

The Bible Companion Series

Christianity in Action

The Acts of the Apostles

A Bible-Believing Study Guide

The Bible Companion Series of Bible Studies

These Study Notes Belong to: _____

By Craig A. Ledbetter.
Bible Baptist Church of Ballincollig
29 Westcourt Heights
Ballincollig, Cork, Ireland
(021) 4871234
(c) 1996-2008 Craig Ledbetter

Any portion, including the whole of this text may be reproduced without the permission of the author, as long as credit is given for its source (Romans 13:7)!

TABLE OF CONTENTS
Study of the Book of Acts

STUDY INTRODUCTION 4

CHAPTER ONE..... 6
 THE CHURCH COMMISSIONED 6

CHAPTER TWO..... 9
 THE CHURCH EMPOWERED 9

CHAPTER THREE..... 14
 CHRISTIANITY MEETS THE NEED 14

CHAPTER FOUR..... 17
 HOW TO STAND-UP FOR CHRIST 17

CHAPTER FIVE..... 19
 STAYING TRUE!..... 19

CHAPTER SIX 22
 DELEGATING THE WORK 22

CHAPTER SEVEN 25
 LEARNING THE LESSONS OF HISTORY 25

CHAPTER EIGHT 29
 THE CHURCH EXPANDING..... 29

CHAPTER NINE 33
 THE CONVERSION OF SAUL 33

CHAPTER TEN..... 36
 CORNELIUS MEETS CHRIST..... 36

CHAPTER ELEVEN 39
 THE FIRST “CHRISTIANS” 39

CHAPTER TWELVE 42
 THE CHURCH LEARNS TO PRAY 42

FINAL EXAM..... 45
 CHAPTERS 1-12 45

CHAPTER THIRTEEN..... 48
 GOD’S CALL TO SERVICE 48

CHAPTER FOURTEEN..... 51
 SUFFERING WHILE SERVING 51

CHAPTER FIFTEEN 54
 SETTling NEW TESTAMENT SALVATION..... 54

CHAPTER 16..... 57
 THE SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY 57

CHAPTER 17..... 60
 SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES 60

CHAPTER 18..... 63
 SPIRITUAL OVERDRIVE 63

CHAPTER 19..... 66
 THE SECURING OF EPHEBUS 66
CHAPTER 20..... 73
 SAYING FAREWELL 73
CHAPTER 21..... 77
 SAVING THE BEST FOR LAST..... 77
CHAPTER 22..... 81
 SPREADING THE GOSPEL BY TESTIMONY 81
CHAPTER 23..... 83
 SPREADING THE GOSPEL BY TESTIMONY 83
CHAPTERS 24..... 85
 SAVOURING EVERY MOMENT 85
CHAPTERS 25..... 87
 TO THE UTTERMOST..... 87
CHAPTERS 26..... 89
 ALMOST PERSUADED! 89
CHAPTER 27..... 92
 HOW TO HANDLE THE STORMS OF LIFE..... 92
CHAPTER 28..... 94
 PAUL'S FINAL JOURNEY 94

A Note Concerning the Cork Bible Institute

This study course is intended to be used in conjunction with the Cork Bible Institute and contains a Final Exam that can be applied towards credit in the Institute. If you want your participation in this course to be part of an overall course accreditation, please inform Pastor Ledbetter and he will make sure your records are retained. Your attendance will be recorded, and there will be a class project for you to complete by the end of the ten week course.

Class Project:

To pass this course, you will need to complete two reports:

- 1) A Report giving a brief description of every person in the Book of Acts, and*
- 2) A basic outline, briefly describing every chapter of the Book.*

The Acts of the Apostles

Study Introduction

I. Preliminary Information

A. The Title of the Book - *The _____ of the Apostles*

1. Describes *An _____ Account* - Not primarily *doctrinal* in nature, but a record of the lives of real people who lived out what they believed, under real circumstances.
2. Describes *An _____ Account* - Actual names and places of verifiable facts. Not like Joseph Smith's "Book of Mormon" with is non-historical!!! This Book in type will match the character of the Book of Joshua, which too is an historical account of God's people possessing their inheritance.
3. Describes *An _____ Account* - The book is written in the Present Tense. In other words, these acts are on-going in the lives of Christians today! Christianity did not end at the close of the 28th chapter! Christianity continues to spread, and build upon the foundation laid here in this Book (Eph 2:19-22)

B. The Author: _____ (Luke 1:1; Acts 1:10)

1. The ultimate Author is _____ (2 Tim 2:15)
2. As far as the human "_____" was, compare Scripture with Scripture Acts 1:1,2 with Luke 1:1,2.
3. Luke, the beloved physician (Col 4:14), was a Jew, not a Gentile as many believe. Reason: because Romans 3:2 states that the "oracles of God" (Scriptures) are given to the _____, and NO Gentile is used to write any Jewish Scripture!

C. The Date of Its Writing: About _____ A.D.

1. Acts 28 records that the Apostle Paul was not dead at the completion of the Book of the Acts, so it has to be dated before his death which was in 65 AD
2. It is well known that Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 AD, and the Acts does not record that either, so it was written before that event as well.

D. The Intended Audience -

1. *O Theophilus!* _____ of God! The Bible has always been written primarily for God's people, and not for the atheist or agnostic! It is written from the standpoint of the believer with few exceptions which are directed at the skeptic. Did you ever notice that the Bible never attempts to prove the existence of God?
2. Did you notice that Luke is not attempting to re-write, or update his former treatise, but rather continuing on in its account of God's hand in their lives. Luke's first treatise was written under the inspiration of God (2 Tim 3:16). Luke knew that no one could improve God's inspiration!

E. Its Importance and Significance

1. The Book of Acts puts "_____" to faith. God's truth **changes** a life (2 Cor 5:17), not just a mind, or even just a heart, and Acts shows how the lives of people all over the world were changed by the preaching of the gospel. Acts is the _____ of the Gospel!
2. The Book of Acts records what it took the apostles and early disciples to lay the foundation for the rest of us to get saved.
3. It places in the hand of the Christian a verifiable record of the events and truths of Christianity so that they may know with "_____" (Luke 1:4) that it is of God, and God alone!

F. The Theme - always Jesus Christ (1:1; Acts 28:31)

1. The Book of Luke covered the life of Jesus Christ, His "passion," and his resurrection.
2. The Book of Acts will cover the life that Jesus Christ lives _____ his disciples until His return for them in the clouds!

G. Its Placement in the Bible

1. Acts is a **continuation** of a former _____ (in-depth discourse) - *The Gospel According to Luke*.
2. Acts provides a practical **connection** with the doctrinal Books that follow it. The doctrinal Books (Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, etc.), are principles, and statements that need *lives* attached to them before they can be transferred to another life.

II. Our Approach to the Study of the Bible

- A. We take the Bible as primarily _____ and authoritative (John 17:17)
- B. We prefer to study the Bible in an outline form - identifying the various subjects and conclusions made by the Book on a chapter by chapter basis - studying it bit by bit (Isa 28:10).
- C. We believe the King James Bible in its entirety, and waste no time attempting to find errors or mistakes in it - rather we wish to live it!

III. Some Practical Information

A. **A Simple Outline of Acts** - This Book is divided up in several ways:

1. By Nationalities (Romans 1:16)
 - a. To the ___ First (Acts 1-12)
 - b. And to the Greek (Acts 13-28)
2. By Geographical Region (Acts 1:8)
 - a. In Jerusalem (Acts 1-7)
 - b. Judaea (Acts 8)
 - c. Samaria (Acts 8)
 - d. Uttermost Parts of the earth (Acts 9-28)
3. By Personalities
 - a. Acts of the Apostles
 - b. Acts of their Disciples
 - c. Acts of the Holy Spirit
 - d. Acts of the world - its religions, philosophers, etc.
4. By a General Sequence of Events - This is how we will study through the Book

B. **Some Things to know about when studying this Book**

1. This Book is An _____ Book - Christianity is not just a “faith” but the living of that faith, out in the open, not in a closet!
2. A _____ Book
 - a. Just like Salvation involves a transition from darkness into His marvelous light (2 Pet 2:9), so the Book of Acts records the transition of world history from dark religion, to the marvelous light of Bible Christianity.
 - b. There are three "transitional" Books in the New Testament:
 - 1) *Matthew*- Transition from the Old Testament to the New
 - 2) *Acts* - Transition from an emphasis being placed upon the Jews, to the _____
 - 3) *Hebrews*- Transition from the _____, to the "last days"
 - c. Every major *heresy* comes from people referring to obscure passages in one of these three Books, and building subsequent doctrines on them.

C. **Some of the subjects this Book will deal with:**

1. Once a person is saved, what to expect next – what are the steps to Christian maturity, and what troubles should every Christian expect to come into their lives now that they are saved
2. The empowerment and mobilization of the New Testament church for a greater purpose than just their enjoyment!
3. The various methods of soul-winning
4. The extent of soul-winning - World Wide Evangelism
5. How the New Testament church functions in the world
6. The simplicity of New Testament worship!
7. Salvation by the grace of God through faith *alone*
8. The following heresies and confusions will be dealt with:
 - a. _____ - The belief that a person is “_____” (pre-chosen) to salvation, or “elected” to damnation by God.
 - b. **Pentecostalism**/Charismaticism - The belief that ___ the spiritual gifts are for today; the belief that a person can lose their salvation
 - c. **Lordship Salvation** - that a person is not really saved unless they have everything under control at the point of salvation - basically the belief in _____ perfection AT salvation
 - d. **Baptismal Regeneration** - the belief that _____ is a part of a person’s salvation
 - e. Judaism - **Legalism** - the belief that every Christian must keep the “___” in order to really be a true Christian, and keep saved
 - f. And a few more!

IV. Conclusion

The Acts of the Apostles

Chapter One

The Church Commissioned

Focus Verse: **Acts 1:8**

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts 1:8

I. Chapter Introduction

- A. Christianity started with Jesus Christ. But just existing as Christians without a purpose, without motivation, without power is only empty!
- B. Christ's death, burial and resurrection had been the event that split history into two, and propelled a few ignorant fishermen and carpenters into a hostile world to bring it to God. That is the record of Acts. As Christians, we are to follow their examples, obtain the necessary courage, and seek to carry out the tasks that our Lord gave us to do - all through the power of the Holy Spirit!
- C. Acts Chapter 1 is divided up as follows:
 1. The Person of Jesus Christ (1:1-5)
 2. The Priorities of the Christian (1:6-8)
 3. The Promise of Christ's Return (1:9-11)
 4. The Patience Required (1:12-14)
 5. The Preparation to Serve - Mobilization (1:15-26)

II. Study Outline of Acts Chapter 1

A. The Person of Jesus Christ- Past, present and future ministry (1:1-5)

1. When Luke begins this Book, he immediately connects it with his previous Book, the *Gospel According to _____* and then covers the entire life, death, burial, resurrection, showing, and ascension of Jesus Christ - **all in four verses**. For the rest of the Book, he follows the lives of Christ's disciples in the continuing saga called "Christianity". Truly, *"the saga continues!"*
2. It is addressed to a specific Reader - _____!
3. *Theophilus!* _____ of ____! As we have already stated, the Bible has always been written primarily for God's people, and not for the atheist or agnostic! It is written from the standpoint of the believer with few exceptions which are directed at the sceptic. Whoever Theophilus was, this Book definitely was not only intended for him, but for all who would know how live the Christian life in today's world! It is written from the viewpoint of an eyewitness (Acts 16:10).
4. The theme is _____ from start to finish (see Acts 1:1 and then 28:31)
 - a. The Book of Acts will cover the life that Jesus Christ lives through his disciples until His return for them in the clouds!
5. The subjects dealt with by Jesus before his ascension (1:2-5):
 - a. The phrase *"through the Holy Ghost"* (1:2). A key phrase of Acts! A unique statement telling you that after Jesus ascended to heaven, He spake by means of the Holy Ghost to His Apostles, giving them instructions, and informs us of the means by which Jesus continues to both "do and teach" even up until today! The same means of inspiration (2 Tim 3:16).
 - b. The resurrection, and its "_____ *proofs*" (1:3)
 - 1) Jesus is seen for forty days (Sunday He resurrects in the March or April time frame, and then ascends Thursday, 40 days later in late April or May sometime) by over ____ witnesses (1 Cor 15:6)
 - 2) The **fact** of an empty tomb and grave clothes (Mt 28; John 20:3-9)
 - 3) The **fact** that eleven men ate and lived with Him for those forty days (Luke 24:38-44)
 - 4) The **fact** that those eleven men actually "_____" Him (I John 1:1; John 20:28)
 - 5) The **fact** of the transformed lives of the eleven apostles, and of all who trust a living Saviour (2 Cor 5:17).
 - c. _____ (1:3; Matt 6:33; Rom 14:17)
 - 1) This one subject is about the most important thing that a Bible Believer could settle in his or her mind - what the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven are. Suffice it to say here that Jesus is NOT discussing of things pertaining to the Kingdom of Heaven (millennium) because it is some two thousand years away, but rather a form of life that the body of Christ is to live out until the millennium. What is the millennium? It is the earthly visible reign of Jesus Christ on this earth for 1000 years (the Kingdom of Heaven), following the rapture and the seven year tribulation (Rev 19).

- d. The _____ of the Father (1:4,5; Luke 24:49)
- 1) A _____ (1:5), immersion - One of seven in Scripture
 - 2) An _____ (1:8), becoming "endued with power" (Luke 24:49) that comes from the Holy Spirit (John 14:16) - Comforter, Guide, Teacher, Helper.
 - 3) A _____ (2:2,4; 4:8,31) - of the heart and spirit of a Christian with the power and drive, and strength needed
 - 4) _____ - As a new body, the body of Christ, the Church is not to "relish" this gift, but use it for souls, and for the living of the Christian life (Cf Philp 2:5-8). All that Jesus did in His life and ministry, He did through the power of the Holy Ghost (John 3:34), not in the power of His deity! All so that He could show how WE can live

B. The Priorities of the Christian (1:6-8)

1. The Jew's primary desire - the restoration of "_____". People are always interested in a physical kingdom - empire where THEY have it made! This literal kingdom is promised (it makes up half of the old Testament promises), but is not our concern right now! Not the right timing.
2. Christians can get to where they are only looking forward to heaven and therefore do nothing here and now for God (Jude 25)!
3. Jesus' main desire was for them to get the power that they needed (from the Holy Spirit) to do the work that He was leaving them here on the earth to do! The fulfilling of the great commission (Matt 28:19-20) - invade enemy territory by presenting the truth about heaven, hell, salvation, and the human heart. Note the difference expressed between God's power to know the end from the beginning, and then Christ's declaration that Christians will have power also - power to do God's work in His stead here on earth as ambassadors (2 Cor 5:20). Jesus wanted:
 - a. For the Christian to be empowered (Eph 5:18) - they already had received the Holy Ghost by faith (John 20:22) and been sealed (Eph 1:13) with Him at salvation.
 - b. For the Christian to be a _____ - having experienced something that he or she can attest, testify as being true (1:8)
 - c. And be a witness throughout the world - starting right where they were - _____ and going until Christ returns!

C. The Promise of Christ's Return (1:9-11)

1. The ascension of Jesus Christ - This is the third _____ in Scripture (see Gen 5:21-24; 2 Kings 2:11 for the earlier two)
2. The heavenly visitors - Angels
 - a. These show up at Christ' birth (Luke 2 at His descension), and then here at his ascension.
 - b. Their gentle prod - *get moving because He is coming back!* This is not the last time that you see Him. The imminence of the return of Jesus was preached and believed by the Apostle Paul (1Thes 4:16,17)!
 - c. The information given here concerning the Second coming:
 - 1) Christ's return will be clouded to the view of the world
 - 2) Jesus will come down out of heaven
 - 3) He will come _____
 - 4) Angels will participate somehow
 - 5) The very same Jesus that left this planet, will return! No one will be taking His place (like a counterfeit "christ")!
 - 6) Jesus will arrive back here to this very spot - _____

D. The Patience Now Required (1:12-14) To wait, and serve, and look

1. The situation - the Captain has left them on their own with one instruction - go to Jerusalem and wait there until you get power! It is now Friday in probably early May, and about 120 disciples are gathered together in an upper room. The significance of this upper room- it is probably the one they had the last supper in
2. Note the names of the disciples and then those who were with the disciples - other women, Mary the mother of Jesus, and Jesus' brethren (i.e., actual half-brothers and sisters!). No Judas Iscariot mentioned though! What happened to him? _____
3. This is where modern Christianity fails miserably - they hate _____ on God (Ps 27:14; Jam 5:7,8), _____ (Col 3:23,24), and _____ for Christ's return (Tit 2:13). They get bored too easily.

