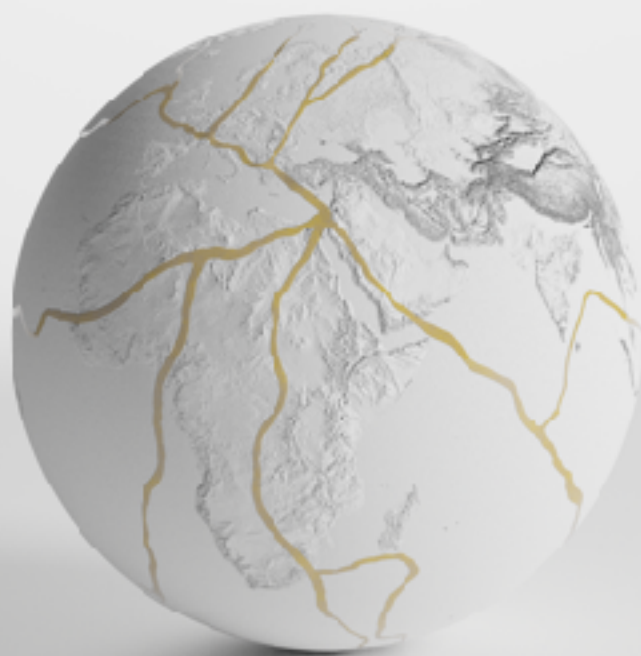


# ACTS



REVIVAL & RECONCILIATION

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## INTRODUCTION

The book of Acts is about the acts of Jesus and the Holy Spirit through the early Church. As we move into the second section of the book of Acts, we move from Jerusalem and begin to see how the Church spread the gospel to the surrounding area, nation and people groups.

During our study of this portion of the book of Acts we'll be investigating the reconciling work of the Holy Spirit. This reconciliation is defined as a restoration of our relationships with God and with one another. To be become agents of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5) is to join the Holy Spirit's work in restoring others to God (evangelism, church planting, missions, etc.) and restoring ourselves and others to one another (counseling, community, racial reconciliation, etc.)

As the Spirit awakens to us the message of the Cross and Jesus' resurrection and faith in those two things, we are reconciled to God. But the Spirit doesn't stop there, he guides us into reconciliation to others and empowers us to become agents of reconciliation in our World. This process of reconciliation and it's reach will stand in the spotlight for the next nine weeks as we continue our study in the book of Acts.

As we continue in the the book of Acts, we will no doubt continue being encouraged, exhorted, corrected, rebuked, comforted, and awakened as we hear the story of God reconciling all things to himself in Jesus Christ.

HARVEY TURNER

*Reno Church Lead Pastor of Preaching & Vision*

# RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

## LISTEN

### **SERMON DROPBOX FOLDER** [bit.ly/ActsDropbox](https://bit.ly/ActsDropbox)

Click the link above for access to sermons and teachings on the book of Acts.

*Dropbox account not required.*

## WATCH

### **THE BIBLE PROJECT: ACTS** [bit.ly/BibleProjectActs](https://bit.ly/BibleProjectActs)

The Book of Acts explained through illustrated videos from the Bible Project.

## READ

### **FRIEND OF SINNERS** [bit.ly/FriendofSinnersBook](https://bit.ly/FriendofSinnersBook)

In "Friend of Sinners," Pastor Harvey unpacks the Why, What, and How of evangelism. The book begins with a close look at Christ's conversations with people, and Harvey then uses Christ's example as the foundation for the rest of the book. This practical, biblical approach to evangelism helps believers break down the barriers preventing them from telling people about Jesus so that they feel empowered to share the gospel. Also available at the Connect Desk.

### **THE GOSPEL & RACIAL RECONCILIATION** [bit.ly/MooreReconciliation](https://bit.ly/MooreReconciliation)

In the kingdom of God, it is not us against them. The problem of racism stretches back as far as humanity's origin in the book of Genesis. Brother pitted against brother, tribe against tribe—people have warred against one another, fueled by contempt for racial differences. Yet the gospel is a message of reconciliation. The kingdom of God is us reconciled to one another.

## READ - LS KIDS

### **THE PRIEST WITH DIRTY CLOTHES** [bit.ly/SproulPriest](https://bit.ly/SproulPriest)

In this edition of his classic story, *The Priest with Dirty Clothes*, Dr. R.C. Sproul continues his project of illustrating theological concepts for children. In this book, he teaches the concept of imputation, which lies at the heart of the important biblical doctrine of justification. Using the story of Joshua the high priest (Zechariah 3:15) as his jumping-off point, Dr. Sproul weaves a classic tale about a young priest who is invited to preach his first sermon before the king and his court. But on his way to the palace, he falls from his horse, getting his clothes hopelessly muddy. Jonathan finds that he needs powerful help if he is to stand before the king. This edition of *The Priest with Dirty Clothes* includes all-new illustrations by Justin Gerard and a new "For the Parents" section to help them bring out the truths of the book for their children.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## *STARTING POINT* - **Sunday May 7 & June 4**

New to Living Stones or know someone who is? The first Sunday of each month, after our gatherings we host Starting Point in the Gallery. This short meeting is an opportunity to meet the pastors and hear our mission. Questions? Email [Carli@LSChurches.com](mailto:Carli@LSChurches.com)

## BAPTISM: *CLASSES* - **April 23 & May 14** *SUNDAYS* - **April 30 & May 21**

Baptism is a command of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ, given to Christians, as a sign and public proclamation of faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ. The class is a requirement before being baptized, so anyone interested in being baptized is invited to meet with our pastors and hear more about what baptism signifies and your next steps as a Christian. To sign up for the baptism class, visit the Connect Desk or email [Carli@LSChurches.com](mailto:Carli@LSChurches.com).

