2

Of Equal Value

Key References: Acts 18; Ephesians 2:11-22; *The Acts of the Apostles,* chap. 24, pp. 243-254; *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 10, pp. 93-96; Our Beliefs, nos. 14, 11, 12















Sabbath

DO Do this week's activity on page 19.

powertext

"Now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ" (Ephesians 2:13).

powerPoint

God's love compels us to be accepting of others.

Have you noticed how easy it is to feel at home with others who believe the same as you do? Take a journey back in time and picture Paul with your mind's eye as he travels, makes friends, and shares with others his faith in Jesus.

I should find people here who are willing to accept the true God," Paul said to himself, as he stepped onto the dock and surveyed the bustling port city of Corinth. "But first I need to find food, work, and a place to stay."

Paul gathered his things and walked around the city, stopping only to eat lunch. Since Paul was a trained tentmaker, he asked the canvas merchants about the good tentmakers in town. The names Priscilla and Aquila kept coming up.

"I've got to deliver canvas to their shop," said one merchant. "Why not come with me?"

Paul hopped onto the merchant's cart.

"Tell me about these two," he said to the merchant.

"They do good work, even though they don't open on the seventh day," the merchant replied. "They're Jews, but they also follow Jesus, that teacher who was killed a few years back."

2

Sunday

READ Read Acts 18:1-17 and this week's story, "Of Equal Value."

LEARN Begin to learn the power text, Ephesians 2:13.

THINK Think about the times when you have felt that things were not fair or when you felt left out.

PRAY Ask Jesus to help you be a person who includes others.

Monday

READ Read Ephesians 2:11-13.

DISCOVER Paul is speaking to Gentiles—people who were born non-Jews. Read verse 12 and discover five things that describe Gentiles who live apart from Christ.

THINK How does it feel to be excluded?

PRAY Ask Jesus to help you find ways to reach a specific person who is excluded.

Tuesday

READ Read Acts 18.

FIND Jesus experienced prejudice and rejection. In the following verses, discover why: Matthew 1:18, 19; Luke 5:18-24; John 1:45, 46.

WRITE In your Bible study journal, write ways you can help break down barriers.

PRAY Pray for all the victims of rejection and prejudice around the world.

"Really?" said Paul, smiling to himself.

"Here we are," said the merchant, pulling up to the shop. As Paul helped him unload the canvas, a woman rushed out of the shop, followed by a man walking more slowly.

"Do you have a new helper?" the man asked the merchant, extending his hand to Paul. "This is Priscilla, my wife; I'm Aquila."

"Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ," Paul said to them, clasping Aquila's hand in both of his. "I'm Paul." (See 1 Corinthians 1:3.)

"You worship the Christ!" Priscilla gasped, holding her hands over her heart.

"I do. I am an apostle of our Lord by the will of God," said Paul, smiling.

"Then you must stay and talk with us," said Priscilla.

"I'll be going now," said the merchant.

Handing the merchant a bag of coins, Aquila said, "Thank you for bringing our brother to us." The merchant nodded and drove away.

"Where have you come from?" Priscilla asked Paul.



"Most recently from preaching the gospel in Athens," Paul replied. "The people preferred their false gods to our true One, so I came here. And you?"

"We came from Rome when Emperor Claudius ordered out all Jews," replied Aquila. "Corinth seemed like an excellent place to reopen our business."

"And to share our faith," interjected Priscilla.

