

CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS STUDY

FOR
Junior Secondary School

3



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JSS 3

CRISTIAN RELIGIOUS STUDIES

FIRST TERM

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CRS JSS3 First Term

TOPIC: THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is the spirit of the Lord. In other words, it is God in form of a spirit. The Holy Spirit is the third divine person in the *Trinity* which consists of God the Father and God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. Jesus never used the adjective “it” for the Holy Spirit,

The Promise of the Holy Spirit

Before his crucifixion, resurrection and ascension Jesus took time to advise and encourage his disciples to be good ambassadors of the kingdom of God, assuring them that he would never leave them alone. And as his time for crucifixion drew ever closer, Jesus noticed that his disciples were upset and depressed as they were aware that their master was about to be taken away from them. So he promised them the he would send them a Comforter and Counselor which is the Holy Spirit. In John 14: 26 Jesus said: “The Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the father will send in my name will teach you all things and remind you all that I have taught you.” *[Also read John 16:7.]* After the ascension of Jesus to heaven, his disciples did receive the Holy Spirit.

Ascension into Heaven

In Christian pallance, the word “ascension” means the rising of the body of Jesus into Heaven. It happened on the **4th day** after his resurrection. Jesus was with his disciples when the angels of God came to take him away; body and soul. *[Reads 1:4-9.]* The ascension was a key to God the Father pouring the Holy on the disciples and by extension, every Christian.

Significance of the Holy Spirit

1. The Holy Spirit delivers us from avoidable human errors and unprofitable relationships
2. He is man’s vehicle of inspiration that guides us to all truth.
3. He makes us hunger and thirst for God
4. He makes us to have faith in God
5. He makes us to be courageous, bold, obedient and peaceful.

6. Without the guidance of the Holy Spirit we cannot walk with God

7. Without Him we cannot do the work of God and do evangelism

8. He helps to live a life like Christ.

EVALUATION

a. What is ascension, and what is the significance of Jesus ascension?

b. Who is the Holy Spirit?

TOPIC: THE EFFECTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT ON THE EARLY DISCIPLES

The coming of the Holy Spirit had tremendous effect on the disciples and helped them in their ministries of spreading the good news and establishing the church. Specifically speaking, the miracles performed by Peter and Paul attested to the full blown effects the Holy Spirit had in the lives of the Apostles. Read below to learn how exactly the Holy Spirit had effect in the lives of Peter and Paul.

THE MIRACLES OF PETER AND PAUL

Peter and John went to the temple to pray when a lame man who was begging at the gate stopped them and begged for money. Peter and John had no money, but Peter said: “ Look at us, silver nor gold we do not have. But what have we will give to you; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth stand up and walk.” Immediately the man stood up and started dancing around and praising God. He had been crippled from birth but through the power of the Holy Spirit through Peter and John he got his healing. The crowd was amazed by the miracle, they gathered round Peter and John was starring at them with amazement. Peter preached to the crowd and urged them to repent and leave their sinful ways.

MORAL LESSON

- 1. Holy Spirit gives boldness to speak the truth anywhere and anytime.***
- 2. With the Holy Spirit healing can take place no matter the illness.***
- 3. You need the Holy Spirit to the work of God well***
- 4. The Holy Spirit is available to anyone who wants and deserves Him.***
- 5. He makes us fearless no matter the trouble.***

Assessment

- What were the effects of the Holy Spirit on the Early Christians

TOPIC: CONVERSION OF FOLLOWERS

After Peter and John healed the lame man in the temple, the crowd gathered round them and Peter preached the good news of Jesus to them after which about five thousand people gave their lives to Christ. However, the temple captain and priest were not happy that the Apostles were preaching the gospel of Jesus to the crowd. So they arrested the Apostles and took them to court where the Scribes and elders assembled to pass judgement on them. The elders asked them which power they were using to perform miracles. And Peter, (ever so filled with the Holy Spirit) told them that it was by the power of Jesus Christ of Nazareth whom they crucified and whom God raised from the dead after three days. He also told them that Jesus is the ***stone rejected by the builder but now the chief corner stone***; there is no name by which we will be saved except the name of Jesus Christ.

When the Scribes saw that Peter and John were bold and fearless and more intelligent than they were, they decided to use threat against them especially since they could not justifiably find them guilty of any crime committed. Meanwhile, by this time the healed lame man was with Peter and John in the court. And the people had heard the story of how Peter and Paul healed the man and relieved him of his burden. So the elders and scribes could not accuse Peter and Paul of any wrongdoing as doing so might have incurred the wrath of the people. Therefore, they merely threatened the Apostles to stop spreading the gospel of Jesus. But Peter replied: "Whether it be right to obey your words more than the words of God, we must speak God's words." The elders freed them.

Seven Deacons Chosen

The disciples therefore continued winning souls even as followers of Christ increased tremendously by the days. And there arose the need for more workers in the church, a necessity that prompted the crowd to choose **Stephen, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas** and **Nicolas** as deacons. The disciples laid hands upon them and prayed for them. And through their evangelism, followers increased in large numbers and spread to other nations.

MORAL LESSONS

1. The Holy Spirit is inevitable in doing God's work, we need Him always.

2. Workers are needed in churches so help the church in doing something. That is, be a church worker.

EVALUATION

1. What did Peter say to the elders?

2. Name the seven Deacons selected to help the disciples in God's works.

TOPIC: FRUITS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The fruits of the Holy Spirit are the nine visible qualities of a true Christian life. They are the evidence that one is a true child of God. All good Christians have at least one fruit of the Holy Spirit. Please see them listed below-

- **Love:** This is the first and most important gift of the Holy Spirit. If you love God you won't break His laws voluntarily or hurt anyone.
- **Joy:** Rejoice in the Lord always. Do not let the challenges of this world steal your joy.
- **Peace:** Even when trouble blows, God sees- hold your peace, He is in control.
- **Long-suffering:** This simply means patience.
- **Kindness:** treat everyone with kindness
- **Goodness:** Have a good behavior
- **Faithfulness:** Don't disappoint family members, friends, masters and God. Keep your promise.
- **Gentleness:** Don't be harsh on people.
- **Self control:** The spirit and flesh will always contradict each other. It takes self control to overcome temptation.

