



UNIT 32 | SESSION 3

# GENTILES BECAME PART OF THE CHURCH

## ACTS 11

### CHRIST CONNECTION

God calls us to celebrate when others believe and help them know and love Jesus more.

### BIG PICTURE QUESTION

What is the church? The church is all Christians everywhere.

### MEMORY VERSE

1 Corinthians 12:12



## LEADER BIBLE STUDY

Acts 11 recounts the first time people were called “Christians” because they were recognized as followers of Jesus. In this passage, Peter was criticized by some of the believing Jews for going into the house of Cornelius and eating with Gentiles; however, these same critics later realized that God’s power was at work even among the Gentiles.

How did the church in Antioch demonstrate God’s plan for all people to be saved through the gospel? What is the proper response of Christ followers upon hearing that the lost have been found through coming to faith in Jesus?

The church in Antioch displayed the power of the gospel as Gentile believers and Jewish believers became one body under the headship of Christ. It was the transforming power of the Holy Spirit that held these brothers and sisters together, allowing for differing customs and backgrounds to be overcome. In fact, when Peter defended the Gentile salvation to the church in Jerusalem, he recited Jesus’ words from Acts 1:5 on the baptism of the Spirit. He reminded the naysayers among them that if the Gentiles truly received the Spirit, why should the rest of them get in the way of God’s salvation at work? The evidence of the Holy Spirit among them, leading them to live in holy fellowship and bold proclamation, proved that God’s hand was working in the lives of those who were previously outside the faith.

Turning away from their disapproval, the members of the circumcision party first became stunned into silence and then glorified God for the repentance of these new Gentile followers. May we, too, be quick to move to celebration and praise when anyone trusts in Jesus for salvation, rather than be unsure or prone to criticism. Let our own hearts seek to pray that the Spirit produces good fruit in the lives of those who proclaim His truth, encouraging and lifting them up as they seek and serve His name alongside us.

Highlight God’s goodness in bringing these new followers to Himself. Encourage your kids to share the gospel with those who may be different from themselves, trusting that the good news of Jesus brings us together for the good of His church and the glory of God.

## TERMS TO KNOW

**Gentiles:** people who are not part of God’s chosen family at birth. Jesus was a light to the Gentiles (Matt. 4:16-17; Luke 2:32). At the house of Cornelius, the Spirit was poured out on the Gentiles (Acts 10:45).



## GENTILES BECAME PART OF THE CHURCH

God had called Peter to tell everyone the good news about Jesus, no matter who they were or where they came from. So Peter shared the gospel not only with Jews, but with Gentiles. The Gentiles in Caesarea heard Peter's message and believed. God gave His Holy Spirit to these new believers, and they were baptized.

Before long, the apostles and other believers throughout Judea heard that Gentiles had believed the good news about Jesus. They were surprised, so Peter shared about the vision God had given to him of the sheet of clean and unclean animals and his encounter with Cornelius. Peter explained that the gospel is for all people. Then the believers praised God and understood that Jesus had come for the Gentiles, too!

At the same time, believers who scattered after Stephen's murder had traveled to places like Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch of Syria. In those places, the believers only shared the gospel with the Jews. But some believers from Cyprus and Cyrene went to Antioch and preached the gospel to the Greeks, too. God was with them, and a large number of the Greeks believed the good news.

The church at Jerusalem heard about these new believers, so they sent Barnabas to Antioch. Barnabas was a good man. He loved God and was full of faith and the power of the Holy Spirit. When Barnabas arrived, he saw that God was gracious to these believers. He was glad and encouraged them to keep following God. Even more people trusted in Jesus.

Then Barnabas left Antioch and went to Tarsus to look for Paul. He found Paul and brought him back to Antioch. They stayed with the church in Antioch for a year, teaching large crowds of people. Jesus' followers were first called Christians at Antioch.

## CHRIST CONNECTION

Even though some people tried to stop it, the gospel spread throughout the earth — not only to Jews but also to Gentiles. The good news about Jesus is for everyone. **God calls us to celebrate when others believe and help them know and love Jesus more.**

# WELCOME



Connect with kids as they arrive

## OPENING ACTIVITIES

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to build relationships and help new kids connect to your group.

Before heading to Large Group, kids can work on the provided coloring or activity pages. You can also do the Memory Verse Activity below as a class!

## MEMORY VERSE

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.

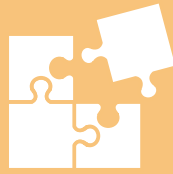
**- 1 Corinthians 12:12, ESV**

## MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY

Pass out the verse scramble sheets to each kid. Under each blank, have kids use the scrambled letters to write the correct word. Once they're done, have them read it aloud.