E. The Preparation to Serve - Mobilization (1:15-22) They have to overcome several problems:

1. The problem with _____. After the resurrection of Christ, there were over ____ disciples (1 Cor 15:6). But only ____ are at the prayer meeting, waiting for the "promise of the Father" (the arrival of the Holy Spirit). Christians have a hard time with priorities (see Demas in 2 Tim 4:10) and faithfulness to them (1 Cor 4:2).
2. Let's identify some of the priorities that both they and we need:
 - a. To be sure of our salvation - there is no greater priority!
 - b. To be in one accord - unity around the Scriptures (Acts 2:42)

- c. To love _____ (John 13:34)
 - d. To get the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8)
 - e. To be a witness (Acts 1:8) - by clear word and clean life
 - f. To be ready for Christ's return (Acts 1:11)
3. The problem with _____. Peter has been going over the pages of his Bible and he has thought about the importance of the number 12, and that something has been left undone by God - the filling of that 12th apostleship, and so Peter figures they need to fill Judas' place. Jesus said the labourers were few (Matt 9:36-38)
 4. So Peter takes the _____ - there is a danger here. Don't act until God tells you to act. Learn to wait on the Holy Spirit to direct you. And act on your current instructions. We definitely need initiative, but God-led initiative - obedience to Scriptures
 5. Reviews Judas' life (1:16-19)
 - a. He was a true apostle - with miracles and gifts (Matt 10:1,2)
 - b. Yet he was a _____ (John 6:70) that had to commit suicide by hanging himself on the edge of a cliff (Matt 27:5)
 - c. His body fell into the very field that the Pharisees purchased with the money Judas had sold Jesus out for (Matt 27:6-8)
 - d. Judas left a big vacancy - a "_____" (1:20) or managerial position - shepherd, overseer - not religious hierarchy (Ac 20:28; 1 Pet 2:25; 5:2-4)
 6. CONJECTURE - Peter possibly wrongly applies the _____ - it was too early to fill the vacancy - it will be filled by another man (1 Cor 15:8) which turned out to be _____
 7. Let's find out what it takes to be an Apostle - _____
 _____ (note the *signs*, 2 Cor 12:12):
 - a. Had to be _____ by Jesus Himself (John 6:70)
 - b. Had to be _____ to be an apostle - was not just a name (Mt 10:1,2)
 - c. Had to _____ Christianity (Eph 2:19,20) throughout world
 - d. Had to have been faithful throughout the ministry of Christ - from _____ baptism through Christ's resurrection (Cf 1 Ti 1:12,13). NO ONE after Acts 12 could meet that criteria.
 8. They chose a replacement (1:23-26) Only two people met the qualifications. To "cast lots" means to put the two names in a basket and draw out one. It turned out to be _____.

III. Conclusion

The Acts of the Apostles

Chapter Two *The Church Empowered*

Focus Verse: Acts 2:4

"And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."

I. Study Introduction

- A. The New Testament Christians have now been mobilized (chapter 1), and primed by the command of their Captain, are only waiting for the signal that they have can commence the battle (Eph 6:12).
- B. The signal finally came, on the day of Pentecost, exactly 50 days after the death of the Passover Lamb - right on schedule!
- C. From that moment on, Christians have relied on the empowerment of the Holy Spirit in their lives to do the work that Christ has called for us to do (John 15:4,5; Eph 5:18)
- D. This chapter sets the start of the "Christian Era." Christ had brought to a close the era of the Law (John 1:17). The coming of the Holy Spirit brought in the Christian Era, or "dispensation of Grace" (2:21).

II. Study Outline

A. The Empowerment of the Church (2:1-4)

1. What Pentecost was to the Jew
 - a. The Pentecost Feast (Lev 23:15-21) - one of seven:
 - 1) The Passover Feast - Calvary
 - 2) The Feast of Unleavened Bread - Calvary
 - 3) The Feast of the First Fruits - The Resurrection
 - 4) The Feast of Pentecost - feast of seven weeks - Pentecost
 - 5) The Feast of the Trumpets - Rapture and Second coming
 - 6) The Feast of the Atonement - The tribulation
 - 7) The Feast of Tabernacles - Millennium
 - b. Pente-cost means ' ___ and represents a feast occurring ___ days after the Passover.
 - c. It coincides with remembering and celebrating the giving of the ___ at mount Sinai (Ex 19:1). Notice how that in the New Testament, it will become a celebration of the giving of GRACE (John 1:17).
 - d. It celebrated the birthday of the _____ (Ex 19:5)
 - e. Great signs and wonders announced its arrival (Ex 19:16,18)
 - f. Some _____ people died at that time (Ex 32:28)
2. Pentecost's Importance to the Church
 - a. At the Passover (Matt 27) Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, was humiliated, degraded, and put to a criminal's death. But at Pentecost, Jesus is highly glorified!
 - b. It celebrates the official birthday of " _____ " (Cf "the church in the wilderness" Acts 7:38)
 - c. Great signs and wonders marked its arrival (Act 2:2,3,17-20)
 - d. _____ souls got SAVED (Acts 2:41)
3. The particulars of Pentecost
 - a. These Christians were **still** in _____, and waiting for the arrival of the **promise** of the Father - expecting the fulfillment (2:1). It is not right, or "normal" in God's eyes for Christians to be apart, and busy doing their own things in life, but they **MUST** set aside the time to faithfully be together (Heb 10:25)!
 - b. The sound of the "rushing mighty wind" filled the house (2:2). This event has only happened ONCE.
 - c. The appearance of "cloven (divided) tongues" (like the word "cleave" or "cut in half") that looked like _____ (2:3). Each person individually received the ability to speak. This event has only happened ONCE. This is not a baptism of "fire" (Cf Matt 3:11). This is the arrival of something that looks like it is on fire because it came from heaven (Cf rev 1:13-15).
 - d. The filling of the Holy Ghost caused them to begin to speak with "other tongues" (2:4) a supernatural sign gift. Somebody is going to start talking differently now. Turns out to be in ALL the main different languages of the world! Remember how that God had to "DIVIDE" the languages back at the tower of Babel in Gen 11? Well, God now overcomes that "confusion" with a special ability for His people to be able to speak ANY language needed so that the Gospel (good news) of Jesus Christ could be heard and UNDERSTOOD by all!!! Look at 2:4 where they are given "cloven tongues" and begin to speak in "OTHER tongues!" What could be clearer? Tongues are _____ (2:8; 1 Cor 14:21)!

B. The Experience of Pentecost (2:5-13)

1. Every Jew in town heard of what was going on in that little upper room (2:5-7), and how it had spilled out into the streets - the sound of wind coming out of the sky and entering into a house couldn't be contained (like a helicopter dropping out of the sky and onto the roof of a house). Not a secret meeting.
2. These were Jews that had traveled from every nation to Jerusalem for this feast - remembrance of the _____ of Israel!
3. All of the people heard these few men speaking in so many different _____. Very confounding/confusing.
4. The disciples are doubted to have the ability to know so many languages - people could tell they sounded like Galilaeans because of their accent. This tells you that probably, only the ones from _____ were speaking in tongues- the 12 Apostles (1:11)
5. These disciples spoke with "_____" not "unknown" tongues to fifteen represented countries and ethnic regions. These were Jews and proselytes that were part of the "_____" that came back to Jerusalem every year to worship (see the "Ethiopian" eunuch doing this same thing a couple of years later in Acts 8:26-28).
 - a. The *Parthians, Medes, Elamites, Arabians*, and the people from *Mesopotamia* were Jews from the _____ that were part of the dispersion of 2 Kings 17.
 - b. The *Judeans* are the local people that lived in southern Israel
 - c. The *Capadocians, people of Pontus, Asians; Phrygians, and Pamphylans* all come from areas of the _____ dispersion.
 - d. The *Egyptians, and Lybians* were from Africa - the _____
 - e. The *Roman, and Cretian* proselytes represented the Jewish dispersion to the _____ and _____ of Israel.
6. These are said to represent "every nation under heaven." This definitely is only a partial list of the nations represented.
7. The areas listed form a complete circle around the Mediterranean, *with the center being _____* (see Figure 1).
8. These were the directions that the good news of Christ would be first carried by these people as they believed, and then returned "home." Jesus had commanded the Christians to go to the "uttermost parts of the earth" (Acts 1:8; Matt 28:19; Mark 16:15) and here the uttermost had come to them!

9. Everybody heard the "wonderful WORKS of God" (at the cross) in their own language! God had gone the extra mile! He could have made all listen in Hebrew or Greek, but God inspired the translation process so that His word could be _____ (Rom 10:17) and easily understood by the whole world!!!

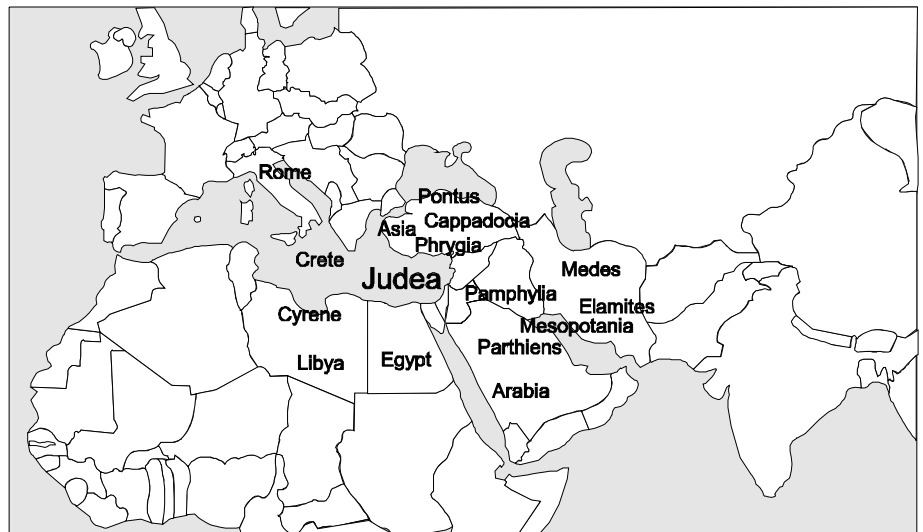


Figure 1 - The World in the First Century

- a. Two important things to notice:
 - b. The whole world needed to hear the news of Jesus Christ!
 - c. But most importantly, the Jews needed to be convinced that they really had _____ the Messiah - that they had missed Him. So God gave them one more "_____" - tongues.
10. Those who doubted came up with illogical conclusions.
- a. Some said this was "_____" (this event has no meaning).
 - b. Others thought they were drunk with "new wine," which is only a derogatory statement. Like saying they were *dippy* because of only drinking buttermilk. The world just brands things that they don't understand as crazy, or immature. That's how they treat most of history and the Bible

Note: Concerning wine. New wine is grape juice, fresh out of the _____ (Prov 3:9,10), having no alcohol content - it is this kind of wine that Jesus drank (Matt 26:29). The other kind of wine is referred to as "_____" wine (Prov 23:29-30, not just grape juice, but *mixed* now with alcohol), and is usually associated with drinking "_____" (high alcohol content).

C. The Explanation of Peter (2:14-21) Peter's First Revival

1. His Audience - "Ye men of _____ and everyone dwelling in Jerusalem" - Dealing directly with the _____ here.
2. His Rebuke (2:15). The people really believed that these "disciples" of Jesus were wimps, and that really had gotten drunk on new wine! But thinking that they were drunk at the third hour of the day (9AM) was just showing their gullibility. Principle: Learn to have something to say to show just how ignorant people really are about Christianity (Cf 1 Pet 3:15)
3. His Message. This is the beginning of the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy of the "Last Days" (Joel 2:28-32)
 - a. **The Last Days** - the days leading up to Christ's _____ which is the "Day of the Lord"
 - 1) Peter knows that _____ is only the beginning
 - 2) There is much more to come - only the "_____ " of the Spirit (Rom 8:23)
 - 3) Peter thought that the rest of the prophecy is about to be fulfilled (Cf Matt 3:1,2; 4:17). But it is up to the Jews!

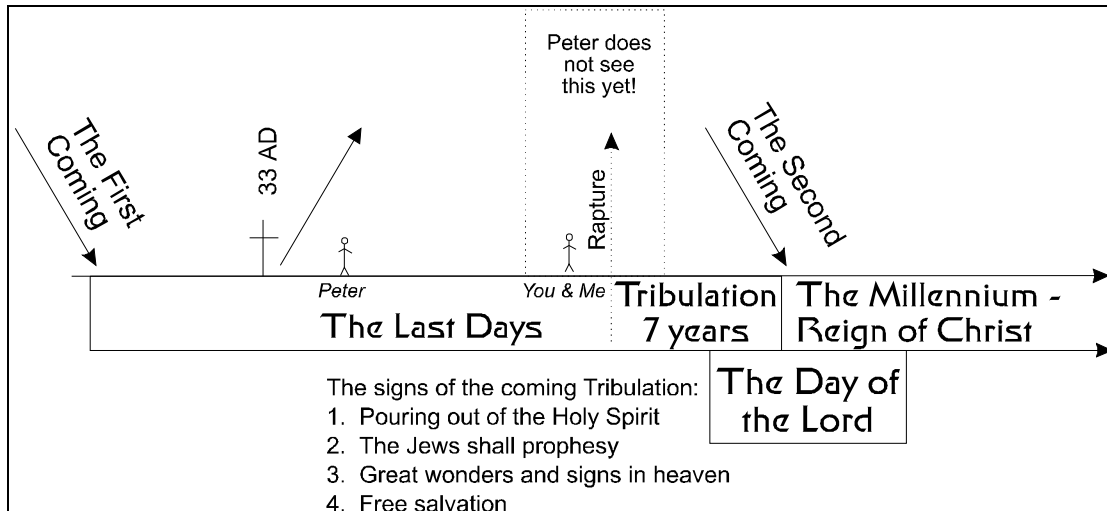


Figure 2 - The Last Days as seen by Joel and Peter

POINT: Only the outpouring was fulfilled. The remainder of the prophecy is still yet to be fulfilled. Peter did not understand that God's timing can span _____ of years (Luke 4:14-20 & Isa 61:1,2, Gen 3:15 & Rom 16:28)

- b. **The pouring out of God's Spirit** - on ALL flesh. This event was identified by the sound of wind, the cloven tongues, and by the various world languages being spoken miraculously.

POINT: Yet, the Jews did not as a nation get saved like they are supposed to (Ro 11:26) - it was the wrong _____. So, not even this point is completely fulfilled, yet.
- c. _____ **JEW prophesying and seeing visions and dreams** (2:17,18). Not for everybody. "upon your sons... daughters... my servants"
- d. **Wonders and signs from the heavens** (2:19,20) - telling us that these events are associated with the _____ (Mt 24:21,29,30)
- e. **The Day of the Lord is coming** (2:20). The day of Christ's _____. Peter knew the tribulation was next on God's schedule (Joel 2), so he is readying everyone for its approach
- f. **The time of salvation is** ____ (2:21; Ro 10:13; 2 Cor 5:20; 6:1,2). The means of salvation is no longer associated with the Temple, ceremony, the Law, and the death of a lamb - but with calling on the once crucified Lamb to save you!