EVALUATION

1. What is the most important fruits?
2. Name six fruits of the holy spirit.
3. What helps us to overcome temptation?

CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS KNOWLEGDE JSS3 FIRST TERM

TOPIC: FELLOWSHIPPING IN THE EARLY CHURCH (Acts 1:15–26; 2:41–47; 4:32–37)

Peter's Speech on Pentecost day

Peter's sermon in Acts 2 is critically important since it demonstrates how the apostles interpreted the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, including the Ascension. Peter uses the Old Testament in this sermon and cites texts which were fulfilled in the events of Jesus' life, but also in the events of Pentecost.

Peter first explains the significance of the Holy Spirit (2:14–21). Beginning with a prophecy from Joel 2:28–32, Peter states that the presence of the Spirit in the apostles at that moment is what Joel predicted.

Communal Life in the Early Church

On the day of Pentecost, Peter's speech was strong and filled with the Holy Spirit such that about three thousand people repented of their sins and were baptized; thence became followers of the teachings of the Disciples.

These new converts then lived together in community of the family of God, sharing everything in common. They indeed lived selflessly, cooking and eating together as one family even as nobody claimed ownership of what they had. *One happy family* is the best phrase to describe them, and on a daily basis they grew as the Lord added to their number

MORAL LESSONS

- Jesus established the church with His disciples as the foundation members. Jesus is the leader of the church which He established when He was on earth.
- They early foundation members stayed together, prayed together for the coming of the Holy Spirit. We should emulate them by engaging in united prayers.
- Peter's powerful sermon led to the conversion of 3,000 people, don't be afraid to speak the goodnews.

- The early Christians relied on the teaching of the apostles, this helped them to live together as one happy family.
- At the time of Jesus death, resurrection and ascension the members of the church were 120, and Peter was the head.

ASSESSMENT

1. What is the effect of Peter's speech on establishing the early church?

TOPIC: FRAUD IN THE CHURCH

The early church enjoyed peaceful and communal co-existence; a time when every single Christian cooperated and lived as one. But then as expected in every human organisations, a time came when some bad eggs in the group started to be dishonest. A perfect example is what Ananias and Sapphira his wife did. Read a summary of the story in the next paragraph.

The Bible recorded that some of the early Christians (who owned lands) were selling their lands and other belongings and donating such to the church for daily upkeep of the members as part of their communal living. And then Ananias and his wife sold their land but but decided to keep some of the proceeds to themselves while only giving Peter part of it; pretending that was all the money earned from the land sale. Meanwhile, Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit quickly discerned that Ananias was lying. So he said to Ananias “Ananias, how is it that Satan has filled your heart that you lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept some of the money you got from sale of the land to thyself? Didn’t it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold wasn’t the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied just to human beings but to God.”

Immediately Peter finished speaking, Ananias fell down and died. Mind you, nobody had touched him; he just fell and died. Some young men came and took his corpse to bury. Three hours later his wife Sapphira arrived, unaware of what had happened to her husband. Peter asked her: “Tell me, is this the price you and Ananias got from the land?” she vehemently replied without fear, “Yes, that is the price”. Peter said to her: “How could you conspire to test the Spirit of the Lord? Listen! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also.” Immediately she fell and died. The same men that buried her husband came and took her corpse to bury beside her husband’s grave. This created fear and tension among other Christians.

MORAL LESSONS

- It is not good to lie
- Do not joke with the things of God
- A person that helps another person to commit crime will have same punishment as the person that committed it.

- Do not lie to your parents, teachers, priests/pastors they are God's representatives on earth.
- Live a holy life.

EVALUATION

1. Who is Sapphira?

2. Why did Ananias and Sapphira die?

TOPIC: PHILIP AND THE ETHIOPIAN EUNUCH

The angel of God appeared to Philip, directing him to an Ethiopian eunuch who had come to Jerusalem to worship God. He was sitting on his chariot and reading the scripture but not understanding what it was he read. And as Philip saw the man, the spirit of God asked him to go closer and join the man in his chariot. When Philip reached there he asked the eunuch if he understood what he was reading but the eunuch replied “How can I, except some man should guide me.” He then asked Philip to come and sit with him. He had been reading the passage which says- “He was led like a sheep to the slaughter and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth. In his humiliation his judgment was taken away, and who shall declare his generation? For his life is taken from this earth.”

The eunuch asked Philip who the prophecy was talking about and Philip told him that it was Jesus Christ. Philip then started preaching to the man. As they moved along in the chariot, the eunuch saw a river by the road side and demanded to be baptized. Philip said to him: “If thou believest that Jesus is the son of God thou wilt be baptized.” The eunuch declared his belief and was baptized. As they came out of the water the spirit of God whisked Philip away and the eunuch saw him not. The eunuch went home rejoicing.

MORAL LESSONS

- *You need the Holy Spirit to understand the scripture.*
- *God's salvation is available to all irrespective of nation, race or language.*
- *You must believe that Jesus is the son of God before you can be saved.*
- *There is power in declaration.*

EVALUATION

1. From the story above highlight the importance of guidance in understanding the gospel.

TOPIC: PAUL'S EARLY LIFE

Saul was born in the Roman empire of Cilicia, a circumstance that made him a Roman citizen by birth even though he was born by Jewish parents from the tribe of Benjamin. He was a highly educated man, industrious too and an influential lawyer. His Roman name is Paul and he belonged to the extremist Jewish religious party known as the *Pharisee*.

The Pharisees strictly follow the laws of Moses, which is why Paul saw Christians as deviant set of people doing the wrong thing and following the wrong religious path. He therefore took it upon himself to bring them back to what he thought was the right path, playing a significant role in persecution of Christians in Jerusalem in process. He supervised the martyrdom of Stephen (i.e., the stoning to death of Stephen). After that, he became a one-man army, persecuting the Christians everywhere they were. He went house to house, dragging out and arresting Christians and apostles. His persecution crippled Christian activities because so many believers were killed and many others fled Jerusalem to other cities.

Later Paul took permission from the high priest to go to Damascus to molest and persecute Christians there. It was on his way to Damascus that he had encounter with Jesus. Jesus appeared to him and struck him with blindness, saying: "Saul, Saul, why are thou persecuting me?" subsequently he was conscripted into the Lord's army of missionaries. Paul later became the writer of the most books in the new testament. He wrote fourteen out of the twenty seven books of the new testament.

