Paul into the barracks, the place where the soldiers lived in Jerusalem. The commander wanted to know the situation so he ordered his soldiers to flog Paul. Paul asked the centurion standing if it was allowed to flog Roman citizens even when they were not proven guilty. The centurion went to the commander and told him that Paul was a Roman citizen.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing as the centurion, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Is this man truly a Roman citizen?" "I am afraid because we were about to do something illegal!" and "I need to report this to my commander." The centurion tells the commander that he cannot flog Paul because he is a citizen. [!end] Restart the action.

Act out the Roman commander who asks Paul, "Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?"

Stop the action.

Act out Paul telling the commander he is a Roman citizen by birth.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing the commander and the soldiers, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "This man is truly a Roman citizen," "I am very afraid," and "We will be in trouble because we arrested this man in chains even when he is a citizen." The soldiers did not flog Paul. [!end] Restart the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

The crowd of people listened to Paul until he told them about how Jesus said to him that he should go tell the Gentiles the good news. At that moment, the crowd became angry. They threw their **cloaks** into the air. Use the same word for cloaks as you have before, and remember that cloak is in the Master Glossary.

The **commander** ordered Paul to be brought by the soldiers to the **barracks**, the place where the soldiers lived. The Roman commander led six hundred to one thousand soldiers. Use the words commander and barracks as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on commander.

The commander ordered the soldiers to flog Paul for questioning. Paul asked the **centurion** whether the law allowed them to **flog** Roman **citizens**.

The word **flog** is to beat someone with a leather whip to question him. Paul's question was not meant to be answered. The centurion already knew that flogging Roman citizens was not allowed. The centurion told the commander that Paul was a Roman citizen. Use the word centurion as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on centurion.

Paul told the centurion and the commander that he is a Roman citizen. A **citizen** held the rights and privileges of being called a Roman. Paul was born a citizen which means his father or parents were Roman citizens. Use the word citizen as you used previously.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 22:22–29

Audio Content

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Acts 22:30–23:11

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 22:30–23:11 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

In the previous passage, Paul was arrested by the Romans when he started a riot in the temple. Then, Paul escaped flogging when he told the Roman commander that he was a Roman citizen.

The Roman commander wanted to understand what Paul did and why the Jews were angry at Paul. The next day, the commander ordered the Sanhedrin, the Jewish council, to meet with Paul. You will remember from previous passages that the council was composed of two influential groups known as the Pharisees and Sadducees. The council of Jews wanted to use the trial to condemn Paul.

Paul stood in front of the council. Paul looked intently at the council and called them brothers. The use of "brothers" here means fellow Jews and that Paul was on equal terms with them. Paul said, "I have lived before God in all good conscience until this day." The conscience is the part of a person which allows him to know what is right and wrong to think or act. A person's conscience makes him ashamed or guilty if he has done wrong. Paul meant that he had done what he thought was right.

The high priest named Ananias commanded the Jews who were standing next to Paul to strike with a fist or slap the mouth of Paul. This Ananias was different from the two men with the same name from earlier stories in Acts.

Paul responded to the high priest, "God will strike you, you whitewashed wall!" A whitewashed wall is a wall of stones painted with white in order to hide its ugly appearance. Paul used the symbol of a whitewashed wall to describe the high priest as a hypocrite, a person who appeared to be good on the outside but evil inside.

Paul added, "You sit there to judge me according to the law yet you violate the law by commanding that I be struck!" The high priest wanted to condemn Paul. However, Jewish law stated that a person was innocent until someone proved them guilty. The high priest was supposed to follow the law, but instead he broke the law because he treated Paul like Paul was guilty.

Stop and discuss: Who are the persons in your community in charge of settling complaints? How do they ensure that the trials are conducted fairly?

The Jews who stood near Paul asked, "Would you dare insult God's high priest?" These Jews believed God appointed Ananias to the position as the high priest. The Jews meant that if Paul insulted the high priest, Paul was also insulting God who gave Ananias the position.

Then Paul said, "I did not realize he was the high priest." Luke did not explain why Paul did not recognize who the high priest was.

Paul used the verse from Scripture as support, "It is written, do not speak evil about the ruler of your people." The phrase "it is written" means Paul quoted from the book of Exodus, part of the Law of Moses.

Paul wanted to prove his innocence. Paul spoke in a loud voice so everyone could hear. When Paul saw that there were Pharisees and Sadducees in the council, he said, "Brothers, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees." Son of Pharisees meant his father and grandfather were Pharisees. Then Paul said, "I stand in trial because of the hope of the resurrection of the dead." The Pharisees and Sadducees disagreed on many religious issues. The Pharisees believed in the resurrection, in spirits, and in angels while the Sadducees did not. The two groups in the council argued because of the resurrection. The two groups were divided among themselves.

There was a great uproar in the council or a loud noise due to the Jews arguing with each other. Some of the scribes or teachers of the Jewish Law came from the Pharisees. They said, "We find nothing wrong with this man! What if a spirit or an angel spoke to him?" The teachers of the Law supported Paul because they also believed God can resurrect the dead.

The dispute became so violent. This means the two groups spoke angrier and louder than before. The Roman commander feared Paul would be torn to pieces. Torn to pieces refers to pulling on something so hard that it tears into two pieces. This means the commander was afraid that Paul would be hurt. The commander ordered his soldiers to take Paul back to the barracks, the place where the soldiers lived.

The following night, Jesus stood near Paul. Jesus said, "Take courage! As you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must testify about me also in Rome." To testify is for a person to tell others what he has seen or heard. Jerusalem is the capital city of Israel while Rome is the capital of the Roman Empire. Jesus encourages Paul that though there were Jews who were against him, Jesus was on the side of Paul.

Stop and discuss: How do people in your community encourage or cheer for someone who is doing a good job?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

The story has four scenes.

First scene: Paul stood in trial before the Sanhedrin, the Jewish Council. Paul starts to make his defense but the high priest orders someone to slap Paul.

Second scene: Paul continues his defense. Paul said he was a Pharisee and he stood trial because of his belief in the resurrection. A violent dispute arises between the Pharisees and the Sadducees.

Third scene: The Roman commander ordered his soldiers to take Paul into the barracks, the place where the soldiers stayed in Jerusalem.

Fourth scene: The following night, Jesus stood near Paul and encouraged him. Jesus said Paul testified about him in Jerusalem and will testify also in Rome.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- The Roman commander
- The soldiers
- The high priest
- The Sadducees
- The Pharisees, including the teachers of the Jewish Law
- Jesus

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action on it.

Remember that the Roman commander wanted to know why the crowd of Jews were angry at Paul. The commander brought Paul to the council, the leaders of the Jews. The council members were seated in a semi-circle formation. As Paul was standing, he looked intently at the Sanhedrin. Paul wanted to understand what they thought of him.

It is important to remember that the council was composed of two religious groups, the Pharisees and the Sadducees. The Pharisees believed in the resurrection and the existence of angels and spirits, while the Sadducees did not. Paul claimed that his conscience was clear and he was innocent of the charges.

The high priest ordered the Jews near Paul to strike his mouth but Paul rebuked the priest.

Paul knew that there were Pharisees in the council. Paul said he was a Pharisee and stood trial because of his belief in the resurrection. Paul's statement caused a strong disagreement between the Pharisees and the Sadducees.

The Roman commander ordered his soldiers to take Paul away from the council by force. They brought Paul into their barracks, the place where the soldiers stayed.

The following night, Jesus stood beside Paul. Jesus encouraged Paul and said that he will testify about Jesus in Jerusalem and in Rome.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

The story has four scenes.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- The Roman commander
- The soldiers
- The high priest
- The Sadducees
- The Pharisees, including the teachers of the Jewish Law
- Jesus

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points at the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The Roman commander wanted to know the truth about Paul. He brought Paul to the council, the leaders of the Jews.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing as Paul, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I am innocent so I have nothing to fear," and "This is my opportunity to tell the leaders of the Jews about my convictions." [!end] Restart the action.

Paul stood before the council and said that he felt like he had done nothing wrong against God. The high priest, the leader of the council of Jews, ordered those near Paul to strike his mouth. Paul rebuked the high priest, calling him a whitewashed wall.

Stop the action.

Paul realized there were two groups in the council composed of Pharisees and Sadducees. Paul said, "I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees. I stand on trial because of the hope of the resurrection." Paul said this so the council will be divided and argue among themselves.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing as the Sadducees, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "There is no resurrection," and "We cannot allow this man to be free."

Ask the actors playing as the Pharisees, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Paul is presenting a case about the resurrection," and "Paul must be set free because he is also a Pharisee." [!end] Restart the action.

The Roman commander saw that the council was already divided and Paul was in danger. The commander ordered the soldiers to take Paul away from the council to keep him safe.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing as Paul, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I have testified to the council about my faith," and "I almost got hurt again." [!end] Restart the action.

The Roman commander told the soldiers to bring Paul to the barracks, the place where the soldiers stayed. In the next evening, Jesus stood near Paul. Jesus encouraged Paul that he will testify about Jesus in Rome as he did in Jerusalem.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing as Paul, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I am not afraid, because Jesus is with me," and "I will also testify about Jesus in Rome."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

The Roman commander wanted to know what Paul did. The **commander** led six hundred to one thousand soldiers who were stationed at Jerusalem. Use the word commander as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on commander.

The commander brought Paul to the council of the **Jews**. The **Sanhedrin**, or the council of the Jews, is ruled by the **high priest**. Use the words Sanhedrin, high priest, and Jews as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on Jews, Sanhedrin, and priest.

Paul told the council that he lived in "good conscience" up to that day. **Conscience** is the part of a person that helps him to think what is right and wrong.

The council of the Jews was made up of two religious groups: the **Pharisees** and the **Sadducees**. The Pharisees believed in the resurrection, spirits, and angels. The Pharisees accepted both the written Law of Moses and oral tradition. The Sadducees only accepted the written law. The Sadducees do not believe in the resurrection nor on angels and spirits. Their Scripture is only the five books of Moses. Use the words Pharisees and Sadducees as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on Pharisees and Sadducees.

Paul and the Pharisees believe in the **resurrection**, the existence of **angels**, and **spirits**. Spirit refers generally to any being without a physical body. It includes angels, demons, and the spirits of dead people. Use the word resurrection and angels as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on resurrection, angel, and spirit.

Jesus told Paul that he will testify about Jesus in **Rome** as he did in **Jerusalem**. Jerusalem is the capital city of Israel while Rome is the capital city of the Roman Empire.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 22:30–23:11

Audio Content

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Acts 23:12–35

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 23:12–35 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus or God?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

In the previous passage, the Roman commander wanted to understand why the Jews were angry at Paul and what crime he committed against the people. But the trial resulted in a violent debate between the Pharisees and the Sadducees. To ensure Paul's safety, the Roman commander took him back to the barracks.

On the next day, there was a group of more than forty Jews who made a plan to kill Paul. The Jews formed a conspiracy, or a secret meeting to plan or do something evil or illegal. They took an oath not to eat or drink until they put Paul to death. These men vowed, meaning they spoke a curse on themselves if they were not able to fulfill their intentions to kill Paul.

Have the team discuss how people in your culture speak of vows or oaths to accomplish something. What will they gain if they fulfill their vows? What will happen if they failed to fulfill their vow?

These Jews went to the high priest and the elders, the leaders of the council of the Jewish people. They told the religious leaders that they vowed to kill Paul. They asked the religious leaders to request the Roman commander to bring Paul to the Sanhedrin, the high religious council. Then they would kill Paul on the way to meet with the council.

The plan of the Jews was for the council to ask the Roman commander to petition Paul or make a request from the commander to allow Paul to be heard for another time. When Paul comes out on his way to the council, the Jews planned to kill Paul before he arrives at his destination. These Jews only told the high priest and the elders who would agree to their plan.

Paul's nephew, the son of his sister, overheard the plan to secretly attack Paul.

Paul's nephew went to the barracks, the place where the Roman army lived. His nephew told Paul what he heard. Paul called for a centurion, a Roman officer of a hundred soldiers. Paul told the centurion, "Take this

young man to the commander, for he has something to tell him." Young man means that Paul's nephew could be between sixteen to twenty-eight years old.

The centurion accepted Paul's request and he brought Paul's nephew to the commander. The commander took Paul's nephew by the hand, which means the commander treated the young man kindly. The commander took Paul's nephew aside to a place where they could talk privately.

The young man, Paul's nephew, tells the commander about the Jews' plan. The commander tells Paul's nephew not to tell anyone about their meeting.

Knowing that Paul's life was in danger, the commander called two of his centurions and told them to prepare two hundred soldiers, seventy horsemen, and two hundred spearmen who will bring Paul safely to Caesarea. Horsemen are soldiers who ride horses. Spearmen are soldiers with spears. The third hour of the night means around 9:00 in the evening. We will remember that earlier, Paul stayed in Caesarea before coming to Jerusalem. Caesarea acted as the Roman capital in Israel, where the Roman governor of that area was based. The Roman commander needed to ensure that Paul would stay safe. Part of his job was to ensure the safety of Roman citizens, and he knew that the threat to Paul's life was very dangerous.

The commander also ordered his two centurions to provide a horse for Paul to ride and to take him safely to Felix, the governor. The governor was the ruler of the Judean province.

Have the team discuss how important persons are protected in your culture. What do people in your community do to ensure that the lives of individuals are safe from harm?

The Roman commander wrote a letter for the governor. The name of the commander was Claudius Lysias. He wrote to "his Excellency, Governor Felix." His excellency refers to the honor given to a person of high status such as the governor. The Roman commander informed the governor in the letter why he sent Paul to him. Roman commanders were required to write letters like this every time they transferred a prisoner. The Roman commander was required to explain what had happened to Paul. The commander was not convinced Paul deserved death so he sent him to the governor.

Have the team discuss how persons in authority are addressed in your culture. Discuss also how greetings are used in writing letters in your community.

Paul and the soldiers left in the night until they reached the city of Antipatris. On the next day, the cavalry, the soldiers on horseback, escorted Paul to Caesarea while the rest of the soldiers returned to the barracks at Jerusalem. When the cavalry arrived in Caesarea, they handed Paul over to the governor. The governor read the letter from the commander. The governor asked where Paul was from, because he needed to decide if Paul was from the areas where he had authority. Cilicia was one of the areas where the governor could rule, so he kept Paul. The governor told Paul that he will hear his case once his accusers come to Caesarea. Paul stayed at the Praetorium under guard. This is a palace that had been built by a former Jewish ruler of the area. Now his palace was the Roman headquarters, or Praetorium.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

The story has six scenes.

First scene: A day after the trial of Paul before the Sanhedrin (the Jewish council), a group of more than forty Jews planned to kill Paul. They vowed not to eat or drink until they finished their plan to kill Paul.

Second scene: These Jews went to the high priest and the elders who were the leaders of the Jews. They told the elders the plan. But Paul's nephew heard about the plan of the Jews to kill Paul.

Third scene: The nephew of Paul went to the barracks, the place where the Roman soldiers lived. The young man told Paul that a group of Jews was planning to kill him. Paul told a centurion to take his nephew to the Roman commander.

Fourth scene: Paul's nephew informs the commander about the conspiracy.

Fifth scene: The Roman commander called two of his centurions. The commander ordered his soldiers to provide a horse for Paul. The commander also wrote a letter to the governor.

Sixth scene: The soldiers left with Paul during the night until they reached Caesarea the next day. They gave the commander's letter to the governor. They also turned Paul over to the protection of the governor. Paul stayed at Herod's palace under guard.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- The more than forty Jews who plotted to kill Paul
- The high priest and the elders
- The son of Paul's sister
- The Roman commander
- The 2 centurions
- The Roman soldiers
- Felix, the governor of Judea

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action on it.

It is important to remember that Paul was attacked by a crowd of Jews at the Jewish temple. Now a group of about forty Jews wanted Paul killed. These Jews vowed not to eat or drink until they could kill Paul. They were putting a curse on themselves if they could not accomplish their plan.

It is important to remember that the high priest and some members of the Sanhedrin, the council of the Jews, want to condemn Paul. The Jews who planned to kill Paul went to the high priest and the elders. They ask the Sanhedrin to call for Paul the next day. As the Romans are bringing Paul to the Sanhedrin, the Jews will jump out and kill Paul on the way.

It is important to remember that the Roman commander still held Paul as prisoner.

It is important to remember that Paul's nephew, the son of his sister, heard that some Jews were planning to kill Paul.

The nephew of Paul went to the barracks. His nephew told his uncle Paul about the plot of some Jews to kill him. Paul requested the centurion to allow his nephew to speak with the Roman commander.

It is important to remember that the centurion took Paul's nephew to the commander. The commander greeted Paul's nephew politely. He took his hand. He walked away with the nephew to a private area to talk.

The Roman commander ordered his two centurions to gather an army of two hundred soldiers, seventy horsemen, and two hundred spearmen. They were ordered to escort Paul to Caesarea and bring him to Felix, the Governor of Judea.

It is important to remember that the commander, whose name was Claudius Lysias, sent a letter to Felix, the governor. The commander explained in the letter why he sent Paul to the governor.

It is important to remember that the soldiers and Paul stopped for the night in the city of Antipatris. The next morning, Paul and the horsemen continued on to Caesarea. The soldiers and spearmen went back to Jerusalem.

