

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

You Will Be My Witnesses Acts 1

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Acts 1:8

Day 1: Read Acts 1:1-8.

1. What is the “former book” referred to in verse 1 (Luke 1:3)? Who, then, is the author of Acts?
2. Why did Jesus tell his disciples to stay in Jerusalem (Luke 24:49)?
3. In verse 4 Jesus reminds the disciples that they have heard him speak of the Holy Spirit before. Read John 14:16, 17, 26; and 16:7–15 and jot down some words or phrases that Jesus uses to describe him.
4. The Holy Spirit is mentioned three times in verses 1–8; what do we learn about him here?

Day 2: Read Acts 1:6–11.

5. Compare the last scene in Luke’s gospel (Lk. 24:50–52) with this opening scene of Acts. What details are added to the Acts account?
6. How is each person of the Trinity involved in the spread of the Gospel?
7. Is the phrase “you will be my witnesses” (vs. 8) a command or a prophesy? Explain.
8. What is the job of a witness? How does the statement “you will be my witnesses” apply to everyone who follows Christ? Explain briefly how the Holy Spirit is making **you** a witness for Jesus Christ.

Day 3: Read Acts 1:8–11.

9. This book is entitled “The Acts of the Apostles,” but in light of verse 8 what might be a better title?

10. What do you think the disciples were thinking and feeling in verse 10?

11. Jesus describes his future return to earth in Matthew 24:30, 31. What details does Matthew’s account add to what the angels say in Acts 1:11?

Day 4: Read Acts 1:12–26.

12. How did Jesus’ followers occupy their time during the 10 days covered in these verses?

13. In view of what we read in Mark 3:21 and John 7:5 who are we surprised to see numbered among Christ’s followers?

14. Peter was not a religious scholar. How then did he know what he says about the psalmist in verses 15ff. (See Luke 24:45.)

15. What words and phrases in verses 15–26 show the disciples’ trust in God’s sovereignty?

Day 5: Review.

16. When Jesus hung on the cross he uttered the words, “It is finished” (John 19:30). However, in Acts 1:1 we read the phrase “all that Jesus **began** to do and to teach.” How can work that is finished be just started?

17. What does Christ’s ascension mean for you personally? (See Eph. 2:4–7; Col. 3:1–4; Heb. 7:25)

8. What strategy does Peter use to grab the attention of the crowd? How might this help you when you witness to others?
9. Verses 22-24 give a “behind-the-scenes” look at what God has been up to. Jot down what is revealed about Him in these verses:
10. Who does Peter say is responsible for Jesus' death? Why is it important to make this distinction?

Day 4: Read Acts 2:25-37.

11. What point is Peter trying to make about King David?
12. Verses 32-33 mention each person of the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. What do these verses show us about how the Trinity works together?
13. What did Peter emphasize that “cut” the people “to the heart”? In what way(s) do you identify with this reaction?

Day 5: Read Acts 2:36-41.

14. In response to their question in verse 37, what does Peter tell the crowd they must do? What is the result?
15. God's faithfulness is powerfully demonstrated throughout this chapter. List support for such a statement, including any fulfilled prophecies and promises you find:
16. On a more personal level, Peter himself experienced the fulfillment of God's promises in this chapter, (e.g., Luke 5:8-10, John 14:26). How does this encourage you?

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Unity Acts 2:41–47; Acts 4:32—5:11

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.” Acts 2:42

Day 1: Read Acts 2:41–47.

1. Who are the people referred to in verses 42? (vs. 41)
2. List the four things they were devoted to. How are each of these important elements in the life of a believer?
3. If someone wrote a book about you, what would they say were devoted to?

Day 2: Read Acts 2:41–47.

4. List everything the believers were doing from verses 43 to 47.
5. List words and/or phrases which describe the attitude of the believers. What produced this attitude? (Acts 2:37, 38)
6. How are you similar and/or different than these believers?
7. Are there ways in which you think God might want you to become more like these believers? What are they? Who will pray with you concerning these changes?

Day 3: Read Acts 4:32–37.

8. What characterized the early church?
9. What two things do the apostles continue to do?

10. What does verse 34 say about everyone in this fellowship? Think about the number of people continuing to be a part of this fellowship. (2:41; 4:4) What would it take to care for everyone's physical needs?