## *MEMBERSHIP CLASS* - **April 30 (1:30-4:30p)**

If you have been coming to Living Stones for a while, and you would consider this church your home, this is your opportunity to commit and become a member here. We would like to provide you with a meal and childcare, but we need you to RSVP so we know that you are coming. This is our last Membership Class until fall, don't miss this next step at Living Stones! If you would like to register, visit to the connect desk or email [Griffin@LSChurches.com](mailto:Griffin@LSChurches.com)

## SAVE THE DATE - *SUMMER BBQ* - **July 1**

On Saturday, July 1st, we will be hosting a Summer BBQ at the California building in Idlewild Park. The pastors are going to be grilling up some burgers and hot dogs, and it should be fun for the entire family. Summer is coming quickly, and we want you to get this on your calendar before you make any plans for Saturday.

# READING PLANS & DEVOTIONALS

The 2017 Bible Reading plans are about experiencing the Scriptures through the daily commitment to opening your heart and mind to God. This is a discipline essential to all disciples of Jesus.

## **WHOLE BIBLE - AS IT HAPPENED** [bit.ly/AsItHappenedPlan](http://bit.ly/AsItHappenedPlan)

For 2017, the pastors invite you to join them as they read through the whole Bible using the “As It Happened” reading plan, this chronological reading plan will guide us through the Bible day by day reading the story of the Bible as it historically came together. You can find this plan within the YouVersion Bible App (search: As it Happened) or through the link above.

## **NEW TESTAMENT - OUTREACH** [bit.ly/OutreachPlan](http://bit.ly/OutreachPlan)

If the prospect of reading through the whole Bible is bit daunting but you’re still looking for a way to daily immerse yourself in the Bible, please subscribe to the “Outreach” reading plan. This reading plan will guide you through the New Testament day by day reading the story of Jesus and the Early Church. You can find this plan within the YouVersion Bible App (search: Outreach New Testament) or through the link above.

## **DEVOTIONAL - NEW MORNING MERCIES** [bit.ly/NewMorningMercies](http://bit.ly/NewMorningMercies)

Mornings can be tough. Sometimes, a hearty breakfast and strong cup of coffee just aren’t enough. Offering more than a rush of caffeine, best-selling author and pastor Paul David Tripp wants to energize you with the most potent encouragement imaginable: the gospel.

Forget “behavior modification” or feel-good aphorisms, Tripp knows that our greatest need is an encounter with the living God. Then we’ll be prepared to trust in God’s goodness, rely on his grace, and live for his glory each and every day.

## **DEVOTIONAL - VALLEY OF VISION** [bit.ly/ValleyVision](http://bit.ly/ValleyVision)

A selection of prayers and meditations in the Puritan tradition, widely valued since its publication in 1975.

# COMMUNITY GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Dear Community Group Leaders,

The Discipleship Guide for ACTS: REVIVAL AND RECONCILIATION will continue the the rhythm we set in the previous Discipleship Guide. This guide will include the call to worship, connect to Sunday, role holders, Scripture study, application, and prayer segments. Thank you for your constructive feedback and willingness to try this new style of Community Group Liturgy each week. This year, as we write each Discipleship Guide for a new sermon series, we will strive to improve and bolster the content for each guide.

Leaders, please continue to develop and work with the role holders in your group. The new format will still require you to coordinate some extra planning with your group members. The Discipleship Guide has a section for role holders to lead a segment of time each week. Also, certain weeks may have a time of sharing for another member who is not a role holder to share a prayer or testimony.

Thank you again for your leadership and commitment to serve in your Community Groups. Please continue to pray for revival and reconciliation.

JASON DIAZ

Reno Church Discipleship Pastor

## WEEK 1

# RADICAL RECONCILIATION

### Acts 8:1-3; 9:1-31

#### CALL TO WORSHIP (5 minutes)

DISCUSS - What is the reason of why we meet each week? God created us to worship Him and live in community to walk with God and with one another. Community Groups are the best way for us to live out walking with one another and with God within a church context. Share why you feel Community Group is an important part of your life.

#### CONNECT TO SUNDAY (5 minutes)

Why do you value going to Sunday worship gatherings? What is the need and purpose? What is the value for our own lives and working towards discipleship, in consistent weekly attendance? What is the difference between attending Sunday gatherings 25 weeks out of the year as opposed to 52 weeks?