When the soldiers arrived at Caesarea, they gave the letter to the governor. The governor read the letter. The governor also knew Paul was from the province of Cilicia. Paul stayed at Herod's palace under guard.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

The story has six scenes.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- The more than forty Jews who plotted to kill Paul
- The high priest and the elders
- The son of Paul's sister
- The Roman commander
- The centurion
- The Roman soldiers
- Felix, the governor of Judea

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points at the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

Act out the Jews of about forty men who were planning to kill Paul. They vowed not to eat or drink until they could kill Paul.

Stop the action.

The Jews who planned to kill Paul went to the high priest and the elders. They tell the council about their plan.

Stop the action.

The son of the sister of Paul heard about the plan of the Jews to kill Paul. The young man went to the barracks and told Paul what he heard. Then Paul asked the centurion to send his nephew to the commander so the young man can tell his story.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing as Paul, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I thank God because he allowed my nephew to hear about the plan," or "The commander should know this." [!end] Restart the action.

Act out the centurion taking Paul's nephew to the commander. Paul's nephew tells the commander about the conspiracy against Paul.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing as the commander, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "This is going to be a serious trouble," and "The high priest and the elders have a part on this." [!end] Restart the action.

The Roman commander called for two of his centurions. He ordered them to assemble a large army of two hundred soldiers, two hundred spearmen, and seventy horsemen. They were to escort Paul safely until they reach Caesarea. They have to leave the third hour of the night, or 9 in the evening.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing as the centurions and the soldiers, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "The safety of Paul is our mission," and "We have to move quickly." [!end] Restart the action.

The Roman commander sent a letter to Felix, the governor of Judea, staying at Caesarea.

Stop the action.

The soldiers traveled with Paul until they reached Antipatris. They spent the night there. On the next day, the cavalry (the soldiers on horseback) escorted Paul to Caesarea. The cavalry gave the letter to the governor. They also turned Paul over to him. The governor read the letter. The governor asked Paul where he was from so he knew if Paul was from his area of authority. The governor told Paul that he would wait there until his accusers came there to charge him with wrongdoing. Paul stayed at the old palace of Herod, which was now the Roman headquarters.

Stop the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

There was a group of Jews who made a conspiracy. They swore an oath to kill Paul. A **conspiracy** is a secret plan by a small group to do something harmful to someone. An **oath** is added to a promise so that people know they must keep their agreement and that it cannot be changed. Use the same word for **Jews** as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on Jews and oath.

The Jews went to the **high priest** and the **elders** of the **Jewish council**, or **Sanhedrin**. Use the same words as you used previously for high priest, the elders, and the Jewish council. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on priest, elder, and Sanhedrin.

The nephew of Paul heard about the plan of the Jews. So he went to the **barracks**, the place where the Roman army stayed in Jerusalem. The young man spoke to Paul. Paul asked the **centurion**, a leader of one hundred soldiers, to send his nephew to the Roman **commander**, the leader of the army stationed at Jerusalem. Use the same word for barracks, centurion, and commander as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on centurion and commander.

The Roman commander ordered the two centurions to assemble an army of two hundred soldiers, seventy **horsemen**, and two hundred **spearman**. A group of horsemen are sometimes referred to as cavalry while the spearman are soldiers who use spears as weapons.

The Roman commander sent Paul to Felix, the Roman **governor**. Use the same word as previously used in other passages.

As a prisoner, Paul stayed in the Praetorium in Caesarea. The **Praetorium** referred to the palace that had been built by a former Jewish ruler of the area. Now his palace was the Roman headquarters.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 23:12–35

Audio Content

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Acts 24:1–9

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 24:1–9 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus or God?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In the previous passage, Paul's nephew, the son of his sister, warned the Roman commander about the plan of a group of Jews to kill Paul. The Roman commander sent Paul to Caesarea with a large group of soldiers to guard him. Paul was brought to Felix, the governor of Judea. The Roman commander also sent a letter to Felix explaining to the governor the case of Paul. In the letter, the commander stated that Felix will conduct the trial between Paul and his accusers.

Five days later, the high priest Ananias, some elders of the Jews, and Tertullus, a spokesman, went to Caesarea to present their case to the governor Felix. The high priest was the head of all the Jewish priests. The elders were the heads of important families of Jews. The elders belong to the Sanhedrin, the council of Jews. Tertullus was a spokesman or a lawyer who spoke on behalf of the high priest and the council. A spokesperson was a man trained to speak well. He was familiar with Roman law and courts. His job is to convince the judge to make the decision. Tertullus will present the accusations that the council has against Paul.

Felix was the governor of Judea. He was the ruler who controlled the affairs of Rome in Judea. The governor also hears cases like the one Paul experienced in Jerusalem. We will remember that the Roman commander turned Paul into the custody of Felix. Then Felix summoned Paul to come in, which means the governor allowed the trial to begin between Paul and his accusers.

Tertullus presented his case before Felix, meaning Tertullus began to accuse Paul. Tertullus opened his statement with praise for the governor. Tertullus calls the governor as the most excellent Felix. Tertullus follows the custom of the time and flatters the Governor Felix. He wants to show respect and gain favor from the governor, so he says that the governor has brought peace and help to the area of Judea. We know from historians that Governor Felix was cruel to the Jewish people. However, Felix would expect Tertullus to say nice things to him, even if they were not true.

Have the team discuss how people in your culture use words to gain the favor of powerful and influential people.

Tertullus also said that Felix has foresight and that the governor brought reforms to the nation of the Jews. Reforms in government may include lowering corruption, constructing roads, and making laws for peace and order. Since we are not sure whether Tertullus was a Jew or a Gentile, be careful not to translate his phrase as "our nation." The phrase "we accept this with all gratitude" means the Jews welcome the reforms that Felix was doing for their people.

Have the team discuss how people in your culture use the word for a people group or ethnic tribe. Some cultures do not have a word for the nation.

Tertullus said that Paul was a troublemaker by comparing him to a plague, or spreading disease.

Discuss how people would describe someone who is troublemaker in the community. What words would you use to describe them? What would you compare them to?

Tertullus also accused Paul of causing other people to riot or rebel. In Roman law, the death penalty is the punishment for rebellion. Tertullus probably said these things because the Jewish council wanted Felix to punish Paul by death.

Tertullus called Paul a leader of the sect of the Nazarenes. Jesus lived in Nazareth. The Jews called Jesus a Nazarene. In Paul's time, the Jews called the believers in Jesus as Nazarenes. The word sect means a religious group with beliefs different from the main group. Tertullus meant that Christians believe in false doctrines different from the teachings of the Jews.

Tertullus also accused Paul of trying to desecrate or make the Jewish temple unclean. This was a serious crime for the Jews. We will remember the Jews from Asia who accused Paul of bringing a Gentile into their temple. The crowd of Jews seized Paul and took him out of the temple area.

Tertullus adds, "If you examine him yourself you will be able to find out from him about everything of which we accuse him." Tertullus was trying to convince the governor that his accusations were true. "The Jews also joined in the charge," which means that the Jews in court such as elders joined in saying that the accusations were true.

Tell of a time when you had to convince someone in authority that your version of an event was true. What words or phrases did you use? What strategies did you use to try to convince them that you were right?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, you will help the group visualize this story. You will help the group define the scenes, setting, and characters of the story.

The story has two scenes.

First scene: Five days after the commander sent Paul with a large group of soldiers to governor Felix, the high priest, the Jewish elders, and the spokesman Tertullus arrived at Caesarea.

Second scene: This event took place in the court of governor Felix. The governor called for Paul to come in. The spokesman Tertullus accused Paul of alleged crimes committed against the Jewish religion and Roman law.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Felix, the governor of Judea
- Ananias, the high priest
- The elders of the Jews
- Tertullus, the spokesman

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action on it.

It is important to remember that before this story starts, Paul stood before the high priest Ananias and the Jewish council. The council wanted to condemn Paul, and a group of Jews tried to kill Paul. The Roman commander sent Paul to Governor Felix in Caesarea. This story starts five days later, when the high priest Ananias, the Jewish elders from the council, and Tertullus, a spokesman who knows Roman laws, arrive in Caesarea.

The governor Felix summoned Paul to appear at the trial. Paul arrives in the room where Felix and the Jewish accusers are. Tertullus is the spokesman for the group because he knows Roman law and speaks well. Tertullus speaks on behalf of the members of the group. Tertullus greeted the governor with respect and a short speech about how good the governor is. Then, Tertullus accused Paul of causing other Jews to riot. The crime of rebellion was punishable by death in Roman law. The spokesman accused Paul as a ringleader of a Nazarene sect. The Nazarenes referred to the believers of Jesus during Paul's time. Tertullus also accused Paul of making the temple unclean which was a serious crime against the Jews in their religion. The Jewish elders who came with the Tertullus and Ananias also joined in accusing Paul.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

The story has two scenes.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Felix, the governor of Judea
- Ananias, the high priest
- The elders of the Jews
- Tertullus, the spokesman

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points at the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

Act out the high priest Ananias, the elders of the Jews, and Tertullus who came to Caesarea. They pursued the case against Paul in Caesarea.

Stop the action.

Act out the governor Felix calling for Paul to appear in court. Paul stands before the court to face the accusations from Tertullus, the spokesman. Act out Tertullus saying things to flatter or impress Felix.

Stop the action.

Act out Tertullus the spokesman accusing Paul of causing other Jews to rebel. Tertullus also accused Paul of being the ringleader of the Nazarene sect.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing as Paul, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I have nothing to fear because these accusations are lies," and "I trust that the Lord will protect me." [!end] Restart the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

After five days, Ananias the **high priest**, some **elders** of the Jews, and Tertullus, a **spokesman**, came to governor Felix at Caesarea. Use the same words for high priest and elders as you used previously. The spokesman was a lawyer who speaks well and was familiar with Roman law and procedures in court.

Felix is the Roman **governor**. The governor was in charge of the province of Judea. Use the same word for governor as you used previously.

Tertullus praised Felix for the reforms he has done for the **nation**. Use the same word for nation as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on the nation.

Tertullus accused Paul and calls him a **plague**, like a fast-spreading disease causing trouble and riots among the **Jews**. Use the same word for Jews as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on Jews.

Tertullus also accused Paul as a ringleader of the **Nazarene** sect. A sect is a group of people with different beliefs from what is usually accepted as correct beliefs. Jesus grew up in Nazareth. During Paul's time, the Jews called the believers of Jesus as Nazarenes. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information about Nazareth.

He also accused Paul of causing the **temple** of the Jews to become unclean. Use the same word as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on the Jewish temple.

Show a picture of Herod's temple, if your team needs one.

Some manuscripts give more information about how the Roman commander took Paul away from the Jewish leaders. You can include this information if other translations in your area do.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 24:1–9

Audio Content

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Acts 24:10-23

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 24:10-23 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus or God?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In the previous passage, the high priest Ananias, the elders of the Jews, and Tertullus the spokesman went to Caesarea to file a case against Paul before Felix, the governor.

After Tertullus presented his accusations, it was now Paul's turn to respond to his accuser. Felix motioned Paul to speak. Paul spoke respectfully to the governor. Paul recognized that Felix ruled as judge in their nation for many years. As governor, Felix also acted as judge for important cases. Paul is glad to make his defense. This means that Paul is happy or willing to respond to the accusations.

Paul told Felix that he has just arrived in Jerusalem 12 days ago. He came to Jerusalem to worship. Paul said neither the high priest, elders, nor the lawyer saw Paul stirring the crowd. He also did not argue with anyone either in the temple or in the synagogues. Paul wanted to tell the governor that the Jews did not have evidence or witnesses to prove he started riots as Tertullus had said.

Paul did not deny that he was a follower of the Way. You will remember from earlier passages that followers of Jesus called themselves the Way. The Jewish leaders call the Way a sect or cult. Paul clarified that he worshipped God and believed in the Law and the Prophets. The Law was the Jewish Law of Moses and writings of the Jewish prophets.

Stop and discuss: What do people in your community do when they find out that some of you have turned to the Christian faith?

Paul also told Felix about his beliefs in the hope of God and about the resurrection. The resurrection is the belief that God can bring the dead to life. There will come a time in the future when God will raise both the righteous and wicked back to life. Paul added that even his accusers, such as the high priest, also believed in the resurrection.

Paul also assured the governor that he continues to live with a clear conscience before God and man. He did not commit a crime. Paul returned to Jerusalem after being away for several years. His intention for coming to Jerusalem was to bring his gifts to the poor and offerings to the temple. The offering may include a male or a female lamb, a male sheep, food, and other offerings.

Before he gave his offerings, Paul performed the ritual of purification. People had to become ceremonially clean before they could worship in the temple and stand before God. Paul followed the Jewish laws carefully so he could worship at the temple.

Paul did not start riots in Jerusalem. But there were Jews from Asia in the temple. They were the ones who said Paul started riots in Asia. However, Paul points out that these Jews from Asia are not in Caesarea to bring charges against him. The Jews in Caesarea-Tertullus and the high priest-never saw Paul causing riots. Then Paul gives the only possible explanation for the high priest's accusation. The only thing he said that caused trouble was when he shouted out to the high Jewish council that he believed in the resurrection of the dead.

Felix already had an accurate knowledge about the Way. This meant that Felix had already learned much about the Way. Felix put them off, meaning he stopped the trial. Felix said to them, "When Lysias the tribune comes down, I will decide your case." We will remember Lysias was the Roman commander who sent Paul to Caesarea from Jerusalem. Then Felix ordered the centurion, an officer of one hundred soldiers, to keep Paul under arrest. As a Roman citizen, Felix gave Paul some liberty, allowing his friends to visit him and take care of his needs.

Stop and discuss: How do guards or police in your community take care of their prisoners?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

The story has two scenes.

First scene: Paul responded to the accusations from Tertullus. In his defense, Paul convinced the governor that he did not cause a riot in the temple at Jerusalem.

Second scene: The governor Felix ordered to stop the trial of the accusers against Paul. The governor ordered the centurion to keep Paul under guard at Caesarea.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Felix, the Roman governor
- Claudius Lysias, the Roman commander
- The high priest
- The elders
- Tertullus, the spokesman
- A centurion
- The Jews from Asia

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action on it.

Remember that the accusers from Jerusalem led by the high priest came to Caesarea to pursue their case against Paul. Remember that Tertullus has spoken for the Jewish council. Felix nodded at Paul. This meant that he gave Paul the permission to respond to his accusers. Paul told Felix that he arrived at Jerusalem to worship at the temple. Paul did not stir up a crowd or argue with anyone in the temple or in the synagogues, a place where the Jews prayed and read Scripture together.

But Paul admitted he was part of the Way. Tertullus implied that the Way was a dangerous group that caused riots among Jews. But Paul said he worshipped God and believed in the Law and the Prophets. Paul believed in the hope in God and in the resurrection.

Paul also told Felix that he was not able to come to Jerusalem for several years. Paul came to Jerusalem recently in order to give alms to the poor and his sacrifices. Paul also assures Felix that under Jewish laws, Paul performed the ritual of purification necessary to worship in the temple.

Paul tried to convince the governor that the Jews from Asia did not appear before Felix nor at the trial with the council of the Jews at Jerusalem. The high priest, the elders of the Jews, and Tertullus made accusations but they were not there at the temple when the crowd of the Jews attacked Paul.

Paul also told Felix about what he said during the hearing with the Jewish council. Paul said it was because of his belief in the resurrection of the dead that he was under trial.

Felix had learned much about the Way. Felix stopped the conversation. Felix told them when Lysias, the Roman commander, comes, he will make his decision about the case. He ordered the centurion, an officer of a hundred

soldiers, to keep Paul in custody but giving Paul some freedom. Felix allowed Paul's friends to visit him and take care of him.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

The story has two scenes.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Felix, the Roman governor
- Claudius Lysias, the Roman commander
- The high priest
- The elders
- Tertullus, the spokesman
- A centurion
- The Jews from Asia

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points at the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

Felix the governor gave Paul the permission to respond to the accusations against him.

Stop the action.

Paul responded to the accusations. He explains to Felix that his accusers did not see him stirring up the crowd of Jews nor arguing with anyone at the temple or in the synagogues.

Stop the action.

We will remember Tertullus the spokesman said Paul was a ringleader of the Way. Paul admitted that he was a follower of the Way. Paul said to Felix that he follows God and believed in the Jewish Law and the Prophets.

Paul told Felix that he came to the temple in Jerusalem to give his alms to the poor and offer his sacrifices to God. He also performed the purification rituals so Jews can be allowed to offer sacrifices at the temple.

Stop the action.

Paul told Felix about the resurrection of the dead. When Felix heard this, he stopped the trial because he has an accurate knowledge of the Way. He said, "When Lysias the commander comes, I will decide your case."

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing as Paul, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I did what I could to convince the governor I did nothing wrong," and "Finally I can rest." [!end] Restart the action.

Act out Felix orders a guard to stay with Paul. Paul's friends are able to visit with Paul and meet his needs.

Ask the actor playing Felix, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I think Paul is innocent," and, "Paul is safe here with me."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Paul presents his case before the governor Felix. He says that after several years he has returned to **Jerusalem**. He did not argue with anyone in the **temple** or in the **synagogues**. Use the words Jerusalem, temple, and synagogue as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on Jerusalem, temple, and synagogue.