D. The Exhortation to the Jews (2:22-40) - His Application

1. Hear the words of the Scripture (Cf 7:57,58) as preached!
2. Recognize who Jesus is (2:22)
 - a. He was a _____ person - with a name, an address (Nazareth). Jesus had to be all man to effectively live out the perfect life and pay for our sins (Heb 2:9-12)
 - b. He was a _____ person - proven by God by miracles and signs right before their very eyes - Messiah, anointed One of God, appointed to do what only He could do
 - c. He was God's _____ to our sin - delivered by the determinate council (God figured out the only way to pay for sin and still remain holy)
3. Realize that it was _____ who crucified the Messiah (2:23)
 - a. You can't blame the Roman soldiers
 - b. You can't blame the religious leaders

- c. You can't blame it on ___ either. He did not force people to sin, nor did he fix it so that people HAD to get saved, or HAD to be lost (election and predestination). God holds PEOPLE responsible for their actions (Dt 30:19)
 - d. You can only blame yourselves. You rejected the only hope for eternity (Mt 27:22-25). Just accept the responsibility! God brought Christ here, and then you PEOPLE killed Him!
 - e. Realize our sins brought Jesus here to begin with, and it was our sins that killed Him on the cross (John 1:29; 10:17,18)
 - f. Realize also that if Jesus had been born in the 20th century, then He would have been rejected just the same!!!
4. Accept the _____ as final proof (2:24) of His Messiahship
- a. Nobody had to go in to the tomb and raise up Jesus
 - b. Nobody had to roll away the stone for Jesus to get out
 - c. Jesus laid down His own life, and then He got up again!
 - d. All as proof that He is ___ in the flesh (Matt 1:23; 1 Tim 3:16; Heb 1:8)
 - e. And all so that He could remove the _____ of death (2:24). Jesus endured the pains of death (wages of our sin), so that we could be free of them!
5. Look to the prophecies about all this (2:25-36). David spoke of Christ's eternal life that could not end - Even when Jesus' body was dead, Jesus lived on (Eph 4:8-10). David knew that the Messiah would be glad to take our place and give us _____ (2:26).
- a. Jesus had to go to _____ in our place (2:25-30)
 - 1) His Spirit went back to the **Father** (Lk 23:46; Eccl 3:21)
 - 2) Christ's body went to the _____ (Luke 24:1-4)
 - 3) Christ's soul went to hell to dump our _____ there (Heb 9:28; 1 Pet 2:24), and then He ends up in _____ (Abraham's bosom, Lk 16:19-26) for the remaining 3 days and nights where He did some preaching (1 Pet 3:19). Notice that it was Christ's _____ that was our offering for sin (Isa 53:10) on the cross!
 - b. David knew that where he was going, one day, the Messiah would come and get him. This was only for those who believed God before the resurrection (Christ had to be the first one who resurrected, *never to die again*, 1Cor 15:20)
 - c. David died, and his body was still in the grave (2:29-31). So, evidently, David's _____ did not get resurrected in Mt 27:50-54, so it is yet to be. But many O.T. saints **did** resurrect! So the reference is to the fact that David was not talking about himself, but about the Messiah. So, David was a prophet (2:30,31), and much of the Psalms are about _____!
 - d. Peter witnessed Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection (2:32).
 - e. Peter then points out that the Promise of the Holy Ghost is just "icing on the cake" as proof that all this is going on just like the Scriptures had predicted (2:33)!
 - f. David is not the one who has ascended bodily to heaven yet, only the _____ could do that (2:34,35)
 - g. Therefore, let everyone know that Jesus is Lord and Christ - the Promised One (2:36), and that everyone must repent!
6. Allow the _____ message to do the work (2:37-40)
- a. The gospel pricks the heart - _____ (Heb 4:12)
 - b. The gospel requires a response - "*What shall we do?*"
 - 1) _____ - must accept it as true, and right
 - 2) _____ - must see yourself as wicked and wrong
 - 3) Be _____ - must openly confess Christ (John 12:42,43)
 - 4) _____ - no exception - all need to repent (1 Pet 3:9)
 - 5) All for the remission of sins - _____
 - a) Believe and repent to _____ remission
 - b) Be baptized _____ of remission
 - 6) All so that you too can receive the gift of the Holy Ghost - every believer was promised the gift. Not dealing with tongues, but with the gift **OF** the Holy Ghost Himself!
 - c. You are simply believing God's promise of salvation made to all who will respond to God's call to be saved (2:39)
 - d. The gospel provokes us to care about _____ things - to save ourselves from this ungodly generation (2:40)!

E. The Environment (Culture) of Jewish Christianity (2:41-47) The Believer's New Life is:

- 1. Evidenced by ___ (2:41; In spite of 2:37. Cf 16:31-34; 1Thes 1:6)
- 2. Faith is followed by Baptism. Baptism is the _____ of a person's _____. Presentation of a person's death to the old life, and new life in Christ (Rom 6:1-6)

3. Christians join themselves unto a local _____ (2:41). No Christian is to be alone, and “independent!” All are to link-up with other Christians who are determined to live for Christ - no “comfortable” Christianity wanted by God! Not a DIY type of “church” either, but one wanting to follow the apostle’s doctrine!
4. Continues _____ (unchanging commitment) in (2:42):
 - a. The apostles _____ (Cf Eph 2:19,20) - the New Testament before it was written.
 - b. _____ with other believers (their primary friends) - no longer having friendship with the world (James 4:4)
 - c. Breaking of bread (The Lord's _____)
 - d. _____ (loved to spend time worshipping, adoring, interceding, to their God and Saviour Jesus (1 Tim 2:1)
5. They all had a *balanced* fear (2:43). Had a right view of God, and feared Him, even though saved by Him (Prov 8:13, 9:10)
6. Their new culture was evidenced by _____ (2:43)
 - a. In the first century, there were special signs and miracles to convince the _____ that God was with the Christians (Mark 16:17-20). The miracles were mainly associated with the _____ (2:43; 3:6,7; 4:33; 9:40; 14:3; 19:11; 2 Cor 12:12). Others were Stephen (6:8) and Philip (8:6).
 - b. Today, the supernatural is focused on spiritual needs, and greater miracles than the physical (ie, marriages being salvaged, souls being saved, etc). We still desperately need real miracles (James 5:13-20)! And God still does them best!
7. They _____ to each other's needs (2:44,45)
 - a. Had all things common - met each other’s needs (Phil 2:4)
 - b. Sold possessions so that they could meet each other's need. When money ran out, possessions were worth less than people. the Christian’s sacrificed for each other (John 15:13)
 - c. This is **not** communism. Communism is _____ upon people. This is completely voluntary, and in response to need
 - d. This attitude is because they were staying ready for Christ’s return - busy soul-winning, preaching, praying, trusting God! Not worried about real estate, or tomorrow.
 - e. Christians need to live like Jesus is coming back today, but plan like he is not coming back for 1,000 years.
8. The Christian culture is identified by _____ (2:46; 1:14; 2:1) - In one accord. Unity under the authority of the word of God.
9. Still connected with the Jewish _____ (2:46; waiting on the second coming of Christ, 1:11). They later abandon the Temple for _____ churches when they realise it is irrelevant at this time
10. They had preaching and worship services from house to house (2:46; Ro 16:3-5; Act 8:3; Col 4:15). Enjoyed preaching and teaching more than TV (1 Cor 1:18)!
11. As a group, they had favour with ALL the people (2:47) - the people knew that the Christians had been changed for the better!
 - a. With each other (Rom 12:10)
 - b. With the world - The Christian life is one that is called to holiness (1 Pet 1:14-16) Trustworthy, honest, clean, humble
12. New Testament Christianity grew _____ (2:47). People were getting saved, and were being added to the local church, as they yielded to God’s direction in their lives.

III. Conclusion and Study Questions

The Acts of the Apostles

Chapter Three

Christianity Meets The Need

Focus Verse: **Acts 3:6**

"Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk."

I. Study Introduction

- A. The attitude of Bible Christianity has been from its inception: meet the real need. Biblical Christianity cares about feeding and clothing people, but worries more about the eternal destiny of this world, than its comfort level, and its lifespan! Real Christians see the soul more than the skin colour, the sickness, the pain, and the troubles of life - we see the future, and the opportunity that God has given us to meet this world's greatest need - Christ!
- B. Acts chapter three shows Christianity meeting the need, and setting the pattern. yes miracles can and do happen, but the miracle of salvation is the focus! See Mark 2:1-5

II. Study Outline

A. Background

1. People tend to focus upon _____ -i.e., beautiful homes, being debt free (which you ought to be), healthy kids, secure job, etc.
2. Enter two men - two of the most confident men that you would ever meet - Peter, and John in Acts 3. From these two men here in this chapter, I want to dwell on the things primarily that you and I **have** as Christians to show you that in spite of whatever you may think that you don't have, you have all you need in order to be used of God!
3. We know what these two men did NOT have:
 - a. _____ - these were fishermen (Acts 4:13)
 - b. _____ - note 3:6. Isn't that something how God's people normally have *this* lack (see 2 Cor 8:2), and spend more time complaining to God about it!
 - 1) It is not that these things are not desirable, nor that these are wrong to have. It does however get in the way of those who "don't have an education, or plenty of money" when it comes time for them to believe that God can use them!

B. The Riches of New Testament Christianity (Rev 2:8,9; 3:1-11)

1. The Treasure of **Fellowship** (3:1) "*Peter and John went up _____*" Christians need each other, and miss out when they put "buddies" and girl-friends ahead of Christians! Christians too easily forsake the assembling of themselves, which is Church, and the supporting of one another! These Christians may not have had much else, but they had fellowship:
 - a. Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18:2,18,26)
 - b. Paul and Barnabas - Paul and Silas - Paul and Timothy (Paul was rarely alone). Christians were always in groups
 - c. Jesus and His twelve
 - d. Adam and Eve - not good that he was alone
 - e. Based upon commitment to each other and to a higher goal than just fellowship (Act 2:41-47)

There are times to be alone (John the Baptist in the wilderness before his ministry, Jesus in the wilderness for 40 days, Elijah, David tending sheep, etc), but we need each other!
2. **Prayer** (3:1) "*at the hour of _____, being the ninth hour*" Peter and John had Biblically prioritized their time with the important things always getting done - like prayer here! They loved to walk with their Lord in prayer, and through His word! Loved to be together in a place that focused on prayer and preaching - church
3. An **Opportunity** (3:2,3) "*And a certain man, lame...*" This is probably the most important of the things that we as Christians have: **an opportunity to witness for Jesus!** Don't pass up the opportunities that God gives you! For example, when someone curses, or, asks "What's the good word," etc. A mature Christian is always looking out for God given opportunities to be a witness of His saving grace (1 Pet 3:15)! This beggar was over 40 years old, lame from birth (4:22)
4. A **Name** (3:4-7) "*but such as I have give I thee: In the NAME of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk*"
 - a. It is not what you know that gets you into Heaven - it is WHO you know
 - b. This name, Jesus, is the only authority we have to ask something of God (John 14:13)
 - c. It saves the sinner's soul (Rom 10:13)!
 - d. It is our authority to preach and meet as a church (Mt 18:20; Lk 24:47)
 - e. It is what we preach (Acts 8:35)!

- f. It enabled the first century Christians to establish Christianity, and the bible as authentic (Mk 16:17)
- g. It is the focus of everything the Christian does (Col 3:17)
- h. Better than a Credit Card, American Express Card because it has no limit (Phil 4:19), and has no expiration date!
- i. If you only had this name, and nothing else, then *you are rich* (Rom 8:17)

Note that this miracle was accomplished all in the **name** of Jesus Christ! *Faith in that name* (4:16)! These boys were just doing "**what they could**" and leaving the miracle up to God! See Jonah - just did what God told him to do (preached about Him, and His coming judgment), and look at the results! Peter gave him a name that would answer all his soul's needs!

- 1) The lame man leaps up (immediately his feet and ankles receive strength)
- 2) He walks with Peter and John INTO the temple - very mindful of WHO just did the miracle
- 3) Keeps leaping -up (can't get over it) and grabbing Peter, John
- 4) Praises God for that precious Name that works!
- 5) Draws everybody's attention to him, filling their hearts with amazement, and causing them to come and check him out!

This lame man is a great picture of a sinner's salvation:

Lame from his mother's womb	- Sinner from conception
Carried to the temple	- Dependant upon others to get him to God
Carried daily	- Needed someone to take him to Christ every day!
Looked to religion for help	-
Expected that material things would meet his need	-
Commanded to hear Peter's words	- Needed to hear the Gospel (not just see it in your life)
Had faith in the name of Jesus	- Trusted Christ (Eph 1:9-12)
Leaped up - instant healing	- Instant salvation
Rejoiced and enjoyed being made whole	- Brings joy and satisfaction in being made spiritually whole!
Was different from then on	- The Christian is different

- 5. **A Message** (3:12-26) They had something to say! "*And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people...*" One thing about Peter, he was always ready to give an answer of the hope that lieth in him! He had a message ready, in season, and out of season! If we are saved, we do too

C. The Message of New Testament Christianity (3:12-26)

- 1. Declare People's _____ (3:12-18) - get people "lost"
 - a. People naturally misunderstand God (3:12-13)
 - 1) Think that _____ have special powers - either they are from God, or from the devil
 - 2) Think that Jesus was just a ____ - yet everything He did was to prove that He was God come in the flesh
 - b. People are responsible for the murder of an innocent Man (3:13-15) - Religious people at that!
 - 1) YE delivered Christ to Pilate who wanted to let Him go
 - 2) YE denied Jesus a fair trial, and denied His work for you
 - 3) YE desired a murderer to be granted freedom
 - 4) YE did away with the Prince of LIFE - at least you THOUGHT that you did - Jesus got back up, and we stand here as proof that Jesus lives!
 - c. People really don't know better (3:16-18) - Are ignorant
 - 1) Ignorant of the _____ of Jesus (3:16,6; Phil 2:9-11)
 - 2) Ignorant of the work of faith (3:16)- works thru and thru
 - 3) Ignorant of the Scriptures which foretold it all (3:17,18)
- 2. Present the Necessary Conversion (3:19-26) - show them the only hope - how to be "found" - saved!
 - a. Conversion requires _____ (3:19)
 - b. Conversion releases you from the _____ for your sins - "blots out" means to cover over the sin-record with blood!
 - c. Conversion redirects attention to a Biblical view of the future (3:20-24)
 - 1) The _____ return of the Lord. Peter believed it was soon here, Paul believed it (1 Thes 4:14-17), John looked forward to it (Rev 22:20)
 - 2) The establishment of His literal kingdom on this earth - the _____ where Jesus reigns as King of kings (Rev 19:11-16; 20:2-7; Isa 9:6,7) Kingdom of heaven.

- 3) All according to the prophecies of the great lawgiver to the Jews, Moses, as well as ALL the prophets in the Old Testament - they ALL spoke of Christ:
 - a) His coming as God two times! Both are recorded!
 - b) His suffering - to the last detail is described
 - c) His reign - the glory and power
- d. Conversion realises that we are ones the Bible was written to (3:25,26), and the ones that Christ wants to save and bless! God has personally written His word to individuals, and expect personal responses (Cf the parable of the great supper in Luke 14:16-24)

III. Conclusion and Study Question

The Acts of the Apostles

Chapter Four

How to Stand-Up For Christ

Focus Verse: **Acts 4:19**

"But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye."

I. Study Introduction

- A. Trouble goes with Christianity (John 16:33) like peanut butter goes with jam! We are going against the flow (Matt 7:13,14)
- B. The Christian who only wants a free-ride is in for a rude-awakening
- C. But the trouble is not bad. It is what God uses to get the glory as we yield to His grace and power through it all!

II. Study Outline

A. How to Grieve Satan's Crowd (4:1,2)

1. *Deal directly with _____* - carry your gospel out into the streets! The world really doesn't care what we believe, and what we do inside a church-building. What they worry about is us living it!
2. *Teach and preach* - actually explain the truth, and make it clear to people, compelling the lost to come to Christ. Don't let people go on in their darkness! Find a way to wake them up!!!
3. *Convince people that Jesus really is _____* (because of the resurrection, because of the fulfillment of hundreds of prophecies in the Bible), and that all He said was true! That will upset the evolutionists, the humanists, and the religionists!

B. How to Deal With Governmental and Cultural Persecution (4:3-22). Remember to expect it (John 15:20,21)

1. The leaders of opposition (4:1,2,5,6)
 - a. Priests - _____.
 - b. Temple captain - _____ (Cf 19:21-27)
 - c. Sadducees - _____
2. The methods of opposition (4:3,7,16-18,21)
 - a. Confinement (4:3) Scare tactics
 - b. Interrogation (4:7) - belittling, and examining them in court
 - c. Enact laws against free-speech (4:16-18) that involves religion
 - d. Threaten to do worse (4:21)
3. The results of opposition (4:4-14)
 - a. Thousands more were encouraged to trust Christ - He was worth it (4:4)
 - b. The Christians only became _____ (4:8-12)
 - c. The Christians became more _____ upon Christ (4:13)
 - d. Even the opposition will not be able to withstand the truth (4:14; Luke 21:12-17). Christianity has always forced the world to change. Don't allow it to force you to change!
4. The response to opposition (4:8-12, 18-22)
 - a. Be open and honest about what you are doing
 - b. Turn the situation around to the issue of their sins
 - c. Make Jesus Christ THE only answer
 - d. Tell them they MUST BE _____! (Cf John 3:3,7)
 - e. Remind them that God is to be obeyed above any and all others (4:19)
 - f. Explain that you are only talking about what you have experienced, and know for a fact (4:20)
 - g. Remember that God is not going to let you down (4:21-22)!
 - h. Note: This man's infirmity was longer than any on record - Jesus healed a man of 38 years infirmity in John 5:5.