#### ROLE HOLDER (10 minutes)

Rotate the three role holders into this slot for the following eight weeks of Community Group gatherings. Leading the Community Group should not fall on the leader(s) to carry the group and discussion. The role holders segment is an opportunity to grow and develop leaders within your group.

Leader, take the next few minutes to discuss the purpose of role holders to your group. You may click [THIS WEBSITE LINK](#) to read about and share the roles and responsibilities of the role holders. Use the chart below to schedule each week.

WEEK	ROLE HOLDERS	TOOL #:	NAME:
2	Worship	#4: Postitive / Negative Prayer	
3	Community & Connect to Sunday	#5: Burdens v. Loads	Role Holder: Sharing:
4	Mission	#4: Cultural Activity	
5	Worship	#3: Prayer Cards & Communion (see prayer section)	
6	Community & Testimony (see wk6 call to worship)	#6: Dinner & Discussion	Role Holder: Testimony:
7	Mission	#6: Sunday Invite Challenge	
8	Worship	#6: Jesus' Prayer Life	
9	Community	#4: Single Topic Testimonies	

## **SCRIPTURE STUDY** (20 minutes)

### **Read Acts 8:1-3; 9:1-13**

Close your eyes while reading the passage aloud two to three times. Designate someone new to read each time. Imagine and visualize yourself as one of the characters in the text. As you visualize what is going on in the passage, what is jumping out to you?

\*The questions below are examples and tools to help you dive into the text. Your group is not required to follow the set of questions.

- Obvious Observations: i.e. Saul approved of executing Stephen (8:1). Saul threatened disciples of Christ (9:1).
- What does this text tell us about God (Father, Son, Spirit)? Jesus speaks and spoke to Saul (9:4). He is merciful toward Saul (9:5)
- What does this text tell us about man? The topic of Jesus makes some men angry (9:1).

## **APPLICATION** (15 minutes)

- Do you know anyone like Paul before he was converted? If so, do you believe that God has the power to save that person in your life?
- Do you have a personal story of radical conversation?

## **PRAYER** (10-15 minutes)

Prayer Walk - If the weather is nice and time of day appropriate, go on a prayer walk in smaller groups of 3 to 4 people. If not, divide into smaller groups based on the neighborhoods you live in and pray together for those areas.

\*Leader, you are invited to choose a few verses from this week's Bible text to meditate over, when you start group prayer. The verses should be used in prayer to remind us of God's character AND/OR move us towards a prayer of thanksgiving.



## WEEK 2

# RECONCILING THE NATIONS

## Acts 8:4-40

### **CALL TO WORSHIP** (5 minutes)

Read and discuss - Hebrews 10:24-25 says “And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”

What does this verse tell you about the importance of living in intentional community with one another?

### **CONNECT TO SUNDAY** (5 minutes)

Every Sunday, we take communion. When Jesus served his last supper to the disciples, which is the basis for communion, he said “do this in remembrance of me.” What are we remembering about Jesus when we take communion? Why might this be important for a Christian to do on a regular basis? When else in your week do you take time to remember Jesus? How do you remember him?

### **ROLE HOLDER** (10 minutes)

WORSHIP TOOL #4: POSITIVE/NEGATIVE PRAYER

### **SCRIPTURE STUDY** (20 minutes)

#### **Read Acts 2: 8:4-40**

Break up into teams of three or four people. Make three lists: one list of all the details and events you find happening in the passage, another list of questions you have about the text, and a final list with new lessons you have learned about the text as God’s people. Reconvene with the entire group and share your questions and what you have learned. Save this list for to compare your notes for the next time your group does this activity.

\*Below are examples & tools to help you dive into the text. Your group is not required to follow the questions.

- Obvious Observations: Even though there was persecution, the Christians didn’t stop preaching the word (8:4)
- What does this text tell us about God (Father, Son, Spirit)? He saves the unlikely (8:13)
- What does this text tell us about man? Men would pay for the gifts of God (8:18).

**APPLICATION** (15 minutes)

- Do you have a global view on the church?
- How can we bring a global vision to our Community Groups?
- How can the Ethiopian's conversion encourage us to engage with people with different backgrounds and ethnicities?
- If someone from a different ethnicity were to come to our group, would be welcoming an genuinely accepting?

**PRAYER** (10-15 minutes)

Pray and acknowledge and worship God and ask for his help.

Specifically, pray in regards to what was discussed tonight. Spend a few minutes thanking God for how he has shown who he is in what we discussed tonight. We'll then also spend a few minutes asking for the Holy Spirit to empower us to live differently this week.

(Please pray for yourself aloud, and when others are praying, pray for them also silently. Begins and closes prayer.)

\*Leader, you are invited to choose a few verses from this week's Bible text to meditate over when you start group prayer. The verses should be used in prayer to remind us of God's character AND/OR move us towards a prayer of thanksgiving.

## WEEK 3

# RACIAL RECONCILIATION

## **Acts 9:32-10:48**

### **CALL TO WORSHIP** (5 minutes)

Throughout the study of the book of Acts, how have you seen God work in your Community Group to bring personal and corporate revival to Living Stones and Northern Nevada? How else is God calling your group to grow to bring revival and reconciliation to the church?