Paul admitted he was a "follower of the **Way**." During the early years, the believers of Jesus are called "followers of the Way."

Paul believed in the **Law** and the **Prophets**. Use the words Law and Prophets as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on Law and Prophets.

Paul believed in the hope in God and in the **resurrection**. Use the word resurrection as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on resurrection.

After several years, Paul went to Jerusalem to give his **alms** and his **offerings**. The alms are gifts they give to the poor. Use the word offerings as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on offerings.

Paul claimed the Jews knew he was purified before he offered his sacrifices. Paul had just completed his **purification ceremony**, or made himself ritually pure, when they saw him. Use the same word for purification ceremony or **ritually clean** or **pure** that you have used before. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on purification offering or ceremony.

Paul informed Felix that he stood before the **council** of the Jews. The council is also called the **Sanhedrin**. Use the same word for council as you have used previously. For more information about the council refer to Sanhedrin in the Master Glossary.

Felix told them that he will give his decision when the **commander** comes. Felix also ordered the **centurion** to keep Paul under custody. Use the words commander and centurion as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information about commander and centurion.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 24:10–23**Audio Content**

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Acts 24:24–27*Hear and Heart*

Hear Acts 24:24–27 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus or God?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In the previous passage, Felix allowed Paul to respond to his accusers, the high priest, the elders of the Jews, and Tertullus the spokesman.

After some days, Felix and his wife Drusilla sent for Paul. We will remember Felix said he will decide on Paul's case when Lysias the commander arrives. But at this time, it shows Felix still has not made any decision about Paul's case. Drusilla was Jewish. Felix sent for Paul so the couple can hear what Paul will say about his faith in Christ Jesus.

Paul explained to Felix about righteousness, which means doing what is right and having a right relationship with God. A righteous person has a good moral character. A righteous person is obedient to God. Self-control is when someone chooses not to do something that he believes is not right to do. He does not do it even if he is tempted to do it.

Stop and discuss: Describe what a righteous person does in your culture. Describe what a person with self-control does in your culture.

The "judgment to come" refers to a future time when God will judge all people according to what they have done in their life. We will remember that Paul is a prisoner and the governor Felix is the judge handling his case.

When Felix heard these things, he was alarmed or afraid. He told Paul to stop talking for now. Felix sent Paul back to his place as a prisoner. This was a polite command for Paul to go. It appears Felix did not like or was upset by what he heard from Paul. He told Paul that he will talk to him another time.

As his prisoner, Felix was hoping Paul would bribe him for his release. A bribe is money being paid to an official to do something illegal. In Roman law, a bribe was not allowed, but some Roman officials such as Felix accepted bribes. Felix sent for Paul often and talked with him. Each time Felix hoped that Paul would give him money. It is also possible Felix was interested to hear about the new religion about Jesus.

Stop and discuss: Talk about a time or situations where people have given a bribe or paid for something illegal.

Two years passed, but Paul was still under custody in Caesarea. It appears Paul gave no such payment to Felix. Felix was afraid of the Jewish leaders, so he kept Paul in prison. He wanted the Jewish leaders to like him, even though he saw no reason to keep Paul in prison. After two years, the Roman emperor removed Felix as governor. Porcius Festus became the new governor after Felix.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

The story has three scenes.

First scene: Felix the governor and his wife Drusilla sent for Paul. Paul came to Felix and Drusilla. He shared about his faith in Christ Jesus.

Second scene: Felix often sends for Paul to talk with him.

Third scene: Two years passed. Felix stepped down as governor. He was replaced by Porcius Festus.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Felix, the Roman governor
- Drusilla
- Porcius Festus

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action on it.

You will remember Paul said he stood trial because of his belief in the resurrection. Paul also admitted to be a follower of Jesus. The governor Felix and his wife Drusilla sent for Paul. Drusilla was a Jewish woman.

This story starts a few days after the court hearing. Felix and his wife Drusilla came to the room where the court met. Then Felix sent a messenger or servant to get Paul and bring Paul to them. Paul told them about his faith in Jesus. He also discussed issues such as righteousness, self-control, and the coming judgment.

When Felix heard Paul talking about the issues about righteousness, self-control, and judgment, Felix was afraid. He ordered Paul to stop talking about such issues. The governor will talk to him another time. The governor thought Paul would bribe him or give the governor money for Paul's release.

Felix sent for Paul many times and talked with him. Perhaps Felix waited for Paul to bribe him.

After two years, the Roman emperor removed Felix and replaced him with Porcius Festus. He kept Paul in prison to please the Jews. Porcius Festus became the new governor in Caesarea.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

The story has three scenes.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Felix, the Roman governor
- Drusilla
- Porcius Festus

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points at the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

Felix the governor and his wife Drusilla sent for Paul. They wanted to hear Paul talk about his faith.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing as Drusilla, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Why is Paul in prison because of his faith?" and "I want to know more about Jesus." [!end] Restart the action.

Paul shared his faith about Christ Jesus. Paul also discussed issues such as righteousness, self-control, and the coming judgment.

Stop the action.

When Felix heard Paul talking about these issues, he became afraid.

Stop the action.

Felix sends for Paul to speak with him frequently. After two years, the Roman emperor replaced Felix with Porcius Festus.

Stop the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

After some days, Felix and his wife Drusilla sent for Paul. Drusilla was a female **Jew**. Use the word Jew as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on Jew.

Paul shared about his **faith**, belief in **Christ** Jesus. Christ is the Greek word for Messiah, Promised Savior. Use the same word for Christ and faith as you used previously. He also talked about issues such as **righteousness**, **self-control**, and the coming **judgment**. A righteous person has a good moral character. Use the word righteousness as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on Christ, faith, and righteousness.

Self-control is the attitude of choosing not to do something he is tempted to do because he believes it is wrong. It could also mean controlling one's desires. The **judgment to come** refers to a future time when God will judge all people according to what they have done in their life.

Felix hoped Paul will **bribe** him for his release. A bribe is a dishonest act to persuade someone to act in one's favor by a gift or money.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 24:24–27

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Acts 25:1-5

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 25:1-5 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus or God?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In the previous passage, Paul was still in prison at Caesarea. Felix was removed from being governor of Judea. He was replaced by Porcius Festus.

Porcius Festus became the governor of Judea from A.D. 58 to 62. Both the cities of Jerusalem and Caesarea were under his territory. Three days after coming to Judea, Festus went up to Jerusalem. People "went up" to a city when it was at a higher elevation than the place they were. Caesarea is located on the seacoast. Jerusalem is in the mountains at about 760 meters in elevation. Jerusalem is about 120 kilometers from Caesarea. It was a two to three day journey.

Festus met with the chief priests and important leaders among the Jews. The chief priests ruled the political and religious affairs of the Jews. Because Felix did not condemn Paul, the chief priests continued their case against Paul.

Stop and discuss: Who represents the leading men in your community? How is this determined?

The leaders asked a favor of Festus. This favor will be harmful to Paul. The chief priests asked Festus to bring Paul to Jerusalem to face a trial there. They planned to ambush or attack Paul while he was on the way from Caesarea to Jerusalem. We will remember that Paul already faced the council of the Jews. We will also remember that there were some Jewish men who secretly planned with the chief priests to ambush Paul while he was on the way to the trial. The chief priests wanted to kill Paul but they did not tell Festus about their plan.

Festus told the chief priests that Paul was still being held prisoner at Caesarea. Festus told the Jews that he will go to Caesarea in a few days. Festus invited some of the men with authority to Caesarea. These men of authority were Jews capable of representing the leaders of the Jews before Festus. Festus told them that they must come to Caesarea if they were to present a case to them. This may have been because it would have inconvenienced

Festus to bring Paul there. He would have to stay longer and he was planning to return to Caesarea in just a few days.

Stop and discuss: In your culture, how do new leaders or politicians make friends with the people?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

The story has two scenes.

First scene: Porcius Festus became the new governor of Judea.

Second scene: Festus went to Jerusalem to talk with the leaders of the Jews.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Porcius Festus, the Roman governor
- The chief priests
- The important leaders of the Jews

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action on it.

After Felix, Porcius Festus became the new governor of Judea. Porcius Festus arrived in Caesarea. Three days after, he went up to Jerusalem. Remember that Jerusalem was a two to three day journey from Caesarea.

Show a map of the Province of Judea.

When Festus came to Jerusalem, he met with the chief priests and important leaders of the Jews. These men were religious and political leaders. Since Paul was the prisoner of Festus, the chief priests asked the governor if he can send Paul to Jerusalem to face trial.

We will remember that earlier, some Jews planned to ambush Paul while he was on the way to the council of the Jews. They talked with the chief priests about this plan. But Paul's nephew reported this plan to the Roman commander. However, this time it is not just a group of Jews, it is the leading priests and leaders themselves who want to ambush Paul and kill him on the way.

Festus allowed the Jews to go to Caesarea if they want to present a case against Paul.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

The story has two scenes.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Porcius Festus, the Roman governor
- The chief priests
- The important leaders of the Jews

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points at the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

Porcius Festus became the new governor of Judea after Felix. He went up to Jerusalem and met with the chief priests and important men among the Jews.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing as the chief priests and important men of the Jews, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "We also want to be familiar with this new governor," and "Paul is the prisoner of the governor." [!end] Restart the action.

The chief priests and important men of the Jews asked the governor if he can send Paul to face trial in Jerusalem.

Stop the action.

Festus was planning to go back to Caesarea in a few days. Festus gave the Jews a mild command that if they wanted to present a case against Paul, they would have to come to Caesarea.

Stop the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Porcius Festus became the new governor of Judea. The Roman emperor appoints a **governor** who will rule over a province. He rules over **Caesarea** and **Jerusalem**. Caesarea was an important port in the Mediterranean Sea. It is where the palace of Herod was built. Use the words governor and Jerusalem as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information about Jerusalem.

Festus met with the **chief priests** and important leaders of Jerusalem. The principal men refer to the people who were most important among the Jews, namely the leaders and other men who had status and power. The chief priests were the religious leaders among the priests in Jerusalem. Use the word **priest** as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information about priest.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 25:1–5

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Acts 25:6–12

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 25:6–12 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus or God?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In the previous passage, Porcius Festus replaced Felix as governor. Festus went to Jerusalem to meet with the chief priests and leading men of the Jews. Festus told some men of authority to go with him to Caesarea and file a case against Paul.

Festus stayed for about eight to ten days at Jerusalem. Festus went to Caesarea. A day after Festus arrived in Caesarea, he sat on his seat as judge of the court. The Roman governor also functioned as judge. Festus commanded Paul to appear before him in that trial.

There were Jews who went to Caesarea from Jerusalem. Festus invited some men with authority to file their case against Paul. The Jews filed many and serious crimes against Paul. Serious crimes may refer to violations that require severe punishment. Still, the Jews could not prove their accusations before Festus.

It was time for Paul to respond to his accusers. Paul spoke to the governor respectfully.

Paul continued to plead his innocence. Paul made his defense, or defended himself while the Jews accused him of crimes. Paul did not break any law against the Jews, the temple of the Jews, or any law against Caesar. Caesar was the ruler of the entire Roman Empire. The law of Caesar also referred to the Roman laws.

As the new governor of Judea, Festus wanted to please the Jews. Festus knew the Jews wanted to condemn Paul. But Paul was able to respond to the accusations which the Jews could not prove. Paul had done nothing wrong, or he did not commit any sin against the Jewish or Roman law. So Festus asked Paul if he was willing to be sent to Jerusalem to face trial there. We will remember the chief priests and important men of the Jews asked if Festus can send Paul to Jerusalem. We will also remember that the Jews planned to ambush Paul on his way from Caesarea to Jerusalem. Festus may send guards to protect Paul, but the governor did not know that the Jews planned to kill Paul along the way. Festus didn't know what to do with Paul, so he thought that it might make more sense to try him in the place where he supposedly broke the law-Jerusalem.

But Paul knew he will not have a fair trial in Jerusalem. Paul was also aware of an attempt of the Jews to ambush him when he was still in the custody of the Roman commander. Paul said to Festus, "I am standing before Caesar's tribunal, where I ought to be tried." The tribunal is a court of law. The tribunal belonged to Caesar, but Caesar was not actually there. The governor represented Caesar in the province. Paul used his right as a Roman citizen to be tried in a Roman court. Paul emphasized that he was in a Roman court so that the Jews cannot have any control over him. Paul also said that it was proper that Festus judge over his case.

Paul also repeated that he did not commit a crime against the Jews. If Paul did any crime deserving death, Paul said he will not try to escape death. This is another way of saying if Festus found Paul guilty of a serious crime deserving death, Paul will not try to run from Festus. Paul will accept the punishment. Paul added, if the Jews could not prove him guilty then the Jews have no right to take Paul from the governor.

Paul said to Festus, "I appeal to Caesar." This statement means, "I call to Caesar on my behalf." Paul may think the Jews will be able to convince Festus to their side. Since Paul thought he cannot win his case either in Jerusalem or in the court at Caesarea, Paul used his right as a Roman citizen. Paul asked the trial to be made in Rome before Caesar. When Paul arrives in Rome, Caesar or his representative will judge over his case. In a Roman court, the accused person can appeal to be tried in Rome before the Roman judge decided on the case.

Stop and discuss: When cases are filed in your culture, where do innocent people seek help if they know they are not given a fair trial? How does someone appeal a judge's or court's decision?

Festus discussed Paul's case with his council. The council referred to his Roman advisers who were familiar with legal matters. Festus wanted to make sure he will do what is lawful in Roman law. Then Festus said to Paul, "To Caesar you have appealed; to Caesar you shall go." The declaration of Festus emphasizes the name of Caesar twice. Paul had made an appeal to Caesar so Festus was required to grant the appeal. Festus recognizes the higher authority of the Roman emperor who will investigate and make a decision on Paul's case.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

The story has three scenes.

First scene: Festus the governor took his seat at the tribunal in Caesarea. The Jewish leaders accused Paul of various crimes.

Second scene: Paul responded to his accusers and gave his defense.

Third scene: Festus talks with the council about Paul's appeal to Caesar.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Porcius Festus, the governor
- The Jewish leaders who accused Paul
- The council in Caesarea

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action on it.

You will remember earlier, Paul stood trial before Felix, the former governor. Here, Paul stands trial before the new governor, Porcius Festus. The new governor had been to Jerusalem to meet with the Jewish leaders. The Jewish leaders accused Paul of violating Jewish and Roman laws.

This story starts 8 to 10 days later. Festus goes back to Caesarea. The day after he arrives in Caesarea, the Jewish leaders come to the court. Festus sits in a special chair that a judge sits on when he hears a case and decides what to do.

Paul spoke to Festus respectfully. Paul defended himself against the accusations. When Festus asked Paul if he was willing to face trial in Jerusalem, Paul refused. As a Roman citizen, Paul decided that he should be tried only in a Roman court. Paul knew that he would not be safe in the Jewish council and knew of the previous plot to kill him. He knew his chances were better in the Roman court. If Festus was unwilling to decide the case, then Paul probably felt his best option was to appeal to Rome.

Upon hearing Paul's appeal, Festus talked with his council. Then Festus decided to accept Paul's appeal that his case be transferred from Caesarea to Rome. The title Caesar is mentioned twice to emphasize that Festus will send Paul to Caesar, the Roman emperor himself, to try the case.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

The story has three scenes.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Porcius Festus, the governor
- The Jewish leaders who accused Paul
- The council in Caesarea

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points at the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

Festus went to Caesarea and sat in the seat of the tribunal. The Jewish leaders filed their case against Paul.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing as Jewish leaders, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "We will accuse Paul of as many crimes as we can," and "We believe the governor will condemn Paul." [!end] Restart the action.

Paul responded to the accusations. Paul continued to plead his innocence.

Stop the action.

Festus asked Paul if he was willing to face trial in Jerusalem. Paul refused and held that he should be tried only in a Roman court.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing as Paul, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "The governor appears to be helping the Jews," and "I might be ambushed along the way to Jerusalem." [!end] Restart the action.

Because Paul did not want to be sent to the Jews in Jerusalem, Paul appealed to Caesar. Festus talked with the council in Caesarea. Then Festus said, "You appealed to Caesar, to Caesar you will go."

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing Festus, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "The council of advisers will guide me what to do," and "As a Roman citizen who appealed to the court of Caesar, I have to send Paul to Caesar in Rome." [!end] Restart the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

The **Jewish** leaders came from **Jerusalem** and accused Paul of many crimes. Use the word Jew and Jerusalem as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on Jew and Jerusalem.

Paul did not violate the **laws** against the Jews, the **temple**, and **Caesar**. The Jewish law referred to the law of Moses. Use the word law, temple, and Caesar as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on the words law, temple, and Caesar.

Festus talked to the council about Paul's case. The council here refers to the Roman advisers of Festus in Caesarea.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 25:6–12**Audio Content**

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Acts 25:13–22*Hear and Heart*

Hear Acts 25:13–22 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus or God?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

In the previous passage, a group of leading Jews went to Caesarea. They filed their accusations against Paul before Porcius Festus. As governor, Festus also functioned as judge in Judea. Paul appealed to appear before Caesar in court in Rome.