Day 4: Read Acts 5:1–11.

11. Ananias and Sapphira, and Barnabas (Acts 4:36, 37), all sold property and put money at the apostles' feet.

A. Were they required to sell their land and give all their money? Explain.

B. What was the difference between the giving of Barnabas and that of Ananias and Sapphira? (Deut 23:21–23)

12. What does Peter mean when he says, "You have not lied to men but to God."? (Psalm 51:3, 4; II Corinthians 7:10)

13. Verses 5 and 11 state that "Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events." How would you define this fear and what would be some outcomes of this fear in your own life? (References verses: Deut 6:2; Psalm 61:5; Proverbs 2:1–5, 8:13, 14:27; Isaiah 11:1–3, 33:6)

14. What is the importance of fearing God, not man, and knowing that your sin is before God, not man?

Day 5: Review

15. How has the study this week helped you to think through (and apply) the following:

A. Caring for a new believer.

B. Caring for the needs within a community of believers.

C. Being involved in a community of believers.

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

A Healing at the Temple

Acts 3

“Repent then and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord and that he may send....Jesus.” Acts 3:19, 20

Day 1: Read Acts 3:1–26.

1. Imagine that you are the man who is healed in these verses. Retell this story from his point of view.

Day 2: Read Acts 3:1–10.

2. Most people going to the temple probably ignored the crippled beggar. What is unusual about how Peter and John respond to him? How do you think their response makes the beggar feel?
3. What would have satisfied the beggar? How does the value of what the beggar requests compare with what he actually receives?

Day 3: Read Acts 3:1–12.

4. Describe the following reactions:
 - A. The beggar after he is healed?
 - B. The temple-goers to the healed man?
 - C. Peter to the temple-goers?
5. Think about where and when this healing takes place and who the onlookers are. What is God’s larger purpose in this miracle?

Day 4: Read Acts 3:1–26.

6. List the names and descriptive phrases that Peter uses for Jesus in this chapter. Pick three of them and explain what these descriptions of Jesus would mean to Peter's audience. What do they mean to you?

7. Pick a verse or phrase that sums up the message of Peter's words in verses 12–26.

Day 5: Read Acts 3:1–26.

8. Twice, Peter exhorts his hearers to turn to God. Considering that Peter is addressing people who are at the temple for the purpose of praying, what does this imply about their prayers? Isaiah 29:13a

9. How is the crippled beggar a picture of the Israelites who Peter addresses that day? For example, how is the beggar's physical condition like Israel's spiritual condition? What does God do for the beggar? What does God want to do for Israel?

10. Be honest—what would you really like God to do for you? Meditate on the apostle Paul's prayer in Eph. 3:16–19. How does what God wants to give you compare with what you want from him?

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT**Two Fishermen Before the Scholars****Acts 4:1–31**

“When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and took note that these men had been with Jesus.” Acts 4:13

Day 1: Read Acts 4:1–4.

1. In this chapter, Peter and John are acting as witnesses for Christ. (Acts 1:8) Do you have a similar commission? (Luke 8:39)
2. The Sadducees (vs. 1) were the majority party of the Sanhedrin—wealthy, aristocratic, priestly descendants. What else do we know about the Sadducees? (Matthew 22:23)
3. Verse 2 isn’t the first time Peter emphasizes the resurrection. (See also 2:24, 26-31; 3:15.) Why does he hit so hard on that subject? (I Corinthians 15:14, 17–22)
4. How does persecution impact on church growth here? (vss. 3, 4)

Day 2: Read Acts 4:5–22.

5. Peter and John are the ones on trial here. As you scan the chapter, who seems to be in charge of the situation? Jot down some phrases to support your position.
6. What effect does God’s truth, as spoken by Peter and John, have on “rational” human arguments? (2 Corinthians 10:3–5a)
7. What is the difference in educational level between the two apostles and their inquisitors? (4:13; Luke 5:2, 3)
8. Why do you think God uses “unschooled, ordinary men”? (1 Corinthians 1:26–29) How do you think God can use a person like you?

Day 3: Read Acts 4:1–31.