C. How to Have A Good Church Service (4:23-37)

1. Make Christians and church "*your own _____*" (4:23)
2. Praise and honour the God you serve (4:23-30)
 - a. Have a unified burden as a church for prayer, and dependence upon God - "in one accord" ought to be our goal
 - b. Give testimony of God's hand in your life - take notes
 - c. Remember that you are in good company - ie, David, Jesus (4:25-27)
 - d. Beg Him for continued boldness in face of threatenings (4:27)

- e. Be surrendered to fitting in God's plan - instead of making your own (4:28). God had before, already determined that Christ would have to die, and Christ accepted. So should we!
- f. Request continued proof of His hand through your lives
 - 1) _____ to preach and witness
 - 2) _____ to prove - healing, miracles, signs and wonders
- 3. Expect answers to your prayers (4:31; Mark 11:22-24)
 - a. Earthquake - the hand of God
 - b. Filling with the Holy Ghost - continued empowerment
 - c. Speak the word of God (not tongues) with boldness
- 4. Be busy in the work of the Lord (4:32-33; 1 Cor 15:58)
 - a. Maintain unity - by growing in God's word
 - b. De-emphasize _____ - yearn more for God's *presence*
 - c. Give witness of the resurrection - the primary proof that Jesus is the only way is the fact that He alone rose again!
 - d. Have great _____ with each other - focus on the real enemy! This is the greatest need right here - how much grace? GREAT! Put up with things - rather love and enjoy the things of God. The way to get grace is by **humility** (Ja 4:6)
- 5. Take care of one another (4:34-37) - the fruit of grace is *giving*!
 - a. _____ (4:34,35; 2:44-45) - This was not mandatory, but voluntary - a Christian *family* member who wont help out is worthless!
 - 1) Dedicate what you possess back to God- make Him *Lord*
 - 2) Allow God to do what He wants with your life & money
 - 3) Meet the need - tens of thousands of new baby Christians kicked-out of their homes, now needed to be housed and fed. People sold extra houses and lands
 - a) We need to be very careful here - care for people in need, not allow them to be lazy (Cf 1Ti 5:3-6).
 - b) We need to be unified as a church - care financially for those who have lost jobs for the Gospel
 - c) Look out for ways to help each other out as if each were literal brothers or sisters! Kill the pride, and forget about class-systems! Be a family!
 - d) Allow the pastor (like the apostles) to distribute the help (4:35) - set up a means of
 - b. _____ (4:36,37)
 - 1) Barnabas was a great _____, the best of friends to all! He was an exhorter (11:22-24; 14:21,22). He got people excited about living for God, and giving for souls! An exhorter advises, warns, cautions, stirs up Christians!
 - 2) Barnabas was a great _____ - didn't wait for someone else to do things, but took the lead himself! People need encouragement to follow and serve God- so we should work to become good examples
 - 3) The spiritual Christians need to take the _____ (Gal 6:1)
 - 4) The younger Christians are to be humble enough to yield to preaching, & instruction (Pr 13:1; 9:8; Eccl 7:5)

III. Conclusion and Study Questions

The Acts of the Apostles

Chapter Five *Staying True!*

Focus Verse: **Acts 5:11**

“And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things.”

I. Study Introduction

- A. The OT parallel to the Book of Acts is *Joshua*. At this point, Acts 5 matches the instruction of Joshua 7.
- B. Dealing with the sin unto death (1 John 5:16,17) - Six instances:
 - 1. Flippant attitude towards the _____ (1 Cor 11:28-30)
 - 2. Direct _____ to God’s command - as with Moses (Num 20:8) that ended up ruining the presentation of a figure of Christ!
 - 3. Direct disobedience to a clear command of God - as with Jonah
 - 4. _____ and complaining to God about His care - as with Israel in the wilderness - caused them to disregard His instructions and plan - they rebelled, and it cost them dearly!
 - 5. Taking what belongs to God as Achan and his family did in Joshua 7
 - 6. Putting on a religious show of hypocrisy as a Christian - as with Ananias and Sapphira here in Acts 5
- C. The principle is that it only takes one person who does not want to follow God, to hurt the whole body of believers. One person with bitterness, with anger, with sin in their heart, with rebellion can stop God’s blessings - that is what happens in Acts 5
- D. The challenge is for all of us to stay true to purity and to God’s word!

II. Study Outline - Staying True!

A. Sin in the Camp (5:1-11)

- 1. The Deceit of Ananias and Sapphira (5:1-2)
 - a. They wanted the kind of _____ that Barnabas was getting for his generosity
 - b. They used the sale of their property as a means to ACT like they were more sacrificial than they really were - put on a big show of “spirituality” - it is wrong to *act* spiritual. Be real
 - c. They agreed together that it would not hurt anyone (5:2). Our sin hurts more people than we know!
 - d. They _____ to Satan’s pull toward his plan. They were not demon-possessed, but sin-filled instead of Spirit-filled (Eph 5:18). Peter one time had trouble with this (Matt 16:21-23), as did James and John (Luke 9:54,55)
- 2. The Death of Ananias and Sapphira (5:3-10)
 - a. It was not wrong to own property - the best thing
 - b. Peter had the gift of “discernment”
 - c. Peter also had the responsibility to keep the church pure by revealing sin in their midst - Peter did not “kill” Ananias. God did!
 - d. Peter pointed out that Ananias had not lied to people, but to God - specifically, to the Holy Ghost (5:4) - Deity of the Holy Ghost - proof of the Trinity!
 - e. The truth was used to *slay* Ananias - the word of God is a sword (Heb 4:12) and pricked the intention of Ananias’ heart
 - f. Produced great fear (5:5) - it is right to fear the consequences of sin - as a Christian, or unsaved!
 - 1) The consequences of sin in the unsaved: _____!
 - 2) The consequences of sin in the saved: _____ (Heb 12:5-8), and it could lead to early death, and to lose of rewards in heaven!
 - g. This is the first death in Christianity (like the children of Israel having to die in the wilderness due to disobedience)
 - h. The Lord next has Peter identify whether Sapphira was an innocent party, or an accomplice. She was an accomplice (5:7-10), and she dies as well. Two types of sins:
 - 1) _____ - doing something wrong
 - 2) _____ - not doing something right - negligence
- 3. The importance of Ananias and Sapphira (5:11) - to make Christians realise that HIS church is supposed to be _____, and TRUE and REAL - not deceitful, and money-oriented!

B. Signs and Wonders (5:12-16)

- 1. **The meaning of Signs and Wonders:** special miracles that “signify” that something miraculous is going on - to make people “wonder” about important things instead of remaining numb. Signs and wonders included:

- a. Healing, raising the dead, giving sight
 - b. Speaking in tongues
 - c. _____ - telling the future
 - d. Withholding rain for 3 1/2 years (Elijah) in judgment
 - e. The sun darkened, and moon turned into blood (Act 2:19,20)
2. **The Purpose of Signs and Wonders**
- a. To prove that Jesus was God (Acts 2:22)
 - b. To back up the word of God (Mark 16:20)
 - c. To show that God was with the _____ now in Acts 2, like as He had been with the Jews in Exodus (Dt 6:22)
 - d. To mark _____ in God's dealings with mankind (Act 2:19)
 - e. To deceive people and get them against God (Rev 16:14)
3. **The Producers of Signs and Wonders**
- a. _____ Himself - The Lord Jesus (Acts 2:22)
 - b. _____ - Moses and Aaron (Ex 7:3), and the prophets
 - c. _____ - By the hands of the _____ (Acts 2:43; 4:33; 5:12; 14:3,4; 19:11; Ro 15:19; 2 Cor 12:12). They got this personally from the Lord Jesus (Mt 10:1,2).
 - d. _____ - By the first _____ (Acts 6:8; 8:5-7) - they were given this power by the apostles (Acts 6:5,6)
 - e. The _____ (Mt 24:24; Rev 13:11-15), and his "ministers" (Ex 7:10-12)
4. **The Proofs of True Signs and Wonders**
- a. They worked _____ time - with and without faith by the recipient (Acts 5:16; 28:7,8).
 - b. They worked until the _____ of the apostolic age (2 Tim 4:20; 1 Cor 13:8)
 - c. They never contradicted the word of God - always were subject to verification (1 John 4:1)
5. **The Problem with Signs and Wonders**
- a. An _____ people look for them - not true seekers of Christ (Mt 12:38-41), but of more sources of power!
 - b. The devil can easily counterfeit most of them (Ex 8:16-18)
 - c. The Lord will allow signs and wonders to confound the rebellious (2Thes 2:8-12), and test the Christian (Dt 13:1-5).
 - d. Miracles are to be subject to the word of God (Isa 8:18-20). If they aren't valid, then the magician is to be _____ (Dt 13)
 - e. People are only to believe the _____ - not miracles (John 4:48). The miracles were to get people to believe the word (Mk 16:20)!
6. **The Place of Signs and Wonders** - in the Past, and in the Future
- a. Primarily in _____
 - b. To the Jews throughout the world - to get them back to God
 - c. To some of the Gentiles - but not as a general rule. Paul was restrained in using miracles outside Israel (Cf 1Cor 1:22-24)
 - d. Were finished at the completion of the Bible (1 Cor 13:8-10)
 - e. They will occur again in the _____ (manna from heaven feeding the Jews; water from the rock; earthquakes, sun being turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, etc). These miracles will once again be directed at the Jews!
7. **The Proper Results of Signs and Wonders** - The apostles demonstrated authority over laying the foundation of the church
- a. Produced _____ in the church - already had it
 - b. Seriousness about being a part of the New Testament church
 - c. People getting saved - consistent focus!
 - d. People getting healed (5:16) - every one! Everybody was ready for the coming of the kingdom of Heaven-Millennium
- C. Staying Faithful (5:17-42) Consistent Christianity**
1. The assault on the Apostles (5:17,18) - this is the natural result of revivals (4:31; 13:44,45)
 2. God's _____ - miraculous (5:19). Doesn't always have to deliver, but delights to!
 3. The Angel's command (5:20)
 - a. **Go** (Mt 28:18-20; Mk 16:15)
 - b. **Stand** (Eph 6:13,14)
 - c. **Speak** - not just living the Gospel, but preaching it
 - d. **Speak ALL** the words of this life (2 Tim 4:1,2)

4. The Apostle's _____ (5:21) - to obey - even though at great risk
5. The Council's Humiliation (5:21-26) - they are not in control!
6. The "Nice" Approach (5:26-28; Rom 8:31)
7. The Clear Goals of the Apostles (5:28-32) - not to heal everyone
 - a. To obey God, over man - in everything (Prov 3:5,6; Ex 1:22)
 - b. To fill Jerusalem (any area) with the doctrine (truth) of Christ - not satisfied with 11, 120, 500, 3000, 5000,!
 - c. To convince sinners of their responsibility for the murder of the innocent blood of Christ
 - d. To call people to repentance & forgiveness of sins by Christ
8. The Effect of the preaching of the word of God (5:33-42)
 - a. _____ deep down into the sinner's heart (Heb 4:12)
 - b. Causes people to want to _____ the messenger (Mt 21:33-39) and stop the message. Religion is the source of all killing (Rev 18:24) throughout history! Without Christ, religion is only the love of money!
 - c. Causes people to _____ (5:34-39)
 - 1) Gamaliel was a Bible-believer, not a Bible-doer (Ja 1:22) - teacher of the Pentateuch supposed to know truth
 - 2) He reasons that human endeavors will always ultimately fail, because they require perfect leadership. As with:
 - a) Theudas - a false prophet
 - b) Judas of Galilee - rogue leader of a tax rebellion
 - 3) He points out the God's endeavours cannot be stopped, because **He** never dies
 - 4) He wants to let the Christians go, because if Christianity is of man, then it will fail because its leader is dead. But if it is of God, then they had better be careful to not be found fighting God - guilt is showing up here!
 - d. Causes ___ in life of the Christian (5:40,41; 1Cor 1:18,23,24)
 - 1) Preaching and living godly will always produce persecution (2Tim 3:12). Should it ruin our attitude?
No
 - 2) They were in good company - with all the other men and women of God throughout history, including Jesus
 - 3) It was all for the Lord anyway (Col 1:23)
 - 4) No matter what we lose - the Lord will make it up (Mk 10:28-30)
 - e. Encourages Christians to just keep on going for the Lord, and being faithful doing what God tells them to do (5:42)!
 - 1) Taught daily out in public - in the Temple - like church
 - 2) Taught daily in every house - personal discipleship!
 - 3) Taught Jesus Christ to Jews who already knew the O.T.

III. Conclusion and Study Questions

The Acts of the Apostles

Chapter Six

Delegating the Work

Focus Verse: **Acts 6:3**

“Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.”

I. Study Introduction

- A. No one person can do all the work involved in the church ministry. God designed Christianity like a family, with more than just a few helping out. In God’s family, everyone pulls their weight, and more. There is not to be *welfare*, with the majority reaping the benefits of the work of the few! There needs to be delegation - the appointment of helpers, fellowlabourers, fellowservant. Not power-hungry leaders!
- B. In chapter six, God allows the church to experience some major “growing pains” in order to prepare them for greater growth, and for a further outreach than just Jerusalem!

II. Study Outline - Delegating the Work (Acts 6:1-15)

A. Reaching the Limit (6:1-2)

1. With over 15,000 new Christians, the 12 apostles were well beyond their abilities in trying to minister the word of God to people. They had become overwhelmed by handling all the donations, coordination of housing and feeding the widows. It was getting to where they had no time to teach the Scriptures. People who depended upon the Christians for food were being left out and were going hungry! They had no other source of help
2. Definitely the primary work of the Apostles was to _____ (6:2; Eph 4:20,21), and to _____ (get ability to teach)
3. But some others had to take over handling the ministrations of food, and other help. There were too many “_____” and so few “_____” in the congregation. Leads to murmuring (Cf Ex 15:24; 16:2,8; 17:3), and to big trouble - there needed to be a balance!
4. Called delegation, commission, ambassador. Examples:
 - a. _____ and his 70 elders (Ex 18:13-24)
 - b. Jesus and His 12 apostles (Mt 10:5-10)
 - c. Jesus and His 70 disciples (Luke 10:1-3)
 - d. Jesus and all of Christianity (Mt 28:19,20; 2 Cor 5:20)
 - e. The Pastor, and his Teachers (Eph 4:11,12)

B. Delegating Pastoral Responsibilities (6:3-6)

1. The inventory among the local Christians (6:3) - don’t bring-in someone from outside. Look “*among ourselves*” for:
 - a. These are the four qualifications of Godly servanthood:
 - b. Men of _____ - their character is well known
 - c. Spiritual men, _____ of the Holy Spirit - obedient to God (Acts 5:32) - doers of the word, and not hearers only (Jam 1:22)
 - d. Wise men (having wisdom; experienced). Not novices or people playing games
 - e. _____ - who will accept assignments and serve, instead of always trying to lead! These men become known as “deacons” which simply means “servants” (1 Tim 3:8,10).
 - f. All of us ought to have the desire to be these kind of Christians!
2. Resolve to keep things proper (6:4; 1Cor 14:40) - maintaining the priority tasks - the Apostles would give themselves to labouring in prayer, and in the word (1 Tim 5:17; 2 Tim 3:15)
3. Seven men are chosen (6:5)
 - a. _____ - his name means “crown”. He is well known for his faith in Christ, and being filled with the Holy Spirit. He is the primary person in Acts 7. He then gets stoned by the religious rulers!
 - b. _____ - not the Apostle by this name. He is the primary person of Acts 8 (with Samaritans getting saved, and then the eunuch). Becomes known as the “evangelist” (8:5; 21:8)
 - c. Procorus - his name means “*leader of the choir*”
 - d. Nicanor - his name means “*conqueror*” - soul-winner
 - e. Timon - his name means “*honourable*”
 - f. Parmenas - his name means “*faithful*”
 - g. Nicolas - his name means “*a conqueror of the people.*” He had first converted to Judaism, then to Christianity - and he was still fervent - many lose fervency after a few mistakes.