King Agrippa visited Festus. Agrippa was the son of Herod Agrippa. You will remember from earlier in Acts that Herod the father had James killed and Peter put in prison. Agrippa went with his younger sister Bernice to pay

their respects to Festus. Agrippa and Bernice paid their respects to welcome Festus as the new governor of Judea. Agrippa was the ruler of the Jews. Agrippa wanted to build a relationship with Festus.

Agrippa and Bernice stayed there with Festus for many days. While they stayed there, Festus told them about Paul. The previous governor Felix kept Paul in prison. Agrippa was a Jew who knew many things about their people and the religion of the Jews. Festus talked to Agrippa about Paul so he will know how to deal with Paul's case properly.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story of a time when you had a very important decision to make and didn't know what to do. Whom do you ask for advice and why did you choose to ask them?

Festus told Agrippa that when he went to Jerusalem, the chief priests and elders of the Jews went to Festus. They presented their case against Paul. The chief priests asked Festus to condemn Paul. But Festus could not give a decision because Roman law requires a trial. The accusers need to file their case before the accused. The accused was given the opportunity to defend himself of the charges.

Festus also said to Agrippa that when he arrived at Caesarea, he arranged for a trial for the Jews and Paul. On the next day, Festus took his seat in court as judge. Festus called upon the jailer to bring Paul to the court. When the Jews accused Paul before Festus, they accused Paul of different crimes that Festus did not expect.

Festus told Agrippa that their charges against Paul were about their religion of Christians. Though Jesus died, Paul believed that Jesus rose from the dead. Festus was at a loss, meaning he did not know how to judge the situation. Festus needed to document the case for Caesar's court before he sent Paul to Rome, but he did not know what to say. Festus asked Paul if he was willing to face trial in Jerusalem. We will remember that the first trial of Paul before the Jews was held at Jerusalem before the Roman commander.

Paul refused to go to Jerusalem. Instead, Paul appealed to Festus that he would face trial before Caesar. Festus needed to arrange for the travel of Paul to Caesar in Rome. Agrippa said in a polite way that he also wanted to hear Paul's defense in person. Festus said Agrippa can hear Paul speak tomorrow.

Show a map that includes Jerusalem, Caesarea, and Rome, if you team needs to see one.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

The story has two scenes.

First scene: King Agrippa and Bernice went to Governor Festus to greet him.

Second scene: Festus told Agrippa about Paul's trial. The Jews accused Paul of crimes about their religion.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Porcius Festus, the governor
- King Agrippa
- Bernice
- The chief priests
- The elders of the Jews

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action on it.

You will remember earlier, Paul appeared before Festus the governor. The Jews who went to Caesarea accused Paul of many serious crimes. Festus asked Paul if he was willing to face trial in Jerusalem. Paul refused. He appealed to face trial in Caesar's court.

A few days after the Jews presented their accusations against Paul, King Agrippa and his sister Bernice went to Festus. They greeted the governor of Judea. Festus told Agrippa and Bernice that Paul was in prison during the days of the former governor, Felix.

Festus told Agrippa about his meeting with the chief priests and elders of the Jews in Jerusalem. The chief priests and elders were asking Festus to condemn Paul. Festus could not condemn Paul because there are Roman laws which protect its citizens to have a fair trial. Festus invited some of their leaders to file their complaint against Paul in Caesarea.

Festus also told Agrippa about the hearing of the Jews against Paul in Caesarea. Festus sat on the seat of the court on the next day. He called for Paul to appear before his accusers. The Jews filed their case against Paul before the governor.

Festus found out that the Jews argued about matters of Jewish religion. Paul believed that Jesus who was put to death is alive.

Agrippa said to Festus that he wanted to hear Paul before the court. Festus said Agrippa can hear from Paul on the next day.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

The story has three scenes.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Porcius Festus
- King Agrippa
- Bernice
- The chief priests
- The elders of the Jews

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points at the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

Agrippa and Bernice went to Caesarea to greet Festus, the new governor. They stayed with the governor for many days.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing as Festus, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I also want to make friends with the leaders of the Jews," and "I need someone who can tell me about Jewish culture and religion." [!end] Restart the action.

Festus said to Agrippa about Paul whom Felix kept in prison in Caesarea. When Festus went to Jerusalem, the chief priests and elders of the Jews asked Festus to condemn Paul. But Festus could not condemn Paul because there were Roman laws which give citizens the opportunity to defend themselves in court.

Stop the action.

Festus also told Agrippa about the hearing in Caesarea. The Jews accused Paul of many serious crimes. But Festus realized the complaints of the accusers were about their Jewish religion. Paul believed in Jesus who died but is alive. Festus asked Paul if he was willing to go to Jerusalem to face trial there. Paul refused. Paul appealed to face trial before Caesar's court.

Stop the action.

Agrippa asked Festus if he can hear about Paul's case. Festus said he can hear about Paul on the next day.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing as Festus, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Perhaps Agrippa can help me understand Paul's case," and "I want to know if I made the right decision in allowing Paul to appeal to Caesar."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Festus talked to the council about Paul's case. The **council** here refers to the Roman advisers of Festus in Caesarea. The Roman government was in charge of the Province of Judea.

The **chief priests** and **elders** of the **Jews** came from **Jerusalem** and accused Paul of many crimes. Use the word Jew, priest, elder, and Jerusalem as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on priest, elder, Jew and Jerusalem.

Paul did not violate the **laws** against the Jews and **Caesar**. The Jewish law referred to the law of Moses. Use the word law and Caesar as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on the words law and Caesar.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 25:13–22

Audio Content

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Acts 25:23–27

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 25:23–27 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus or God?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In the previous passage, Festus told Agrippa the story about Paul. Agrippa wanted to hear Paul speak about his beliefs.

On the next day, Agrippa and Bernice came before Festus with much splendor and ceremony. This activity was a means to show the honor and importance of the king. The king would have been dressed in fine clothing and jewelry to show his importance. Agrippa and Bernice entered the audience hall, which was a large room where many people can meet together. This audience hall was different from the courtroom. Many of the high-ranking military officers were there, including the important men of the city. The high-ranking officers refer to the five commanders in Caesarea who led five hundred to one thousand soldiers each. Festus called for Paul to enter the audience hall. Paul came into the audience hall.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story of a special occasion when there were important people present. How do people in your culture dress up during special occasions to honor the important people?

Festus presented Paul before King Agrippa, Bernice, the commanders, and the important men of the city. Festus said, "You see this man," meaning everyone in the room can see Paul standing there. In the earlier passage, the Jews asked Festus to condemn Paul. Now Festus speaks about them as the whole Jewish people. The whole Jewish people referred to both the Jews from Jerusalem and Caesarea. The Jews asked Festus to condemn Paul with the death sentence.

As judge, Festus heard the Jews accuse Paul in a trial. Festus also heard Paul's response to the accusations. After the hearing, Festus realized Paul did not commit a crime that deserves or requires death according to Roman law. Paul appealed that he will be tried before the emperor, or Caesar, in Rome. Festus decided to send Paul to Rome.

Due to Paul's appeal, Festus needed to send Paul to Rome. But Festus has nothing to write to the emperor about Paul's case. The accusations against Paul were about the Jewish religion and not about Roman law. Festus needs to write something that will help the emperor decide on Paul's case. Festus presented Paul to King Agrippa because Agrippa knew more about the Jewish religion. Festus wanted Agrippa to listen to Paul so Festus will have something to write to the emperor. It will be unreasonable for Festus to send Paul to the emperor without clearly explaining the charges. Festus thinks that the emperor will not understand or think it is correct for Festus to send Paul to him without a clear case against him.

Have the team discuss what people in your culture do when they stand before the important leaders in your community.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

The story has two scenes.

First scene: King Agrippa and Bernice entered the audience hall. Festus called for Paul to come. Paul comes in.

Second scene: Festus explains to Agrippa and the guests the reason for the event. Paul appealed to face trial before the emperor in Rome. Festus needs something to write to the emperor concerning Paul's case.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Porcius Festus, the governor
- King Agrippa
- Bernice, Agrippa's sister
- The military commanders
- The important men of the city of Caesarea
- The whole Jewish people

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action on it.

You will remember earlier, Agrippa asked Festus if he could hear Paul speak. On the next day, Festus and Bernice entered the audience hall. Festus and Bernice entered with great pomp showing their elegant dress and clothing to show their importance to the people. The military commanders and the important men of the city of Caesarea were also there.

Festus called for Paul to come in. Paul comes in. Festus presents Paul before Agrippa, Bernice, the military commanders, and the important men of the city.

Festus explains that the Jewish people asked him to condemn Paul. But Festus did not find Paul commit any crime deserving death. Paul appealed to be tried in the court of the emperor. Festus need to write something

to the emperor regarding Paul's case. Through this hearing of Paul before Agrippa, Festus will have more information about the case.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

The story has two scenes.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Porcius Festus, the governor
- King Agrippa
- Bernice, Agrippa's sister
- The military commanders
- The important men of the city of Caesarea
- The whole Jewish people

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points at the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

Festus allowed Agrippa to hear Paul. On the next day, Agrippa and Bernice entered the audience hall. Agrippa and Bernice wore elegant clothes and jewelry to show their high status in Jewish society. The military commanders and the important men of the city were also there.

Stop the action.

Festus called for Paul to come in. Paul entered the audience hall. Festus presented Paul to Agrippa and the other guests. The Jews from Jerusalem and Caesarea asked Festus that Paul should not live any longer. Paul appealed to be tried before the Roman emperor. Festus need something to write to the emperor about Paul's case.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing Agrippa, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I want to hear what Paul said to the chief priests and elders," and "What made this Jew change his beliefs?"

Ask the actor playing Paul, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I will tell my faith to Agrippa about Jesus and the resurrection," and "I will prove my innocence before these people."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

King Agrippa, Bernice, the military **commanders**, and the important men of the city entered the audience hall of Festus, the governor. The commander is also known as a tribune. Use the word commander as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on commander.

Festus told Agrippa that the whole **Jewish** people from **Jerusalem** and this city asked him that Paul should not live any longer. Use the word Jew and Jerusalem as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on Jew and Jerusalem.

Festus calls the emperor **His Majesty** or **My Lord**. This word also means a human lord or master. Use the word lord as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on lord.

Paul appealed for a trial before the emperor. The Roman emperor was also known as **Caesar**. Use the word Caesar as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on Caesar.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 25:23–27

Audio Content

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Acts 26:1–23

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 26:1–23 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus or God?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In the previous passage, Festus asked Agrippa what he should write to the emperor about Paul. The charges against Paul were not clear to Festus. Festus allowed Paul to enter the audience hall. Festus presented Paul to Agrippa and explained to him about the accusations of the Jews.

Agrippa gave Paul permission to speak to him and the guests about his case. Paul motioned his hand. This means Paul was about to speak. This gesture could also mean Paul thanked King Agrippa for hearing him. In a polite manner, Paul said that it is a good thing he can defend himself in front of King Agrippa, because Agrippa understands the Jewish culture and faith. Paul will defend himself against the accusations of the Jews to prove his innocence.

Paul knew that Agrippa was familiar with their customs and religious duties. In a respectful manner, Paul appealed for Agrippa to listen to him carefully. Paul begins his defense by telling his way of life as a Jew. Paul was saying that he was obedient to the law of Moses since his childhood. The Jews from his home area and from Jerusalem know that Paul followed God's law.

Paul said that the Jews knew that Paul lived as a Pharisee. The Pharisees are the most strict sect, or group, in the Jewish religion. These Jews could testify, or report these facts, if they were willing. Paul doubted the Jews will tell the truth. Paul tells Agrippa that he was on trial because of the hope of the Jews that God promised to their ancestors in the Old Testament. God promised the Jewish ancestors that the people who followed him would be raised from the dead one day. The entire people of Israel, the twelve tribes of the Jews, believed and hoped this would happen. In fact, the Jewish people worshipped night and day while waiting and hoping for the promised savior. However, now Paul is saying that the promised savior has come and proven that people can rise from the dead. It seems like a contradiction that the Jewish people do not believe what he says, when they have been waiting for it for so long.

Paul asks, "Why is it incredible to you that God can raise the dead?" Paul is using a question to emphasize that the people should believe that God can raise the dead. It is important to remember that Paul's listeners were composed of two groups. The first group was the Jews which include Agrippa, Bernice, and other Jewish officials. These Jews in the audience hall could be Sadducees who do not believe in the resurrection. The second group was Festus and the Roman officials who also did not believe in the resurrection.

Stop and discuss: How do people in your culture react when someone says a person who died was raised back to life?

Paul tells them again about his past life. As a Pharisee, Paul believed that he was doing the right thing when he opposed the name of Jesus. Paul wanted to prove to the Christians that Jesus was not the Christ. In his previous life as a Pharisee, Paul believed that God wanted him to hurt the followers of Jesus. Paul did those hurtful things against the followers of Jesus in Jerusalem. Paul arrested and put many of the saints, or people God set apart for himself, in prison. We will remember from an earlier passage that Paul asked for letters from the chief priests to give him permission to persecute the followers of Jesus. Paul also voted for the decision along with other Jews to put them to death.

Paul retells the story to Agrippa about his way to the Damascus. While they were traveling, a bright light flashed on him that made him blind. In this story version, Paul and all his companions fell down because of that bright light. The Lord Jesus also said to Paul, "It is hard for you to kick out against the goads."

Paul punished the followers of Jesus often which means he punished them many times. Paul went to look out for them from one synagogue to another. Paul was very furious against them. He tried to make the followers of Jesus to speak blasphemy, which are words that dishonor God. Paul then recounts the story of how he traveled to Damascus to pursue the followers of Jesus. You will remember that Damascus is an old city in Syria which was beyond the territory of Israel. Paul received the authority from the chief priests to pursue the followers of Jesus.

While Paul was on his way to Damascus, he saw a bright light from heaven at noon. Paul described the light as brighter than the sun which shone on him and his companions. Because of the bright light that struck them, Paul and his companions fell to the ground. Paul also heard a voice talking to him in the Hebrew, or Aramaic, language. The voice called to Paul's Jewish name twice. This means the voice was calling Paul's attention. It asks, "Why are you persecuting me?" which refers to Paul's actions of causing hurt to the followers of Jesus. The voice also said, "It is hard for you to kick against the goads." This is a well-known proverb which means people should not rebel against what God wants them to do or else they will only hurt themselves.

Stop and discuss: What are some of your favorite proverbs from your culture. Which of these proverbs has a similar meaning to the proverb used by Jesus in this story?

Paul asked who was the one speaking in that voice. Jesus answered, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting." The many things Paul did to hurt the followers were actions that he also did against Jesus. Jesus commanded Paul to stand up. Paul obeyed God and his life changed. He will no longer pursue the followers of Jesus. Jesus explains that he appeared to Paul for a purpose. Jesus appointed Paul as his servant and as a witness to the things Paul saw.

Jesus told Paul that both Jews and Gentiles, non-Jews, will try to kill him, but Jesus will rescue Paul from those attacks. Jesus is sending Paul to both the Jews and the Gentiles. As the servant of Jesus, Paul will help others to open their eyes. This is a figure of speech which means the person with closed eyes does not believe in Jesus. Those who receive Jesus will turn from darkness into light. Darkness is associated with the power of Satan. Following God is like being in the light. By turning to the light, a person will receive forgiveness of sins. That person will also have a place, or share, in the inheritance with people who have been sanctified by faith in Jesus. This means that when people believe in Jesus, they will become holy and follow God more closely.

Paul addresses King Agrippa directly and says that he obeyed the heavenly vision. Paul preached about Jesus in Damascus where he was when he became a follower of Jesus, then in Jerusalem, and then to those living in the region of Judea, then to the Gentiles, those who were non-Jews. Paul urged the people to repent, or turn away from their sins then turn to God. When people turn to God, they allow God to lead them and they do what he wants. Those who repented should also prove that they are no longer sinning by doing good things that God asks them to do.

Paul says that this is the reason the Jews attacked him at the temple and tried to kill him. Paul was obedient to the vision from God and was preaching about Jesus. Paul said God has helped him from then until this day to continue telling both small and great about Jesus. This means that Paul shared with everyone regardless of their status. Paul only spoke of what the prophets and Moses said would happen. Their message was that the Christ, or Promised Savior, must rise from the dead. God also commanded Paul to proclaim the light to both the Jews and the Gentiles, those who were non-Jews.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

The story has five scenes.

First scene: King Agrippa allowed Paul to speak. Paul explained to Agrippa why he was accused by the Jews.

Second scene: Paul told about his past life as a Pharisee. Paul put the followers of Jesus into prison while he was in Jerusalem.

Third scene: Paul also told them about his encounter with Jesus while he was on his way to Damascus.

Fourth scene: Paul told them that he began to preach about Jesus in Damascus, Jerusalem, in Judea, and to the Gentiles.

Fifth scene: Paul shares the message of Jesus with those listening.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Porcius Festus, the governor
- King Agrippa
- Bernice
- The military commanders
- The important men of the city of Caesarea
- The chief priests
- Paul's companions in going to Damascus
- Jesus
- The followers of Jesus
- The Jews who attacked Paul at the temple

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action on it.

In the previous passage, Festus introduced Paul to Agrippa. Festus told the king about the accusations of the Jews against Paul.

Agrippa allowed Paul to speak at the audience hall. Paul gestured to show that he was about to speak.

Paul begins to speak about his past life. He is telling a story about something that happened long ago.

