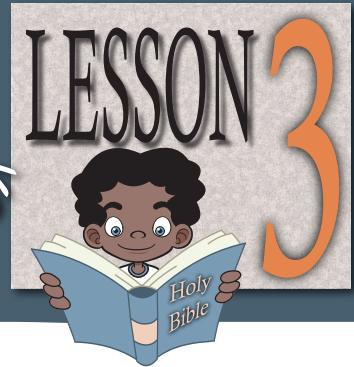


Old Law Not Binding; Other Journey

Acts 15



New Testament 8
Part 1: ABCs OF ACTS 13-18

SUNDAY MORNING

New Testament 8 [Class Attendance Sheet](#) provided in activity sheets (NOTE: The document is interactive, allowing the teacher to type in the Class, Teacher, and the children's names.)

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:

Acts 15; Ephesians 2; 4; Galatians 3; 4

MEMORY WORK:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: “[Y]ou who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace” (Galatians 5:4b).

OLDER CHILDREN: “You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace” (Galatians 5:4).

Also help the children memorize the ABCs of Acts.

SONGS AND FINGERPLAYS (SEE END OF LESSON FOR WORDS):

A [song book](#) and [audio recordings](#) of many of the curriculum songs are available on the curriculum Web site.

- [“Here’s the Church Building”](#)
- [“Oh, We Must Be Kind”](#)
- [“Being Kind to Others”](#)

LESSON VISUALS AND TEACHING AIDS (NOTE ANY DISCLAIMERS):

- See [AP’s Pinterest page](#) for ideas on bulletin boards, visuals, crafts, etc.
[DISCLAIMER: Pins may sometimes need to be adjusted to be Scriptural.]
- [ABCs of Acts 13-26](#) Bible fact cards (provided under “N.T. 8 Bible Facts”)
- “Acts Chapter Summary” from “[Kids Prep 2](#)” CD by Jeff Miller
- “Summary of the Bible” from “[Kids Prep](#)” CD by Jeff Miller
- Pictures/drawings from any books listed under 3rd-4th Grader Pre-Class Activities/ Learning Centers
- Betty Lukens’ felt pieces
- Life of Paul (Series 2) A Beka picture set (DISCLAIMER: use the cards, *not the lesson book*)
- [Map of Palestine](#) (provided in activity sheets)



- **Map of Paul's Evangelistic Trips** (provided in activity sheets)
- **OLDER KIDS:** Draw a body outline on the board and talk about what happens when a body is “divided” to illustrate what happens to the Body of Christ when it is divided.

PERSONAL APPLICATION:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: God wants us to get along with one another, at school, at home, and in the church.

OLDER CHILDREN: God wants us to get along with one another, at school, at home, and in the church without compromising what the Bible says (without changing something in Scripture just “to keep the peace”).

LESSON STARTS HERE

INTRODUCTION: (YOUNGER CHILDREN)

Discuss with the children some of the things that happened to Paul as he traveled and taught about Jesus.

What happens when we fight with our friends or brothers/sisters? How do you feel when that happens? Aren’t we supposed to try to get along with others? What if someone does something that God says is wrong? Should we do that, too? Paul tried very hard to get along with others, but sometimes people did things and taught things that God did not like. Then Paul had to tell them the right way to act. Sometimes this made other people mad. We should always try to get along with others, but not if it means going against God. In our story today, some people were not getting along. Let’s see how they worked things out.

INTRODUCTION: (OLDER CHILDREN)

Review Paul’s first missionary journey and some of the things that happened.

Have the children give some examples of when they have to compromise to get along with others. There are many times we must compromise or work things out with other people so that we can get along. We cannot always have our way. But there are times when we must **never** compromise. In today’s story, some New Testament Christians were having a major disagreement about what was the right thing to do. Paul and other Christians stood for the truth and did not compromise because they knew God would not want them to. Let’s see what happened!

POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

1. As we continue our ABCs of Acts, do you remember what “M” and “N” stood for?
2. Acts 15 corresponds to “O” and stands for **Old Law Not Binding** and **Other Journey** of Paul.
3. YOUNGER KIDS: Focus only on Other Journey of Paul. See Wednesday’s lesson.
4. While Paul and Barnabas were still in Antioch, a group of Jews from Judea who had become Christians (“Jewish Christians”) arrived. They began to teach that to be a “true Christian,” one had to follow the teachings of Jesus and the Law of Moses as well (particularly the significant rite of circumcision). They wanted the Church to be only a “sect” (part, division) of Judaism, not the distinct Church that Jesus died for. [The Roman government left the early Christians alone for years because its leaders regarded Christians as a sect of Judaism.]



NOTE: Some Jews (who were not Christians) believed that Gentiles could be saved by staying away from idol worship and immorality, but that did not make the Gentiles part of the nation of Israel, God's holy people under the Old Law. To become a Jewish convert (one of God's people under the Old Law), a Gentile had to be circumcised.