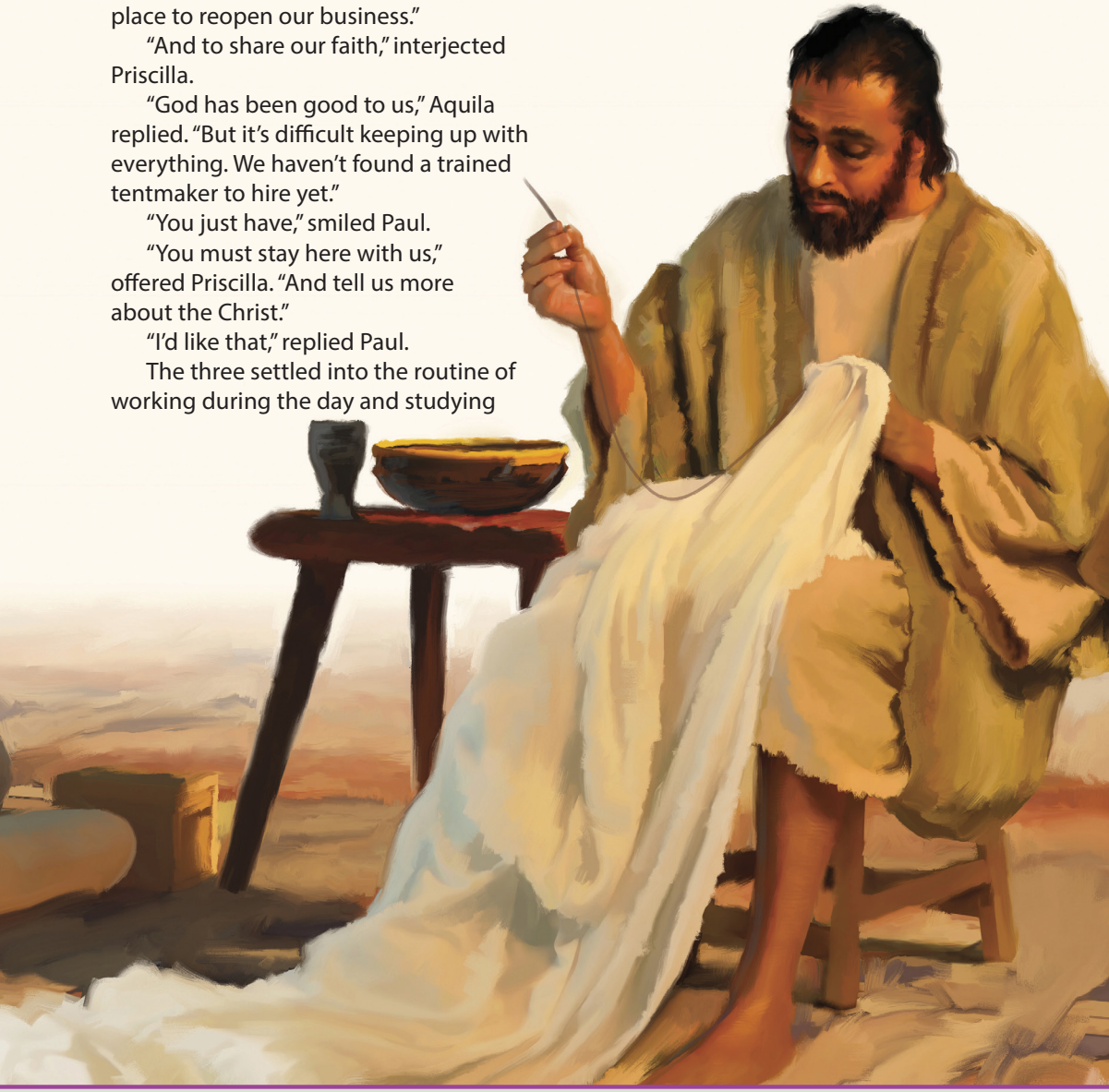
"God has been good to us," Aquila replied. "But it's difficult keeping up with everything. We haven't found a trained tentmaker to hire yet."

"You just have," smiled Paul.

"You must stay here with us," offered Priscilla. "And tell us more about the Christ."

"I'd like that," replied Paul.

The three settled into the routine of working during the day and studying together in the evening. On Sabbath Paul taught in the synagogue. One day Silas and Timothy appeared at the shop. Paul greeted them with big hugs. With the large tent order finished, Paul could spend all his time preaching to the Jews.



2

Wednesday

FIND Read Ephesians 2:14-17. How many times does Paul use the word "peace"?

DISCOVER Who does Paul say is our peace? To whom does Jesus bring peace? How does Jesus bring peace to people who are different from one another?

THINK Are there any barriers between you and other people? If so, what do you need to do to remove those barriers?

PRAY Ask God to remove all barriers between you and others.

Thursday

READ Read Matthew 9:10-12.

CREATE Create a song or poem about how Jesus breaks down barriers.

IMAGINE If Jesus lived on your street, with whom would He make friends?

DESIGN Design a logo or symbol to illustrate the unity found in Jesus.

PRAY Thank Jesus for giving us all access to Himself, the Spirit, and the Father.

Friday

READ Read Ephesians 2:18, 19.