Stop and discuss: How do storytellers in your culture indicate that someone is talking about their past life?

Paul told Agrippa about his previous life that he was a Pharisee since his youth. Paul opposed the name of Jesus Christ. Paul put the followers of Jesus in jail. Paul even voted to a decision that the followers of Jesus should be put to death.

After Paul explains that he was a Pharisee, he talks about the resurrection of the dead. He then is really surprised that the people are accusing him and angry with him for believing in the very thing they are hoping for. Paul shows this by saying, "And for this hope I am accused by Jews, O king!" Paul directly addresses the king here to show how surprised he is.

Paul starts this part of his past story with "one day" he wanted to pursue the followers of Jesus in Damascus. He asked permission from the chief priests to arrest those followers. But while Paul and his companions were on their way to Damascus, he was struck with a bright light. He also heard the voice of Jesus speaking to him. Jesus asked Paul why he is persecuting him. Jesus also appointed Paul to become his servant and his witness.

Paul again directly addressed Agrippa. After receiving the heavenly vision, Paul preached the message of Jesus in Damascus, Jerusalem, and in the region of Judea. He also preached to the Gentiles, those who were not Jews.

Paul tells Agrippa that the Jews in the temple tried to kill him because of his belief in Jesus. Paul tells how God helped him so that he could tell great and small. Paul then tells them the message of Jesus.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

The story has five scenes.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Porcius Festus, the governor
- King Agrippa
- Bernice
- The military commanders
- The important men of the city of Caesarea
- The chief priests
- Paul's companions in going to Damascus
- Jesus
- The followers of Jesus
- The Jews who attacked Paul at the temple

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points at the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

Agrippa allowed Paul to speak. Paul introduced himself as a Pharisee before the king. He explains that Paul was in trial because of his belief in the promise of God.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing King Agrippa, "How are you feeling? "You may hear things like, "What are the new things that Paul will say?" and, "Why did he appeal to a trial before Caesar?" [!end] Restart the action.

Paul told Agrippa about his past life that he was a Pharisee before he received a vision from Jesus. Paul tried to arrest the followers of Jesus to put them into prison. But Jesus appeared to Paul in a vision and stopped him from arresting the believers of Jesus. Paul began to preach about Jesus in Damascus, Jerusalem, Judea, and among the non-Jews. He urged his hearers to repent from their sins and turn to God.

Stop the action.

Paul told Agrippa and his listeners that the Jews in the temple seized Paul and tried to kill him because of his faith in Jesus. Paul also testifies to the listeners that his testimony was based from what Moses and the Prophets said about Jesus.

Stop the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Paul tells King Agrippa about the accusations of the Jews. In his earlier life, Paul tells about his time in Jerusalem, his nation, and life as a Pharisee. Use the words Jew, Jerusalem, nation, and Pharisee as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on these words.

Paul opposed the name of Jesus of Nazareth. With permission from the chief priests, he went after the saints, or believers, and put them into prison. Nazareth was the home town of Jesus. The word **saint** refers to the people set apart for God or those who follow Jesus. Use the words Nazareth, priest, believers, and saints as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on these words.

Paul also went after the followers of Jesus in the **synagogues** and tried to force them to speak **blasphemy** against God. Use the words synagogue and blasphemy as you used previously. Blasphemy is speak words that dishonor God. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on synagogue and blasphemy.

Paul saw a bright light. Jesus called to Paul in a vision and spoke to him in the **Hebrew** language. The Hebrew language or Aramaic was the native language of the Jews. Jesus also said to Paul, "It is hard for you to kick against the goads." The **goad** is a stick used by the owner of an ox or another animal to direct the animal. The saying is from a Greek proverb which says people should not rebel against what the gods tell them to do, because if they do rebel they only hurt themselves.

Paul will be a servant and a **witness** for Jesus. Paul will share the message to the Gentiles, those who were non-Jews. Those who want to follow Jesus must turn away from the power of Satan and ask for the forgiveness of sins. Use these words as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on these words.

When Paul received the heavenly **vision**, he immediately preached the message of **repentance** in Damascus, **Jerusalem**, the region of **Judea**, and to the Gentiles. Use the words vision, repentance, Jerusalem, and Judea as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on the words vision, repentance, Jerusalem, and Judea.

The Jews at the temple seized Paul and tried to kill him. Paul obeyed the command of God to **testify**, or tell about Jesus. The message of Jesus as Messiah follows what **Moses** and the prophets said. Use the words temple, Messiah, Moses, and prophets as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information about these words.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 26:1–23

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Acts 26:24–32

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 26:24–32 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?

2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus or God?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In the previous passage, Paul told his story before King Agrippa, Governor Festus, and the other listeners about the change in his life from Pharisee to a follower of Jesus.

While Paul was speaking, Festus interrupted Paul. Festus had all the rights to do so because as governor, he also acted as judge of the court. Festus shouted at Paul, "You are out of your mind." This phrase also means being crazy or the person does not think as normal people do. Festus believes Paul has studied too much and this has changed him from a normal person to a crazy person. Festus interrupts him at a crucial moment-when Paul is talking about the resurrection of the dead. That's a subject that seems hard to believe!

Paul continued to speak with respect to the governor. "Most excellent Festus," Paul said, "I am not out of my mind," or "I am not crazy." Paul claimed his words are truth, meaning what he said to Agrippa actually happened. Paul's words were also rational. In the original language, the word used by Paul means the opposite of being crazy which is to be sensible.

Paul referred to King Agrippa as someone who knew what Paul testified about Jesus. Agrippa was the appointed ruler over the province of Judea, so he would know the story of Jesus and his followers. The phrase, I can speak boldly or freely to him means Paul did not need to explain to Agrippa many things. Agrippa was familiar with Jewish culture and religion. Paul added that what he testified about Jesus was not done in a corner, or it did not happen in secret. As a political ruler, Agrippa knew about the issue between Jesus and the Jews.

Paul turns to Agrippa whom he knew understood more of the situation than Festus. Paul asked Agrippa a question that he did not expect him to answer. As a fellow Jew, Paul asked Agrippa if he believes in the Jewish prophets, meaning the prophecies of the Old Testament that speak about the Christ, the Promised Savior. Paul answered for Agrippa saying, "I know that you believe." Paul wanted Agrippa to admit that he believed in the prophets. King Agrippa knew what Paul was asking him to do. Paul wanted Agrippa to become a Christian. Agrippa answered Paul with a question that he did not expect to be answered. Agrippa was saying to Paul that he cannot convince the king to become a Christian in just a very short time. As the king appointed by the Roman emperor, it would be unlikely that Agrippa will publicly reject the religion of the Jews.

Stop and discuss. In your culture, who do you turn to for help explaining the traditions and beliefs in your culture that foreigners do not understand? How do people in your culture familiar with these traditions explain these practices to others?

In response to Agrippa, Paul said whether it takes a short time or a long time, Paul's goal of convincing them to the faith is the same. Paul addressed this message not only to Agrippa but also to Festus and everyone in that audience hall. When Paul says "I pray to God," he means that he wishes that God will do something: Paul wants them to become Christians. "Except for these chains" means that Paul did not wish for his hearers to be a prisoner in chains as he now was.

King Agrippa stood up as well as Festus the governor, Bernice the king's sister, and everyone who was seated also stood up. When the king stands up, the hearing is over. The meeting could have continued but the king decided to end the meeting at that time. They left the audience hall. King Agrippa, Festus the governor, and Bernice said to each other, "This man is doing nothing to deserve death or imprisonment." We will remember that the chief priests wanted Festus to condemn Paul with a death sentence.

Agrippa who knew Jewish culture, religion, and the events that took place knew more about the case of Paul than Festus. Agrippa gave his judgment that Paul could have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar. To

be set free is to go out from jail and from the custody of the authorities. Festus could release Paul from the accusations of the Jews, because Agrippa agreed that Paul had done nothing wrong. As a Roman citizen, Paul used his right in appealing to Caesar. The governor gave the rights to the emperor who will judge over his case.

Stop and discuss. In your culture, if you knew an innocent person was in jail because of false accusations, how do you help that person to be set free?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

The story has two scenes.

First scene: Paul was in a hearing before King Agrippa, Festus, the governor, Bernice, and the other officials.

Second scene: After the hearing, Agrippa, Festus, and Bernice talked to one another about the case of Paul.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Porcius Festus, the governor
- King Agrippa
- Bernice
- The military commanders
- The important men of the city of Caesarea

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action on it.

In the previous passage, Paul defended his innocence before King Agrippa, Festus the governor, and to everyone in the audience hall.

While Paul was speaking, Festus interrupted Paul in a loud voice, and he said Paul is out of his mind, or a crazy person. Paul said he was telling the truth. Because Festus knew only a few things about Jewish culture, Paul turned to Agrippa. Paul asked Agrippa a question that he did not expect him to answer. Paul asked Agrippa if he believed in what the prophets said. This was another way of saying that if Agrippa believes in the prophets, he should also believe in Jesus.

Agrippa also answered Paul in a form of a question. Agrippa asked Paul if he could convince him to become a Christian in just a short matter of time. Agrippa refused to believe in what Paul said. Agrippa stood up and the hearing ended. The order of standing is important in their culture. The king stood first, then the governor, then Bernice, and finally the others. This showed respect to the leaders in order of highest status to lowest.

After they left the audience hall, King Agrippa, Festus the governor, and Bernice talked with each other. They agreed that Paul did not deserve to be put to death or imprisoned. Agrippa believed Paul would have been set free if he did not appeal to Caesar.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

The story has two scenes.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Porcius Festus, the governor
- King Agrippa
- Bernice
- The military commanders
- The important men of the city of Caesarea

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points at the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

While Paul was still speaking, Festus interrupted Paul and he said Paul was crazy. Paul said he was not crazy but he was telling the truth.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing Paul, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "My words are plain and simple," and, "Festus does not understand clearly because he is not a Jew." [!end] Restart the action.

Paul knew Agrippa was aware and understood what he was trying to say. Paul asked Agrippa if he believed in the prophets. Agrippa refused to become a Christian.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing Agrippa, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Paul is trying to convince me to join his religion," and "I now understand the argument between the chief priests and the Jews." [!end] Restart the action.

Paul makes one last statement of appeal: "Short or long, I wish that you all were as I except for these chains." The hearing of Paul ended when Agrippa stood up, followed by the governor, Bernice, and the rest of the audience. Agrippa, Festus, and Bernice talked with each other about Paul's case. They believe Paul does not deserve death or imprisonment. Still Paul has to go to a trial in Rome because he appealed to Caesar.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing King Agrippa, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "The chief priests want to condemn Paul because he changed his religion," and "Paul became a follower of Jesus but he did not commit a crime."

Ask the actor playing Festus, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "The chief priests wanted to hurt the followers of Jesus because they changed their religion," and "I cannot set Paul free because he appealed to Caesar."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Paul tells Festus that he speaks words that are true and **rational**. In Greek, the word rational is the opposite of crazy or insane. This means Paul used sensible words.

Paul asked King Agrippa if he believed in the **prophets**. The prophets are spokespersons of God. The writings of the prophets were written in the Old Testament. Agrippa answered Paul that he cannot convince him to become a **Christian**, or follower of Jesus, in a short time. Use the words prophet and Christian as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on prophet and Christian.

Agrippa said to Festus that Paul would have been set free if he did not appeal to **Caesar**, who is the Roman emperor. Use the word Caesar as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on Caesar.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 26:24–32

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Acts 27:1–8

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Acts 27:1–8 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Acts 27:1–8 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Acts 27:1–8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

As you remember, Luke is the person telling the story. He is writing it all down to send to Theophilus, who is not there while this is happening. In the previous passage, Paul is in Caesarea, where King Agrippa and Governor Festus have decided to send Paul to Caesar in Rome, Italy. Paul is a prisoner of the Roman authorities. At this point in the story, Luke rejoins Paul, along with Aristarchus, another friend of Paul's.

The voyage to Rome will be long, taking several months and requiring several stops along the way. You will remember from earlier passages that Caesarea is a port city on the edge of the Mediterranean Sea, a large body of salt water between Europe, Asia, and Africa. It is in Israel but is a center for administration for the Roman rulers. This city is named in honor of Caesar, the ruler of Rome and all the lands that Rome controlled.

Stop here and show the translation team a map of this area. Look at the map and find Caesarea. Find Rome on the map. Notice what other areas border the Mediterranean Sea.

Tell a story of a long journey that you have made. How did you decide when and where to stop? Pause this audio here.

Because Paul is a prisoner on his way to trial, Roman soldiers escort him on the trip. The person in charge of the prisoners at Caesarea decided the prisoners heading to Rome should travel by ship. He entrusted Paul and other prisoners to an officer named Julius. Julius is a centurion in the Imperial Regiment or Cohort. You will remember from earlier passages that a centurion is an officer in charge of 100 soldiers. He was part of the military unit called the "Imperial Cohort" or "Imperial Regiment." A "cohort" or "regiment" in the Roman army is a unit made of six groups of 100 soldiers. Imperial means that this group of soldiers served the Roman Emperor, or Caesar. They served the Roman Emperor in Judea and Syria.

Paul's companions, Luke and Aristarchus, are allowed to travel with him, but they are not prisoners. Aristarchus is from the city of Thessalonica in the province of Macedonia. You will remember from previous passages that Aristarchus had traveled with Paul on other occasions. Luke and Aristarchus were probably required to pay for the cost of their voyage. There are probably other paying passengers in addition to the prisoners and Roman soldiers on the ship.

The group travels on two different ships in this part of the story. The first ship started from Adramyttium, another city on the Mediterranean coast, but Paul and the group boarded it in Caesarea. This first ship is probably a coasting ship designed to travel close to shore and make many stops. This ship was going only part of the way to Rome. The ship stopped in Sidon, and Julius was kind to Paul and let him leave the ship to visit friends. Paul's friends in Sidon provided for his needs. This means that they probably gave him food and other supplies that he might need for the long journey ahead.

Stop here and discuss: Have translation team members tell a story about going on a long journey, and not having some things they needed. What are some ways that you got the things you needed while on the trip? Pause this audio here.

Then the ship leaves Sidon and sails along the lee of the island of Cyprus. The lee of an island is the side where the ship is the most protected from the wind. In this instance, it refers to the southeast and east coast of the island of Cyprus up to the northeast tip of the island. From there, the ship passes by Cilicia and Pamphylia, but did not stop at those places. The ship finally stops in Myra. Myra is a city in the province of Lycia. Since this ship will not go to Italy, Julius the centurion finds another ship in Myra that will take the group on the next portion of their journey.

Stop here and show the translation team a picture of a coasting ship. Show the team a map of the route the ship took from Caesarea to Myra. Pause this audio here.

In Myra, Julius, the Roman official in charge, puts Paul and his group on a different ship that had come from Alexandria, Egypt. This second ship was probably 60 meters long and 15 meters wide. The ship could hold at least 276 people on it as well as many tons of grain and other cargo. It was big enough to sail across the open ocean and all the way to Rome. There was a fleet, or group of ships, controlled by the Roman government to transport the grain to Rome. This ship was probably a grain ship from that fleet.

This second ship sailed from Myra, but progress was slow because a strong wind blew against the way they wanted to go. It was several days before the ship arrived off the coast of the town Cnidus. This portion of the trip should have only taken two days, but the winds made the voyage much longer. Because of the strong winds, the ship sailed along Salome, the eastern point of the island of Crete. This area was on the lee side of the island. The island would block the wind blowing from the west. When the ship passed this side of Crete and turned back west, the wind was still blowing against them, so they continued to struggle to travel quickly. Because of the wind, the trip is taking many more days than expected.

Finally, the ship stopped at a place called Fair Havens, near the town of Lasea on the south side of Crete. Fair Havens means "Good Harbors," meaning it was a place protected from the sea's winds and waves.

Stop here and show the translation team a map of the route of the ship.

Stop here and show the translation team a picture of a Mediterranean cargo ship.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Acts 27:1-8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has four scenes.

In the first scene: The authorities decide it is time for Paul and other prisoners to begin the trip to Rome. Julius, a Roman centurion, is put in charge of the prisoners. Paul's friends, Luke and Aristarchus, join him on the journey. They leave on a ship scheduled to make several stops along the coast.

In the second scene: The ship stops in Sidon. Paul is allowed to leave the ship to visit with friends who live in Sidon. Paul, Luke, and Aristarchus get back on the ship. The ship leaves Sidon and sails for Myra.

In the third scene: Strong winds blow against the ship, making it hard to travel quickly in the direction they want to go. The ship lands in Myra. Julius finds a different, bigger ship that is going to Rome. Julius moves the group to that ship.

In the fourth scene: The second ship leaves Myra but sails slowly because of the wind. The ship's crew changes the direction of the ship to try to make better progress, but the wind still slows them down. After several days, the ship arrives at Fair Havens near Lasea, on the island of Crete.

The characters in this passage are:

- Roman authorities in Caesarea
- Paul
- Luke
- Several other prisoners
- Julius, a centurion of the Imperial Regiment
- Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica and a friend of Paul and Luke
- Captain and crew of the first ship
- Paul's friends in Sidon
- Captain and crew of the second ship
- Other Roman soldiers

After Paul's trial in Caesarea, the officials would have to find a ship to send Paul to Rome. This story begins with "When they decided that we would set sail, or get on a boat, for Rome, Italy, the Roman official Julius took charge of Paul and some other prisoners." We do not know who made the decision that it was time to go.