4. Notice **how** they were chosen. Was it “unconditional election by God?” By dictate from the apostles? Was it anarchy (people fighting to be picked)? No. It was by congressional choice - the choice of the congregation (both OT and NT truth). This is the basis of *democracy* - people chose within the limits of law.
5. Authorising the servants (6:6). The laying on of hands had no miraculous power - just authorisation to serve in the name of the Lord with the backing of the church (as with Joshua; Num 27:18). This is where maverick, and rogue Christians have the problem: ie, working _____ someone (Luke 7:6-9). This is why the modern church makes God sick - there are very few servants!
6. Some Areas of Service in a local church:

- a. Sunday School teaching, and class helpers
- b. Puppeteers
- c. Mailing Birthday Cards, and Visitor letters
- d. Book table - organising and handling books, tracts, videos
- e. Tea table - purchasing, organising the table, washing cups
- f. The Pastor’s visitation partner(s)
- g. Weekly Bible Club leader
- h. Discipler - teaches someone through the discipleship course
- i. Crèche worker on Sunday evenings

C. Reaping a Greater Harvest (6:7)

1. Satan’s attempt to split the church had been defeated by adapting to meet the need of the Grecian believers. Principle: don’t only look after your own life (Philp 2:4). In other words, meet people’s needs!
2. Christianity was back in action. Things were as they should be.
 - a. People were sharing the work-load. More involvement.
 - b. The word of God spread out as the apostles now spent more time on getting it out.
 - c. The number of people getting saved also increased
 - d. Those who had been opposed to Christ the most (the priests), were surrendering to the truth - Satan was losing ground!

D. Stephen Stands on His Own (6:8-15) He enters into battle!

1. Stephen’s miracles (6:8)
 - a. We are in the apostolic age of the church
 - b. The apostles have extended powers to these deacons
 - c. The deacons not only served tables, but preached the Gospel
 - d. Wonders and miracles will always be associated with those full of faith, and power. Not by the laying on of hands, but by the closeness of the walk with the Lord!
2. Stephen’s menace (6:9-15). Five synagogues take on Stephen
 - a. The synagogue was the Jewish “church” - meant “_____”.
 - b. Here was a synagogue of “worshippers” who “disputed” (debated) with Stephen about the Scriptures! If people would just do this today!
 - c. They were not able to win against his wisdom (depth) and spirit (attitude; confidence, correctness).
 - d. So, when you can’t win with facts, you use _____ (6:11-13)
 - 1) The “religious” crowd believes the end justifies the means, so they bribe some professional liars to stir up the crowd who were listening to Stephen preach.
 - 2) They worked on people’s emotions - said that Stephen was attacking Moses and God (ie, Mary, and the saints).
 - 3) Brought Stephen before “the council” (this council is working overtime putting these guys on trials!
 - 4) False witnesses take center stage - reject the truth, so they promote liars! Jesus was accused by false witnesses.
3. Stephen’s message (6:14).
 - a. The second coming of Christ was _____ - at any moment! Jesus was coming back, and they could die at His return - not talking about something way off in distant future! Not looking for signs either - signs already fulfilled enough!
 - b. Jesus, (not a nuclear bomb) will *Himself* destroy this Temple, and place (2 Thes 1:7-9). The Temple will be “occupied” by a false christ - the abomination of desolation!
 - c. The “customs” of the Jews will be changed - this was a big cut because the Jews treasured their “customs” (Mk 7:9). They already had been as far as a Christian was concerned:
 - 1) No more lambs to be slaughtered
 - 2) No more priesthood - every believer is now a priest
 - 3) No more Sabbaths, religious ceremonies - now it is the first day of the week (Sunday) that has the memorial!

- d. That Jesus changes lives - Stephen's face was not full of fear, or hatred, but of joy, and confidence - like an angel (6:15)! This was the greatest part of Stephen's message!

III. Conclusion and Study Questions

The Acts of the Apostles

Chapter Seven

Learning the Lessons of History

Focus Verse: **Acts 7:51**

“Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye.”

I. Study Introduction

- A. The Bible stands alone in its ability to teach people how to understand its contents! Nobody has to write a book “about” the Bible - really! People are supposed to be Bible **readers**! The Bible is its own interpreter, and explains itself better than any *theologian* or *scholar*!
- B. Here in Acts 7, God reviews history, and shows us some great truths that maybe we miss when we go through the Bible! What you are about to see is how God presents truth
 1. He uses preachers - not great educators or teachers
 2. He teaches history - HIS-story
 3. There is one thing that we learn from history - and that is, as a general rule, people **never** learn from history!
 4. Those who do not learn the lessons of history, are destined to repeat them! Israel going around in the wilderness for 40 years...
- C. God’s preachers throughout the Bible spend a lot of time going back over history, and showing God’s hand. History is usually the most boring subject taught in school - but only because people believe there is no meaning to history - no God behind the scenes. But when you see the Author of history at work behind the scenes, it comes alive
- D. Stephen, a servant of the church in Jerusalem is about to be used of God to teach some highly educated *ignoramuses* some Bible history - and it would do us all some great good to sit in on the “class!”

II. Background

- A. Remember, Stephen has been caught, and brought before a religious council for preaching on the street some “heretical” things (6:13-15):
 1. The second coming of Christ was _____ - at any moment!
 2. Jesus, (not a nuclear bomb) will *Himself* destroy the Temple!
 3. The “customs” of the Jews will be changed!
 4. That Jesus changes lives! Not the catechism class!
- B. The high priests asks Stephen to begin his defense (7:1)
- C. Notice that Stephen wastes no time defending his actions, but takes up the challenge of preaching the gospel, and defending Christ’s desire to save a bunch of religious sinners headed for hell!

III. Study Outline - Learning the Lessons of History

A. God’s Work Throughout History

1. History begins with ____, not with man (7:2)
2. Stephen focuses on Jewish history to make it relate to the Jews
3. Stephen reminds them of God’s hand in the life of Abraham (7:2-7)
 - a. Started while he was in Mesopotamia - unsaved, surrounded by an ungodly society
 - b. God calls Abraham to leave everything: home, family, religion, plans
 - c. God challenges Abraham to follow Him to a land he had never seen before - real faith
 - d. Abraham obeys, and arrives in Canaan - the promised land
 - e. But Abraham is not GIVEN anything yet (7:5) only promises
 - 1) The land
 - 2) Children (Abraham has no child yet)
 - 3) Bondage and struggle - part of the promise
 - 4) Redemption - the Passover - freedom
 - f. The covenant of circumcision (7:8) - God made a promise to Abraham and to his children forever that was identified by the act of circumcision - a mark of ownership (Christians also are owned; 1 Cor 6:19,20)
4. Stephen reminds them of God’s hand in the lives of Isaac, Jacob, and the twelve patriarchs (7:8)
5. Stephen reminds them of God’s hand being with Joseph (7:9-16)
 - a. God was with him when he was sold into slavery (7:9)
 - b. God was with him when he was delivered from all his afflictions (7:10)
 - c. God was with him when Joseph was made governor (7:10)
 - d. God was with him, using Joseph to prepare for all of his family to come to Egypt according to God’s plan (7:11-15)

- 1) Used Joseph's affliction for good (Gen 50:20; Rom 8:28)
 - 2) God uses trouble to get sinners to repent
 - 3) God uses trouble to get Christians back right
 - 4) God used WW2 to get the Jews back into Palestine
 - 5) God is doing stuff in your life as well to get you right - I would give in early, and not resist Him!
- e. 75 souls were saved from starvation, and were prepared for God's next phases of history - a continual building upon the past (7:14-16):
- 1) The birth of a mighty nation IN Egypt (2 million people)
 - 2) The development of the need of that nation for God - only develops when under bondage
 - 3) Their blood redemption - at Passover
6. God's hand was with Jacob's children - known as the _____ (7:17-27) - *Israel* was Jacob's new name
- a. The time of the promise (Gen 15:13-16) drew near (7:17-18)
 - b. God allowed persecution to begin in order to prepare the hearts of Israel to rely on the Passover Lamb!
 - 1) A king who knew not Joseph - not ignorance, but no interest in knowing a Jew! **Mind control**. Same with TV, education, politicians - don't want to know!
 - 2) Slavery of the people - **Will control**
 - 3) Systematic murdering of male children - **birth control**
 - c. The persecution also helped Israel to "_____" to leave!
 - d. God provided a deliverer - Moses (7:19-27) - always does!
 - 1) Miraculous protection at birth (7:19,20)
 - 2) Taken into Pharaoh's house - in spite of Pharaoh's death sentence (7:21)
 - 3) He learned all the world's wisdom and knowledge (7:21,22) and became mighty in words and deeds (7:22)
 - 4) But he sensed something was wrong
 - a) Something was wrong with how own people - Jews
 - b) His heart was not right (7:23) - felt out of place
 - c) All the education and money and power in the world wont fix the heart!
 - 5) He takes action - gets ahead of God (7:23-26) and fails!
 - 6) He is totally misunderstood by the Jews (7:27)

e. The Jews complain, "**WHO MADE THEE TO BE A JUDGE AND A _____ OVER US?**" (7:27) - *This is Stephen's focus!!!*

7. This is where humanity begins to always resist and reject God's hand in their lives - always consider it a bother!

B. Man's Failure Throughout History (7:25-30) Illustrated by _____

1. Moses got ahead of God's timetable - three responses to God
 - a. Man seems to either get ahead of God - usually happens at a young age, and produces disillusionment
 - b. We _____ God as He attempts to work in a person's life we find ourselves always kicking and screaming (Ps 78:40-42)
 - c. We totally reject God - never listening to God at all!
2. Moses supposed _____ would understand his intentions (7:25)
3. Moses supposed that God would work everything out - *which He will*, but you are not to _____ God or force God's hand (Mt 4:6,7)
4. Moses feared man (_____) more than he feared God (7:29)
5. Moses shut out God for __ years (7:30) - out of bitterness, and disappointment - he let 40 years go wasted because of his own attitude (he supposed that things should have been different - we all think this same thing)! This is a great sin!

C. God's Plan All Through History Has Been to _____ (7:30-50)

1. He tried to Save Israel through Moses (7:30-36)
 - a. God always goes looking for us - calling us back (7:31; Gen 3:7-10). We can't get back, so God comes to us!
 - b. God never _____ (7:32,33) - things happen that seem like set-backs, but God can't change, and His plans don't change
 - c. God _____ and is well aware of the events in our lives (7:34; Heb 4:14-16)
 - d. God can use _____ (who allows God to transform them; Rom 12:1,2):

- e. A _____ here - Moses - if he would get saved - trust the Lord instead of his own intelligence, and abilities
- f. A _____ - Abraham - if he would just learn his lesson
- g. A _____ - Peter - if he would just devote all his energy to serving his risen Lord!
- h. God uses some people (7:34,35; like Moses here) simply because He knows that it will require _____ on the part of the Jews to follow him (stammering, unsure, not quite polished).
- i. God's work in history is always evident by the _____ - God likes to make it plain that He is behind things, and not just "chance" (7:36)
- 1) Signs and wonders started with Moses to Israel - Jewish
 - 2) Signs and wonders are for confirmation of God's word
 - 3) True signs and wonders are unquestionable
2. Moses prophesied of a coming Prophet like himself that people are to hear, and follow (7:37-44; Dt 18:15,18,19)
- a. This Person would be _____ like Moses - He would speak the words of God, and of things to come (John 1:21,25; 6:14)
 - b. This Prophet would be "of your brethren" (_____)
 - c. This Prophet would deal directly with the _____ (Mt 15:24; 10:5,6)
 - d. This Prophet would have a _____ like Moses did (7:38)
 - 1) A church is an _____ group. It means "an assembly that has been called together" - specifically, "called OUT of the world, and INTO an assembly" (Heb 10:25)
 - 2) An Old Testament church was an assembled group of Bible believers - they formed *synagogues*. The Jews were called OUT of Egypt, and assembled first in the wilderness, and then later, as a nation in Canaan
 - 3) A New Testament church is an assembled group of Bible believers - they formed *churches*. The Christians are called OUT of the world, and assemble "in the wilderness" right now (non-impressive buildings sometimes), but later they will assemble in _____ (Heb 12:22,23)
 - e. This Prophet would deliver *lively* oracles - _____ - N.T. just as Moses delivered to Israel the Old Testament.
 - f. This Prophet would NOT be followed by everyone, just as Moses was not followed by all the Jews (7:39-44)
 - 1) The Jews preferred to set up their own religion - same with all peoples - they worshipped "Egypt" (the world)
 - 2) They didn't like a leader who was not predictable
 - 3) The people preferred only _____ (2 Tim 3:1-4)
 - 4) God fixed it so that the people didn't just dabble a bit in false religions, but went "all the way!" (7:41-44) - Idolatry is like a landslide, continuously getting worse!
 - 5) Jewish idolatry (7:41-44):
 - a) First they worshipped a golden ____ - *holy cow!*
 - b) It is only after God has offered the truth, and been rejected that God turns (repents) and leaves them alone (7:42)! The worst place to be is without God!
 - c) They were not satisfied, and so worshipped all the "*host of _____*" (astrology, Stonehenge, Newgrange, spiritism, *beings from outer space*, modern evolutionary astronomy) - Dt 4:19; Jer 7:18
 - d) This was all during the Israelite's trek through the wilderness for 40 years! Still going on today!
 - e) They carried in their hearts the tabernacle of the sun-god _____ - Ammonite demon that required people to _____ their children in human sacrifice!
 - f) They worshipped a star related to a Babylonian god named **Rempham** - an obscure god - a passing fad!
 - 6) And God fixed it so that they "reaped" just what they sowed (Gal 6:9) - they ended up captives, carried away into Babylon for ____ years!
 - 7) Even though they had the tabernacle of witness all along
3. The Tabernacle (7:45-50).
- a. Built by _____ under God's instructions (Ex 25-40)
 - b. It was to be a "witness" (it testified to the people of God's presence among them - reminded them)
 - c. It was to be the place that all sacrifices were brought; all tithes; and all worship was to be held.
 - d. It had the following components:
 - 1) An Outer Court - anybody could enter
 - a) An Altar of Sacrifice
 - b) A Brass Washtub - Brazen Laver (lavatory)

- 2) An Inner Court - Only the priests could enter
 - a) A seven-branched _____
 - b) A Table with twelve “shewbreads” (loaves of bread)
 - c) An Altar of Incense
- 3) A Holy of Holies - only the high priest, once a year could enter
 - a) The “_____” (box) of the covenant
 - b) The covering “mercyseat” - covered by Cherubs
- e. This was no ordinary “tent - it matched the pattern of the true tabernacle in heaven (Heb 8:5; 2 Cor 12:2)
- f. Carried by _____ (Jesus) into Canaan
- g. King David wanted to make God a permanent testimony of His power and presence in Jerusalem - a _____ (7:45,46).
- h. But David’s son, _____ was to be the builder (7:47).
- i. All the while God kept reminding Israel that God really doesn’t live in Temples (7:48-50)
- j. But Israel wanted to build it anyway

D. But Man Through it all does nothing but “_____” God (7:51-53)

1. People are “stiffnecked” - _____, unrepentant (7:51; Ex 32:9)!
2. People are “uncircumcised” in heart and ears - untransformed, unchanged (Rom 2:28,29)
3. People are consistent - always resisting (7:51)
4. Notice it is the Holy Ghost that has been at work (7:51)
5. All the prophets were persecuted and hated by the Jews!
6. The Jews even killed the very prophets who foretold of the coming Just One (the Messiah)
7. Just like they murdered and betrayed the Messiah Himself (7:52)
8. All in the face of receiving God’s word, and not living it (7:53)

E. Stephen’s Altar-Call

1. They were cut to the heart - not just an intellectual exchange
2. They were only full of anger - either make people glad, or mad!
3. But Stephen remained full of the Holy Ghost - never lost his temper
 - a. He saw the glory of God - Moses saw this; David saw this
 - b. He saw Jesus there next to God the Father
4. So the crowd **stones** Stephen - the first martyr of Jesus Christ
 - a. Note the “_____ of spirit” - wrong spirit
 - b. Note the rejection of his “words” - Stephen fought with Scripture, and the people resisted! He did not fight with swords and guns!
 - c. Note the carefulness of the crowd - must have “witnesses” to verify the people’s actions that day (7:58)
 - d. This turns out to be the influencing of the greatest Christian to ever live - Saul of Tarsus (7:58)!
5. Up to the very last, Stephen’s heart is broken for his people (7:59,60)
 - a. His whole focus was continually on the Lord
 - b. He trusted to the end in the Lord to “receive his spirit”
 - c. He wished that Israel would not reap anymore for their sins!
 - d. A Christian’s death is only a falling asleep

IV. Conclusion and Study Questions

The Acts of the Apostles

Chapter Eight The Church Expanding

Focus Verse: Acts 8:4

“Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.”

