

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

BIBLE STUDY PART 2

3PS CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES

Lesson Seven	God Values All	Acts 16:16-19, Psalm 139:13-16
Lesson Eight	Next Level Ministry	Acts 18:24-28, 19:1-7
Lesson Nine	Sacrificing Self for Others	Acts 20:22-35
Lesson Ten	The Testimony	Acts 22:3-8, 15-22
Lesson Eleven	Answering Critics	Acts 26:19-29
Lesson Twelve	A Fearless Messenger	Acts 28:17-28

Purpose

As we proceed on our journey through the book of Acts, Doctor Luke continues to give us drama-filled, exciting stories of transformed lives, the direct result of the work of God's Holy Spirit. Anointed teaching and the Holy Spirit reaching, into the very souls of men and women are profiled. Even at great risk and peril of life, these men of God shared the message that changed the futures of many, from eternal damnation to eternal life with Jesus Christ.

We are the legacy of those who were filled with the Holy Spirit on that day of Pentecost. As each believer told somebody, who told somebody, who told somebody else, until someone told me and you, we continue the teaching and reaching, with the message of the gospel.

God's love extends to all - strong and weak, rich and poor, the downtrodden, the lonely, and the lost. We see men, women, boys, and girls bound by sin; deceived, oppressed, and even possessed by the devil, oblivious to the spiritual realm. Luke shows that the Holy Spirit of the living God came to expose the enemies of our souls, defeat every threat, and set every captive free. He values each soul, and souls will be set free because of the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We must speak words of life and hope to everyone, just as someone spoke hope and life to us.

So, let's spread the word - Jesus died and is alive,
Jesus saves and sets free, and Jesus is coming back again!

God Bless and Make You Free Indeed

Pastor Warren Jones

Lesson Seven:

God Values All

Acts 16:16-19, Psalm 139:13-16

Discussion Starter: How can one who is born into a life of slavery, understand freedom?

Freedom Obtained

Acts 16:16-18

16 One day as we were going down to the place of prayer, we met a slave girl who had a spirit that enabled her to tell the future. She earned a lot of money for her masters by telling fortunes. 17 She followed Paul and the rest of us, shouting, "These men are servants of the Most High God, and they have come to tell you how to be saved." 18 This went on day after day until Paul got so exasperated that he turned and said to the demon within her, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And instantly it left her.

Discussion Question:

1. Why do you think a demonic spirit would tell the truth, and why do you think Paul was annoyed if it was telling the truth?

The Complaint

Acts 16:19

19 Her masters' hopes of wealth were now shattered, so they grabbed Paul and Silas and dragged them before the authorities at the marketplace.

Discussion Question:

2. Why is it so easy for people to exploit the weak, and devalue human life and dignity for selfish gain?

Fearfully and Wonderfully Made

Psalm 139:13-16

You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb. 14 Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it. 15 You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion, as I was woven together in the dark of the womb. 16 You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed.

Discussion Question:

3. Are some people less valuable than others? Consider, as examples, the homeless, drug or alcohol addicted, incarcerated, non-English speaking, LBGT, physically challenged.

Apply the Text

Believers, we are our brother's keepers. As does the Lord, who died and paid the price for ALL people, we are to value ALL human life.

Memory Verse

How precious are your thoughts about me, O God. They cannot be numbered! 18 I can't even count them; they outnumber the grains of sand! And when I wake up, you are still with me!

Psalm 139:17-18

Lesson Eight:
Next Level Ministry
Acts 18:24-28, 19:1-7

Discussion Starter: Is there a point in life where we stop learning? Why?

Incomplete Witness (Acts 18:24-26)

24 Meanwhile, a Jew named Apollos, an eloquent speaker who knew the Scriptures well, had arrived in Ephesus from Alexandria in Egypt. 25 He had been taught the way of the Lord, and he taught others about Jesus with an enthusiastic spirit and with accuracy. However, he knew only about John's baptism. 26 When Priscilla and Aquila heard him preaching boldly in the synagogue, they took him aside and explained the way of God even more accurately.