### **CONNECT TO SUNDAY** (5 minutes)

Ask a consistent group member who is not a role holder or co-leader to prepare a time of sharing of what impacted them the most from the previous worship gathering.

(Leader, please ask your group member to share and plan two weeks in advance)

### **ROLE HOLDER** (10 minutes)

COMMUNITY TOOL #5: BURDENS VS. LOADS

### **SCRIPTURE STUDY** (20 minutes)

#### **Read Acts 9:32-10:48**

Read over the text as a group, is there something in this chapter that surprised you? If so, how were you surprised? Are there any verses in this chapter that confuse you or that seem to contradict other parts of the Bible? Why do you think God included this part of the text in the Bible?

\*Below are examples & tools to help you dive into the text. Your group is not required to follow the questions.

- Obvious Observations: Peter was frequently traveling to visit the saints (9:32)
- What does this text tell us about God (Father, Son, Spirit)? Jesus heals (9:34)
- What does this text tell us about man? Humans are mortal (9:37).

**APPLICATION** (15 minutes)

- Have any of us experienced racial tension?
- The primary way that reconciliation happens is through relationship, what does it look like for you to pursue relationship with someone who is different than you?
- How does the current political climate keep us from pursuing this clear implication of the gospel?

**PRAYER** (10-15 minutes)

Public Prayer - The leader will announce five prayer topics. The group will all pray aloud in unison for a couple minutes on each prayer topic: 1. Pray for our church. 2. Pray for the City of Reno. 3. Pray and repent for any sin we need to address before God. 4. Pray for God to bring healing to our local community and racial reconciliation. 5. Pray thanksgiving for what God is doing in our lives and His church.

\*Leader, you are invited to choose a few verses from this week's Bible text to meditate over when you start group prayer. The verses should be used in prayer to remind us of God's character AND/OR move us towards a prayer of thanksgiving.

## WEEK 4

# GLOBAL RECONCILIATION

## Acts 11

### **CALL TO WORSHIP** (5 minutes)

Recall the experience Pastor Harvey shared on stage from his time in Turkey. The church in Turkey requires police officers to guard the doors during their worship gatherings. The Antalya Protestant Church is going against the cultural and social norms to bring the gospel to the people of Turkey. How are we as a Community Group called to be culturally different in our local community?

### **CONNECT TO SUNDAY** (5 minutes)

Every Sunday, we listen to God's word being preached. Why do you think we hear a sermon every week? When else during our week do we listen with open ears to hear God speak through his Word?

### **ROLE HOLDER** (10 minutes)

MISSION TOOL #4: CULTURAL ACTIVITY

### **SCRIPTURE STUDY** (20 minutes)

#### **Read Acts 11**

Read the passage two to three times with different readers for different sections. What stuck out to you the different times we read the passage?

\*Below are examples & tools to help you dive into the text. Your group is not required to follow the questions.

- Obvious Observations: Christians were scattered because of the persecution over Stephen (11:19).
- What does this text tell us about God (Father, Son, Spirit)? God speaks (11:7, 9, 16). God makes things clean (11:9) and gives the Holy Spirit (11:16).
- What does this text tell us about man? Men are initially opposed to change (11:2-3).

### **APPLICATION** (15 minutes)

- In what ways has the local church changed and challenged you?
- How do you fit into the change and challenge of both the local and global church?
- What impact does giving and serving to your local church make towards God's global church?

### **PRAYER** (10-15 minutes)

A.C.T.S. Prayer - Pray that God would use our group to be his witnesses by the power of the Holy Spirit. Use the **A.C.T.S.** format to pray through the application (detailed in *Community Group Liturgy Document*)

## WEEK 5

# RESCUE AND RECONCILIATION

## Acts 12

### **CALL TO WORSHIP** (5 minutes)

Discussion - What are the “3 Wins” of Community Groups? How are we doing as a group in each of these areas, since the last time we discussed the “3 wins”? Why is pursuing these "3 wins" as a group important? How can we continue to grow?

(The 3 wins are: Outsiders to Insiders, Christians in Maturity, Leaders Developed)

### **CONNECT TO SUNDAY** (5 minutes)

Each Sunday, a leader calls us to repentance through a time of confession. Afterwards, that leader always prays and announces what we call ‘the assurance.’ The Assurance is to assure us that we are forgiven and loved. Why might that be an important thing to hear weekly? Are there other times and places in our lives that we hear someone reassure us of God’s love and forgiveness for us?

### **ROLE HOLDER** (10 minutes)

WORSHIP TOOL #3: [PRAYER CARDS](#)

### **SCRIPTURE STUDY** (20 minutes)

#### **Read Acts 12**

Read the passage together as a group. Then, take five minutes individually to write down and retell what you just read in your own words. Share what you have written down with your group.

\*Below are examples & tools to help you dive into the text. Your group is not required to follow the questions.