Benefits of the Opposition

1. The persecution and opposition led to the expansion of the gospel to Gentiles (non-Jews).
2. It made the apostles more aggressive in their evangelism
3. Through the help of the Holy Spirit the apostles performed many wonders in the face of the opposition.
4. Opposition made Christianity to grow instead of weakening its spread.
5. The disciples and early Christian chose to obey God rather than man. This stands as lesson to the Christians of today to stand up and defend their faith in the midst of opposition.

EVALUATION

1. Who was Paul before his conversion?
2. What did Paul study?

3. What is his other name?

TOPIC: CORNELIUS CALLS ON PETER

Cornelius was a good Christian; alongside his entire family. He was God-fearing and generous to the poor and needy. One day in the afternoon, he had a vision where the angel of God appeared to him saying: “Cornelius your prayers and gifts to the poor have come up as a memorial offering before God. Now send men to Joppa to bring a man called Simon, also called Peter”. When Cornelius woke up he called two of his servant and a soldier, told them the vision and sent them to go to Joppa and fetch Peter.

While on their way to Peter, he too had a vision the afternoon of the following day. In the trance, he saw the heaven open and there appeared different animals and God told him to kill and eat. But Peter told God the animals were unclean. God then told him never to call anything he created “unclean” or “impure”. As Peter was still wondering what the dream could mean, the men sent by Cornelius arrived at the home where he was staying. God told Peter that there were three men looking for him, that he shouldn’t hesitate to follow them. Peter came out and told them “I am the one you are looking for, why have you come?” The men told him why they came, and he departed with them to Cornelius’ place.

Peter at Cornelius’ House

Some people from Joppa followed Peter and by the next day, they arrived at Caesarea. Already Cornelius had gathered all his friends and family and they were expecting Peter. When they arrived Cornelius knelt and bowed to Peter. But Peter stopped him, saying “I am only a man”. When Peter went inside he saw large group of people (friends and family of Cornelius) and said to them that according to Jewish law it was acceptable for Jews to associate with Gentiles (non-Jews) but that God had instructed him not to call anything He created unclean or impure. He said since God sent him he had no reason to disobey. He asked Cornelius why he was invited and he was told the trance Cornelius had.

Peter started preaching to them about Jesus Christ. As he was preaching the Holy Spirit came upon the crowd and the Jews that accompanied Peter from Joppa were astonished that non-Jews could receive the Holy Spirit. Before the Holy Spirit came Peter said, “I now realise how true it is that God does not show favouritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears Him and does what is right.” After the Holy Spirit descended on them Peter baptised them. They begged him to stay for some more days before going back but he refused.

MORAL LESSONS

1. *God doesn't consider language, nation, nor race- He welcomes anyone who does what He wants.*
2. *God does not discriminate.*
3. *Every human carries God's favour.*

EVALUATION

1. What time of the day did they have the vision?
2. What is the meaning of the dream Peter had?

TOPIC: THE COMING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The coming of the Holy Spirit was an event characterized by the outpouring of God's Spirit on Jesus' disciples. Before this event, it should be recalled that Jesus already told his disciples that he would be killed and that he would rise from the dead after three days and go back to heaven. His disciples were not happy about that, but he promised never to leave them alone and that God the Father would send down the Holy Spirit to comfort and counsel them. Consequently, after Jesus was crucified and he resurrected, he came to his disciples and told them in Acts 1:8 that after he had ascended to heaven the Holy Spirit would come down upon them and that they shall go forth spreading the good news to Jerusalem, Judea and all over the world. He also instructed them to remain in Jerusalem till the Holy Spirit comes down upon them.

On the Pentecost day, the disciples were in a locked room praying when a loud noise like rushing wind filled the room and tongues of fire descended on their heads. The Bible said that they started speaking in different languages; languages which they hitherto knew not how to speak. Their ability to speak those languages was the demonstration of the power of the Holy Spirit which had come upon them. The speaking in tongues and prayer attracted crowd, and the crowd quickly assumed that the disciples were drunk.

Meanwhile, because the Holy Spirit was in them, Peter had the courage to address the crowd and defended the disciples, telling the people gathered that they were not drunk but filled with the Holy Spirit and that their speaking of different tongues was inspired by the Holy Spirit. He told them that it was the fulfillment of the old prophecy of Joel which states: ***"And in the last days, God says I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and daughters shall prophesy. " Joel 2: 28-32; Acts 2: 17-24.*** Peter and the rest disciples then preached to the crowd and about three thousand souls were converted to the kingdom that day alone.

Significance of the Coming of the Holy Spirit

1. God was faithful by sending down His spirit to the disciples on the Pentecost day.
2. The Holy Spirit filled the apostles with strength, boldness and courage to preach.
3. Through the Holy Spirit unusual things happened

4. They had been afraid since Jesus ascended to Heaven but the Holy Spirit came and gave them strength, courage and boldness.

5. He came to give spiritual gifts to members of God's church.

6. It shows that God is dependable, trustworthy and reliable in keeping His words.

EVALUATION

1. Who's the Holy Spirit?

2. Why were the disciples afraid?

3. The Holy Spirit descended in what form?

4. What impact did He have on the disciples?

5. How many people were converted to Christianity on that Pentecost day?

JSS 3

CRISTIAN RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE

SECOND TERM

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TOPIC: THE SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL TO ROMAN EMPIRE

Before Jesus left disciples, he commissioned them and instructed them to spread the gospel. He specifically told them to “Go and make disciples of all nation, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19-20). Since then, the disciples have been spreading the word of God in and outside Jerusalem to the even the deepest part of the world.

Soon, the early Christians (who were mostly Jews) spread to Roman empire and were converting people. Unfortunately, the Christians were greatly persecuted until the emergence of emperor Constantine. The mother of Constantine, Helena secretly converted to Christianity but was afraid to publicly proclaim her new religion in order that she may not be executed and also so that she will not contribute a problem to her son’s rein. She rather [secretly] persuaded her son to convert to her new Christian religion. But he was was hesitant at first.