It is important to remember that this is the point in the story where Luke and Aristarchus join Paul. Luke is the author, so Luke begins to show us that he was there because he says "we set sail for Rome." You will remember that Luke had previously traveled with Paul on other trips. Luke has not been together with Paul since they arrived in Jerusalem prior to Paul's arrest. We do not know where Luke has been during the past two years.

It is important to remember that the group took two boats to Rome. The first boat came from Adramyttium and stopped in Caesarea to pick up Paul and his group. They sailed along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea for one night. The next day they stopped at Sidon. Paul and his friends got off the boat to visit friends.

After Paul and his friends returned to the boat, the boat went to Myra. The trip from Sidon to Myra took approximately 10 to 15 days.

Stop here and show your translation team a map of the route of the boat from Caesarea to Sidon to Myra. Pause this audio here.

In Myra, Julius found another ship, and all the prisoners left the first boat and got onto the second boat. This boat began to sail towards Rome, but the wind pushed against it, and the boat sailed slowly. It was several days before the ship arrived off the coast of the town of Cnidus. This portion of the trip should have only taken two days, but the winds made the voyage much longer. Because of the strong winds, the ship sailed along Salome, the eastern point of the island of Crete. This area was on the lee side of the island. The island would block the wind blowing from the west. They continued to sail along near the coast and finally landed in Fair Havens, near the town of Lasea on the south side of Crete. Crete is an island in the Mediterranean Sea, about 260 kilometers long and 64 kilometers wide at its widest point.

Stop here and show your translation team a map of the route of the boat from Myra to Fair Havens. Pause this audio here.

It is important to think about how sailors sailed ships in heavy winds. Ships in this time moved by sail and wind power. Some ships were supplemented as necessary by oars operated by slaves. We do not know if these ships had oars since the passage does not mention oars. Grain cargo ships were often about 55 meters long, 14 meters wide, and 13 meters high. The coasting ship was smaller. These ships were dependent primarily on the wind to move them. If the winds were moving in the direction they wanted to go, then they could travel from 7 to 11 kilometers per hour. If the winds were moving against them, the sailors would have to sail the ship in a zigzag direction which was difficult and slow.

Stop here and show the translation team a picture of a Mediterranean cargo ship. Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Acts 27:1–8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has four scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Roman authorities in Caesarea
- Paul
- Luke, telling the story
- Several other prisoners
- Julius, a captain of the Imperial Regiment
- Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica and a friend of Paul and Luke
- Captain and crew of the first ship
- Paul's friends in Sidon
- Captain and crew of the second ship
- Other Roman soldiers

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out the Roman authorities deciding to send Paul and the other prisoners to Rome. The authorities make Julius, the centurion, in charge of the prisoners. Luke and Aristarchus accompany Paul on the journey.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing Aristarchus and Luke, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Grateful to be traveling with Paul again," or "Hoping that I can be of service to my friend," or "Eager to see what God has in store for us." [!end] Continue the drama.

Act out Paul and his companions, the other prisoners, Julius, and the other Roman soldiers boarding the ship in Caesarea. The ship leaves Caesarea. The ship stops at the port in Sidon. Julius gives Paul permission to visit with his friends in Sidon. Paul's friends help provide for Paul's needs for the journey.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Paul, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Grateful to be able to visit my friends," or "Concerned that my friends don't worry about me. I hope I can encourage them to be strong," or "Glad that God has given me favor with Julius."

Ask the people playing Paul's friends in Sidon, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Happy to see Paul," "Worried for Paul," "Happy that we can help Paul with some provisions," and "Angry at the Roman authorities." [!end] Continue the drama.

Act out Paul and his companions returning to the ship. The ship leaves the port in Sidon and continues on toward Myra. Act out the sailors having difficulty sailing the ship because of the wind. The ship arrives in Myra. Julius finds a large grain cargo ship that is going to Rome. Julius and the Roman soldiers move Paul and the other prisoners to that ship. Luke and Aristarchus accompany Paul.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Julius, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Frustrated at the delay," or "Concerned. I hope I can find a ship going all the way to Rome," or "Anxious. I hope the rest of this trip is not so slow and difficult." [!end] Continue the drama.

The grain cargo ship from Alexandria leaves the port of Myra but sails slowly because of the wind. The ship's crew changes the direction of the ship to try to make better progress, but the wind still slows them down. After several days, the ship arrives at Fair Havens near Lasea, on the island of Crete.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the captain of the ship, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "We are way behind schedule. The owners will be angry," or "It's nice to have a break from the wind, but we need to get moving again."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Acts 27:1-8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The government officials decided that Paul and other prisoners would get on a ship to sail for Rome. They gave Paul and the prisoners to Julius. Julius was a centurion in the Imperial Regiment or Cohort. A **centurion** was a Roman soldier who was in charge of 100 soldiers. A "cohort" or "regiment" in the Roman army is a unit made of six groups of 100 soldiers. Imperial means that this group of soldiers served the Roman Emperor, or Caesar. They served the Roman Empire and the Roman emperor or Caesar. Use the same word for centurion and regiment that you have used in previous passages. For more information on centurion, refer to the Master Glossary.

They got on a **ship** in Caesarea. Then changed to a larger ship in Myra. The first ship was a smaller ship designed to travel close to shore and make many stops. The second ship was a grain cargo ship from Alexandria, Egypt. This second ship was probably 60 meters long and 15 meters wide. The ship could hold at least 276 people on it as well as many tons of grain and other cargo. It was big enough to sail across the open ocean and all the way to Rome. This ship was probably part of a fleet of ships controlled by the Roman government to transport grain to Rome.

Stop here and show the translation team photos again of the types of ships that sail on the Mediterranean Sea. Pause this audio here.

The ships passed by **ports**, places where ships could load or unload passengers and cargo. Ports are located on areas of the coast or the land next to the sea. Many ports are situated in a **harbor**, a part of a body of water along the shore deep enough for anchoring a ship. A harbor often has coastal features, either natural or manmade, that protect ships from winds, waves, and strong ocean currents.

The first ship passed the **lee of the island of Cyprus** and the second ship passed the **lee of the island of Crete**, meaning that the ships passed the side of the island most protected from the wind.

Stop here and show the translation team the two maps of the route taken in this passage, again: one that passes by the lee of the island of Cyprus and the other that passes by the lee of the island of Crete. Discuss as a team how you will describe and translate the "lee of the island."

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 27:1–8

Audio Content

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Acts 27:9–26

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 27:9–26 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus or God?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In the previous passage, the ship which carried Paul as a prisoner left port sailing toward Rome.

Much time has passed since the ship which carried Paul left port. It was taking longer than expected. The distance they had traveled in one or two months should have only taken one or two weeks. The winds were not helping the ship move quickly along. The Fast, or Day of Atonement, was already over. The Day of Atonement is the most important Jewish day of worship, prayer, and fasting. It occurs near the end of September. Sailing after this time was dangerous because storms or strong winds can destroy ships.

Paul respectfully advised the people on the ship that the ship might be in danger. He said, the ship may be destroyed, its cargo will be lost, and many people may die. The centurion did not listen to Paul. The centurion followed the advice of both the captain and the owner of the ship.

The harbor the ship went into was not safe because it was exposed. During the winter, the ships would face storms and strong winds with no protection. This was dangerous for the ship and the crew. The majority decided that the ship should continue to travel to the city of Phoenix, a harbor on the island of Crete where the boat would have protection during the winter months. This majority may refer to all the sailors or almost everyone on the ship.

Stop here and discuss with the translation team: If you sail boats in your culture, how do you know when it is safe to sail or not? Who makes those decisions? If you do not sail boats in your culture, how do you know when it is safe to start on a journey? Who makes those decisions?

When the crew of the ship observed that the south wind, or a wind blowing from the south, was blowing gently, they continued sailing to Phoenix. The crew thought they had the type of wind they needed to continue the voyage, so they pulled up the anchor to the ship so they could sail again. An anchor is a heavy object tied to a rope or chain often with a crossbar which could dig into the sea bottom in order to hinder the ship from moving.

The ship sailed not too far from land. The ship stayed a safe distance from the land so it will not hit the rocks underneath.

Not too long after the ship was sailing, the wind changed direction. The ship encountered a storm at sea. The storm had strong winds and made large waves. A strong wind called the northeaster blew in quickly from the northeast and forced the ship in a different direction.

The wind was so strong that the ship could not steer against it. The sailors had no choice but to let the wind move the ship on its own. The ship sailed with difficulty towards a small island named Cauda for safety. They sailed along the lee side of the island, the side most protected from the winds. The sailors had difficulty securing the lifeboat of the ship. A lifeboat was a small boat which could hold 10 to 30 people, depending on its size. The sailors used this small lifeboat to take people or cargo to and from the large ship when the ship was unable to get close to the dock or shore. The lifeboat was often tied with a rope to the back of the ship and the ship pulled it along as they sailed to make more room on the ship.

Stop and show a map that indicates Fair Havens, Phoenix, and the island of Cauda.

The sailors finally managed to lift the lifeboat from the water to the ship. The sailors also passed ropes to strengthen the hull or the ship's body. The sailors probably dropped a loop of rope at the front of the ship and let the water push it back to the middle of the ship. They supported the ship to prevent it from being broken by the wind. They also feared that the ship might hit shallow waters or be driven to the sandbars of Sytris. A sandbar is a lot of sand just under the water. If a ship hit a sandbar it would suddenly stop and possibly cause damage to the ship. The sandbars of Sytris were a place near the coast of Libya. They lowered the anchor to slow down the movement of the ship.

The violent storm struck the ship. The people started to throw off the cargo, or goods in boxes or containers, to lighten the ship. The ship carried cargo such as the possessions of the passengers and goods the owner plans to sell in other places. Throwing off the cargo means the ship would be lighter. They needed to do this for them to survive the storm.

A day after they threw off the cargo, the ship was still heavy. They removed the ship's tackle and threw it off into the sea to lighten the ship. The tackle refers to the gear used to move cargo in and out of the ship. They need to throw off the less important parts of the ship so the ship would be lighter and stay afloat.

The thick clouds of the storm prevented the people in the ship to see light from the sun or the stars. The storm remained strong against the ship for many days. The people aboard the ship feared that they will not survive the storm and that the ship will soon sink into the sea.

The storm was bad for many days. The people on the boat had not eaten much-either because the food was spoiled, thrown overboard, or they were too busy and afraid to eat. Paul stood and talked to everyone on the ship. He told them that the crew should have listened to him when Paul warned them about the danger they might face if they sailed from Crete. Paul said if they had listened to him they would have avoided danger and now they would not be in danger, and the ship would be safe.

Stop and discuss: What happens in your culture when someone gives advice, no one listens to them, but later they are proved right? How do they react? How do the people react to them?

Paul said that an angel or a messenger of God stood before Paul the night before. The God of Paul, to whom he belongs and worships, sent an angel to talk with Paul. The angel gives this message to Paul, "Do not be afraid. You must stand before Caesar." Caesar was the king of the Roman Empire. The angel assures Paul that he will be able to present his case in a trial before Caesar in Rome. The angel also added that God granted or promised that every person's life would be spared.

Stop and discuss: How do people in your culture react when they receive a visit from an angel giving them a message from God?

Paul told the people on the ship to take heart or be encouraged. Paul said he has faith in God which means he believes that what the angel said will surely happen. Paul said that, however, the storm would cause the ship to wreck on an island. Paul had probably learned from the angel.

Stop and discuss: How do people in your culture respond when a lot of people are in danger? How do you calm people who are afraid?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

The story has five scenes.

First scene: The ship carrying Paul was traveling to Rome. Much time had passed while they were at sea and the Fast, the Day of Atonement, had passed.

Second scene: The ship left for the harbor in Crete. They tried to reach the port at Phoenix, in Crete, to spend the winter there.

Third scene: A south wind blew so the ship left port so they could continue sailing. A strong storm came while they were traveling at sea. They traveled along the side of a small island called Cauda. As they continued, they lowered the anchor to slow the speed of the ship.

Fourth scene: The ship was still in the middle of the storm. They threw the cargo to lighten the ship. They also threw the tackle to keep the ship afloat.

Fifth scene: The crew had no food for days. Paul stood up and spoke to everyone. He told them that an angel of God spoke to him. The angel said everyone will live. Only the ship will be destroyed.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Paul's companions such as Luke and Aristarchus
- The sailors
- Julius, the centurion
- The soldiers
- The prisoners

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action on it.

It is important to remember that the ship was taking Paul to Rome as a prisoner.

Much time has passed since the ship left. At the beginning of this passage, Paul's boat had stopped in the port of Fair Havens, near Lasea. Paul advised the ship's crew that they could be in danger because of the strong winds and winter storms that usually begin in late September. But the centurion ignored Paul and listened to the captain and to the owner of the ship.

They made a decision to continue traveling towards Phoenix, a harbor in Crete. They hoped to spend the winter there. A south wind started to blow so the ship left the port. They thought that it was safe to sail to Phoenix. But a short time after departing, a strong wind, called the northeaster, pushed the ship in a different direction.

While they were sailing, a strong storm made it difficult for the ship. They traveled along the leeward side of the island of Cauda, the side most protected from the wind. They also pulled the lifeboat off from the water and into the ship.

They continued sailing amidst the storm. They threw the cargo overboard to lighten the ship. Soon they also threw the tackle to keep the ship afloat.

The crew had nothing to eat for many days. The people could not see the sun or stars because it was raining so hard. The people on the ship lost hope that they would survive. Paul stood up and he said too that they should have listened to his warning. He said an angel of God spoke to him the night before. The angel said to Paul that he should not fear. Everyone on the ship will survive. Only the ship will be destroyed. Paul also encouraged

them. He said that he trusts God to save them. Then Paul says that they will most likely run aground on an island. It is possible that the angel told Paul about this information, or Paul simply assumed this would happen.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

The story has 5 scenes.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Paul's companions such as Luke and Aristarchus
- The sailors
- Julius, the centurion
- The soldiers
- The prisoners

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points at the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

The ship spent many days at sea. The Fast, or the Jewish festival of the Day of Atonement, had passed, meaning that it was close to the time of year when it was difficult to travel by sea. Paul spoke to the people that there might be danger ahead of them. But the captain and the owner of the ship did not listen to Paul.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing the captain and the owner of the ship, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Why is this prisoner telling us what we should do?" and "We do not need Paul's help." [!end] Restart the action.

The south wind blew so the sailors continued sailing. But the weather kept changing while they were at sea. The wind called northeaster changed the direction of the ship. Then a strong storm came while they were sailing. The crew pulled the lifeboat up. They also tied ropes to strengthen the ship. The crew feared that the ship would run aground. They threw the cargo to lighten the ship. They also threw the tackle, a part of the ship, to keep them afloat.

Stop the action.

Many days passed and the people in the ship have nothing to eat. The crew lost hope of surviving the storm. Paul stood up and told the crew that they should have listened to his warning. Paul said an angel spoke to him and encouraged the people. Paul said that everyone would be saved but only the ship would be destroyed.

Stop the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Many days have passed since they sailed at sea. The **Fast**, or the day when the Jews celebrated the Jewish Feast of the Day of Atonement, was over. The **Day of Atonement** is the most important Jewish day of worship, prayer, and fasting. It occurs near the end of September. When the Jews fasted, they show humility before God and ask

for his help. Use the word **fasting** as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information about the words **fasting** and the **Day of Atonement**.

Paul warned the people that they might be in danger. But the **centurion** ignored Paul, but he listened to the captain and the owner of the ship. A centurion commands 100 soldiers. Use the word **centurion** as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information about **centurion**.

While they were sailing, a strong wind called the **northeaster** changed the direction of the ship. The northeaster was a strong wind that came from the northeast. This wind was dangerous because it can destroy the ship.

When they were in the middle of the storm, they must throw off the cargo to lighten the ship. They also threw the **tackle** from the ship with their hands. The tackle was a part of the ship used to move things in and off the ship.

Paul stood up. He said an **angel** of God spoke to him. An angel is a supernatural messenger from God. Use the word **angel** as you used previously. **God** is the creator God who sent the angel to Paul. The angel told Paul that he must stand before **Caesar**. Caesar was the king of the Roman empire. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information about the words **angel**, **God**, and **Caesar**.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 27:9–26

Audio Content

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Acts 27:27-38

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 27:27-38 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus or God?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In the previous passage, the ship carrying Paul and the Roman centurion encountered a storm in the middle of the sea.

Luke tells us that the storm blew the ship for fourteen days. The storm was driving or pushing the ship across the Adriatic Sea. The sea of Adria during these times was east of Italy and continued south to Africa. Today this is known as the Mediterranean Sea.

About midnight of the fourteenth day, the crew of the ship sensed that they were getting nearer to land. The sailors had skills and experience that helped them know that the ship was getting closer to land. The sailors used a method called "taking soundings," which helped them know the depth of the water. They used a weight tied to a rope and lowered it to the sea until it hit the sea bottom. They made a sounding, and it measured twenty fathoms, or about 35 meters. They sailed a little further, and the next measurement was fifteen fathoms, or about 26 meters.