- Obvious Observations: King Herod was aware of and bothered by the Christians (12:1-2).
- What does this text tell us about God (Father, Son, Spirit)? Strikes people down who do not give him glory (12:23)
- What does this text tell us about man? Men can be power hungry (12:1-2, 18-19).

**APPLICATION** (15 minutes)

- Do you assume that suffering means that God is punishing you?
- Was God punishing James and Peter in this passage?
- How does James' and Peter's story of suffering encourage you in your walk with God?

**PRAYER** (10-15 minutes)

Communion - Ask the Worship Role Holder to prepare and guide the group through Communion together. Thank God that through the death of the Author of Life, we have moved from death to life.

\*Leader, you are invited to choose a few verses from this week's Bible text to meditate over when you start group prayer. The verses should be used in prayer to remind us of God's character AND/OR move us towards a prayer of thanksgiving.

## WEEK 6

# RECONCILIATION IS THE MISSION

## Acts 13

### **CALL TO WORSHIP** (5 minutes)

Share some evidences of grace this past week in your personal life, Community Group, or church ministry you serve. Why does this evidence of grace point you back towards God and His Character?

### **CONNECT TO SUNDAY** (5 minutes)

If God was trying to get your attention about something during the Sunday service this week or last, what was it?

### **ROLE HOLDER** (10 minutes)

COMMUNITY TOOL #4: SINGLE-TOPIC TESTIMONIES

### **SCRIPTURE STUDY** (20 minutes)

#### **Read Acts 13**

Do a recap of the past five weeks of Scripture. How does the text from previous weeks connect to this week's discussion? What would you say is the main theme so far?

\*Below are examples & tools to help you dive into the text. Your group is not required to follow the questions.

- Obvious Observations: There were different gifts in the church (13:1).
- What does this text tell us about God (Father, Son, Spirit)? God sends his people (13:2-4).
- What does this text tell us about man? Many oppose Gods people (13:8)

### **APPLICATION** (15 minutes)

- Paul waited twelve years to do what Jesus told him to do in planting churches. He also needed to the local church to affirm him to leave an go plant churches. Why do we take time and affirmation from our local church to make major life decisions?
- Paul and Barnabas do some evangelism in this chapter. How can we learn from them and apply their evangelism methods to our non-Christian friends and family?

### **PRAYER** (10-15 minutes)

Small Group Prayer - Pray in smaller groups of 3-4 people. Spend the next 5 minutes sharing with one another what has been fascinating to us about God recently, in knowing and learning about him. Then, spend the next 10 minutes in prayer, thanking God for what we are learning about who he is, and then praying for boldness to continue to speak God's Word.



## WEEK 7

# RECONCILIATION BY PLANTING

## Acts 14

### **CALL TO WORSHIP** (5 minutes)

Scripture - One community group member can prepare a few minutes of sharing of verses they have studied that points us towards actively living in community with one another.

(Leader, please designate someone in your group at least two weeks in advance to share.)

### **CONNECT TO SUNDAY** (5 minutes)

Does your Sunday attendance reflect how you value the privilege of having the ability to attend each week? What are your barriers?

### **ROLE HOLDER** (10 minutes)

MISSION TOOL #6: [SUNDAY INVITE CHALLENGE](#)

### **SCRIPTURE STUDY** (20 minutes)

#### **Read Acts 14**

Close your eyes while reading the passage aloud two to three times. Designate someone new to read each time. Imagine and visualize yourself as one of the characters in the text. As you visualize what is going on in the passage, what is jumping out to you?

\*The questions below are examples and tools to help you dive into the text. Your group is not required to follow the set of questions.

- Obvious Observations: Paul is a beast for the gospel. Gets stoned, dragged out of the city, then gets up and goes back to preach the gospel (14:19-20)
- What does this text tell us about God (Father, Son, Spirit)? God uses persecution to advance his mission (14:22).
- What does this text tell us about man? Men long for a god to come (14:11).
- What should believers learn from this text? What should non-believers learn?

**APPLICATION** (15 minutes)

- In recent Sunday gatherings, our pastors have shared how our local church is supporting global church plants in Turkey, Italy, and Brussels. Where do you see similarities in our church's mission to plant churches with the text in Acts?
- Is God calling you to be a part of planting a church? Take time to discuss what this means.
- How does your personal walk with God connect to the world wide movement of God in church planting?

**PRAYER** (10-15 minutes)

Silent Prayers-Prayer brings your presence into God's presence. Have the leader choose a segment of tonight's scripture reading to read aloud to the group. Meditate in silence to hear what God is telling you. Spend time in silent prayer over the scripture reading.

\*Leader, you are invited to choose a few verses from this week's Bible text to meditate over when you start group prayer. The verses should be used in prayer to remind us of God's character AND/OR move us towards a prayer of thanksgiving.

## WEEK 8

# RECONCILIATION BY GRACE

## Acts 15: 1-35

### **CALL TO WORSHIP** (5 minutes)

Read and pray - Designate someone in your group to read the paragraph below. Take a couple minutes to open in prayer asking God to set aside our personal agendas and center our minds and our hearts towards worshipping him.