Constantine’s mother later made her new religion public. And it so happened that someday while in the battlefield facing a very strong opposition, he saw his mother in a vision, standing beside Jesus Christ. He told Jesus that if he could help him win the war he would convert to Christianity. He won the war and fulfilled his promise. And not did he convert to Christianity, he also converted the entire Roman empire to Christianity. This is because the religion of an emperor automatically became the religion of the entire empire. As the empire became Christianized, Constantine replaced all pagan officials to Christian officials, establishing Christianity in the empire and went as far as Israel to build the church of Nativity in Bethlehem; specifically on **Mount Moriah**. After the death of Constantine, his son Constantinus, also know as Constantine II took over. He was also a very strong and devout Christian. Through him the **Fathers** gained control of the empire.

Factors that Assisted the Spread of the Gospel Throughout the Roman Empire

1. The zeal of the early Christians
2. Confidence they had in communicating their faith
3. The miracles that occurred wherever they went
4. The good character of the Christians

5. The unity and the discipline of the local church

EVALUATION

1. Why did Helena refuse to publicly proclaim her religion?

2. What made Constantine to convert to Christianity?

3. After the death of Constantine who took over?

JSS3 C.R.K. SECOND TERM

WEEK 2

TOPIC: THE CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY JOURNEY

By the direction of the Holy Spirit, Paul and Barnabas were sent to preach to the Gentiles at Paphos, the capital of Cyprus. And while at Paphos, they met a Jewish sorcerer [magician] called Bar-jesus also known as Elymas. The sorcerer attached himself to the governor, a very intelligent man called Sergius Paulus. Meanwhile, Sergius Paulus had invited Paul and Barnabas to come and preach to him. And while preached to the governor, the magician tried to discourage the governor from listening to the sermon. And so Paul sternly looked at the sorcerer and said “You son of the devil full of every sort of deceit and fraud and enemy of good! Watch now, the Lord has laid his hand of punishment upon you, and you will be struck blind. You’ll not see the sun for sometime. Immediately the sorcerer became blind, he started begging for someone to hold his hands let him walk. The governor saw this and was marveled, this made him believe instantly the message of Jesus Christ Paul and Barnabas had brought to him.

MORAL LESSONS

1. Just as Bar-jesus was distracting and discouraging the governor from listening that’s how the devil distracts and discourages us too.
2. When two power meets the lesser one bows. God’s power is supreme.
3. When they preached in Antioch in Pisidia they were persecuted but that did not stop nor discourage them.
4. It was in Paphos that the name Paul was officially introduced. Acts 13:9.

EVALUATION

1. What are the two names of the Jewish sorcerer Paul and Barnabas met at Paphos?
2. Why did Paul strike him with blindness?

JSS3 C.R.K. SECOND TERM

WEEK 3

TOPIC: THE JOURNEY FROM ANTIOCH TO DERBE

For his first missionary journey, Paul visited Derbe, a town in Turkey. There, he preached and got many disciples one of whom was Gaius who later accompanied Paul to his missionary journey to Greece. Do note that Paul's journey to Derbe happened after he was stoned in Iconium.

Paul and Barnabas in Iconium

At Iconium, Paul and Barnabas went to the synagogue as usual. And there they preached elegantly to the crowd, performing signs and wonders. Many people- Jews and Gentiles believed, but the few Jews that didn't believe poisoned the mind of the Gentiles and stirred them up for violence. The crowd was divided, some for Paul while some against him. They planned to stone them, but Paul and Barnabas found out in time and fled to Lystria and Derbe, and to neighbouring countries where they continued to preach the gospel there. They knew that there would be no giving up in the spreading of the gospel, irrespective of the difficulties and persecutions that they faced.

Paul and Barnabas in Lystria

Paul and Barnabas were preaching in Lystria when they noticed a crippled man who was listening to them attentively. He was born crippled. Paul saw in his heart that he had faith, so Paul called him out with a loud voice, commanding him to "Stand up!" Immediately the man jumped on his feet and started walking. The crowd was amazed. They spoke in their dialects, saying that Paul and Barnabas were gods in human form. They said Barnabas was the Greek god **Zeus** while Paul was **Hermes** since he was the speaker. Immediately the priest of the temple of Zeus which was located close by together with the crowd brought bulls and flowers to the town gate to offer sacrifice to the apostles. And when Paul and Barnabas learnt of this, they tore their cloths and ran to them saying "Friends, why are you doing this? We are humans just like you. We have come to bring you goodnews that you should turn from these worthless things and turn to the living God who made heaven and earth and everything..."

Then some Jews arrived from Antioch and Iconium, won and poisoned the mind of the crowd and finally convincing the people to stone Paul. After he was very well stoned and assumed to be dead, he was dragged out of the town, assumed to be dead. But as other Christians gathered round him and prayed, he got up and went into the town. The next day he went to Derbe with Barnabas.

MORAL LESSONS

1. Opposition to the gospel can't stop its spread
2. Glory of God shouldn't be shared with man. Give all the glory to God
3. Be honest and humble, do not feel like a god because you have done great thing
4. Caution people when they want to give you praise that belongs to God.

EVALUATION

1. Narrate the incident that preceded the stoning of Paul and Barnabas.

JSS3 C.R.K. SECOND TERM

WEEK 4

TOPIC: CONTROVERSY IN THE EARLY CHURCH

Every human community faces controversies ever so often. It is just an inevitable phenomenon; conflict. And so it proved to be in the early church when the main source of controversy was the discrimination of Jewish Christians against the Gentiles. The Jews thought that those who were not circumcised were not permitted to be Christians. As the Bible recorded, some of the Jewish Christians who held this opinion came from Judea to Antioch preaching to the people that unless they were circumcised according to the custom taught by Moses, they could not be saved.

This conflict caused further conflict between Paul and Barnabas. The two of them then went to Jerusalem to seek advice from the church elders and apostles in order to settle the controversy once and for all. And on their way, they passed through Phoenicia and Samaria and saw how the Gentiles were converted. They told the Jerusalem church how Gentiles had been converted and this made the church happy.

Meanwhile, some of the believers who were in support of the Pharisees stood up and said that all gentile Christians must be circumcised and keep the laws of Moses if they were to be fully accepted into the Christian fold. After discussing this issue with them (elders and apostles), Peter got up and addressed them. He recounted the works God had done among the Gentiles, especially the Holy Spirit pouring down on them which according to him indicated God's acknowledgement of them. He explains that God makes no difference between the Jews and Gentiles and concluded by saying both Jews and Gentiles would be saved the same way.

