

Life today

What can you tell about the people in the picture?

How does it feel to be in a group like this?



Imagine

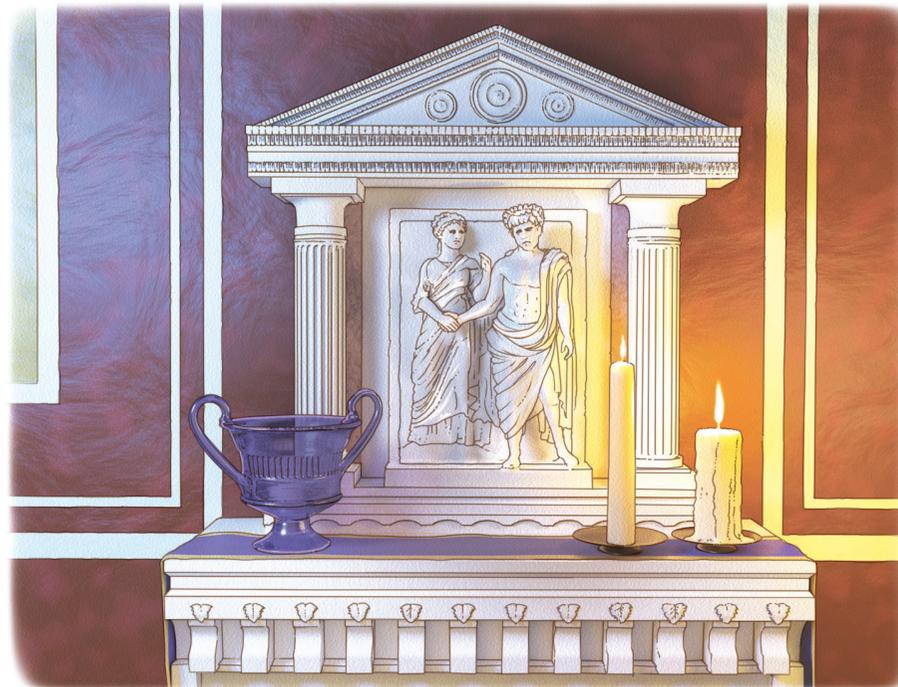
Identity was important in Paul's world. You needed to show other people which group or religious cult you belonged to. Paul wasn't the only person encouraging people to follow Jesus. Some rival teachers told people that they should live strictly according to Jewish laws. For example, you made sure everyone knew you didn't eat pork, and on the sixth day of every week you carried out the rituals of the sabbath. Other teachers said that you shouldn't do anything to upset the Romans who ruled the area.

You should be seen celebrating the Emperor, Caesar's, birthday, and have lots of things in your house that had the logo of the imperial cult of Rome on them.

Paul taught people that it's not what rituals you practise or what you own that shows you're a follower of Jesus. He said that when you are baptized in Jesus, it is like wearing new clothes, and when you're wearing those clothes, you are kind, generous and loving.

Did you know?

One way of showing that you were loyal to the Roman Emperor was how you decorated your house. Lots of candlesticks, lamps and tiles have been found that have the logo of the imperial cult of Rome on them. You would also use purple cloth. Only Senators (a bit like a Member of Parliament) in the Roman Empire could wear purple, but ordinary people could use purple material for wall hangings, bolsters and pillows.



Paul's letter to the Galatians

A nugget to explore with children: Chapter 3, verses 27 and 28

When you were baptized, it was as though you had put on Christ in the same way you put on new clothes. Faith in Christ Jesus is what makes each of you equal with each other, whether you are a Jew or a Greek, a slave or a free person, a man or a woman.