"When God is recognized as the central reality on Sunday morning (or Community Group gathering), and when God, not the human being, is seen to be the central actor, to whom all must respond, then the elements of worship can be seen in a different and truer light. In the call to worship we realize that the meeting is no merely human meeting, planned and controlled by our human agendas, but a special meeting called by God, on his divine authority, for his purpose of meeting with his people. In the call to worship God himself is speaking through the human worship leader. We are called to lay aside our personal agendas, to realize where we are and what we are to be doing, to focus our attention on the unseen God, and to yield to him our full awareness and attention." **John Jefferson Davis, *Worship and the Reality of God*, 102-103.**

### **CONNECT TO SUNDAY** (5 minutes)

Each Sunday we sing worship songs together as a church. God's people have been singing songs of praise to him for thousands of years.

Read Psalm 108 together. How does this Psalm change your perspective on singing collectively as a church on Sundays?

### **ROLE HOLDER** (10 minutes)

WORSHIP TOOL #6: [JESUS' PRAYER LIFE](#)

### **SCRIPTURE STUDY** (20 minutes)

#### **Read Act 15:1-35**

Break up into teams of three or four people. Make a list of all the details and events you find happening in the passage. Then, make another list of questions about the text you may have for the entire group. Finally, make a third list of new lessons you have learned in the text, as God's people. Reconvene with the entire group and share your questions and what you have learned. If your group kept the list from week two's study, compare your notes and discussed what you God has been teaching you throughout the Acts series.

\*On the next page are examples & tools to help you dive into the text. Your group is not required to follow the questions.

- Obvious Observations: The entire church was behind multiplication and sending these men (15:22).
- What does this text tell us about God (Father, Son, Spirit)? The Holy Spirit chooses to send these men (15:28)
- What does this text tell us about man? Men want to have something to do with their acceptance and salvation (15:1,5)

**APPLICATION** (15 minutes)

Our intrinsic desire deeply rooted inside of all of us is to earn our favor with God. It's a constant struggle for us to be reminded that as Christians, we are accepted and saved by God by grace alone.

- What are ways that we are trying to earn our acceptance?
- How can we remind each other that God has accepted all of us through grace alone?

**PRAYER** (10-15 minutes)

A.C.T.S. Prayer - Pray for that God would use our group to be his witnesses by the Power of the Holy Spirit. Use the **A.C.T.S.** format to pray through the application (detailed in the *Community Group Liturgy Document*)

\*Leader, you are invited to choose a few verses from this week's Bible text to meditate over when you start group prayer. The verses should be used in prayer to remind us of God's character AND/OR move us towards a prayer of thanksgiving.

## WEEK 9

# RECONCILIATION BY CONVERSION

## **Acts 15: 36-16:40**

### **CALL TO WORSHIP** (5 minutes)

For the next few minutes, have a few people in your group share how meeting weekly in Community Groups makes an impact in their daily walk with God. Do you realize a difference on the weeks that you're not together with your group?

### **CONNECT TO SUNDAY** (5 minutes)

Discuss the "Call to Worship and Benediction" element from the Sunday gathering. How did these worship elements bless you or make an impact this week?

### **ROLE HOLDER** (10 minutes)

COMMUNITY TOOL #6: [DINNER & DISCUSSION](#)

### **SCRIPTURE STUDY** (20 minutes)

#### **Read Act 15:36-16:40**

Read the passage together as a group. Then, take five minutes individually to write down and retell what you just read in your own words. Share what you have written down with your group.

\*Below are examples & tools to help you dive into the text. Your group is not required to follow the questions.

- Obvious Observations: Paul and Barnabas care about those in the other churches (15:36).
- What does this text tell us about God (Father, Son, Spirit)? God uses an earthquake to save the jailer (16:26-30).
- What does this text tell us about man? Men disagree and have conflict (15:39).

**APPLICATION** (15 minutes)

- How does the conversion of Lydia and the Jailer intersect with your own personal conversion?
- How are they similar and how are they different?
- Who in your life are you praying for to see converted and reconciled to Jesus Christ?

**PRAYER** (10-15 minutes)

Public Prayer - The leader will announce five prayer topics. The group will all pray aloud in unison for a couple minutes on each prayer topic: 1. Pray for our Church. 2. Pray for the City of Reno. 3. Pray and repent for any sin we need to address before God. 4. Pray for radical conversation for non believers. 5. Pray thanksgiving for what God is doing in our lives and His church.

\*Leader, you are invited to choose a few verses from this week's Bible text to meditate over when you start group prayer. The verses should be used in prayer to remind us of God's character AND/OR move us towards a prayer of thanksgiving.

# LS KIDS SUMMARY & DISCUSSION

## WEEK 1

Saul is transformed into Paul.