After Peter finished speaking Paul, Barnabas once again recounted the many miracles God had done through them among the Gentiles. James also reinstated what Peter said. He reiterated that the Gentiles should not be about the need for circumcision, but rather that they should be admonished to abstain from things stained by idols, from sexual immorality, from the things strangled and from blood etc.

The Church then sent Paul and Barnabas, Judas (Barsabas), Silas and some others back to the missionary fields. They wrote a letter and handed to Judas and Silas to deliver. The letter

simply advised the gentile Church to abstain from things stained by idols, from sexual immorality, from the things strangled and from blood. This they did because indeed what matters, according to them is not circumcision but obedience to the laws and words of God. What matters is an obedient and ready heart turned to God.

Disagreement Between Paul and Barnabas

Sometime after the settlement of the circumcision controversy, Paul said to Barnabas “Let us go back and visit the believers in all the towns where we preached the word of God and see how they are doing.” But a fresh controversy started when Barnabas wanted to take John (also called Mark) with them and Paul refused. Paul refused because Mark abandoned them in Pamphylia in their previous journey to those places. This led to serious disagreement which made them to part ways. Consequently, Barnabas took John Mark and sailed through Cyprus while Paul chose Silas and sailed through Syria and Cilicia strengthening the churches. The believers were happy and their faith renewed because of the visit and encouragement.

EVALUATION

1. What was the cause of the conflict in the early church?
2. How was it settled?
3. What led to the disagreement between Paul and Barnabas?

JSS3 C.R.K. SECOND TERM

WEEK 5

TOPIC: CONTROVERSY IN THE CORINTH CHURCH

While still in Ephesus, Paul heard from “some of Chloe’s people” (1:11) that there were divisions and quarrels in the church at Corinth. Paul also heard that there was a serious case of immorality in the church (5:1), and that some of the Corinthian saints were taking their brothers to court (6:1ff.). In addition, Paul received questions concerning marriage (7:1), virgins (7:25), foods sacrificed to idols (8:1ff.), spiritual gifts (12:1ff.) and more. While still in Ephesus (16:8), Paul wrote this first preserved letter to the Corinthians. It seeks to address some of the major problems in the church.

Elitist Snobbery in the Church

Paul rebukes the Corinthians because there are divisions and quarrels in the church. This is the result of a religious snobbery associated by cliques that produced pride and conflict. Religious snobs want to be a part of a small group who think of themselves as the spiritual elite. They are proud and smug because of their associations, especially with their leader, and they look down upon those who are not in their group. The elitism evident in Corinth was based upon two things: (1) who they followed – who their leader was; and, (2) the message and method of their leader.

The Corinthians were boasting of their close association with certain men, men they considered superior to others. By associating with them, the Corinthians felt superior to those who followed others. Taking pride in mere men was evil. If there was any boasting to be done, Paul reminded his readers that their boasting should be “in the Lord”.

Sexual Improprieties

Paul calls the church’s attention to the man in their midst who is living in an incestuous relationship with his father’s wife. This situation called for separation, for a kind of division. The man carried on his sin publicly, before the church (Did he bring this wife to church?) and before the unsaved in Corinth. The heathen Corinthians were shocked by this kind of conduct, and yet the man did not repent. What is even worse, the saints in the church had apparently not

even rebuked him. Somehow, instead of grieving over this terrible sin, they were puffed up with pride about it:

Meat Sacrificed to Idols

For the “liberated” Corinthians, to partake of meats offered to idols was to participate in the heathen ritual – the worship of heathen gods – in which the meat was sacrificed. Paul reminds us that while there may not be other gods, there are demons, and they are very much involved in heathen worship. Christians who sit weekly at the Lord’s Table should have no part in the heathen rituals in which meat is offered to idols. The “liberty” so cleverly reasoned out in chapter 8 is no liberty at all. Eating meats offered to idols is strictly forbidden if it involves participation in the heathen ritual itself.

Conduct in the Church

In the Corinthian church, certain gifts were valued above others. In particular, the gift of tongues seems to have been viewed as the greatest gift, so that all were striving to get it, and those who did not have it felt inferior and useless to the body. Paul turns the tables on those who sought to elevate the gift of tongues above all others by declaring that it was the lesser gifts that were given “more honor” to compensate for their apparent insignificance. In so doing,

Denying the Doctrine of the Resurrection

To deny the resurrection of the dead means that there is no future hope; it also means that there will be no future judgment. If this were the case, one should certainly not live dangerously, as did Paul and the true apostles. To the contrary, one might as well “eat, drink, and be merry” because there may be no tomorrow. If “we only go around once,” as the television commercial used to put it, “then we’d better grab all the gusto we can get.”

Moral Lessons

(1) No teaching, no matter how amazing it may seem, should ever take us outside the boundaries of the Word of God:

(2) Our boasting must never be in men, but only in God.

(3) We should not seek our own glory, but the glory of God.

(4) We should not seek our own good, but the good of others.

(5) Just because something is lawful, does not mean that it is profitable, to me or to others.

EVALUATIONS

1. What are the controversies that the Corinth church was involved in?

JSS3 C.R.K. SECOND TERM

WEEK 6

TOPIC: THE JERUSALEM COUNCIL

In the earliest days of the Christian church, the church was comprised predominately of Jews. In Acts chapter 8 the gospel spread to the Samaritans (who were ethnically mixed Jews-Gentiles), and many Samaritans received Jesus Christ as Savior. In Acts chapter 10, the apostle Peter was the first to take the gospel specifically to the Gentiles, and many received Christ as Savior. In Acts chapters 13–14, Paul and Barnabas had a very fruitful ministry among the Gentiles. All of these Gentiles turning to faith in Christ caused concern among the Jewish believers, first expressed in Acts 11:1–18, and the issues that caused concern were ultimately decided upon at the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15). The issues centered on two questions: Do Gentiles first have to become Jews before they can become Christians? Do Gentiles have to observe the Mosaic Law after they become Christians?