**Optional:** See who can write the entire verse on the whiteboard without looking!

# K12 ACTIVITIES



Do crafts and games with younger kids after Large Group

## CRAFT

**Supplies:** construction paper, scissors, pens, butcher paper

Provide each kid with a piece of construction paper and have them trace their hand.

Have each kid cut out their tracing, then direct them to come together and, using their hand cut-outs, make a single image on the provided butcher paper.

They can make a cross, a heart, etc. Then, help kids glue the hands so the image stays.

## CONNECT THE DOTS



Each hand on this paper represents a unique kid. The hand sizes are all different but when they come together, they form one image. This is like the church. We are many parts of one body united in Jesus! The church is all Christians everywhere and we gather together in our smaller communities to worship and serve God.

## GAME SUGGESTION



### Random 4 Corners

Use the giant foam dice to determine which corner is out. If it lands on a 5, everyone is back in! If it lands on a 6, have everyone do a funny dance or have them move to a different corner.

## ACTIVITY

Take kids to the Large Group Room to play games and have fun!

Ask the Hall Captain or Taylor to open the closet in the Large Group Room so you can pull out games and toys for the kids to play with.

# 345 ACTIVITIES



Do crafts and games  
with older kids after  
Large Group

## GYM DAY

It's Gym Day for our older kids! After Large Group, take your class to the gym to play.

Kids can decide what to play, or you can choose from the games to the right or in your binder.

## GAME SUGGESTIONS!

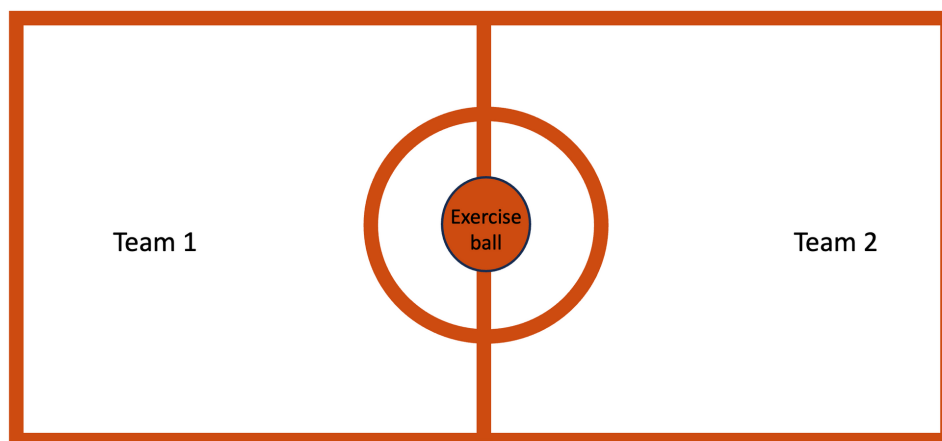


- **Monster Ball**
- **Dodge Ball**
- **Garbage Ball**

## HOW TO PLAY MONSTER BALL

Divide everyone into two teams and have the teams move to opposite sides of the court. Place the large exercise ball in the middle of the center circle on the court and place the dodge balls across the center line of the court.

When you say “go,” each team will try to get the exercise ball out of the center circle onto the other team’s side. If they succeed, that team gets a point, and the round is over. Play as many rounds as you want!



# CLOSING ACTIVITIES



Continue to engage kids while they wait to be picked up

## BIBLE STORY REVIEW

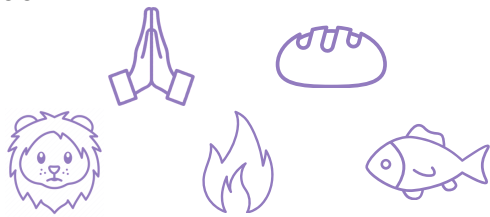
**After Large Group, ask the following questions and lead your class to discuss.**

1. How were the Gentiles saved?
2. Should we allow our differences to keep us from sharing the gospel with others? Why not?
3. The church in Antioch grew after Barnabas arrived and encouraged the believers there. Why do you think the church grew after Barnabas encouraged the believers in Antioch?
4. How do the stories of the Bible help us understand that God sent Jesus to offer salvation to all people?

## HAVE EXTRA TIME?

Play a Bible emoji game!

Using the provided slides on your classroom TV, have kids try to guess the Bible character, story, or event by decoding the emojis on the screen.



## BEFORE YOU GO...

**Please clean up by doing the following:**

1. Put all extra supplies and binders back in the curriculum bins (**Kinder leaders: Curriculum bins go back inside the bottom cabinet**)
2. Clean all trash off the tables
3. Put all crayons, markers, etc. back in the appropriate containers and cubbies
4. Erase the whiteboards and put markers/erasers back in holder
5. Turn off TVs as you leave

**THANK YOU FOR SERVING WITH US!**