I. Study Introduction

- A. Up until chapter 8, Christianity has remained only in Jerusalem, even though Jesus said in Acts 1:8 to go “to the _____ part of the earth”
- B. When the Christians would not do what God needed them to do, it showed that they needed some “correction” which came in the form of persecution. They were no stranger to persecution - it was just that, now it was getting rough, and instead of the by-product of the troubles causing the new Christians to give-up on Christ and God’s word, it transformed them into a fluid army of able soldiers of the cross, taking the Gospel that had transformed them to the world Christ called them to go to! They were finally in motion!
- C. Chapter 8 outlines **why** a church grows, and **how** it all happens!

II. Study Outline - Acts Chapter Eight - The Church Expanding

A. NT Christianity Expands By _____ (2:4,11; 7:54)

1. Preaching is fuelled by the following ingredients
 - a. Prayer - much prayer (10 days of it in the upper room)
 - b. Surrender to obedience to God’s will (James 1:22)
 - c. The power of the Holy Spirit (Eph 5:18)
 - d. Faithfulness to the message (2 Cor 2:17)
2. Bible preaching focuses on the following topics:
 - a. The _____ of Scripture (2:15,16) - prophecy, lives transformed, demonstration that God is involved in life!
 - b. The _____ of Scripture
 - 1) Life is short (2:20)
 - 2) People are wicked to the core (2:22; 3:13-15; 7:51,52)
 - c. The _____ of Scripture
 - 1) It humbles (Isa 66:1,2)
 - 2) It saves (1 Peter 1:23)
 - 3) It comforts and encourages (Rom 15:4; 1 Thes 4:18)
 - 4) It _____ (Eph 6:17; Matt 4:4; Rev 19:11,15)
 - d. The _____ of Scripture (1 Cor 1:18,23)
 - 1) He has the answer - to everything we go through.
 - a) *Salvation* - get sin taken cared-of (Acts 2:21; 4:12)
 - b) *Service* - get busy growing and serving your Lord like you used to serve the devil and yourself!
 - c) *Sanctification* - stay clean - work at it, don’t take a break!
 - d) All of life’s problems are related to our handling of those three areas!
 - 2) He cares enough to give us the answer - all in Christ (1 Cor 1:30; Philp 1:21; Gal 2:20)
3. Bible Preaching results in the following things
 - a. A decision being made, for or against Christ - glad or mad!
 - b. A softening or a hardening of the heart
 - c. A life being lived more for Christ, or for the devil!
 - d. There is no such thing as a middle, neutral ground!

B. NT Christianity Expands in Response to _____ (8:1-4)

1. Satan hates God and anything related to God (2 Thes 2:3,4)
 - a. Satan _____ you, and looks forward to people dying (8:1; 1 Pet 5:8; Mt 7:15; John 8:44; Gen 3:3-7; Mk 5:5)
 - b. If Satan cannot kill you, then he will try and _____ you
 - c. If he cannot suppress you, then he will attempt to invalidate you - make you incapable of doing anything for God

2. Satan loves _____ - it takes the glory away from God!
 - a. Religion is what man DOES for God (Gal 1:13; James 1:27)
 - b. Salvation is what God DID for sinful man (Eph 2:8,9)
3. Satan uses people's dedication to religion, and tradition to try and stamp out a Christian's dedication to the living God (John 16:2). This turns out to be a time of GREAT persecution (8:1)
4. But God's people are not normal anymore (Acts 5:35-37)
 - a. New Testament Christianity does not die when scattered - they _____! When they hang around in one location, they die - stagnation. Get caught up in themselves (Rev 3:14-17)
 - b. When Christians stagnate, God allows troubles and persecutions to arise to get us going again (Ps 119:67,71,75)
5. So, here comes trouble - Saul of Tarsus (8:1)
 - a. He is the major focus of Acts from chapter 13 on
 - b. He was a Pharisee, of the tribe of Benjamin (Philp 3:5)
 - c. He personally persecuted "the Church" at Jerusalem (8:1,3) - these are Christians who simply loved Jesus above all else!
 - 1) Made havoc of the body of believers - ruin, wasted, devastation (or at least tried to) of the people's lives
 - 2) Broke into people's homes - like Gestapo; inquisition
 - 3) Dragging (hauling) men and women to prison and leaving them there to die - all in the "name of God"
 - 4) He personally hurt and **beat** people (Ac 22:19; 1Ti 1:13)
 - 5) He forced people to _____ Jesus' name (Act 26:11)
 - 6) He even went to foreign cities to persecute (Acts 26:11)
6. And yet, notice the effect (Acts 8:1,4) - *The world is reached*
 - a. Christians were scattered into areas that needed the Gospel - God was more concerned about the _____, than the comfort of the saved (Lk 15:3-5) - He pushed them into the next regions
 - b. The word was **PREACHED** - they couldn't help it (Jer 20:9)
 - c. The word was preached _____ and churches sprang up!

C. NT Christianity Expands by _____ (8:5-8) - Miracles

1. *The Miracle of _____*
 - a. That someone would declare Christ to this world - all new cults form on the basis of Biblical dedication to Christ
 - b. That someone would gladly be identified as a fool for Christ (1 Cor 1:21-23; 2 Cor 4:5) - their identify is lost in Christ's!
 - c. That someone would preach **only** the Bible (Act 8:4; 20:27)
2. *The Miracle of Reaching Different _____* - The Gospel is not bound by cultures - it over-rules culture (i.e., it judges all cultures by going beyond cultural differences, and shows what is right in God's sight, and what is wrong; i.e., 1 Cor 11:14,15)
 - a. A Jew preaching the good news to Samaritans
 - b. A white man preaching to a black man and being heard
 - c. A black man preaching to an Asian man and being heard
 - d. An Irish person witnessing to an Englishman
 - e. A Gentile preaching to a Jew and being heard
 - f. All because God crossed-over and became man to reach man!
3. *The Miracle of _____ (8:6-8) - Greatest Miracle!*
 - a. People hearing, and loving the Gospel - instead of rejecting
 - b. People obeying and living the Gospel - gave heed (Ro 6:17)
 - c. Lives transformed - Satan's dominion rejected (Ro 6:18)
 - d. Health restored - many people's illnesses are due to a lifetime of worry, and confusion, and deceit
 - e. Real Joy apparent in the lives of people again!
4. *The Miracle of _____ that all this is of God*
 - a. Philip did miracles like the Apostles - he never failed
 - b. The miracles backed up what Philip preached - just as Jesus did (John 10:37,38) - The outstanding miracles were for the Apostles, and for the first deacons until the Bible was completed (Mk 16:20). But miracles are also for today!
 - c. Types of miracles performed:
 - 1) Removal of "_____ spirits"
 - a) Spiritual demons that are unclean - they defile, ruin
 - b) They control, and blind people

- c) They can be overpowered by the truth (John 8:32) and by faith in the Son of God (John 8:36)
- d) Engage a person head on (Act 26:18; 2Ti 2:24-26)

2) Healing of impossible diseases - crippling palsies

D. NT Christianity Expands by Perception (8:9-24) - Discernment

1. Introduction
 - a. Not everyone who says that they are “saved,” is (Mt 7:21,22)
 - b. There are _____ sown in among the wheat (Mt 13:24-40)
 - c. Satan works not only from the outside, but from the inside
2. Simon the _____ (8:9-11) - this where the term “Simony” came from - purchasing religious positions and powers!
 - a. A sorcerer - used magical trickery (witchcraft) to deceive
 - b. A channeler - attempted to prove that “he” was what God used to do great miracles - all “through” him
 - c. Stuck on himself - very proud, as the _____ (Isa 14:12-14)
 - d. A charismatic (gifted) leader - people gladly followed him
 - e. Primarily used sorceries (healings, magic) toward his own end - emphasised the “proof” of his claims, so that all the Samaritans of the area would look to him for revelation
3. Philip’s effect on the Samaritans (8:12,13)
 - a. Total _____ - they dropped Simon, and believed Philip:
 - 1) Philip never focused on himself
 - 2) He preached about the kingdom of God - salvation
 - 3) He preached about Jesus Christ as the only answer!
 - 4) He challenged everyone to _____ of their religion, get baptized, and follow only Christ - which they gladly did!
 - 5) He miracles were “different” - they were long lasting, and focused on eternity, and holiness - not excitement
 - b. Total defeat for Simon - he couldn’t beat them, so he joined!
4. Simon’s “fruit” from his life was wrong (8:13-18; Mt 7:16)
 - a. Simon sees the Apostles give the seal of the Holy Ghost
 - b. Simon is used to doing “miracles” and wants that ability
 - c. His real problem was *no* _____ (Acts 20:21) - Jesus was just another “power” to connect with and get in-tune with
5. Peter sees through Simon’s “innocent request” (8:19-23)
 - a. We need to see the wolves - _____ (Acts 20:21)
 - b. John the Baptist had this discernment (Mt 3:1,2,5-8)
 - c. Maintains clear lines of distinction, and purity (1 Pet 2:9)
6. Simon learns to fear God first, and then trust and love Him (8:24)
 - a. If repentance is hard for you, then something is wrong
 - b. Maintain a soft heart towards God (Pr 13:1; 15:31; 2Ti 4:2)
 - c. Examine yourself & develop real Christian fruit (2Cor 13:5)

E. Christianity Expands by Personal Work (8:25-40) Soul-Winning

1. Personal Work is _____ work (8:25)
 - a. The majority of work that it takes to build and establish a local group of believers into a church is NOT done by the leaders, but by the BODY itself (Cf 8:1,4)!
 - b. A church that is built by the labours of the “few” is like a human body that is only operating with one hand, and an eye - classified as “invalid,” “sick,” and “crippled.”
2. Personal Work is _____-led work (8:26)
 - a. It is spiritual work - not looking to “feed the world” even though that is important - more interested in the starving souls (Amos 8:11)
 - b. Philip is already working at this (8:4,5) already in motion.
 - c. Philip is listening for guidance instructions (Zech 4:6) - He is “tuned-in” (Ps 46:10) to the spirit (Eph 5:18)
3. Personal Work is _____ driven (8:27) not convenience driven
 - a. There is no debate in Philip’s mind whether he would obey!
 - b. There is NO faith without obedience (Rom 10:17; Jam 1:22)
 - c. Every Christian must learn to desire to find out what God wants done through their lives, and then do it (Rom 12:1,2)
4. Personal Work is _____ rewarded (8:27,28)

- a. God will always lead you to sinners - they are everywhere!
 - b. God places ___ people in your path - people that can and will affect others
 - c. God brought Philip to meet a very special man
 - 1) He is an Ethiopian - black central African
 - 2) He is an Eunuch - treasurer under queen Candace
 - 3) A seeker of the true God
 - a) He had previously changed from idolatry to Judaism - a _____
 - b) He was a believer in the Bible- bought his own copy
5. Personal Work is _____ work (8:29-38)
- a. You have to _____ to (get to) the person - he “ran”
 - b. You have to _____ (find) a “point of contact” - a common issue that the other person understands and relates to:
 - 1) The Eunuch had lots of misconceptions about the Bible
 - 2) God can use anything - current events, troubles, etc.
 - 3) Philip uses the man’s need for “interpretation”
 - c. You have to _____ the person to face the Scriptures
 - d. You have to _____ the person to use his brain (8:34)
 - e. You have to _____ the Gospel from the Scriptures (8:35)!
 - 1) All scripture portions point to Christ (Acts 10:43)
 - 2) You ought to be able to take any Scripture and point out Christ in them:
 - a) In Isa 53 Jesus is the suffering servant
 - b) In Gen 3 Jesus is the promised seed of the woman
 - c) In Exod 12 Jesus is the Passover Lamb of God
 - d) In Song of Solomon, Jesus is the Lily of the valley
 - f. You have to _____ instruct people until they grasp the truth of the Gospel (2 Tim 2:24,25) - Instruct people about:
 - 1) The requirements of God for perfection
 - 2) The inability of any human to meet them
 - 3) Christ’s life, death, burial and resurrection
 - 4) Repentance, and faith only in Christ (20:21)
 - 5) Commitment, and baptism
 - g. You have to _____ people’s depth of understanding and conviction (8:37)
 - h. You then have the _____ of seeing a new birth, and what a joy it is to see them seal their faith in Christ with their baptism (8:38)!
6. Personal Work is _____ work (8:39,40) - You never tire of it
- a. The Eunuch went away rejoicing - there is always JOY with salvation - both in heaven (Lk 15:10), in the heart of the soul just saved, and in the soul-winner (John 4:31-34)!
 - b. Philip found strength to keep going
 - c. God had more “appointments” for Philip ahead - Caesarea

III. Conclusion and Study Questions

The Acts of the Apostles

Chapter Nine The Conversion of Saul

Focus Verse: **Acts 9:20**

“And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.”

I. Study Introduction

- A. We now turn our attention to watch how God deals with the heart of a religious fanatic, who is set only on the destruction of New Testament Christianity. His name is Saul of Tarsus.
- B. As you will see, once Saul realises that He has been fighting against the Lord of both the Old and New Testaments, he quickly repents, and devotes his energies to saving souls instead of torturing them!

II. Background - Acts has so far presented the following events:

- A. Chapter:
 1. The Church was Commissioned
 2. The Church was Empowered
 3. Christianity Reaches out and Meets The Need - not elitist
 4. The Church Learned How To Stand-Up For Christ - face persecution
 5. The Church Learned to Stay True when under attack & in temptation
 6. The Church Began to Delegate the Work - involvement
 7. Christians Focused on Presenting the Lessons of Biblical History
 8. The Church Expanding - How It Grows
 - a. NT Christianity Expands By _____
 - b. NT Christianity Expands by the Right Response to _____
 - c. NT Christianity Expands by _____ - Miracles
 - d. NT Christianity Expands by Right _____ - Discernment
 - e. Christianity Expands by _____ - Soul-Winning
 9. We now turn to examine this young man named Saul, and watch as the Lord Jesus is working him over until he either goes crazy, or surrenders to Christ. This same process is going on all over this world!