The impetus for the Jerusalem Council is given in Acts 15, verses 1 and 5, “But some men came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, ‘Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.’ . . . It is necessary to circumcise them and to order them to keep the Law of Moses.” Some Jewish Christians were teaching that Gentiles had to observe the Mosaic Law and Jewish customs in order to be saved. Since this teaching clearly contradicted the fact that salvation was by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone (Acts 15:11), the apostles and church leaders held the first Christian council to settle the issue. In verses 7–11, the apostle Peter spoke of his ministry with the Gentiles, as recorded in Acts chapter 10. Peter focused on the fact that the Holy Spirit was given to uncircumcised Gentiles in precisely the same manner the Holy Spirit was given to the apostles and Jewish believers on the day of Pentecost. This led Peter to the conclusion that there should be no “placing a yoke on the neck of the [Gentile] disciples that neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear” (Acts 15:10).

Jesus’ half-brother James, who had become a leader of the church in Jerusalem, agreed with Peter and declared, “It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God” (Acts 15:19). The Jerusalem Council then proceeded to give four “rules” that Gentile Christians should live by. These were not rules the Gentiles must follow

in order to be saved. Rather, the rules were to build harmony between Jewish and Gentile Christians in the first century. The four rules the Jerusalem Council decided upon were that Gentile Christians should abstain from food polluted by idols, sexual immorality, the meat of strangled animals, and blood. The instructions were not intended to guarantee salvation but to promote peace within the early church.

EVALUATION

1. What was the meaning and importance of the Jerusalem Council?

JSS3 C.R.K. SECOND TERM

WEEK 7

TOPIC: CONFLICT IN THE SOCIETY

Conflict is a disagreement resulting from actual or perceived differences or incompatibilities. Every conflict is accompanied by misunderstanding which often which usually escalates the conflict. Therefore, inasmuch as we all should do our best to avoid conflict, it should be known that as long as we live on earth, conflict is part of our existence and as such, inevitable. Do bear in mind that it is not conflict that defines you but how you handle the conflict. If we respond to every conflict negatively we will continually live a distressed, bitter and unproductive life. Do not be perturbed by the possibilities of conflicts because whenever it comes, there are ways of resolving them in churches and schools. Find some of them below-

Procedures used for resolvingg Disputes in Church and Schools

1. Develop the proper attitude- meek (Galatian 6:1); humble (James 4:10); forgiving (Ephesians 4:31-32); patient (James 1:19-20).
2. Recognise and admit your own part in the conflict. Matthew 7:1-5 says remove the log in your eyes first before removing the one in another person's eyes.
3. Go to the person, not other people and voice your concern. This is done in love, not just to get something off your chest. If you accuse the person you making matters worse. Attack the problem, not the person.
4. If the person rejects your plea for reconciliation, invite a third party who will serve as mediator. Matthew 18:16. Remember your objective is not to win an argument but to win a fellow Christian back. Let the mediator be a well respected person.

Six Steps to Solving Conflicts in School

1. Cool off, don't speak in anger.
2. Tell what's bothering you

3. Each person should restate what they heard the other person say
4. Take responsibility: in conflict we all our own part. Don't shift blame, take responsibility- admit your fault. This will make resolution possible
5. Brainstorm solution: there are many solution to a single problem. Be willing to seek compromise
6. Affirm, forgive or thank: a handshake, hug or kind words give closure to the resolution of conflicts. Forgiveness is the best form of resolving conflict.

EVALUATION

1. Define conflict.
2. What are the best ways to resolve conflict?

JSS3 C.R.K. SECOND TERM

WEEK 8

TOPIC: FURTHER SPREAD OF THE CHURCH

Philippi was a Roman colony and Paul went there for his second missionary journey. While there, he went out one day to look for a place of worship, and once he found one, he began preaching to some women who were gathered. One of them was a woman from Thyatira named Lydia. She was a worshiper of God, and so God had opened her heart to respond to Paul's message. She and her household were then baptized. After the baptism she invited Paul to come stay with them for some time.

Paul and Silas Imprisoned

On their way searching for a place of prayer they met a slave girl who had a spirit by which she predicted the future. She earned huge amount of money for her masters by fortune-telling. She followed Paul and Silas shouting "These men are servants of the Most High God who are telling you the way to be saved." She kept saying following them about for days and repeating those words until Paul became angry and rebuked the spirit in her saying "In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!"

Instantly, the spirit left the slave girl. But upon realizing that, the slave's masters were angry that their **source income** has been spoiled by Paul and Silas. So they seized Paul and Silas and dragged to the market place to face the authorities. They accused them of propagating unlawful customs and as a result, the apostles were stripped and beaten after which they were thrown to the inner cell with their feet bound in chains.

At midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing to God when suddenly there was a violent earthquake. All prison doors were thrown open and the chains holding them bound were broken. Meanwhile, the jailer standing guard to monitor them thought that they might have escaped. So he wanted to kill himself to prevent the punishment that might have come his way. But Paul prevented him. Still amazed, the jailer asked how he could be saved and Paul said to him to "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved, you and your household". They preached to him and baptized his entire household. The joy of the jailer thence knew no bound.

Paul at Athens

Paul went to Athens and was not happy the city was filled with idols, he began to discuss with Jews and Greeks about God day by day. Some Epicurean and stoic philosophers began to debate with him. They took him to the meeting of the Areopagus. They requested to hear his preaching. He preached extensively to them and the people that gathered. When he finished he left with many new converts who followed him.

EVALUATION

1. Who is Lydia?
2. Why did God point her out among the crowd of women?
3. Why were Paul and Silas imprisoned?
4. Why was Paul not happy in Ephesus?

JSS3 C.R.K. SECOND TERM

WEEK 9

TOPIC: PAUL'S IMPRISONMENT IN PHILIPPI

In Philippi a slave girl is being used by her owners as a seer or fortune teller. The young woman is possessed by a demon who quite accurately identifies Paul and Silas as “slaves of the Most High God” who have come to reveal “a way of salvation.” She follows them, crying out “These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation”. After a few days of this, Paul is fed up, rebukes the spirit, and casts it out of her in the name of Jesus. As a result, she also lost the ability to foretell the future which created no little anger on the part of her owners.

So they took Paul and Silas and brought them before the magistrates (Philippi was like a “little” Rome), charging that the missionaries were forcing them, as Roman citizens, to follow customs which were unlawful. The result was that Paul and Silas were thrown into prison after being stripped, beaten, and severely flogged (Acts 16:20–24). Around midnight there was an earthquake and all the prison doors flew open. Paul and Silas did not flee, but instead stayed and shared the gospel with the jailer who subsequently—both he and his entire family—came to the Lord (Acts 16:25–34). After Paul had made a point about his Roman citizenship⁵ to the magistrates who were wishing simply to release them, the missionaries went to the home of Lydia (Acts 16:35–40) and then departed for Apollonia and Thessalonica (Acts 17:1).