Discussion Questions

1. Have you experienced negative criticism after doing your best? How did it make you feel?
2. Have you experienced negative criticism after doing your best? How did it make you feel?

More Accurate Witness
Acts 18:27-28

²⁷ Apollos had been thinking about going to Achaia, and the brothers and sisters in Ephesus encouraged him to go. They wrote to the believers in Achaia, asking them to welcome him. When he arrived there, he proved to be of great benefit to those who, by God's grace, had believed. ²⁸ He refuted the Jews with powerful arguments in public debate. Using the Scriptures, he explained to them that Jesus was the Messiah.

Discussion Question

4. Should we wait until we understand all of scripture to share our faith? How important is it to know the ways of the Lord?
5. How important is it to utilize the scriptures along with our experiences when sharing Jesus with others?

You Believe, Now Receive
Acts 19:1-7

1 While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul traveled through the interior regions until he reached Ephesus, on the coast, where he found several believers. 2 "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" he asked them. "No," they replied, "we haven't even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." 3 "Then what baptism did you experience?" he asked. And they replied, "The baptism of John." 4 Paul said, "John's baptism called for repentance from sin. But John himself told the people to believe in the one who would come later, meaning Jesus." 5 As soon as they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 Then when Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in other tongues and prophesied. 7 There were about twelve men in all.

Discussion Question:

6. How did this experience with the Holy Spirit differ from the day of Pentecost? Share your personal experience of receiving the Holy Spirit.

Apply the Text

Believers need to make sure boldness and eloquence are accompanied by a depth of understanding when presenting the gospel. Providing a complete picture of Jesus and the gospel will produce a mature body of believers, producing fruit to the glory of God!

Memory Verse

Then when Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in other tongues and prophesied.

Acts 19:6

Lesson Nine:
Sacrificing Self for Others
Acts 20:22-35

Discussion Starter: Salvation is a matter of life and death. What are the risks of sharing the gospel with others? What are the rewards?

Paul's Commitment
Acts 20:22-24

²² “And now I am bound by the Spirit to go to Jerusalem. I don’t know what awaits me, ²³ except that the Holy Spirit tells me in city after city that jail and suffering lie ahead. ²⁴ But my life is worth nothing to me unless I use it for finishing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus—the work of telling others the Good News about the wonderful grace of God.

Discussion Questions:

1. What are some potential risks inherent in doing door-to-door witnessing? How can we overcome the fear of danger or risk when witnessing?

Paul's Concern
Acts 20:25-31

²⁵ “And now I know that none of you to whom I have preached the Kingdom will ever see me again. ²⁶ I declare today that **I have been faithful**. If anyone suffers eternal death, it’s not my fault, ²⁷ for **I didn’t shrink from declaring all that God wants you to know**. ²⁸ **“So guard yourselves and God’s people. Feed and shepherd God’s flock—his church, purchased with his own blood—over which the Holy Spirit has appointed you as leaders.** ²⁹ I know that false teachers, like vicious wolves, will come in among you after I leave, not sparing the flock. ³⁰ **Even some men from your own group will rise up and distort the truth in order to draw a following.** ³¹ **Watch out!** Remember the three years I was with you—**my constant watch and care over you** night and day, and my many tears for you.

Discussion Question:

2. What connection did Paul make between eternal death and false teaching?

Paul's Final Exhortation
Acts 20:32-35

³² “And now I entrust you to God and **the message of His grace that is able to build you up and give you an inheritance with all those he has set apart for himself**. ³³ “I have never coveted anyone’s silver or gold or fine clothes. ³⁴ You know that these hands of mine have worked to supply my own needs and even the needs of those who were with me. ³⁵ And **I have been a constant example of how you can help those in need by working hard**. You should remember the words of the Lord Jesus: **‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’**”

Discussion Question:

3. What legacy will we leave behind of our faith?

Apply the Text

Believers must remain diligent to recognize and expose divisive and false teachings. We must guard ourselves against the greed that stems from carnality and seek the contentment that comes from faithfully fulfilling God's purposes.