III. Study Outline

- A. **Saul's Conversion (9:1-31)**
 1. Occurs to a most unlikely person (9:1) Saul of Tarsus
 - a. Super educated (Acts 22:3)
 - 1) Of Tarsus - very powerful family in very important city
 - 2) Educated at the feet of _____ - prominent teacher
 - 3) Able to fluently speak at least 5 languages (Hebrew, Greek, Arabic, Iconium, Latin, etc.).
 - b. Super-dedicated - zealous, enthusiastic, fanatical
 - 1) A Jew - already very religious; very devout
 - 2) A _____ - not just a Jew, but a leader of the Jewish religion - like a Bishop would be in the Catholic Church
 - 3) Single-focused: all he talked about (“breathing out threatenings”), thought about, worked for, was the extermination of this “cult” and heresy (Acts 24:14)!
 - c. Super _____ - willful ignorance (1 Tim 1:12,13)
 - d. Super _____ (1 Tim 1:15)
 2. Occurs at a most unlikely time - as he sought to destroy Biblical Christianity (9:1,2) - He was not the least “curious” - not looking
 - a. He was expanding his realm of control - legally
 - b. He was coordinating a religious _____ - *in God's name*
 - c. He was forcing people's submission to a central power - Jerusalem, and the council at Jerusalem (not to the Scriptures)
 3. Occurs in a most unlikely manner (9:3-9; 26:12-19)
 - a. A blinding _____ from heaven - brighter than the sun
 - b. A _____ from heaven speaking directly to him
 - c. A sneaking suspicion - the work of the Holy Spirit to convince people that God's word is true (Mk 16:19,20)
 - d. A revelation from God (Gal 1:11,12,16)

- 1) That you are fighting God - not another religion, with all your good works, and ignorant zealotry for God
 - 2) That you are _____
 - 3) That Jesus is who He claimed to be - God in the flesh!
 - 4) There is a distinct danger in thinking that this is how anyone normally gets saved - Paul was the exception.
- e. A fear of God - “astonished and trembling”
- f. A complete **surrender** (9:6)
- 1) Didn't run; hide; or shun the work of the Holy Spirit
 - 2) Dealt directly with the One putting the pressure on him - spoke right back - the first prayer in his life that made it to heaven!
 - 3) Gave in to God's way of doing things - even though it didn't fit the way Saul had thought God should work (the same ideas ruined the Israelites in the wilderness)
 - 4) Requires simple _____ - one step at a time. Salvation is simply obeying the gospel (John 3:3; Ro 6:17; 10:16; 2 Thes 1:8; 1 Pet 4:17). Jesus did not explain all the details of what was happening, nor of what was going to happen to him, but just to follow His word.
 - 5) Produced _____ - blind now; helpless, just waiting; and alone (the other men did not hear the instructions)
 - 6) Produced the right kind of hunger - for God more than any food or fellowship from anyone else!
4. Involves using the most unlikely people (9:10-14) - a soul winner
 - a. God chose to use Ananias - a “nobody” - not an apostle
 - b. God chose to use someone who had doubts, but was willing to follow orders
 - c. God has this “nobody” deal with Saul (who was a VIP)!
 - d. *Oh that God would be allowed to use all of us* (Jam 5:20)
 5. Initiates the most incredible of plans (9:15,16)
 - a. God launches the greatest Christian life ever lived
 - b. Produces the greatest impact this world has yet to see
 - 1) Both on the world then - through preaching and setting up churches all over the then-known world (Acts 17:6)!
 - 2) And throughout all time - by preaching the _____!
 - c. Pays the greatest cost - it is not going to be easy - there will be great _____ (Cf Rom 1:14; Acts 20:26)
 - 1) The Christian got eternal life at great cost
 - 2) The Christian lives his life for Christ at great cost (Philp 1:29; 2 Tim 3:12; 2 Cor 11:23-29)
 - 3) The Christian looks forward to an eternal pay-back (Rom 8:16-18)
 6. Begins in the most humble of ways (9:17-20)
 - a. As a _____, with other nobodies - no longer “Dr.” Saul, or “Professor” or even “Mr.” Saul - just brother (Cf Mt 23:8)
 - b. As being in the dark - not knowing it all - starting empty! Ananias knew about Saul, and what God was doing - humiliating for you to not be able to tell people what you know!
 - c. As being dependent upon other Christians. God made Saul have to wait for Ananias to show up before he got his eyesight back, and the assurance of his salvation (8:17,18).
 - d. Saul had to publicly declare by baptism that he no longer was Jewish, but Christian - he was a follower of Jesus Christ!
 - e. Saul at first had to humbly sit and learn about Christ second-hand from the other disciples, because when Jesus had been around, Saul had been too proud to sit and listen for himself.
 - f. Saul starts right off making a fool out of himself (1 Cor 1:18,21) by going back to his old neighbourhood and _____! Saul did not try and sit next to the Apostles - he went to where the sinners were!
 7. Confounds both Jews (unbelievers), and Christians (9:20-26)
 - a. To Confound means to frustrate, embarrass, confuse.
 - b. Saul confused people about their own beliefs - to get them to see that they had missed Jesus! Bring shame to them!
 - c. Saul did this by preaching - not sharing, or pleading!
 - d. Saul confused people about assumptions - they thought Saul would never convert! What a testimony his life made!
 - e. Saul got people mad enough to want to kill him (John 15:20), so much so that he had to leave Damascus in a basket over a wall (9:23-26).
 - f. Saul then comes to Jerusalem, and thinks he will be welcomed with open arms, but is rejected by the Christians.

- 1) Question: Didn't all the Christians have the gift of discernment? Should they have been able to tell?
- 2) Question: Why did Saul have to run? Wasn't Jesus greater than the enemies of the cross?
- g. No amount of confusion or disagreement could discourage Saul - he was "on a roll" and only grew with the pressure!
- 8. Develops into Great Relationships (9:27-30)
 - a. Because of people who are willing to take risks - _____. His name means consolation, comfort, encourager. We miss so much when we won't take a risk for others!
 - b. Because of Saul's _____ (9:27) of salvation
 - 1) He had a changed life (9:27) - had fruit!
 - 2) He had proven himself to be faithful & consistent (9:28)
 - c. Because Saul went ahead and served God in spite of how he was treated by other Christians, and not caring whether the Apostles accepted him or not - Saul was serving ____ (9:29)!
 - d. Because Saul was content to serve _____ - he didn't have to be in Jerusalem for him to feel important (9:30).
- 9. Produced Godly results - good fruits (9:31)
 - a. The Churches had _____ for a while. Rest from persecution, but NOT rest from soul-winning! With the head man behind the persecution converted, the churches could go about their ministry free and basically unhindered (1 Tim 2:1,2).
 - b. Christians were edified: strengthened in the word - _____.
 - c. Christians learned not to fear any person, but only the Lord!
 - d. Christians learned that you can find comfort in the Holy Ghost - they realised that everything Christ said would happen, did, and that they were all the stronger for it!
 - e. People kept getting saved!

B. Peter's Continuing Ministry (9:32-43) - Last saw him in Chapter 5

- 1. His Miracle at **Lydda** and **Saron** (9:32-35)
 - a. Lydda is a town about 30 miles NW of **Jerusalem** in an area called Saron (**Sharon**)
 - b. Peter is going systematically throughout all the regions of Israel, preaching and healing so that _____ get saved
 - c. Peter meets *Christians* in Lydda - called "saints" while on earth - all Christians are saints - "holy ones" - **better live it!**
 - d. Peter heals **Aeneas**
 - 1) An _____ Jew
 - 2) Diseased with the palsy - a paralysis
 - 3) Bed-ridden for the past eight years
 - 4) Healed instantly by Peter without Aeneas's faith
 - 5) Causes the entire city to turn to Christ - just as in Acts 2
- 2. His Miracle at **Joppa** (9:36-43)
 - a. At the request of some people in Joppa, Peter leaves Lydda and heads 30 miles further NW to this important coastal town of Joppa - the same city where Jonah ran to find a ship away from God's will
 - b. He comes to Joppa to specifically heal Tabitha - Known as Dorcas (her name means: *a young _____*)
 - 1) A saved _____
 - 2) A hard-working _____ (Eph 2:8-10; Jam 2:17) like _____ (Luke 10:41)
 - 3) The Christians in Joppa sent for Peter - Why? No other Christian there was able to heal Tabitha - only Peter had that kind of a gift (as an Apostle)
 - 4) Peter heals without Tabitha's faith
 - 5) Results in many _____ getting saved (9:42)
 - c. Peter stays in Joppa for a break (9:43)
- 3. The Difference Between Peter's and Paul's Ministry:

Peter	Paul
Primarily to the Jew (Gal 2:9)	Primarily to the Gentile
Ministers mainly in Israel	Ministers mainly outside Israel
Emphasises Signs, Wonders and Miracles in reaching the Jews	Emphasises Preaching (1 Cor 2:1-5) to win all peoples
Does some work with Gentiles - Cornelius (Acts 10)	Does some work with the Jews (Acts 19:1-20)
Heads Southeast to Babylon (1Pe 5:13)	Heads Northwest to Rome (Act 28:14)

IV. Conclusion and Study Questions

The Acts of the Apostles

Chapter Ten

Cornelius Meets Christ

Focus Verse: **Acts 10:15**

“And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.”

I. Study Introduction

- A. Ever wonder how the “heathen” find out about Christ - we learn it by the experience of a man named Cornelius
- B. Ever wonder “what” Christians are supposed to preach? We learn from Peter’s encounter with Cornelius!

II. Study Outline - Cornelius Meets Christ - Acts 10

A. The Sinner’s Search (Acts 10:1-33; Jer 29:13)

1. *The Search for God Starts From _____* (10:1,2) - Most people are waiting on an *external event* to get them interested in eternity, but something has to happen on the inside - a hunger!
 - a. We meet a certain man
 - 1) Named _____
 - 2) A Centurion in the Roman army - 100 men under him. There are 4 centurions mentioned in the Bible, and they are ALL men of integrity and good character (Mt 8:10; Acts 27:43; Mk 15:39; and here).
 - 3) Of the Italian band - portion of the army that was made up of Italians - others were made up of other nations
 - b. Cornelius is a _____ man
 - 1) He is devout - had his whole house interested in God - in subjection - and following him!
 - 2) He fears God - not just knowing about God!
 - 3) He gave much money to his local Jewish synagogue
 - 4) He prays always - had great faith AND works!
 - 5) But not saved (Cf 11:13,14) - Like Roman Catholics:
 - a) Roman, and Italian
 - b) Devout, and God fearing
 - c) Looking for, and receiving visions from angels
 - d) Quick to bow down to and worship Peter (10:25,26)
2. *The Search for God is Aided By ____* (10:3-8)
 - a. When a man goes seeking for the truth, God will make sure that he finds it (Ro 2:7,8; Pr 8:17; Jer 29:13). He may not like what he finds, but it’ll be placed in front of them!
 - b. Cornelius has a vision from God - still a time of visions
 - 1) At 3pm in the evening an angel appears
 - 2) Talks to Cornelius, and gives him clear instructions
 - 3) Cornelius calls the angel ‘Lord’ - had visions before
 - 4) Supposed to send for a specific person - **Simon Peter**
 - 5) Told exactly where to send for him (no phone-book) in Joppa 30 miles south of Cesarea
 - c. Notice that God worked on the hearts of all peoples - not just the Jews. **Balaam** was a Gentile prophet (Num 22-24). **Jethro** was a Gentile priest of God (Ex 18)
3. *The Search for God is Hindered by _____* - misconceptions, and other “baggage” (10:9-18)
 - a. *Sometimes by the seeker.* People stop themselves from obtaining what they seek most for (forgiveness, and heaven) by pride, self-righteousness, and their own form of religion (2Tim 3:1-5). Cornelius here seeks **visions** and worships **men**
 - b. *Sometimes by the _____.* May have so much spiritual baggage from their past that they do nothing for God in the present! Bitterness, prejudice, busy-ness, and denominational vision (seeing the Bible through what they have been taught).
 - 1) Peter is locked into the Jewish mind-set of racial superiority. Thinking only the Jews are worthy of the truth, or that only the Jews would be able to receive the truth - very Calvinistic (like saying only the elect can receive it).
 - 2) God uses the cleansing of unclean meats to teach that **God can cleanse anything.**
 - 3) To be *common* or *unclean* meant “dirty,” or “filthy”
 - a) When Christ died, the ceremonial laws and “ordinances” were blotted out (Col 2:13-18). Dietary laws can no longer affect your relationship with God
 - b) The Civil and Moral laws were _____ - eternal!

- c) But, diet **can** affect your ability to serve God - eating unclean food hurts your health (ie, pork, shellfish)
 - d) Don't worry about eating ham, just don't eat too much of it (1 Tim 4:1-5). And wash your hands. Not very spiritual, but good sense!
4. *The Search for God is Completed by _____* (10:19-33)
- a. God has revealed Himself through three things: **Creation** itself (Ps 19; Rom 1), **His Son** (John 1), and **the Bible**.
 - b. But He uses Christians to do the following (Acts 26:16-18):
 - 1) Re-direct people's attention to God's "signals" and directions (*to _____ their eyes*)
 - 2) Engage them in reasonable debate and consideration of the Scriptures (Acts 17:2; 24:25) - to open their minds!
 - 3) Compel people to make a decision (*turn them from sin*)
 - c. When Christian's fail to do their job, the _____ are held responsible (Cf Acts 18:6; 20:26; Ezek 3:18-21)
 - d. So now, Peter is called into action - "**go and preach**" (Acts 1:8), not to just the Jews, but *to all peoples* - doubt nothing!
 - e. And off Peter goes - simply obedient, even though not fully understanding! When you go with a Bible under your arm, and a learning spirit (not a show-off), you will go far!
 - f. Peter hears just how worthy this man is for him to come, and how that Cornelius was _____ of God (10:22), and that Cornelius **had** to hear the word of a Jewish Apostle (John 4:22) in order to get saved. He had to have an authority!
 - g. Cornelius was _____ for Peter to arrive (10:24). He had called together everyone possible so that they ALL could hear the truth and be saved (Cf **Rahab**, Josh 2:12-21; 6:25; and **Lot**, Gen 19:12-14). *We should do as much!*
 - h. Peter gets an unwelcome welcome - Cornelius bows and _____ him (10:25,26)! God hates this, as does Peter!
 - i. Peter explains that this meeting is at the hand of God - not a normal occurrence due to Israel's separation from the Gentiles by God. Allows Peter to show that a lot of things have changed because of the cross!
 - j. Asks *Cornelius* to explain what he is looking for (10:29) - it is best to allow the person to express their spiritual needs. Guide them into an understanding of their hunger without telling what to ask of you! Watch the Holy Spirit work!
 - k. Cornelius goes back over the events of the past few days, but he focuses on the event about to happen - he is anxious to hear what God will have Peter to say! This is how people need to be with the Bible - anxious to hear what God has to say through it!

B. **The Soul-Winner's Message** (Acts 10:34-48)

1. The soul-winner's message can be summed-up in a 217 word sermon preached by an uneducated fisherman to an army captain in Acts 10! What we will be dealing with here are three things:
 - a. A Mission Field - Cornelius' household
 - b. A Missionary/Soul-Winner - Simon Peter
 - c. A Message preached to the first Gentile to hear about Jesus
2. Peter has just arrived at the house of Cornelius and proclaims 7 things - these are the same seven things that each one of us need to be able to present to people. The Gospel message proclaims:
 - a. **Salvation is Extended to ALL** (10:34,35) "*whosoever*"
 - 1) God is no respecter of persons! Only impressed with Jesus!
 - 2) What every person really needs is only _____
 - 3) A person must desire to repent from sin, and to do right!
 - 4) A person must come on God's terms as given in the Bible
 - b. **Christ is Our Example to Follow** (10:36-38) - *This is WHO we preach!* What we just read summed up the life of Jesus!
 - 1) As Peter said in 2 Pet 1:16, we are not following "cunningly devised _____," but the God/Man, Jesus Christ!
 - 2) Our goal is not to present "philosophy", but a _____!
 - 3) Our Living Example - not a doctrine, movement, or fantasy. Aren't you glad He is real (Cf 1 John 1:1,2):
 - a) He gives *peace* (36) - the world cannot give (John 14:27)
 - b) He brings *power* (38) "*more than conquerors*" (Ro 8:37)
 - c) His life is our *pattern* (38) - that of doing good (**real** "good," not fake)
 - d) His works brought *preservation* - Healed and put things back together and made them last! Not just a feeling

- c. **The Death, Burial, and Resurrection is the Greatest Event in History** (10:39-41) *This is WHAT we preach!*
- 1) The world focuses its calendar on the Birth of Christ (AD) - the Christian on the other hand focuses his calendar on the crucifixion, burial, and resurrection! All eternity hung on those events, including your salvation!
 - 2) This becomes the *meaning* of the Gospel - the preaching of not only the *death* of Jesus, but the burial, and the _____ (1 Cor 15:3,4)! Make all three part of it!
- d. **The Great Commission is Still in Effect** (10:42; Matt 28:19,20)
- 1) We are commanded to be a witness, and PREACH this Gospel to the whole world! This commission has not gone away! It is what brought this church full of believers into existence!
 - 2) The Great Commission demonstrates this world is STILL important to God, and worth sacrificing for, so they might hear!
- e. **Judgment Day is Coming** (10:42) - *This is WHY we preach!*
- 1) We must keep *eternity* in view - not get caught-up in things of this world, but in the place Jesus has prepared for us (heaven)!
 - 2) All will be held accountable (you can't live any way you want):
 - a) _____ at the great white throne judgment (Rev 20:11)
 - b) _____ at the Judgment Seat of Christ (2 Cor 5:10)
 - 3) It is not "WHAT" you know that counts, but rather "WHO" you know! I know Jesus Christ personally!!!
- f. **Jesus Christ is Everything You Have Been Waiting For** (10:43a)
- 1) All the prophets pointed to _____ - point everyone either to the Lamb (His first coming), or the Lion (His second coming)
 - 2) All of your _____ point to Jesus - He alone is the fulfillment of those needs - Lonely, health failing, hungry?
 - 3) Don't look for another (Mohammed, Moroni, Matraya, Bhudda), you cannot find a better answer than *Jesus!*
- g. **Salvation is Only Obtained by Faith in Jesus** _____ (10:43b)
- 1) It is not a "religious" issue - Cornelius was religious (10:2)
 - 2) It is not a matter of "sincerity" - He was sincere. Jesus said NOT that ye must be "sincere," but rather "*ye MUST be born again!*"
 - 3) It is not an issue of good works verses bad works (10:2) - but WHO do you know personally that according to the Bible can get you into heaven?
 - 4) Requires Child-Like *Faith*, on God's Terms
 - 5) The result is "the **remission** (taking away) of sins" - Complete forgiveness!