EVALUATION

1. Narrate the story of Paul's encounter with the slave girl at Philipp

JSS 3

CRISTIAN RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE

THIRD TERM

TOPICS:

1. PAUL AND CIVIL AUTHORITIES – PAUL BEFORE FELIX
2. PAUL BEFORE FESTUS
3. PAUL BEFORE AGRIPPA
4. THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH TODAY

Week 1

Topic: Paul and Civil authorities – Paul before Felix

This lesson is about Paul's trial before Felix. He is falsely accused but Paul knows he has a clear conscience before God and man. This lesson teaches students that believers should always strive to keep a clear conscience. This is only a guide for the lesson. Adapt to your individual classroom needs.

Memory Verse: Acts 24:16 "So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man."

Bible Lesson: Paul's Trial before Felix

Introduction: Keeping a clear conscience.

Imagine a stop light, this explains how our consciences are like stop lights. When we are about to do something that we shouldn't our conscience is warning us to stop. If we stop we avoid danger. If we ignore that warning over and over again our conscience is no longer sensitive to doing what is right. If you are a believer the Holy Spirit is like a traffic light. He will warn you if you are about to go somewhere or do something you shouldn't. If you obey His warning, you will have a clear conscience. If you ignore Him you will have a guilty conscience. You can have a clear conscience once again by confessing your sin. If you continue to

disobey the Holy Spirit you harden your heart to Him and can't hear Him as clearly as you can when you are walking in obedience to Him.

As we have followed the life of Paul in the Book of Acts we have seen a believer who obeys the Holy Spirit and as a result has a clear conscience before God and man.

Let's recite our memory verse: Acts 24:16 "So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man."

Let's turn in our Bibles to Acts 24.

Paul is falsely accused before Felix. Acts 24:1-9

Paul was in Caesarea for five days before his accusers arrived. The high priest Ananias with some of the elders and a lawyer named Tertullus who work on a bigger firm, he came to make their charges against Paul before Felix.

Have you ever been in a court room? In a courtroom a judge is seated to hear the case that is brought before him/her. He/she will hear statements from both sides of the issue and make a decision of what to do.

In our lesson today the person that is like the judge in the courtroom is the Governor of Caesarea, Felix. He is seated waiting to hear this case against Paul that has been brought to him so he can decide what should happen to Paul.

The high priest and the unbelieving Jews of Jerusalem have brought a lawyer named Tertullus to present their charges against Paul to Felix. The following are the charges they have brought against Paul (Read verses 5-8):

1. Paul is a trouble maker who stirs up riots among the Jews all over the world.
2. He is the ringleader of the Nazarene sect and even tried to desecrate the temple.

After Tertullus brought these charges against Paul for the unbelieving Jews, the Jews that were present indicated that they were in full agreement with the charges made.

Paul has been falsely accused. None of the charges that were presented to Felix were true. From our study from Acts who was really responsible for stirring up riots when Paul was preaching the Gospel? (Unbelieving Jews)

- Jesus was falsely accused by unbelieving Jews. Believers can expect that people may falsely accuse them (lie about them). 1 Peter 2:12 tells us to “live such good lives among the pagans that though they may accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day He visits us.”

Paul makes his defense before Felix. Acts 24:10-22

After hearing the unbelieving Jews' side of the issue, Felix nods to Paul to present his side. Paul doesn't have a lawyer speak for him. The Holy Spirit enables Paul to speak in his own defense.

Paul states that the facts that he is presenting can be proved to be true (Read verses 10-16).

Paul states:

1. Twelve days ago he went to Jerusalem to worship.
2. He was not found arguing with anyone at the temple or stirring up trouble in the synagogues or in the city.

Paul admits:

1. He worships the God of his fathers.
2. He is a follower of the Way (Christians) (which the unbelieving Jews call a sect).
3. He believes all that is written in the Law and the prophets.
4. He believes in the same hope as these Jews that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.

As a result of Paul's beliefs he makes every effort to always keep his conscience clear before God and man.

What does it mean to have a clear conscience? How do you feel when you have a guilty conscience? (Weighed down, sick to your stomach, etc.)

How can a believer keep a clear conscience before God and man?

- Obey God and confess sins when we disobey. (1 John 1:9) “Draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.” (Hebrews 10:22)
- Stay in God’s Word so your life will be in alignment with God’s Ways. (Ephesians 5:26, Psalm 119:9,11,105)

Paul makes his defense against the unbelieving Jews’ accusations (Verses 17–21):

1. He went to Jerusalem after being away for several years to bring gifts to the poor and to make an offering.
2. He was ceremonially clean when he was found in the temple courts.
3. He was not with a crowd of people when he went to the temple.
4. He was not involved in a disturbance. The Jews from Asia should be present to make a case if they have something against him.
5. He already stood before the Sanhedrin. Those that were present should make their case what crime he committed. He is on trial because he shouted ‘It is concerning the resurrection of the dead’ that he is on trial before Felix.

Paul boldly proclaims God’s Word to Felix and Drusilla. Acts 24:23–27

Felix was very familiar with the Way (Christianity–belief in Jesus–that He died, was buried and rose again the third day) that Paul spoke about. He

ended the proceedings and said he would decide the case when Lysias the commander arrived. He ordered a centurion to guard Paul and allowed him to have some freedom and allowed his friends to take care of him.

A few days after the trial, Felix and his wife Drusilla brought Paul before them to hear him speak. Paul spoke about faith in Jesus Christ. Paul also spoke to them about righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come. When Felix heard Paul's message it frightened him. He sent Paul away. Let's read what he says to Paul in verse 25.

Felix was hoping that Paul would pay him to release him. Paul would not have a clear conscience if he bribed Governor Felix to be set free. The power of the Holy Spirit living inside him enabled him to be obedient to be a prisoner. Paul had the Lord Jesus' comfort and promise that he would testify about Him in Rome. Paul would wait and do things God's way even if that meant he had to sit in prison while he waited.

Let's read verse 27. Paul was left in prison for two years. Felix had an opportunity to do what was right and release Paul because he had not committed a crime but he wanted to grant a favor to the Jews so he kept Paul in prison.