9. Talking about “God” in public is usually safe enough, but the use of what name got Peter and John into trouble? (vss. 2, 10, 30) Why does Peter go out of his way to claim this name on every occasion? (vs. 12)

10. Annas and Caiaphas had hoped they’d gotten rid of Jesus. (John 18:13ff) Why are they going to have even more trouble with him now than before his crucifixion? (John 12:24; 16:7, 8)

11. Jot down one destructive thing and one constructive thing you can do with a good strong rock. How does Jesus fulfill both functions? (vs. 11; Daniel 2:44, 45; Isa. 28:16)

12. How does verse 12 help you respond to people who say there are many roads to heaven?

13. Where does Peter draw the line in “submitting to the authorities”? (vss. 18, 19; Romans 13:1)

Day 4: Read Acts 4:23–31.

14. What do men unintentionally accomplish through all their rebellious scheming against God? (vss. 27, 28; 13:27)

15. Why does the Sanhedrin’s ranting and scheming seem a bit laughable? Whom are they dealing with? (vss. 25b, 26; Psalm 2:1–4)

Day 5: Read Acts 4:27–31.

16. After the disturbing incidents related in this chapter, you would think that the apostles would pray for an end to their hardships and persecution. Instead, what did they pray for? (vss. 29, 30) How does this model of prayer instruct you personally?

17. How does God answer the prayer of verse 29? (vs. 31)

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Obeying God Acts 5:12–6:7

Peter and the other apostles replied: “We must obey God rather than men.” Acts 5:29

Day 1: Read Acts 5:12–18.

1. Verse 13 says that “no one else dared join [the believers].” What kind of person does not dare to join them and why? (Recall what happened in the first part of chapter 5.)

2. What are some results of the signs and wonders performed by the Holy Spirit through the apostles? (vss. 14–18)

Days 2 and 3: Read Acts 5:17–33.

3. How do the religious leaders feel about the apostles in verse 17? How do they feel about them in verse 33?
 - A. Jot down words or phrases in verses 17 through 33 that trace their progression from one emotion to the other.

 - B. What happens if you don’t check jealousy in your own heart? (See James 1:13–15.)

4. In verses 29–31 Peter and the apostles make three statements. Rephrase each statement and then tell what you think infuriates the religious leaders about each:
 - vs. 29

 - vs. 30

 - vs. 31

5. In verse 28 the religious leaders accuse the apostles of being determined to make them guilty of Jesus' blood, but who is really convicting them of sin? (See John 16:7b–11.) Do any of the religious leaders repent? (Acts 6:7)

Day 4: Read Acts 5:34–42.

6. What do we know about Gamaliel? (see also Acts 22:3)
7. In a few words restate Gamaliel's advice to the religious leaders. Is this advice good or bad? Why?
8. Following their release, how do the apostles demonstrate that they really believe what they say?
9. If you had experienced this kind of "disgrace", what do you think your reaction would be?

Day 5: Read Acts 6:1–7.

10. Recall the picture of unity in the early church in Acts 2:42–47. What circumstance could have threatened this unity in Acts 6:1–7? Which is more damaging, the circumstance or the attitudes? Explain your choice.
11. What spiritual traits are required of the candidates who will "wait on tables"?
12. Is "the ministry of the word of God" more important than "waiting on tables"? Why or why not? (See 1 Cor. 12:12–27.)
13. What is the most important trait needed by one who wants to serve in Christ's church? (Gal. 5:14, 16, 22, 23)

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT**The First Martyr****Acts 6:8—7**

“These men began to argue with Stephen but they could not stand up against his wisdom or the Spirit by whom he spoke.” Acts 6:10

Day 1: Read Acts 6:5, 8–10.

1. List some features of Stephen’s character and ministry.
2. What promise did Jesus give concerning wisdom in Luke 21:15? How is this promise evident between Stephen and the members of the Synagogue of the Freedmen?

Day 2: Read Acts 6:11–15.