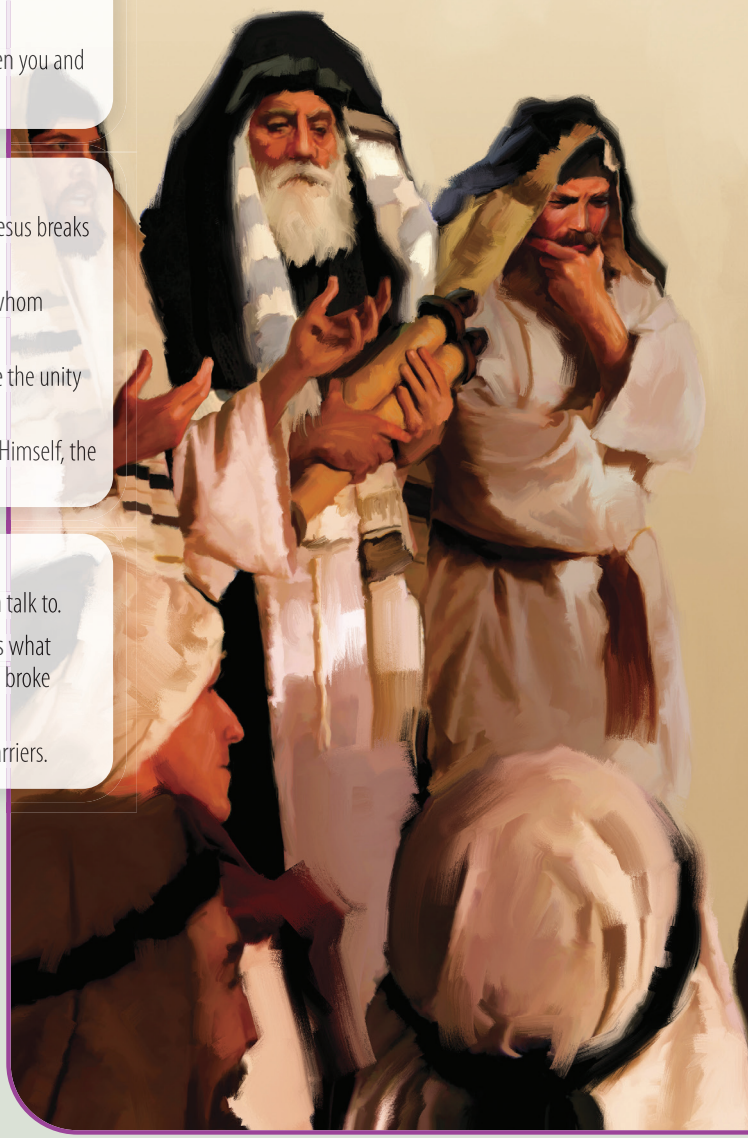
ACT Today, include someone you don't often talk to.

ASK During family worship, ask your parents what barriers they have encountered and how they broke them down.

PRAY Pray for the courage to break down barriers.

Soon, though, the Jews refused to listen. They argued with Paul and threatened him. After one very trying argument Paul shook out his clothes at them.