As we close how is your conscience today? Can you say with Paul "I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man?"

Can you relate more to Felix? Does the truth about Jesus make you afraid and you don't want to hear it?

How do you respond when you hear the news that Jesus died on the cross for your sins, was buried and rose again the third day so you can be made right with God? If Jesus were to come today would you live forever in heaven with Him because you believe by faith that He has paid the price for your sins, or would you be separated from God forever in a place called hell because you chose not to accept the gift of eternal life? You don't have to respond like Felix did, today you can believe in the Lord Jesus and be saved from your sins.

(Close in prayer)

Review Questions:

1. What crime did the unbelieving Jews accuse Paul of? (Being a troublemaker, stirring up riots, desecrating the temple)
2. Who did Paul say he worshiped? (The God of our fathers)
3. What does Paul say the real reason is that he is being accused? (For his belief in the resurrection of the dead)
4. What did Paul speak to Felix and Drusilla about? (Faith in Jesus Christ, righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come)
5. How did Felix respond? (He was afraid and sent Paul away until it was a more convenient time)
6. How many years was Paul in prison? (2)
7. Why did Felix leave Paul in prison? (As a favor to the Jews)

WEEK 2

TOPIC: PAUL BEFORE FESTUS

Introduction

Paul had been falsely accused of starting riots and defiling the temple. Although innocent of these accusations Paul was kept in prison in Caesarea where he appeared before a succession of governors and leaders including Felix, Festus and even the Jewish King Agrippa. At each court appearance Paul spoke freely about his Christian faith. His accusers could never prove him guilty and Paul eventually used his right as a Roman citizen to ask to be sent to Rome to appear before Caesar's court.

Acts 25:1-6 – The trial of Paul before Festus.

Before Festus meets with Paul, he makes a trip to Jerusalem, where the chief priest and other leading men bring charges against Paul. They want Paul brought to Jerusalem. Festus refuses this request, but does allow certain of the leaders to accompany him back to Caesarea for a hearing. Paul is ordered to be brought forth. This time charges are added to charges.

Vs7: "After Paul arrived, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood around him, bringing many and serious charges against him which they could not prove."

While being unable to prove corruption against Paul, they only showed their own hearts. These were the kind that Paul warned about in his letter to the Philippians; *“Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the false circumcision.”*

Vss8-9: Synopsis – Paul begins his defense, but Festus wishes to placate the Jews, so he says to Paul, *“Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem and stand trial before me on these charges?”* And here is where we see Paul play his ultimate card.

Vs10-11: *“But Paul said, ‘I am standing before Caesar’s tribunal, where I ought to be tried. I have done no wrong to the Jews, as you also very well know. If, then, I am a wrongdoer and have committed anything worthy of death, I do not refuse to die; but if none of those things is true of which these men accuse me, no one can hand me over to them. I appeal to Caesar.’”*

When Paul said, *“No one can hand me over to them. I appeal to Caesar,”* there was no more argument to be had. His Jewish accusers would have not more say in the matter.

Note: The law of appeal to Caesar was very sacred to the Romans. Under Julian law any magistrate, or any other with Roman authority, who put to death, or tortured, a Roman citizen who had made an appeal to Caesar, could themselves be condemned. It could even result in a death sentence. (This appeal was generally used as a final need. Most citizens would not want to appear before the emperor of Rome. But Paul must go to Rome.)

Paul's appeal took Festus completely by surprise, even though it got him out of a rather sticky situation. The whole matter had been taken out of his hands, and he did not have to make any tough decisions. He consulted with his council of advisors and then announced, *"You have appealed to the emperor; to the emperor you will go."*

Vs12: *"Then when Festus had conferred with his council, he answered, 'You have appealed to Caesar, to Caesar you shall go.'"*

The council agreed that Paul should be sent to Rome. But this also relieved Festus of any obligation to the Jews, which he was really needed in beginning his new administration.

EVALUATION

1. What was the accusations levelled against Paul by the Jews?
2. What was Paul's defence?
3. Why was Festus unable to pass judgement on Paul?

WEEK 3

TOPIC: PAUL BEFORE AGRIPPA

After Paul defended himself with intelligent speech and an appeal to Caesar, Festus told him “*You appealed to Caesar, to Caesar you will go*”. Therefore, because of Paul’s appeal, Governor Festus sent him to be tried in Rome instead of Jerusalem.

But before Paul was taken to Rome, the King of the Jews, King Agrippa, and his wife, Bernice, came to Caesarea Maritima to pay their respects to the new governor. King Agrippa was the Jewish leader approved by Rome so, again, Festus needed to impress him. Festus told them all about the prisoner (Paul) and how the former governor, Felix, had left him with this dilemma. Agrippa found this very interesting and wanted to meet Paul. Felix planned a large and ostentatious gathering with Agrippa, high-ranking officials and the important men of the city. During the gathering Paul was brought before the group. Paul did not waste this opportunity to share his testimony with all of these important people. He told about his formal education, strict adherence to Jewish law and his fanatical campaign against Christians before he eventually encountered Jesus. He described, in detail, what Jesus had told him to do. Agrippa and the others were impressed with what Paul had to say.

“Then Agrippa said to Paul, ,Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?”

Paul replied, *‘Short time or long—I pray to God that not only you but all who are listening to me today may become what I am, except for these chains.’*” Acts 26:28–29, NIV

Agrippa told Festus that Paul could have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar. He agreed that Festus now had no choice but to send Paul to Rome.

EVALUATION

1. Who was King Agrippa?
2. How did Paul defend himself before Agrippa?
3. What was Agrippa’s response to Paul?

WEEK 4

TOPIC: THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH TODAY

The Mission of the Church

Below are the missions of the church:

1. To proclaim the gospel throughout the world and make disciple of all nations. Before ascension Jesus commissioned His disciples saying: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you even to the end of time."
2. To serve as community of worship and fellowship. Jesus said where two or three are gathered in His name there He is. Matthew 18:20.
3. To mature believers and prepare them to perform works of ministry. Read Ephesians 4:11-12.
4. To train believers with different gifts to work for the ministry of Jesus Christ.
5. To strengthen the body of believers.
6. To encourage believers.

EVALUATION

1. Mention at least five functions of the church.