The two soundings that the sailors made shows that sea underneath the ship was getting shallower. These soundings show they were getting closer to shore. The sailors feared that ship will hit rocks underneath the shallow parts of the sea and endanger their lives. The sailors tried to stop the ship by dropping four anchors from the stern, the back portion of the ship. They would drop the anchor so it would dig in the bottom of the sea and hold the ship in place. The sailors also prayed to their gods for the day to come. During day time, the sailors can see their location better so they can navigate the ship safely to shore.

The sailors wanted to escape from the ship, so they lowered the lifeboat over the side of the ship into the sea. The sailors pretended that they were lowering more anchors from the bow or front of the ship. They were planning to escape using the lifeboat. They probably thought that they had a better chance of reaching the shore in the smaller boat. But Paul warned the centurion and the soldiers that if the sailors tried to escape from the ship, no one would be saved. If the sailors left the ship they would endanger the lives of everyone. The sailors' skills were needed to operate the ship in this difficult situation. It is important to remember that Paul warned the people on the ship and the owner about the dangerous sea travel, but they did not listen to him. Paul told the centurion that the sailors were abandoning the ship and its passengers. The centurion commanded his soldiers to cut the rope holding the boat so that the sailors could not escape.

When it was almost sunrise, Paul persuaded the people on the ship to eat. It was the fourteenth day that the sailors struggled to keep the ship afloat in the middle of the sea. Paul said they were in constant suspense, meaning that they waited to see whether they will die or not. While they were in the storm, the people were either worried about their survival or they were sick from the motion of the ship, so they found it hard to eat. So, Paul urged them to eat so they can recover their strength. Paul also said to them that not a hair is to perish from their heads, an expression meaning that nothing would harm anyone. They would all arrive safely on shore.

Stop and discuss: Tell about a time when you were so worried that you did not want to eat. What finally convinced you to finally eat some food?

After Paul said these things, he took bread then he gave thanks to God and broke it in front of the people on the ship. Bread was the daily food of the people. Everyone on the ship was encouraged by Paul's words. They also ate food until they had eaten enough. Luke records that there were 276 people on that ship.

After the people finished eating, they threw the wheat into the sea to lighten the ship. You will remember from the previous passage that they had already thrown out unnecessary or unimportant items. The main cargo of this ship was probably grain that the owner of the ship intended to sell. By making the ship lighter, the ship is lighter and able to float higher. The sailors can sail the ship closer to the shore before it hits the bottom of the sea.

Stop and discuss: How do people in your culture encourage each other after bad things happen to you? What do you do in order to cheer your people up?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

The story has three scenes.

First scene: The fourteenth day had come since the storm came to them. The sailors sensed they were getting close to land. So they made some soundings, or means to know how deep the water was.

Second scene: When the sailors knew they were getting closer to land, the sailors lowered the lifeboat and tried to escape.

Third scene: Paul encouraged the crew of the ship to eat. He broke bread in front of them and they all ate food together.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Paul's companions, such as Luke and Aristarchus
- The sailors
- Julius, the centurion
- The soldiers
- The prisoners

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action on it.

It is important to remember that the ship was still in the middle of a storm.

On the fourteenth night that they were in the storm, the sailors noticed that they were getting closer to land. They made soundings, or means of checking the depths of the water. They made a sounding, and it measured 35 meters. Then they made another sounding, which measured 26 meters deep.

The sailors dropped four anchors in the stern, which is at the back of the ship, to stop the ship from moving. The sailors wanted to escape, so they lowered the lifeboat. Paul warned the centurion and the soldiers that if the sailors tried to escape from the ship, no one would be saved. The centurion commanded his soldiers to cut off the rope which held the boat so that the sailors could not escape.

When it was almost sunrise, Paul persuaded the crew to eat. They had not eaten because they had been working hard to stay alive. Now they needed strength to survive. Paul also said that not a hair will perish from your head. This is an expression which means they will all survive the storm. Paul broke the bread which means he divided the bread in two pieces and he gave thanks to God. The people were encouraged by Paul's words and also ate with him. Afterwards, they threw the wheat into the sea to make the ship lighter.

Stop and do this activity: Have each team member give a phrase or word picture in your language that has a different meaning than the actual words spoken. Have the other team members see if they know the real meaning behind the words.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

The story has three scenes.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Paul's companions, such as Luke and Aristarchus
- The sailors
- Julius, the centurion
- The soldiers
- The prisoners

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points in the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

On the fourteenth night of the storm, the sailors sensed that they were nearing land. They made soundings or a method of knowing how deep the sea was. The first sounding measured 35 meters and the next sounding measured 26 meters.

Stop the action.

The sailors lowered four anchors to stop the ship from moving or to slow it down. The sailors lowered the lifeboat and tried to escape. But Paul warned the centurion that if the sailors tried to escape from the ship, no one would be saved. The centurion commanded the soldiers to cut off the rope so the sailors will not escape.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing as Paul, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Worried. These sailors who know how to navigate the ship are trying to escape," and "Determined. We have to stay together in the ship." [!end] Restart the action.

Paul encouraged the people on the ship to eat. Paul tells them that not a hair of their head will be harmed. He took bread and gave thanks to God and broke it and he ate. The people also were encouraged, and they also began to eat.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing as the people on the ship, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "The storm made it very difficult for us to eat," and "Thank you, Paul for your encouragement." [!end] Restart the action.

After eating, they threw the remaining grain into the sea in order to lighten the ship.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

The sailors sensed that the ship was getting closer to land. They made a **sounding**, or a means of knowing the depth of the ship. They dropped a rope with a weight which they lowered to touch the bottom of the sea.

The sailors lowered the anchors because they feared the ship might hit the rocks below. An **anchor** is a heavy object tied to a rope or chain often with a crossbar which could dig into the sea bottom in order to hinder the ship from moving. The sailors **prayed** for day to come. These sailors were not believers in Jesus or God-fearing people so they would be praying to their own gods.

The sailors tried to escape by lowering the lifeboat. The **centurion** told his soldiers to cut the ropes holding the lifeboat, so the sailors could not escape. A centurion commanded 100 soldiers. Use the same words for centurion and pray that you have used in previous passages. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information about the words pray and centurion.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 27:27-38

Audio Content

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Acts 27:39-44

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 27:39-44 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus or God?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?

6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In the previous passage, Paul and the sailors head for Rome but their ship encountered a storm at sea. They were afraid that the ship would be destroyed and they would drown. God promised Paul that everyone would survive.

When day time came, the sailors saw land but they could not recognize what place it was. They saw a bay with a sandy beach. This bay has land from either side which protects them from the waves. The sailors saw the sandy beach and they decided to move the ship as close to land as possible. They were hoping that they would cause the ship to touch the ground in shallow water.

Show a photo of a bay.

The sailors cut off the ropes that held the anchors and left them at the sea. They also loosened the ropes that were tied to the rudders. Rudders are used to control the direction of a ship. The rudders used in ancient ships were shaped like oars. The sailors had earlier raised up the rudders out of the water and tied them up. Then the huge waves could not break the rudders. Now they needed the rudders again to steer the ship to land, so they untied the rudders and lowered them. The rudders used in ancient ships were shaped like oars.

The sailors also raised the front sail towards the wind so the wind can move the ship to land. While the ship moved toward the beach, the bottom part of the ship struck sand just below the surface of the water or some shallow place in the sea. The bow, or front of the ship, stuck in that shallow place that the ship could not move. The pounding of the waves broke the stern, or rear, of the ship.

Show a picture of an ancient ship from Paul's time. Identify the parts of the ship such as the anchor, bow, stern, sail, and rudder.

The soldiers planned to kill the prisoners to prevent them from escaping. When the people on the boat jumped out of the boat to swim or float to the land, it would be easy for the prisoners to escape. Roman authorities punished soldiers who allowed their prisoners to escape. This is the reason why the soldiers thought to kill the prisoners to avoid punishment.

Julius the centurion, a Roman officer, knew that if the soldiers killed the prisoners, the soldiers might kill Paul too. Because the centurion wanted to save Paul, he stopped the soldiers from killing the prisoners. The centurion commanded those who can swim to swim towards the shore. Those who could not swim held onto wooden planks or other floating materials. The waves will push the survivors to help them reach the shore. Everyone reached the shore safely and no one got hurt. This shows that God fulfilled his promise to Paul that the ship would be lost, but every life on the ship would be saved.

Stop and discuss: Describe a time when you were in a dangerous situation or an emergency. How did people react that might have made the situation worse? What did people do to help make sure everyone was safe?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest to understand version.

The story has three scenes.

First scene: By day time, Paul and the sailors saw the shore ahead of them. The sailors cut off the anchors and sailed toward the bay.

Second scene: While the ship was heading for the bay, the bow of the ship struck a shallow portion of the sea so it could not move. The soldiers planned to kill the prisoners to keep them from escaping, but the centurion commanded those capable of swimming to swim to the shore. The others held to planks of wood or light materials to reach the shore.

Third scene: Everyone reached the shore safely.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Paul's companions, such as Luke and Aristarchus
- The sailors
- Julius, the centurion
- The soldiers
- The prisoners

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action on it.

It is important to remember that the ship was taking Paul to Rome. But there was a storm that put their lives in danger. In the previous passage, the people on the boat had eaten some food right before the sunlight appeared in the morning. Now they are finished eating.

Just after dawn, the sailors saw land but they did not know what land it was. The storm led them in that direction. The sailors decided to move the ship ashore. They cut off the anchors to release the ship from its place. The sailors also loosened the ropes tied to the rudders so they can use them to steer the ship. They also raised the sail so the wind can move the ship to land.

Show a picture of an ancient ship.

As the ship was moving forward, the bottom part of the ship hit a shallow place in the sea. This was a surprise to the sailors. The word "hit" or "struck" implies a surprising event. The ship was completely stuck and could not move at all. The waves pounded on the stern, or the rear of the ship. The side of the ship was beginning to break. To prevent the prisoners from escaping, the soldiers planned to kill them. But the centurion, a Roman soldier wishing to save Paul. He stopped the soldiers from doing their plan. Instead, the centurion commanded everyone to swim towards the shore. The centurion also said that the people who could not swim use planks of wood or light materials that they can use to keep them afloat until they reach the shore.

Everyone aboard that ship were able to reach the shore safely.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

The story has 3 scenes.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Paul's companions, such as Luke and Aristarchus
- The sailors
- Julius, the centurion
- The soldiers
- The prisoners

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points at the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

After many days at sea, Paul and the sailors saw land and a bay where they can go to.

Stop the action.

Ask also the actor who plays as Paul, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "God answered our prayers," and "God still has a plan for us and for these people." [!end] Restart the action.

The sailors cut the ropes that held the anchors and set sail towards the beach. But the bow of the ship hit a shallow portion of the sea so the ship could not move. The soldiers planned to kill the prisoners so that they will not escape.

Stop the action.

The centurion who wished to save Paul commanded the soldiers not to kill the prisoners. The centurion commanded those who can swim to swim towards the land. He also commanded those who could not swim to hold on to wooden planks or light materials that will help them float towards land.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing as the prisoners, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I thought they were about to kill us," and "We need to swim safely to survive." [!end] Restart the action.

Everyone arrived safely on the land.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Paul and the sailors saw there was a **bay** in front of them. A bay is a place where the coastline goes inward from the sea. So the land to either side of the bay can protect it from waves.

The sailors cast off the **anchors**. The anchor is a large piece of metal that is thrown overboard so the ship will stay in one place while in the middle of the sea. They untied the **rudders** to move the ship. A rudder is a device used to control the direction of the ship. They raised the **sail** for the wind to move the ship towards the beach. A sail is a piece of material extended on a mast, or pole, to catch wind to move the ship. But the **bow** of the ship struck a shallow portion of the sea. The bow is the front portion of the ship. The **stern** was being broken by the waves. The stern is the back portion of the ship.

Show a picture of an ancient ship.

The **centurion** commanded the people to swim towards the land. A centurion commands 100 soldiers. Use the word centurion as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information about centurion.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 27:39-44

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Acts 28:1-10

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 28:1-10 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus or God?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In the previous passage, the ship which carried Paul to Rome got stuck in some reef or shallow place in the sea. The people aboard swam towards the beach.

All the people aboard the ship arrived safely at the beach. It is important to remember that God protected Paul, the sailors, soldiers, and prisoners from the storm and from the shipwreck. They learned that the island was called Malta. Malta is an island south of Italy in the western Mediterranean Sea.

Show a map of Paul's journey to Rome.

The local inhabitants of Malta were hospitable to them. The people in Malta did not speak Greek as their mother tongue. They belonged to a different culture and spoke a different language called Punic. They were very kind to Paul and his companions. It began to rain and the survivors felt cold because they were wet from swimming. It was probably 10 degrees Celsius. The local people prepared a fire for them.

Paul helped and collected a bundle of wooden sticks. While Paul was putting some sticks on the fire, a viper came out and bit Paul's hand. Vipers are poisonous snakes about one or two meters long. The viper's mouth fastened into Paul's hand and it did not let go.

Show a picture of a viper.

When the local people saw the viper still biting Paul's hand, they said to each other that Paul must be a murderer. A murderer is someone who intentionally killed another person. They thought Paul was a murderer because the deadly snake bit him even when he survived from the shipwreck. They thought he was not able to escape from the goddess called Justice. The poisonous snake bit Paul. The local people believed that the goddess Justice punished wrongdoers.

Stop and discuss as a translation team: Tell a story about a time someone in your community did something wrong, and later bad things happened to them. How do you connect bad situations in life with doing wrong things?

But Paul shook off the snake into the fire and viper let loose from his hand. God protected Paul from death and from getting hurt.

The local people knew the viper was poisonous. They waited for Paul to die or his arm to swell. After waiting for a long time, the native people realized that nothing bad happened to Paul. They changed their minds and thought Paul was not a murderer but a god. Since Paul did not swell or die, they thought Paul was a god who had power over nature.

Paul and the survivors went to the lands belonging to Publius. Publius was the chief or the highest official of the island of Malta. Publius welcomed Paul and his companions to his home for three days.

Paul learned that the father of Publius was sick, suffering from fever and dysentery. The word suffering means the father of Publius was very sick. Dysentery is an infection of the intestines that causes diarrhea, pain, and fever. Paul visited the father of Publius and prayed for him. Paul laid his hands on the father of Publius and healed him. Paul did not heal the father of Publius like a doctor heals his patients with medicine. God's power in Paul healed the father of Publius.

The people on the island heard how Paul healed the father of Publius. So the people in the island who were sick also came to Paul and they were healed. They came to Paul over a period of days or a few weeks. It is important to remember that in the Gospel of Luke, many people with sickness came to Jesus and Jesus healed them. The same healing power of God which was in Jesus was also in Paul.

The people of the island honored Paul and those who were traveling with Paul. Honoring may include praising them and giving them gifts. When they were ready to sail again, the people of the island gave them the supplies needed for the trip.

Stop and discuss: How do people in your culture help survivors of calamities such as earthquakes, storms, fire, or refugees from war?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

The story has five scenes.

First scene: Paul and all the people aboard that ship arrived safely on the shores of Malta. The native people of Malta were helpful to them.

Second scene: While Paul was collecting sticks of wood, a viper came out and bit his hand. His body did not swell or was hurt.

Third scene: Publius, the chief of Malta welcomed them to his home.

Fourth scene: Paul healed the father of Publius. Then the sick people on the island also came and Paul healed them.

Fifth scene: The people of the island honored Paul and his companions greatly. The people gave Paul supplies needed for their travel at sea.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Paul's companions, such as Luke and Aristarchus
- The sailors
- Julius, the centurion
- The soldiers
- The prisoners
- The local people of Malta
- Publius, the chief
- The father of Publius
- The people who were sick in Malta

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action on it.

This story starts immediately after the events of the last story. Everyone from the ship arrives on the shore. The local people of Malta helped prepare a fire for them to keep them warm because it was raining and the weather was cold.

While Paul was collecting sticks of wood for the fire, a poisonous viper came out and bit Paul's hand. The people of Malta saw what happened and expected that Paul's arm will swell and he will die. But God spared Paul and he was not hurt.

Now the story shifts to Publius' house. Publius, the chief of the island, invited Paul and his companions. They stayed there for three days.

The father of Publius was sick of fever and dysentery. Paul visited the father of Publius and healed him. The people of the island heard about the healing of the father of Publius. They would bring sick people to Paul and Paul healed them all. Paul and his companions stayed on the island for three months. The local people gave Paul and his companions supplies needed for their travel at sea.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

The story has five scenes.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Paul's companions, such as Luke and Aristarchus
- The sailors
- Julius, the centurion
- The soldiers
- The prisoners
- The local people of Malta
- Publius, the chief
- The father of Publius
- The people who were sick in Malta

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points at the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

Paul and his companions safely reached the shores of Malta. The local people of the island built a fire for them to keep them warm.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing the local people, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "These people from the shipwreck need our help," and "The weather is cold and we need to keep them warm." [!end] Restart the action.

While Paul was picking up sticks of wood, a viper bit and fastened its mouth to Paul's hand. Paul shook the viper off before the fire. The local people of the island saw what happened to Paul.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing as the local people, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Surely, this man is a murderer because the goddess Justice used the viper to punish him," and "Let us wait for this man to swollen and die." [!end] Restart the action.

When the people saw nothing happened to Paul, the local people changed their mind and thought Paul was a god.