3. What is the Sanhedrin? (Acts 5:21)
4. Who else was brought before the Sanhedrin? (Mark 14:53–59) What similarities are there between these two accounts?
5. What did the Sanhedrin notice about Stephen’s face?
 - A. Who else has a face that was “altered”? (Exodus 34:29)
 - B. What caused these “alterations” and what is the relevance for us? (2 Corinthians 3:12–18)

Day 3: Read Acts 7:1–53. (This is the longest speech in the Book of Acts)

6. The charges in 7:1 relate back to 6:11, 13, and 14. Does Stephen answer the question of the high priest? Explain your answer.
7. The men who sat on the Sanhedrin were well educated in their history. Why do you think Stephen spoke in such detail about this history?
8. List any facts that were unknown, new or brought a different perspective to you.

Day 4: Read Acts 7:51–60.

9. Stephen's face looked like the face of an angel. (6:15) How are Stephen's words in vss. 51–53 consistent or inconsistent with your view of angels?

10. Compare Stephen's reaction to being falsely accused to the reaction of the Sanhedrin when they are rightly accused. Why are their reactions so different from each other?

11. What does Jesus promise to those who follow him? (Mat 10:22; Luke 6:22; John 15:18–25) How is this graphically brought to fulfillment in Stephen's life?

Day 5: Review and Reflection.

12. Review what has been learned about Stephen.
 - A. What was Stephen chosen to do within the community of believers? (6:2)

 - B. Why was Stephen chosen to do this?

 - C. From a human standpoint, was this the most important “spiritual” job to do?

 - D. What was God's ultimate purpose for Stephen?

13. As you reflect on your life, are there times you could share where God's purpose only became clear after simple obedience?

14. Both the Sanhedrin and Stephen were well educated in their history, yet their responses to Jesus were radically different. Although being educated in Scripture is important, what else is needed to really know Jesus? (Eph. 2:4–9)

15. Stephen was bold and truthful in his assessment of the Sanhedrin (vss. 51–53). Could any of the truth told to the Sanhedrin apply to your life? If yes, do you desire change? What would it look like and how could the change be achieved?

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The Word Goes Out

Acts 8

“Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went.” Acts 8:4

Day 1: Read Acts 8:1–3.

1. Review Jesus’ prophecy in Acts 1:8. What part of this prophecy is fulfilled in Acts 8:1?
2. What is the catalyst that scatters the believers? What is the result of this scattering (vs. 4)? Give examples where this same catalyst is causing the gospel to be heard today.
3. Describe the apostle Paul (referred to in this passage as Saul) as he is found in verses 1–3. How do Paul’s words in 1 Timothy 1:12–16 encourage you?

Day 2: Read Acts 8:4–8.

4. Why is it significant that Philip went to Samaria? (see John 4:9b, Gen. 12:1–3)
5. What task was Philip first given? (see Acts 6:1–5). How does his “job description” change as the result of the persecution in Jerusalem? What does this indicate about the way God may choose to work in our lives?

Day 3: Read Acts 8:9–25.

6. What similarities do you see between Simon and Ananias and Sapphira whom we studied in Acts 5:1–10?

7. What warning to you take from this passage? (Consider also James 4:8b, I Cor. 4:5b)

Day 4: Read Acts 8:26–40.

8. What differences do you see between the Ethiopian eunuch and Simon the sorcerer?

9. Would you say your heart is more like the Ethiopian's or Simon's? Consider how the Lord might have you pray about your answer and write a prayer to Him.

Day 5: Read Acts 8:26–40.

10. What are some factors that make Philip such an effective witness one-on-one with the Ethiopian?

11. How will this help you and/or challenge you to be a more effective witness for Jesus?

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

Acts 9:1–31

Saul Joins the Children of Light

“This man is my chosen instrument...I will show him how much he must suffer for my name.” (Acts 9: 15, 16)

Day 1: Read Acts 9:1–6.

1. What was Paul on his way to doing when he became a Christian? (vss.1, 2) What were you on your way to doing when you became a Christian?

2. Philippians 3:6 says Saul was “faultless as to legalistic righteousness”, but what words in verse one suggest that his zeal was not completely pure but alloyed with sin?