Memory Verse

24 But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

Acts 20:24 NKJV

Lesson Ten:
The Testimony
Acts 22:3-8, 15-22

Discussion Starter: How has the great commission played a part in your conversion?

Former Life
Acts 22:3-5

3 Then Paul said, "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, and I was brought up and educated here in Jerusalem under Gamaliel. As his student, I was carefully trained in our Jewish laws and customs. I became very zealous to honor God in everything I did, just like all of you today. 4 And I persecuted the followers of the Way, hounding some to death, arresting both men and women and throwing them in prison. 5 The high priest and the whole council of elders can testify that this is so. For I received letters from them to our Jewish brothers in Damascus, authorizing me to bring the followers of the Way from there to Jerusalem, in chains, to be punished.

Discussion Question:

1. How can reciting your spiritual journey, when sharing the gospel, impact others? Explain.

Life-Changing Encounter
Acts 22:6-8, 15,16

6 "As I was on the road, approaching Damascus about noon, a very bright light from heaven suddenly shone down around me. 7 I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?' 8 "'Who are you, lord?' I asked. 'And the voice replied, 'I am Jesus the Nazarene, the one you are persecuting.'

15 For you are to be his witness, telling everyone what you have seen and heard. 16 What are you waiting for? Get up and be baptized. Have your sins washed away by calling on the name of the Lord.'

Discussion Question:

2. Describe an encounter with the Lord or someone, in particular, you have had which changed your life?

New Purpose
Acts 22:17-21

17 "After I returned to Jerusalem, I was praying in the Temple and fell into a trance. 18 I saw a vision of Jesus saying to me, 'Hurry! Leave Jerusalem, for the people here won't accept your testimony about me.' 19 "'But Lord,' I argued, 'they certainly know that in every synagogue I imprisoned and beat those who believed in you. 20 And I was in complete agreement when your witness Stephen was killed. I stood by and kept the coats they took off when they stoned him.' 21 "But the Lord said to me, 'Go, for I will send you far away to the Gentiles!'"

Discussion Question:

3. Have you ever felt moved by the Lord to do something that caused you to be anxious or fearful?

Rejection

Acts 22:22

22 The crowd listened until Paul said that word. Then they all began to shout, "Away with such a fellow! He isn't fit to live!"

Discussion Question:

4. What was the reaction you received from family or friends when announcing a plan to mingle or become sociable with an outsider, say, of another race; a political or religious group?

Apply the Text

Believers must be wise as they share their testimonies with others. The church of Jesus Christ will always be a threat to the world where the enemy's stronghold stands. We must be prepared to be ostracized, criticized, and even attacked. If we shrink back from sharing God's truths, our world will not experience the transformation that is so greatly needed.

Memory Verse

15 For you are to be his witness, telling everyone what you have seen and heard.

Acts 22:8

**Lesson Eleven:
Answering Critics
Acts 26:19-29**

Discussion Starter: Can a person truly believe in God, and not accept what He says in His Word?

**The Gospel Told
Acts 26: 19-23**

19 “And so, King Agrippa, I obeyed that vision from heaven. 20 I preached first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and throughout all Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that all must repent of their sins and turn to God—and prove they have changed by the good things they do. 21 Some Jews arrested me in the Temple for preaching this, and they tried to kill me. 22 But God has protected me right up to this present time so I can testify to everyone, from the least to the greatest. I teach nothing except what the prophets and Moses said would happen— 23 that the Messiah would suffer and be the first to rise from the dead, and in this way announce God’s light to Jews and Gentiles alike.”