Publius, the chief of the island, invited Paul and his companions to his home. They stayed with Publius three days.

The father of Publius was sick of fever and dysentery, a stomach disease. Paul visited the father of Publius and healed him.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing as Paul, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "The chief of the land is kind," and "God returned the kindness of Publius by healing his father." [!end] Restart the action.

The people who were sick came to Paul. Paul healed them.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing as Paul, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "These people need help," and "I will use every opportunity to be a blessing to these people." [!end] Restart the action.

The people of Malta honored Paul and his companions greatly. The people gave them supplies for their next journey.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing as Paul, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I thank them for their continuous kindness for us," and "We have everything we need for our next voyage."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

While Paul was picking up sticks, a **viper** came out and bit his hand. A viper is a poisonous snake.

Show a picture of a viper.

The people think Paul is a **god**. This is the word for pagan or false god. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on pagan or false god.

Publius was a chief official. A chief official is the one who rules the island. Publius invited Paul and his companions to his home. The father of Publius was sick of fever and **dysentery**. Dysentery is a sickness of the intestines that causes fever, diarrhea, and stomach pains. Paul laid his hands on his father and he **healed** him. Paul also healed the sick people in the island. Use the word heal as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on the word heal.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 28:1–10**Audio Content**

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Acts 28:11–16*Hear and Heart*

Hear Acts 28:11–16 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus or God?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In the previous passage, Paul and his companions were welcomed by Publius, the head of the island of Malta. By God's grace, Paul healed the father of Publius. The people who were sick also came to Paul and were healed.

Three months after the shipwreck, Paul and his companions, Luke and Aristarchus, boarded a ship from Malta to Rome. The ship was from Alexandria in Egypt. The ship had the twin gods Castor and Pollux carved on its front. This type of carving is called a figurehead of the ship. Some people believed that these gods protected

sailors during their sea voyages. The ship had stayed in Malta during the winter season. The winter season is cold and has many storms. The ship remained in Malta until it was safe to travel.

Stop and show a picture of a figurehead of a ship.

From Malta, they sailed north on the ship to Syracuse on the island of Sicily. This trip took ten to twelve hours. The ship stayed there for three days.

Then the ship sailed to Rhegium. Rhegium is a port city in southern Italy. After a day, a wind blew from the south which helped the ship travel faster. The following day, they arrived in Puteoli. Puteoli is a port town in Italy. It is about 210 kilometers, 130 miles, southeast of Rome. Paul met some of the brothers, or followers of Jesus, in Puteoli. They were not literal brothers as in a family. The followers of Jesus in Puteoli invited Paul and his companions to stay with them for seven days. They were probably in Puteoli for that time because the Roman centurion had some business to attend to there before continuing on to Rome.

Afterwards, the centurion brought Paul into Rome. After seven days, Paul, Julius the centurion, and Paul's companions left Puteoli for Rome, about 120 kilometers away. People traveling to Rome would travel by road, either walking or riding in carts. After a short distance, they would have arrived at the road called the Appian Way, a major road that led to Rome. The brothers, or believers, living in Rome heard that Paul was there. Perhaps the brothers from Puteoli told the others about Paul. As Paul approached Rome, some believers from Rome met him at the Forum of Appius and the Three Taverns and accompanied Paul the rest of the way into the city. The Forum of Appius, a marketplace, was located 64 kilometers south of Rome while the Three Taverns, a small town on the side of the road, was about 49 kilometers south of Rome. It is important to remember that Paul had written a letter to the believers in Rome about 3 years earlier. Paul thanked God and he took courage because of these visits.

Then Paul and his companions arrived in the city of Rome. A Roman official allowed Paul to live by himself. The Roman government assigned a soldier to guard Paul.

Show a map of Malta, Sicily, and the cities of Rhegium, Puteoli, and Rome in Italy.

Stop and discuss. How do people in your culture receive other believers from other nations?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

The story has six scenes.

First scene: After three months in Malta, Paul and his companions left aboard the ship.

Second scene: The ship arrived in Syracuse in Sicily. They stayed there for three days.

Third scene: The ship sailed from Syracuse to Rhegium and then to Puteoli.

Fourth scene: The ship arrived at Puteoli. The believers in Puteoli invited them to stay seven days.

Fifth scene: Paul and his companions travel by road from Puteoli to Rome. As Paul approached Rome, the believers of Jesus from Rome met him at the Forum of Appius and at the Three Taverns.

Sixth scene: Paul arrived at the city of Rome. The Roman government allowed Paul to stay by himself with a Roman soldier guarding him.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- Paul's companions, such as Luke and Aristarchus
- The sailors
- Julius, the centurion
- The soldiers
- The prisoners
- The believers in Puteoli
- The believers from Rome
- The soldier guarding Paul

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action on it.

Paul and his companions boarded a ship which had stayed in Malta during the winter season. After three months, Paul left Malta aboard the ship.

The ship arrived at the port of Syracuse in the Island of Sicily. They stayed there 3 days. The ship continued on to Rhegium then to Puteoli.

The ship arrived at Puteoli in southern Italy. The brothers, believers of Jesus in Puteoli, invited them to stay seven days. Puteoli was about 210 kilometers from Rome. It would take about 5 days to travel from Puteoli to Rome. They traveled on road from there to Rome.

Then Paul and his companions arrived at the district of Rome. The believers of Jesus met Paul at the Forum of Appius and at the Three Taverns and accompanied them on the rest of the journey.

Paul arrived in the city of Rome. The Roman authorities allowed Paul to stay by himself. A Roman soldier guarded Paul. This story is the last part of the story in Acts where Luke uses the word "we" to show that he was with Paul.

Have the group draw the map on the ground, and then travel from place to place as they act it out. This will help them remember the journey and each stop along the way.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

The story has six scenes.

The characters in the story include

- Paul
- Paul's companions, such as Luke and Aristarchus
- The sailors
- Julius, the centurion
- The soldiers
- The prisoners
- The believers in Puteoli
- The believers from Rome
- The soldier guarding Paul

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points at the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

After three months in Malta, Paul and his companions set sail towards Rome on a ship from Alexandria.

Stop the action.

The ship sailed to Syracuse, to Rhegium, then to Puteoli. When the ship stopped at Puteoli, the brothers (followers of Jesus) met with Paul. Paul and his companions stayed in Puteoli for seven days.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing as Paul, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "There are also followers of Jesus in this region," and "It is a great encouragement to meet fellow believers of Jesus." [!end] Restart the action.

The centurion took Paul and his traveling companions to Rome. They traveled via road from Puteoli to Rome. Believers from Rome came to meet Paul and accompanied him on the rest of the journey. While Paul was heading to Rome, the believers met him at the Forum of Appius and at the Three Taverns. Paul thanked God for them and he took courage.

Stop the action.

Ask the actor playing as Paul, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "I am so happy to meet more followers of Jesus in Rome. I am looking forward to what God has for me in Rome," and "I thank God for these kind people." [!end] Restart the action.

They finally reached the city. Paul was permitted to live by himself in a house, but had a Roman guard.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest to understand version.

The centurion, Paul, and his companions boarded an Alexandrian ship that will take them to Rome. The ship has a figurehead of the **gods** Castor and Pollux. A figurehead is a carved wooden decoration at the bow of the ship. Use the word gods as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information of gods.

Stop and show a picture of a figurehead of a ship.

When Paul and his companions arrived Puteoli, the **brothers**, which means the believers of Jesus, invited them. They stayed there for seven days. Use the word brothers as you used previously.

The city of Rome is the capital of the Roman empire.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 28:11–16

Audio Content

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Acts 28:17-31

Hear and Heart

Hear Acts 28:17-31 and put it in your heart. Listen to the text three times (in three different translations, if possible). Then as a team discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this story?
2. What do you not like or not understand?
3. What does this story tell us about Jesus or God?
4. What does this story tell us about people?
5. How does this story affect our daily life?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this story?

Setting the Stage

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

In the previous passage, Paul and his companions finally arrived in Rome. Paul was allowed to stay in a place by himself with a soldier guarding him.

Three days after Paul came to Rome, he invited the local Jewish leaders to meet with him. The leaders arrived at the place where Paul was staying. Paul called them brothers, meaning they were fellow Jews. He was not implying that they were followers of Jesus. Paul explained that he had done nothing wrong against their fellow Jews or spoke against the traditions of their ancestors. When Paul became a Christian, he did not oppose the Jewish ways of life. Yet the Jews arrested Paul and handed him over to the Romans as their prisoner.

Stop and discuss: What are the first things that you do when you arrive in a new place?

During the trials, the Romans were not able to prove that Paul committed a crime deserving death. Paul then gives the Jewish leaders an account of the trials he had with the Roman governor. Paul tells the Jewish leaders that the Romans could not prove that Paul committed a crime deserving death.

The Roman officials wished to set Paul free but the Jews objected. The Jewish leaders insisted that Paul committed crimes against the Jewish people and against God. Because the Jewish leaders did not want to release Paul, Paul appealed to Caesar because he had no better option. Paul made use of his right as a Roman citizen that he can appeal to a higher court to defend his innocence. Paul clarifies he had no charge against his own people. Paul did not plan to accuse the Jews of wrongdoing before the Romans.

Paul explains to the local leaders of the Jews in Rome why he wanted to meet with them. Paul told them that he was in chains because he believes in the hope of Israel. The hope of Israel refers to the person God promised to save the people of Israel, the Messiah.

The local leaders of the Jews told Paul they did not receive any letter from Judea about him. These leaders did not know about the problems between Paul and the leaders of the Jews in Jerusalem. They said none of their fellow Jews said anything bad against Paul. The local leaders of the Jews like to hear what Paul thinks about "the sect," a group of people with somewhat different religious beliefs. They told Paul there were people who spoke against this sect. The local Jewish leaders may have heard about these stories from Jews who rejected the gospel message. The local Jewish leaders agreed upon a date to meet with Paul again.

When the date of their meeting came, the local Jewish leaders came to the place where Paul stayed. There were more people than at the previous meeting. From morning till evening, he explained to them about the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God means God's rule as king in the hearts of His people.

Paul tried to convince them that Jesus is the savior that God promised. He convinced the Jews using the words from the Law of Moses and the Prophets. Paul was able to convince some of the Jews about his belief in Jesus. Other Jews did not believe Paul. They disagreed among themselves. The Jews who believed in Jesus argued with those who did not believe.

Paul said one last thing, then the Jews left. Paul said that the Holy Spirit was correct when He spoke a message through the Prophet Isaiah to their ancestors. The Prophet Isaiah said that though people hear God's words they will not understand. They will see but not perceive, or recognize. Then the prophet said that the hearts of the people were calloused, or hardened. The heart is the center of the human mind, feelings, and will. This is a comparison that means the people are not willing to believe what God is telling them. The prophet continues the comparison by saying their ears are having difficulty hearing and their eyes were closed. This message is not about being deaf and blind but refusing to believe what they heard and not accepting the truth. The Prophet Isaiah was saying that there will be people who may hear the message from God but these people will simply ignore the message. There may also be people who will see what God does in a supernatural way but these people will also ignore that God is the one working there.

Stop and discuss: What comparisons or word pictures do you use in your language and culture to talk about someone who refuses to listen or believe what they see and hear?

Otherwise, the people may understand with their hearts, see with their eyes, and hear with their ears. The people would realize the truth and believe that Jesus is their Savior. The people would understand with their hearts and turn, meaning they would repent, or turn away from their sins. They will receive healing from God. God will forgive their sins and the people will live in right standing with God.

When Paul said "I want you to know," he was telling the Jewish leaders something very important. Paul told the leaders that God has sent his messengers to the Gentiles with the message of salvation. God wants to save them too. Paul said the Gentiles will listen. Some versions of this passage add that the Jews left Paul and continued to argue among themselves.

Paul stayed in Rome for two more years. He paid for his own expenses. Paul also welcomed anyone who came to see him, including Jews, Romans, and Greeks. In those two years, Paul continued to preach about the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ. While Paul was under house arrest, he continued to speak openly about the kingdom of God, and no one tried to stop him.

Stop and discuss: How do people in your culture behave when they do not agree with each other?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

The story has three scenes.

First scene: Three days after Paul arrived in Rome, he invited influential Jews to meet in the city. Paul and the Jews decided to meet again another day.

Second scene: The day of their appointed meeting came. More Jews came who wanted to hear Paul's message.

Third scene: Paul stayed in Rome for two years preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God to others.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- The local Jewish leaders
- The other Jews who came later
- The soldier guarding Paul
- Other people who listened to Paul

In this session, have the group storyboard, draw out, or use some sort of manipulatives (objects that you can move around such as rocks, sticks, children's toys) to visualize the story and the action on it.

Important to remember that Paul was living in a rented place but he was under guard. After Paul arrived in Rome, he invited the local Jewish leaders for a meeting. Paul retold the events of his trial in Caesarea. He summarized what had happened for the Jewish leadership in Rome. The local leaders did not know about the

disagreement between Paul and the leaders of the Jews in Jerusalem. They agreed to meet again on another day.

When the appointed day came, the local Jewish leaders brought other Jews to listen to what Paul has to say. Paul taught about the kingdom of God from morning till evening. Paul spoke to them about Jesus using the Law of Moses and the Prophets. Some of the Jews believed in the gospel message while the others did not.

Before leaving them, Paul made a final statement. Paul quoted a message of the prophet Isaiah. Isaiah said their ears are having difficulty hearing and their eyes were closed. A deaf ear and a blind eye are used as comparisons. People hear the truth and see the work of God but they refuse to believe what they heard and ignore what they have witnessed. "Understand with their hearts and turn" also means to repent from their sins. The "healing from God" refers to the forgiveness of their sins and people will live in right standing with God.

Then Paul very strongly said, "I want you to know," or "I must tell you." It was important for the Jews to know that God will offer salvation to the Gentiles, and they will also come into God's Kingdom. This is an important part of the message. The Jews do not understand or hear the message, but the Gentiles will.

Paul stayed in Rome for two years since he arrived. Within those years, Paul continued to preach and teach about the kingdom of God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Embodying the Text

Listen to the text once again in the easiest-to-understand version.

In this session, the team will dramatize the story.

The story has three scenes.

The characters in the story include:

- Paul
- The local Jewish leaders
- The other Jews who came later
- The soldier guarding Paul
- Other people who listened to Paul

Have the team act out the story twice. They should act it out in the language they are translating into. First, have the team act out the story without stopping. The second time the team acts out the story, stop them at different points at the story.

As the team acts out the story the first time, pay attention to the flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Look out for the important or difficult parts of the story or passage to be acted out and not skipped. Help the team remember parts of the story.

Three days after Paul arrived in Rome, he invited the local Jewish leaders to meet him. Paul explained to the Jews why he became a prisoner and why he appealed to Caesar.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing as the local Jewish leaders, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "We did not receive reports from other Jews about this man," and "We want to hear what this man says about the Christians." [!end] Restart the action.

The leaders wanted to hear more, so they agreed upon another day to meet. Paul met with the local Jewish leaders again at an appointed date. More Jews came to hear Paul's message. Paul spoke about the kingdom of God and about Jesus. Paul convinced some of the Jews but the others did not believe him.

Stop the action.

Ask the actors playing as the Jews who listened to Paul's message, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "Paul does not seem to be a criminal," and "Paul has a wide knowledge about Jesus and the Scriptures." [!end] Restart the action.

Paul tells them one last thing before they leave: Paul tells them that the Prophet Isaiah said God will bring salvation to the Gentiles.

Ask the actors playing as the Jews who heard Paul speak, "How are you feeling? You may hear things like, "God is the Lord both for the Jews and Gentiles," and "The Gentiles can come to the Lord through Jesus." [!end] Restart the action.

For two years, Paul welcomed everyone who wanted to meet him. Paul continually proclaimed about the kingdom of God and about the Lord Jesus Christ.

Stop the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to the text once in the easiest-to-understand version.

Paul called for the local leaders of the **Jews** in **Rome**. Paul told them he was a prisoner from **Jerusalem**. He called them brothers, which means they were fellow Jews. Paul told the local leaders of the Jews that he came to Rome because he appealed to **Caesar**. Rome is the capital city of the Roman Empire. Use the words Jews, Jerusalem, and Caesar as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on the words Jew, Jerusalem, and Caesar.

Paul told the Jews he had nothing against his **nation**. Paul explains his imprisonment because he believes in the hope of **Israel**. The "hope of Israel" refers to the promise of God that he will send the Messiah who will save their people from their sins. The Jews in Rome said they did not receive letters about Paul from **Judea**. Use the words nation, Israel, and Judea as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on the words nation, Israel, and Judea.

Many Jews came to listen to Paul on the appointed date. Paul testified about the **kingdom of God** and convinced the Jews about Jesus from the **Law** and the **Prophets**. Use the words kingdom of God, Law, and Prophets as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on the words kingdom of God, Law, and Prophets.

Before the Jews departed, Paul told them about the **Holy Spirit** who spoke to the Prophet Isaiah. He also told them that the **salvation** of God has come to the **Gentiles**. While Paul stayed in Rome, he continued to proclaim to the people about the **Lord Jesus Christ**. The word Lord means master or a person who has authority over others. Use the words Holy Spirit, salvation, Gentile, Lord, and Christ as you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information about these words.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Acts 28:17-31

Audio Content

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