III. Conclusion

- A. Just as Cornelius would have died and gone to Hell if he had not heard this message, so too will all the religious people of Ireland! They need soul-winners with a message!
- B. How about you? Religious? Or are you "born again" because you received the Son of God as your substitute just as Cornelius did?
- C. Have you heard this message? Have you received Jesus Christ as your personal savior? If you are saved, are you being like Peter and telling the Missionary Message at all who will hear? Let's be like Peter!

IV. Study Questions

The Acts of the Apostles

Chapter Eleven The First "Christians"

Focus Verse: Acts 11:26

"And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch."

I. Study Introduction

- A. Just because a person is saved, does not make them a *Christian* these days. It used to be so, but in these modern times, people turn to Jesus for only the "fire insurance" but not a whole new life. They want "fellowship" but not "fellowship" or "servanthood."
- B. To be a Christian means to be "Christ-like" in all our actions, thoughts, aspirations, and emotions. Therefore, there are very few true "Christians" today. Only a lot of religious people who put on a show, but have very little "life" that is like Christ.
- C. Chapter Eleven of Acts helps clear-up what it takes to be a Christian.

II. Chapter Review

- One **The Church Commissioned** - The Ascension of Jesus
- Two **The Church Empowered** - The Day of Pentecost
- Three **Christianity Meets The Need** - The Invalid Man Healed
- Four **How To Stand-Up For Christ** - Handling Persecution
- Five **Staying True!** In Spite of Sin in Christian's Lives
- Six **Delegating the Work** - Choosing Deacons
- Seven **Learning the Lessons of History** - Stephen's Attack on Religion
- Eight **The Church Expanding** - Saul Begins His Persecution
- Nine **The Conversion of Saul** - Saul on the Road to Damascus
- Ten **Cornelius Meets Christ** - Peter Tells Cornelius About Christ

I. Study Outline - The First "Christians" (Acts 11)

- A. **To Be A Christian Means More than Being a ___** - The Bad News For Jewish Christianity (Acts 11:1-18)
 1. Everyone hears of Peter's *fellowship* with "Gentiles" (11:1) - News spreads fast about Cornelius (a Gentile) getting saved
 2. The Problems this caused (11:2,3) - not only had Peter misconceptions about the Gospel plan, but so did most of the Jewish Christians in Judæa - there was a lot of explaining and teaching to do in order to mature the Jewish Christians
 - a. Up until this time, salvation seemed to be exclusive only to the Jews - they had the Bible, the priesthood, the Saviour, etc
 - b. One of the authorities in the church at Jerusalem (the apostle Peter) was "defecting" from the accepted way of doing things - the traditions!
 - c. The Old Testament _____ Laws (circumcision) were still dominating people's view of grace (Gal 2:11-16; 3:2,3)
 - d. _____ were also still very dominate (of forbidding to eat with the Gentiles) to the point of closed minds to God's word
 3. Peter presents his case - lays out the evidence (11:4-17) He reviews everything from start to finish - he has nothing to hide
 - a. During his prayer time, Peter (11:4-10):
 - 1) Had a vision of a sheet descending full of _____ animals as defined by the Ceremonial aspect of the OT Law
 - 2) Heard a voice from heaven commanding him to eat
 - 3) He immediately refused - he is quick to be steadfast!
 - 4) God rebukes Peter _____ times on the basis that when God cleanses something, it is then truly clean - no longer sinful - this applies to two things:
 - a) If **unclean foods** can be cleansed by Christ's blood
 - b) Then, **unclean** _____ (Gentiles) can ALSO be cleansed!
 - b. Peter then went with a group of Gentiles seeking him to come meet a man named *Cornelius* (11:11-17):
 - 1) Cornelius reviews *his* recent extraordinary events
 - 2) Peter preaches a very short message of only 217 words
 - 3) The whole house simply believed the words preached
 - 4) The Holy Ghost then fell upon them and gave them the very same gift of tongues that He did to the Jews. This then shows the secondary purpose of tongues

- a) As a sign to _____ Jews that Christianity is of God, just as much as the Exodus from Egypt was (both start with signs)
 - b) As a sign to _____ Jews that the Gentiles are to be allowed "in" on God's salvation equally!
- 5) John the Baptist said this was what to expect
 - 6) Peter realised that he could not over-rule God - had simply misunderstood God's ways (Ps 95:10)!
4. The Jewish Christians _____ (11:18) - the Gospel then is no longer exclusive to one nationality (Jewish), but is universal!

B. To Be a Christian Means _____ Ourselves - The Birth of the Church at Antioch (Acts 11:19-26)

1. We usually limit our Christianity to ourselves, our enjoyment, and our own desires - but what about God's desires? To be truly Christian, we must crucify OUR desires, and launch-out into this world, and "become fruitful and multiply." To be human means no less!
2. Persecution and Scattering means _____, not Ruin (11:19)
 - a. At first, there was the church at Jerusalem - made up of Jews
 - b. But the persecution was driving these Jewish Christians all over the region, and new churches were sprouting up, but still only consisting of Jewish believers
 - c. So, instead of destroying Christianity, persecution and scattering only _____ the number of believers - howbeit, only Jewish ones. Let's always make sure that we have the same determination: to build this church, and to multiply!
3. Mistakes in our ministry are not always bad (11:20,21)
 - a. Some of the Jewish Christians "accidentally" preached to the Gentile Grecians, who then got saved - just like Cornelius
 - b. God was behind their "mistake" - some things to learn:
 - 1) God will use _____ to get His will done - His will is that the world would hear and get saved (Mk 16:15)
 - 2) No matter how you may "ruin" a situation, God can make it turn out right - if you will permit Him
 - 3) It is best to allow God to use your concerted efforts instead of your rebellious hindrances
 - c. The Gentiles, as well as the Jews had to turn away from their religion (whatever it would be), and turn ONLY to the Lord
4. Discern the Hand of the Lord - the will and work of God (11:22)
 - a. Heard the whole story- did not react to gossip and innuendo
 - b. Sent someone (Barnabas) to personally verify:
 - 1) If the salvations matched what the Scriptures demanded
 - 2) If there were any _____ lives - would anyone be able to verify that YOU and I are Christians!?
5. Encourage and help other churches to grow (11:23-26) - even if they are not what you expected, nor are what you want!
 - a. Barnabas **looked** to see if God's _____ was in these people's lives - not miracles, tongues, etc.
 - b. Barnabas **loved** to see God saving the Gentiles - what is YOUR love?
 - c. Barnabas **exhorted** - _____ to the congregation (14:22):
 - 1) They must cleave (cling) unto the Lord - totally depend - no "on again, off again" Christianity
 - 2) They must make it a _____ - purpose of heart - no matter what troubles may lie ahead!
 - d. Barnabas **lived** what he asked the Antioch Christians to do:
 - 1) Everyone came to know him as a good man
 - 2) They knew him to be full of the Holy Ghost (Acts 6:5)
 - 3) And full of faith - confidence, dependence upon Christ
 - 4) And a soul-winner - much more people got saved!
 - e. Barnabas **used** the situation to develop a young Christian in the ministry (hands on experience) - _____ of Tarsus (11:25)
6. The Results of living like Christ (11:26)
 - a. Opportunities - for new disciples to grow around you
 - b. Spiritual Hunger - people start to see what Christ was all about instead of just what "Church" is all about
 - c. Being called Christians - the highest commendation, even when spoken in disgust! Notice:
 - 1) Nowhere in the Bible is anyone called a Jehovah's Witness, a Mormon, a Catholic, or a Protestant
 - 2) The term Christian is an earned commendation for _____ (Mt 9:9; 16:24), not for *free-loaders*, and *feel-gooders*

- C. **To Be A Christian Means Not Forgetting Our _____** - The Burden of Christians for Judæa (Acts 11:27-30)
1. The work of the Holy Spirit shifts from Jerusalem only to _____ - some of the prophets (Eph 4:11) come up to Antioch
 2. _____ (a leading prophet) makes a prophecy that a great _____ would affect the whole known world
 3. Instead of everyone worrying only about themselves, they determine to send "relief" unto the brethren back in Judæa
 - a. Took up a special offering - above the normal tithes. God says learn to meet other needs, and your needs will be met
 - b. According to their ability - not mandatory - an act of _____ and respect - the Christians in Jerusalem had brought them the Gospel in the first place (11:19; Ro 15:25-27; 1Cor 9:11)
 - c. Sent the money by Barnabas and Saul- they were _____
 - d. Placed the money into the hands of the pastors of churches in Judæa to distribute to the people - no Govt handouts
 4. Never forget some things
 - a. Your Jewish connections:
 - 1) The Bible is a _____ Book
 - 2) Salvation is Jewish, not Catholic (John 4:24)
 - 3) Jesus is a Jew - not European, African or American
 - 4) Every Gentile who gets saved, gets *grafted* into Abraham's descendency (Rom 11) - adopted into a royal line
 - b. Your Responsibilities as a Christian
 - 1) To _____ and support Israel. God blesses those who bless Israel, and curses those who curse them (Gen 12:1-3) - as seen throughout history (Egypt, Babylon, England)
 - 2) To _____ for Israel. Christians are commanded to pray for peace in Jerusalem (the city of peace; Ps 137:5; 122:6)
 - 3) Thank the one who gave you the Gospel!

II. Conclusion

III. Study Questions

The Acts of the Apostles

Chapter Twelve

The Church Learns to Pray

Focus Verse: Acts 12:5

“Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.”

I. Study Introduction

- A. Christianity must learn to live more by prayer and dependence upon GOD than upon apostles, prophets, and miracles!
- B. Every religion has its faith-healers, and charismatic prophets, but Christianity has **Christ!** It is a lazy person who just “expects” God to “take care” of the situations that arise in their lives, instead of learning to pray, and humble themselves, and mean business with God!

II. Chapter Review

- One **The Church Commissioned** - The Ascension of Jesus
- Two **The Church Empowered** - The Day of Pentecost
- Three **Christianity Meets The Need** - The Invalid Man Healed
- Four **How To Stand-Up For Christ** - Handling Persecution
- Five **Staying True!** In Spite of Sin in Christian’s Lives
- Six **Delegating the Work** - Choosing Deacons
- Seven **Learning the Lessons of History** - Stephen’s Attack on Religion
- Eight **The Church Expanding** - Saul Begins His Persecution
- Nine **The Conversion of Saul** - Saul on the Road to Damascus
- Ten **Cornelius Meets Christ** - Peter Tells Cornelius About Christ
- Eleven **The First Christians** - The Birth of the Church at Antioch

I. Study Outline - The Church Learns to Pray (Acts 12)

A. The Death of the Apostle James (12:1-3)

1. Background Information:
 - a. Who is **Herod**? A Roman-puppet king over the area all around Israel. The name “Herod” was like the title “Caesar.” This is the same Herod who had John the Baptist beheaded, and mocked Jesus at His crucifixion (Luke 23:11,12)
 - b. Who is this **James**? He is part of the trio of apostles named together as Peter, JAMES, and John. A fisherman with great faith and fervour for the Lord. He wrote the epistle “James”
2. The Reasons for James’ death - Why would God allow it?
 - a. The church needed to live more by _____ and dependence upon GOD than upon the apostles, and miracles!
 - b. The Roman government wanted the Jewish leaders back under their control - scratched each other’s back (see 24:27)
 - c. Herod wanted to get the Christian’s attention, so he picked an important leader to kill - to strike _____ in them (Mt 10:28)
3. The Lessons from James’ Death
 - a. No Christian is _____. We do not have power over troubles - we are not invincible! Your life is in God’s hands! As long as God has a purpose for us, and we are willing to fulfill that purpose, that is when we are unstoppable.
 - b. Don’t expect fair treatment. There was no trial - just a brutal stabbing. If there had been a trial he would have been beheaded. Religions love to get governments to do their “dirty-work” (ie, murder, torture) like the Jews had Rome kill Christ, and now James, and like Rome did in the dark ages!
 - c. No _____ is made! Judas is replaced because he never was a true apostle - he was a devil incarnate (John 6:70)
 - d. No _____ break out. Christians do not riot when mis-treated.

B. The Deliverance of the Apostle Peter (12:3-19)

1. His Capture (12:3-5)
 - a. Massive police operation - 16 elite soldiers swiftly apprehend Peter and place him straight into prison
 - b. Four soldiers (quaternion) are on constant guard at any one time - two were chained directly to Peter - Herod did not want Peter getting away like he had before in Acts 5:17-20.
2. The Holydays (12:3,4) - can’t interrupt the festivities!

- a. The Jews had their Feast of Unleavened Bread (_____)
 - b. The Romans had _____ - Eggs, orgies, fertility worship
3. Peter's Deliverance - it was not an escape (12:5-11)
- a. Because of _____ - made without ceasing by the whole church in Jerusalem (30,000 people praying for one person)
 - b. Because of _____ in Peter's heart - he had a rest that allowed him to sleep, even though he knew he faced death in the morning. Did not stay up all night praying for deliverance.
 - c. Because of God's _____ (James 4:13-15) - it was God's will that James should die, and that Peter should stay alive.
 - 1) God sent the angel of the Lord
 - a) Broke off Peter's chains
 - b) Put Peter's guards to sleep all throughout the prison
 - c) Opened every locked door
 - d) Commanded Peter to just follow him out!
 - 2) Peter realised this was no dream - it was _____! Peter did not have "great" faith, just a great God!
4. Peter's Report to the Christians (12:12-17)
- a. As he thought about all these events, he passed Mary's house (not Mary the mother of Jesus) - son's name is _____
 - b. He saw the lights on (at 5am), and knew they were praying for him - had been praying all night, and for the past 7 days
 - c. As Peter knocks to get in, Rhoda hears him, and is too excited to go and open the gate (she too is surprised God answered their prayers).
 - d. Absolutely nobody believes her, nor in the power of prayer - they all think it is just a spirit! It was the same when Jesus rose from the dead (Luke 24:9-12)!

Note: It is possible to pray about something for so long that you lose the goal, and get locked into the motions of the prayer instead of the fellowship, and dependence upon God.
 - e. Peter quiets them down telling them to get the news to James, the _____ of the church at Jerusalem, and to all the brethren who were still gathered praying (12:17). Peter then heads out of town until chapter 15.
5. What about the Guards? (12:18,19)
- a. They were _____ men - "no small stir!" Herod has them questioned, and then executes them!
 - b. Herod is therefore humiliated in front of the Jews whom he was showing off to. Kings hate to be humiliated - rely on perceptions!
 - c. So Herod goes to Caesarea (90 miles north)

C. The Demise of King Herod (12:20-23) The Price of Pride

1. Here in northern Israel, things seemed to go a little better for him
 - a. Herod controls a group of middle-eastern countries (Israel, and Samaria) under Roman rule. Rules them like a dictator.
 - b. He has succeeded in breaking the rebellion of the Tyre and Sidon region by an _____.
 - c. The people of Tyre and Sidon befriend Blastus hoping to soften Herod's anger - they want peace - under his control
 - d. Herod then has won control of the region
2. So Herod makes a show of his authority (12:21,22)
 - a. Shows-off by making an "oration" - believes in himself!
 - b. The people play along with him and feed his ego calling him "a ____" - they are desperate for him to think they love him - forced love that is!
3. But God makes a _____ out of him (12:23)
 - a. God wont let leadership get away with sin - even though they may be unsaved, or seem like they are untouchable (Luke 12:46-48; remember Rom 13:1-5)
 - b. Herod already knew enough about God and especially Christ.
 - c. Herod pays a high price - total humiliation, and _____ (Rom 6:23; Luke 14:11)

D. The Development of the Work (12:24,25)

1. God's word and work goes on - the only time it stops is when God's people think world events are more important than God's events.

2. Barnabas and Saul have been in Jerusalem with all the relief funds, and have finished working there, and now head back to _____ to continue to work and build there - they were anchored to the church of Antioch - loved it, and missed it when away.

II. Conclusion

III. Study Questions