5. These men were false teachers who claimed that they, like Paul and the other apostles, had been told what to say by God. These "Judaizers" very effectively caused a lot of problems for the young churches that Paul and Barnabas had worked so hard to start. Because Paul and Barnabas did not believe that attaching the Old Law to the New Law under Christ was right, they argued often with these men. Finally, the church leaders in Antioch decided to send the two missionaries to Jerusalem to talk with the Elders and apostles there.
6. Peter reminded these church leaders that he had been chosen by God to teach the Gentiles and discouraged them from adding a requirement other than what God, Himself, had commanded. Peter said that to demand Gentiles also practice the Law of Moses would be like testing God: were His words true and applicable to all men under the new law of Christ? Did He truly do away with the entire Old Law and replace it with something better? Do we truly only have to be obedient to the New Law to be pleasing in His sight? Did God offer salvation to all men or not?



NOTE: Chapter 15 verse 11 is the last mention of Peter in the book of Acts.

7. After the Elders and apostles listened to Peter, Paul and Barnabas then reported what great things God had done among the Gentiles where they had traveled. Surely, if God said Gentiles were to be accepted into the Church and into the social circles of the Jews, then the Jewish Christians themselves not only had to accept the Gentiles (without any additional man made requirements), but also had to accept the Gospel as the inspired commands of God with nothing added. Read 1 Corinthians 4:6 (ESV).
8. The Elders and apostles also debated among themselves and finally decided to send Paul and Barnabas (along with two men from the church in Jerusalem, Judas and Silas) with a letter to the church in Antioch. The letter clearly stated that the Gentiles should no longer be viewed as anything other than brothers in Christ: they could be saved in the same way as the Jews.



NOTE: The letter that was written and sent to the church in Antioch included instructions that would remind the Gentiles that they were **completely** set apart from their former ways of life (Ephesians 4:17-23). They were not only expected to be morally pure, but were also reminded of the contract God made with Man—all the way back to Noah—about eating blood (Genesis 9:3-4; Leviticus 17:10-14; Revelation 2:14,20). The shedding of blood was (and is) to remind Christians how costly their salvation was (is); blood was not to be part of any ceremonial meal, because at that time, that would be seen as related to paganism. **Also** note that these instructions were said to be **from the Holy Spirit**, meaning they were inspired of God (Acts 15:28).

9. Since Jesus died for the Church, He has always wanted us to be united in our efforts for Him (Ephesians 4:1-6; 1 Corinthians 1:10-13; John 17:20-21). The early Church avoided being divided because they were willing to listen to one another and to men inspired of God (which we do today by

studying the inspired New Testament). Discuss with the children the concept of unity related to fighting among friends, divisions in families, rivalries at school, etc., and the effects that these divisions have.

10. OLDER KIDS: The many denominations in the world today have resulted from people wanting to have their own way and being unwilling to listen to what God has said in the New Testament. Relate this to divisions in the home, etc., as well. Divisions and arguments usually occur when people want to have their own way instead of doing things God's way.



RECOMMENDED READING FOR TEACHERS: See the article "[Is It Wrong to Eat Pork?](#)" by Kyle Butt on the Apologetics Press Web site for a response to the argument that Christians should still be refraining from "unclean" foods, like the Israelites.

PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—**BEFORE** CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):

- Click here for complete [Activity Book](#) and [Answer Key](#).

Ages 2-5:

- "[Paul, Barnabas, and Church Leaders in Antioch Coloring Sheet](#)" (provided in activity sheets)
- Continue working on ABCs of Acts booklet. ("[ABCs of Acts Booklet](#)" p. 15 provided in activity sheets)
- Play Red Rover to emphasize the need for "strong links" between friends, family members, etc.
- On a half sheet of paper, print/copy the words "____ can get along with others by ____." Write a child's name in first blank, and then have child tell you something he/she can do to get along with others.

1st-2nd Graders:

- Continue working on ABCs of Acts booklet. ("[ABCs of Acts Booklet](#)" p. 15 provided in activity sheets)
- "[Acts Word Scramble](#)" (provided in activity sheets)
- "[Acts Memory Game](#)": write names or places from this quarter on index cards. Write what the people did or what happened in the places on separate index cards. Shuffle the cards and turn them over. Allow the children to take turns turning over two cards at a time. When a match is found, that child can keep it. See who has the most matches at the end of game. (provided in activity sheets)

3rd-4th Graders:

- Continue working on ABCs of Acts booklet. ("[ABCs of Acts Booklet](#)" p. 15 provided in activity sheets)
- Help the children make a "unity chain" (or "friendship chain") of construction paper strips. Write Scriptures about unity, the one Church, etc., on each link.
- "[Acts Word Scramble](#)" (provided in activity sheets)
- "[Acts Memory Game](#)": write names or places from this quarter on index cards. Write what

the people did or what happened in the places on separate index cards. Shuffle the cards and turn them over. Allow the children to take turns turning over two cards at a time. When a match is found, that child can keep it. See who has the most matches at the end of game. (provided in activity sheets)