**MEMORY VERSE:** But the Lord said to him, “Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel.”

- Acts 9:15

### **LESSON SUMMARY:**

This week in LS Kids we will be meeting Paul in the book of acts for the first time. In the beginning of our story kids will learn that Paul was actually called Saul and he hated Christians. In fact, Saul hated Christians so much he imprisoned and killed them. However, by the end of our story we will see that Jesus transforms Saul into Paul. Paul is now a follower of Jesus who no longer hates Christians but wants everyone to know Jesus is the Son of God.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. What does it mean for something to be transformed?
2. Before becoming a Christian Saul imprisoned and even killed Christians. If Jesus saved Saul from his bad things do you think there is anyone who Jesus cannot save?
3. Take some time to think about people who don't like Jesus and don't like Christians. Can Jesus save those people? What can we do for people who don't love Jesus?

### **PRAYER:**

Father, thank you for sending your son to save us.

Jesus, please save more and more people around us.

Holy Spirit, help us to pray for people who do not love you.

## WEEK 2

# Jesus reconciles people from all nations!

**MEMORY VERSE:** My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

- **John 10:27**

### **LESSON SUMMARY:**

This week in LS kids we will be hearing the story of Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch. In this story Philip obeys the voice of the Spirit and tells the Ethiopian Eunuch about the Good news of Jesus. Because Philip obeyed Jesus saved the Ethiopian Eunuch. We too can obey and follow the Spirit!

In this story we also see that Jesus does not only save the people of Israel. Instead Jesus desires to save people from all nations!

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. In our story Philip did exactly as the Spirit told him to do. What do you think would have happened if Philip had decided to obey the Spirit 20 minutes later instead of when the Spirit spoke to him?
2. Sometimes it can be scary to tell people about Jesus because we feel like we don't know everything we need to know. Do you think Philip knew everything he needed to know when he went to talk to the Ethiopian?
3. Why is it good news for us that Jesus wants to save people of all nations and not just the people of Israel?

### **PRAYER:**

Jesus, thank you for coming to save people of all nations.

Holy Spirit, help us to share the good news of Jesus with all kinds of people everywhere.



## WEEK 3

# Can we see others as God sees them?

**MEMORY VERSE:** So Peter opened his mouth and said: “Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. - **Acts 10:34-35**

### **LESSON SUMMARY:**

This week in LS Kids we will be hearing the story of Peter and Cornelius. Cornelius was a centurion and not part of the people of Israel but he was a devout man who feared God. At the time of this story it would be uncommon for someone like Peter and someone like Cornelius to spend time together. Peter was a Jew and part of the people of Israel. This meant that Peter believed certain people and things were clean and unclean. However, God gave Peter a vision that showed him Jesus could make all things clean. This meant not just the people of Israel could be saved from their sin but anyone who followed Jesus could be made clean.

When Peter met Cornelius many people would have thought it was not acceptable for them to spend time together because Peter was a Jew and Cornelius was not. But in verse 27 we see that many people gather to see Peter and Cornelius talk. Peter makes it clear to everyone watching that no person should be called unclean and everyone can hear the good news of Jesus.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. Do you need to look and act a certain way in order to hear the good news of Jesus?
2. Take some time to think about your friends at school. Are there people who are not your friends that need to hear the good news of Jesus? Do your friends need to hear the good news of Jesus?

### **PRAYER:**

Father, thank you for choosing us.

Jesus, thank you for making us clean.

Holy Spirit, please show us the people who need to hear the good news of Jesus.

## WEEK 4

# The Church spreads the good news.

**MEMORY VERSE:** When he came and saw the grace of God, he was glad, and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose. - Acts 11:23

### **LESSON SUMMARY:**

This week in LS Kids we will be talking about the Church. This is not the building the church, instead we will be talking about the people the Church. We will start by jumping back a few weeks and recalling the story of Stephen. Stephen was killed for telling people about Jesus and this caused many of the believers with Stephen to scatter. As these believers scattered they continued to tell people about the good news of Jesus and the Church continued to grow. Today we also get to tell others the good news of Jesus and the Church continues to grow.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. If your friend was killed for telling people about Jesus would you be afraid to tell more people about Jesus? Why do you think the Church continued to tell more people about Jesus even after Stephen was killed?
2. Read verse 26. What did Barnabas and Saul do with the church in Antioch? For how long?
3. Today we are the church. Do we do many of the same things the early church did? Take some time and name a few.

### **PRAYER:**

Father, let your Church grow.

Jesus, your life, death and resurrection is the best news we could ever hear.

Holy Spirit, help us to spread the good news.

## WEEK 5

# Peter is rescued.

**MEMORY VERSE:** When Peter came to himself, he said, “Now I am sure that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from all that Jewish people were expecting.” - **Acts 12:11**

### **LESSON SUMMARY:**

This week in LS Kids we will be hearing the story of how Peter was rescued by an angel of the Lord. In this story we see that King Herod did not like what the Church was doing so he decided to kill James and throw Peter in jail. James was killed and Peter was arrested simply for telling others about Jesus. The punishment of jail and death shouldn't make anyone want to keep telling others about Jesus. However, at the end of our story verse 24 tells us that the word of God increase and multiplied.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. Take a minute and imagine yourself in Peter's shoes. You have been in jail all night and your friend has been killed for telling others about Jesus. Suddenly an angel rescues you from jail! After all of that do you want to go tell more people about Jesus? Why or why not?
2. In the story James and Peter both experience suffering. Do you think this suffering is punishment for something they have done?
3. Read verse 23. At the end of the story King Herod dies. Why does Herod die?
4. Read verse 24. Why is this verse important to the story?