Discussion Question:

1. Should repentance always be included when preaching the gospel? Should repentance be included in our testimony?
2. Why does Jesus’ resurrection remain controversial?

**An Objection Rebuffed
Acts 26:24-26**

24 Suddenly, Festus shouted, “Paul, you are insane. Too much study has made you crazy!” 25 But Paul replied, “I am not insane, Most Excellent Festus. What I am saying is the sober truth. 26 And King Agrippa knows about these things. I speak boldly, for I am sure these events are all familiar to him, for they were not done in a corner!

Discussion Question:

3. What are the reasons that the gospel is not accepted by so many?

**An Invitation Given
Psalm 26:27-29**

27 King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know you do—” 28 Agrippa interrupted him. “Do you think you can persuade me to become a Christian so quickly?” 29 Paul replied, “Whether quickly or not, I pray to God that both you and everyone here in this audience might become the same as I am, (except for these chains).”

Discussion Question:

4. Why do you suppose that some people accept Christ and the gospel sooner than others?

Apply the Text

Believers must be obedient to God's directions. He plans to give us hope for a bright future, but it begins with repentance and trust in Him. We must be willing to endure as good soldiers, criticism, rejection, and persecution, so that even critics may be transformed and share in this hope.

Memory Verse

22 For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; 23 but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, 24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

1 Corinthians 1:23-24

Lesson Twelve:
A Fearless Messenger
Acts 28:17-28

Discussion Starter: What makes the gospel message so intriguing to you, and how does that excitement open the door for you to share it with others?

The Journey
Acts 28:17-20

17 Three days after Paul’s arrival, he called together the local Jewish leaders. He said to them, “Brothers, I was arrested in Jerusalem and handed over to the Roman government, even though I had done nothing against our people or the customs of our ancestors. 18 The Romans tried me and wanted to release me, because they found no cause for the death sentence. 19 But when the Jewish leaders protested the decision, I felt it necessary to appeal to Caesar, even though I had no desire to press charges against my own people. 20 I asked you to come here today so we could get acquainted and so I could explain to you that I am bound with this chain because I believe that the hope of Israel—the Messiah—has already come.”

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do we or should we believe that the Messiah has come?
2. Have you ever been misunderstood and gotten into trouble because of it?

The Seekers
Acts 28:21-23

21 They replied, “We have had no letters from Judea or reports against you from anyone who has come here. 22 But we want to hear what you believe, for the only thing we know about this movement is that it is denounced everywhere.” 23 So a time was set, and on that day a large number of people came to Paul’s lodging. He explained and testified about the Kingdom of God and tried to persuade them about Jesus from the Scriptures. Using the law of Moses and the books of the prophets, he spoke to them from morning until evening.

Discussion Question:

3. Paul spoke to Jews from the Torah, about Jesus and their Hebrew history. How do we make God’s Word, as we share, relevant to today’s world and conditions?

The Response
Psalm 28:24-28

24 Some were persuaded by the things he said, but others did not believe. 25 And after they had argued back and forth among themselves, they left with this final word from Paul: “The Holy Spirit was right when he said to your ancestors through Isaiah the prophet, 26 ‘Go and say to this people: When you hear what I say, you will not understand. When you see what I do, you will not comprehend. 27 For the hearts of these people are hardened, and their ears cannot hear, and they have closed their eyes— so their eyes cannot see, and their ears cannot hear, and their hearts cannot understand, and they cannot

turn to me and let me heal them.' 28 So I want you to know that this salvation from God has also been offered to the Gentiles, and they will accept it."

Discussion Question:

4. Why preach to people who refuse to believe?

Apply the Text

God uses many ways to bring people into contact with the gospel. Hearing the gospel will nearly always cause a response- either positive or negative. As We Prepare to share the gospel with all that comes our way, and we know that not all will accept it, we are excited because we also know, that some will.

Memory Verse

20 So we are Christ's ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, "Come back to God!"

2 Corinthians 5:20