- Have the children read the following:
 - Acts 15
 - *A Children's Book About Fighting*, by Joy Berry, Grolier Books
 - *Paul's Journeys*, by Loyal Kolbrek, Arch books (DISCLAIMER: remove the sentence starting with "He felt the Spirit..." on p. 6)

FINGERPLAYS:

"HERE'S THE CHURCH BUILDING"

Here's the Church building. (all fingers linked together backward, facing palms)
Here's the steeple. (take two index fingers out of double fist and put fingertips together)
Open the door, and there's the Church—the people!
(Completely unfold double fist, with fingers still linked together)

SONGS:

"OH, WE MUST BE KIND" ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Lora Laycock
(Tune: Chorus of "Blessed Be the Name")

O we must be kind, O we must be kind,
O we must be kind, kind to all;
O we must be kind, O we must be kind,
O we must be kind, kind to all.

"BEING KIND TO OTHERS" ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Lora Laycock
(Tune: "Bringing in the Sheaves")

Being kind to others, being kind to others;
Being kind to others, every night and day.
Being kind to others, being kind to others;
Jesus ever taught us that we must obey.

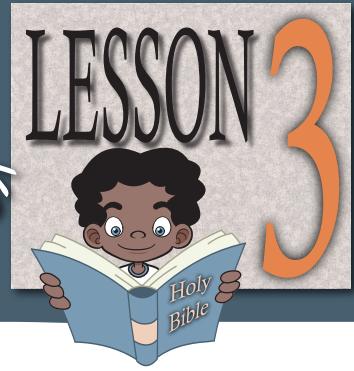
CHORUS:

Oh, we must be kind! Oh, we must be kind!
Jesus ever taught us that we must be kind.
(REPEAT)

*** IF YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS PERTAINING TO THIS LESSON, PLEASE CLICK THE "SUGGESTION" BUTTON BESIDE THE BUTTON FOR THIS LESSON ON THE CURRICULUM WEB SITE.



Old Law Not Binding; Other Journey Acts 15



New Testament 8
Part 1: ABCs OF ACTS 13-18

WEDNESDAY EVENING

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Also help the children memorize the ABCs of Acts.

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- **Map of Paul's Evangelistic Trips** (provided in activity sheets)
- **OLDER KIDS:** Draw a body outline on the board and talk about what happens when a body is “divided” to illustrate what happens to the Body of Christ when it is divided.

PERSONAL APPLICATION:

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OLDER CHILDREN: God wants us to get along with one another, at school, at home, and in the church without compromising what the Bible says (without changing something in Scripture just “to keep the peace”).

INTRODUCTION:

Review [N.T. 8 Bible Fact Flash Cards](#) (provided under “N.T. 8 Bible Facts” on curriculum Web site)

POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

Briefly review Sunday’s lesson (See [N.T. 8 Review Questions](#) for example questions), as well as other ABCs covered to this point.

Discuss the disagreement between Paul and Barnabas regarding John Mark (Acts 15:36-41). The Elders and apostles sent Paul, Barnabas, Silas, and Judas back to Antioch to encourage others to get along. They continued teaching for some time and then decided to go back to places they had been before. Barnabas wanted to take John Mark, but Paul disagreed because John Mark had left the missionary party and gone back to Jerusalem in the middle of the journey (Acts 13:13). The disagreement became so “sharp” that the party split up over the matter.



NOTE: The text does not say why John Mark left the group. Acts 15:38 seems to indicate that Paul was upset with John Mark’s failure to finish the trip with them.

Paul eventually took Silas, and Barnabas took John Mark (apparently, Barnabas’ cousin—Colossians 4:10) home to the island of Cyprus. Ask the young kids what they argue about. When we argue/fuss/disagree, the best thing to do might be to separate for a while. This was apparently a personal disagreement, not a doctrinal issue.

Paul and Barnabas still remained friends and still continued to work for the Lord; they just chose different helpers in their work. They were each powerful preachers at this point, and Paul no longer needed Barnabas to help convince others to accept him as a faithful Christian rather than a persecutor of Christians. Paul and Barnabas remained friends, and Paul later mentions the importance of John Mark (2 Timothy 4:11).



NOTE: Neither Paul nor Barnabas tried to divide the Church or gather their own supporters because of their disagreement. Both were important leaders of the Church and could easily have used their positions to draw attention away from the Lord and to themselves—but they didn’t. (See 1 Corinthians 1)

Sometimes friends agree to disagree and may need time apart to think things through. God doesn't want us to be angry with one another or hold grudges for a long time. Read Ephesians 4:26. He wants us to remember that everything we do—alone or with friends—should be for His glory. Others are watching us to see how we handle disagreements and problems with one another, and they will make judgments about the Church because of how we act and/or react.

PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—BEFORE** CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):**

- See Sunday morning's lesson.

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