### **PRAYER:**

Father, please protect us when we tell others about Jesus.

Jesus, thank you for being our perfect and forever rescuer.

Holy Spirit, please comfort and rescue us when we are suffering.

## WEEK 6

# Paul and Barnabas are sent out.

**MEMORY VERSE:** While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” - **Acts 13:2**

### **LESSON SUMMARY:**

This week in LS Kids we will hear the story of Paul and Barnabas being sent out from the church in Antioch. However, before they are sent out two important things take place. First, the Holy Spirit calls Paul and Barnabas to be set apart for the work he has set out for them. Second, the church in Antioch prays for them before they are sent off.

As Paul and Barnabas set out on their church planting journey they were not always met with open arms. They encountered a magician who taught false things and Jewish leadership who didn't like the attention they were getting. However, at the end of all of this we learn that many Gentiles heard about Jesus and were filled with the Holy Spirit.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. Just like the church in Antioch our church also wants to plant churches. What were some of the things that happened at the church in Antioch before they sent out Paul and Barnabas? Should we also do those things?
2. Why was it important for Paul and Barnabas to leave Antioch?
3. Paul and Barnabas faced a lot of opposition as they set out to tell more people about Jesus. Do you think church planters today face the same kind of opposition?
4. How can our church help church planters today?

### **PRAYER:**

Father, thank you for loving your church.

Jesus, we want to tell more people about you!

Holy Spirit, call us to do your work like you called Paul and Barnabas.

## WEEK 7

# Paul and Barnabas face opposition.

**MEMORY VERSE:** When they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and Iconium and to Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God. - **Acts 21-22**

### **LESSON SUMMARY:**

This week in LS Kids we see that Paul and Barnabas continue to travel and preach the Gospel. However, everywhere they go they face opposition. In Iconium they preached the Gospel and many Jews and Greeks believed but the unbelieving Jews divided the people. In Lystra, through the power of the Holy Spirit, Paul made a crippled man walk and the crowd began to worship Paul and Barnabas as gods. When Paul told them to stop and worship the only real God the crowd threw stones at Paul and dragged him out of the city assuming he was dead. However, Paul was not dead and returned to the Lystra the next day and preached the Gospel. After all of the opposition people were still being saved and churches were being planted in Iconium, Lystra and Antioch.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. In the story Paul and Barnabas faced a lot of opposition and many people disliked them when they went to new places. After hearing the whole story what are some good things that happened?
2. Have you ever had to go to a new school and be the only new person in class? How did you feel? What things were difficult? What things were easy? How do you think Paul and Barnabas felt walking into new cities?
3. In Lystra they threw rocks at Paul until they thought he was dead. Good news for us Paul was alive. What did Paul decide to do after waking up? Do you think that was an easy decision or a hard decision? What decision would you make?

### **PRAYER:**

Father, please give us boldness and courage to tell others about the good news of Jesus.

Holy Spirit, please show us how to help church planters all over the world.

## WEEK 8

# We are saved by grace.

**MEMORY VERSE:** But we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will. **-Acts 15:11**

### **LESSON SUMMARY:**

This week in LS Kids we will be talking about the word “grace.” In the story, Paul and Barnabas have returned to Jerusalem and have started sharing about the conversion of the Gentiles with the Apostles and elders. However, some believers said that the Gentiles should also have to be circumcised. After some discussion amongst the Apostles and elders Peter stood up and reminded everyone that we are saved by grace alone. This is good news for us because not one of us has obeyed the rules perfectly.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. Take some time to discuss the meaning of the word grace. Is grace a free pass to do whatever we want? Does grace allow us to sin without consequence?
2. The Gentiles were different from many of the Apostles and Elders. How should we react when Jesus saves someone different from us?
3. How has Jesus showed you grace this week?

### **PRAYER:**

Father, we know we did not deserve the grace of Jesus  
Jesus, thank you giving us your perfect life.

Holy Spirit, please remind us that we are not saved by our good behavior.

## WEEK 9

# Now I follow Jesus.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Then he brought them out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” And they said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.” - **Acts 16:30-31**

### **LESSON SUMMARY:**

This week in LS Kids we will be hearing the story of the conversion of Lydia and the Philippian Jailer. After hearing the stories we will talk about the word conversion and what it means to be converted. Everyone who has been saved by Jesus has been converted and much like Lydia and the Philippian Jailer all of our story are different.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. In verse 31-32 the Jailer asks Paul how he can be saved. What does the jailer have to do? Can we do the same thing to be saved?
2. Take some time to talk about the word “conversion.” Looking back on the two stories how was Lydia converted? How was the Jailer converted?
3. When someone who is not following Jesus decides to follow Jesus they are converted. How should we feel about new people being converted?

### **PRAYER:**

Father, thank you for choosing each one of us.

Jesus, we want to follow you and only you.

Holy Spirit, help us to rejoice when others are converted.