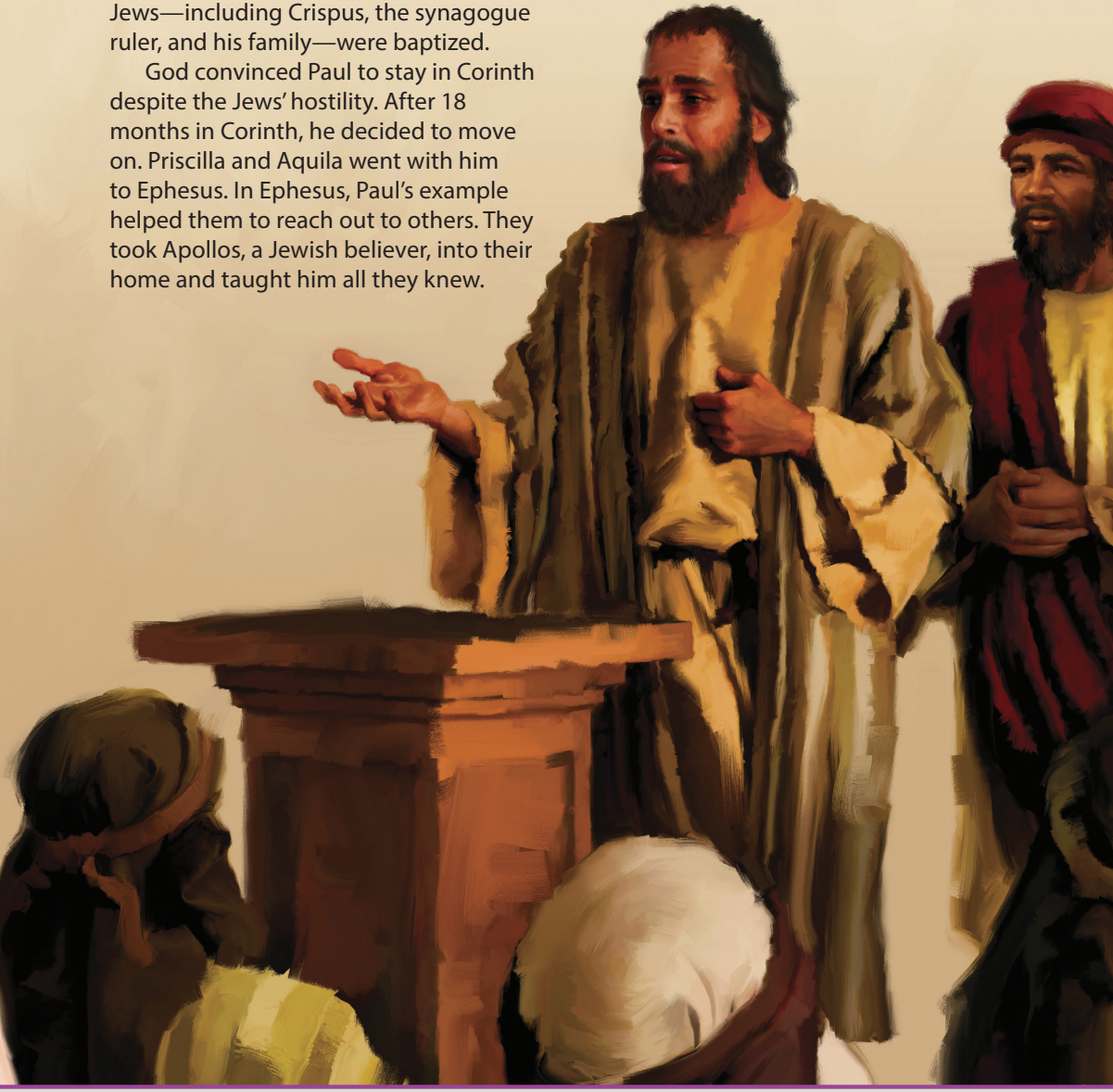
"If you die without believing, it will be your responsibility in the judgment," he warned. "From now on I'm preaching to the Gentiles."



Paul marched out of the synagogue and strode next door to Titius Justus's home. Paul preached Christ freely to Titius, one of the Gentiles who had worshipped God in the synagogue, and to his friends. After listening to Paul's reasoning, several Corinthians and some Jews—including Crispus, the synagogue ruler, and his family—were baptized.

God convinced Paul to stay in Corinth despite the Jews' hostility. After 18 months in Corinth, he decided to move on. Priscilla and Aquila went with him to Ephesus. In Ephesus, Paul's example helped them to reach out to others. They took Apollos, a Jewish believer, into their home and taught him all they knew. When it was time for Apollos to leave, the Ephesian Christians wrote to other believers asking them to welcome him.

Paul continued traveling from place to place. Wherever he went, he continued to break down barriers between people in the name of Christ.



PUZZLE 2

THINK OF OTHERS

Instructions: Below is a Bible verse that tells us how we should treat others. Use the letter groups from the bottom to fill in the missing letters in the Bible verse. Use each letter group only once, and none will be left over. Asterisks separate the words.

"DO * _____ _____ _____ HING * OUT * OF * SELF_____ _____ _____

* AMBIT_____ _____ _____ * OR * VAI_____ * _____ _____ NCEIT. *

RATHE_____, * _____ _____ * HUMILITY * VA _____ _____ _____ *

OTH _____ _____ _____ * A_____ _____ _____E * YOUR-

_____ _____ _____VES, * NOT * L_____ _____ _____ING * TO *

YOUR * _____ _____ _____ * INTER_____ _____ _____S * BUT *

_____ _____ _____H * OF * YOU * _____ _____ * _____HE *

_____ _____ _____ERESTS * OF * THE * OT_____ _____ _____S" *

(_____ _____ _____LIP_____ _____ _____NS 2:3, 4).

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