3. Describe Paul’s conversion. Did he do anything to contribute to it? Did you?

4. Who initiated your coming to God? (Reread Acts 5:31 carefully.)

5. Read Romans 5:6–10 and Ephesians 2:4, 5 and describe what condition you were in at the time you were saved.

Day 2: 9:1-6

On the Damascus road, what shocking discovery does Paul make about the identity of the Lord he thought he was serving all these years? (v.5)

In verse four, we hear Jesus' voice for the first time since his ascension. What is Jesus doing since he returned to the Father? (Hebrews 7:25)

How does hearing Jesus' voice from heaven, breaking into our earthly life, reassure and encourage you about those you love who have died?

Day 3: 9:10-19

After all Saul has done against the church, what are the first two words Ananias says to him, placing his hand on him? (v.17) What truth is God teaching Ananias --- and us? (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Was Paul's conversion only for his own sake or for a larger purpose as well? (v.15) What about you: were you saved only for your own sake and enjoyment of your salvation, or does God have a larger purpose for you?

Consider what it means to be a "chosen instrument" (v.15), whether a musical one or other. Does an instrument exist for its own sake or for the one who plays it?

Day 4: 9:15-31

What had to happen to Paul before he could be used as that instrument in God's hands? (v. 17)

What was the core message that Paul went around preaching in all the synagogues after his conversion? (v.20)

If Paul's case is any indication, does life get any easier after conversion? (Scan verses 23-30)
Has your life gotten easier? Discuss the ways it has and it hasn't.

Day 5: 9:15-31

Now that Paul belongs to Christ, what is Christ going to begin to show him? (v.16) Has God been showing you that too?

From here on in the good news about Christ will be brought in a concerted way to the Gentiles.
(v.15) Is this an afterthought on God's part or the timely unfolding of an ancient plan?
(Isaiah 49:6)

17. What is the reason and purpose for all that suffering you're undergoing in your life, as Paul did? (1 Peter 1:7; 2:21) What is your chief consolation in this life of suffering? (John 14:1-3)

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

Acts 9:32—10

Faith Extended

“Then Peter began to speak: I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right.” Acts 10:34, 35

Day 1: Read Acts 9:32–42.

1. What miracles does Peter perform?
2. What similarities are there among these miracles?
3. Stephen died (chapter 7) and Tabitha was raised from the dead. What do you learn about how God works from these two circumstances?

Day 2: Read Acts 9:36–43.

4. Describe Tabitha.
5. Read Romans 12:6–8 and James 1:27. How does Tabitha’s life reflect these passages?
 - A. What gifts has God given you?
 - B. How do your gifts reflect the above passages?

Day 3: Read Acts 10:1–48.

6. As you read, write down every fact about Cornelius.
7. How is Cornelius’ faith an example to all believers?

Day 4: Read Acts 10:9–48.

8. Is it important that the vision was repeated three times? Explain your answer.
9. What restrictions are given in Leviticus 11:4–7, 13–19, 29–30? In light of these restrictions how is Peter's reaction in verse 14 understandable?
10. What is the significance of the vision?
11. How does Peter's faith change from verse 14 to verse 28? What part did God have in the change? What part did Peter have in the change?
12. What are some beliefs and/or values that hold you back from reaching out to people? How does the vision given to Peter by God apply to you?

Day 5: Read Acts 10:34–48.

13. What is the central theme in Peter's sermon. (vss. 34–43) Peter also gave sermons in 2:16–39 and 3:12–23. Do all three sermons have the same central theme? (In New Testament language, "the prophets" is a form of shorthand for the whole Old Testament.)
14. What happened to those listening to the sermon? (vs. 44) How does this reinforce the vision that God showed Peter?
15. What was the reaction of the circumcised believers (the Jewish believers)?
16. What important step does the early church take during this time? How does Galatians 3:28 support and enlarge this decision?

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT**What's in a Name?**

“When he arrived and saw the evidence of the grace of God, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts.” Acts 11:23

Day 1: Read Acts 11:1–18.

1. His name was Simon until Jesus changed it to “Peter,” meaning rock. How is Peter’s name given substance by these events and the role he played in Acts 2:14–39 and 8:14–17?
2. Compare Peter’s account of these events with the account recorded in chapter 10. What new details are added? What details does Peter leave out? What does the omission of these details suggest about Peter’s character?

Day 2: Read Acts 11:1–18.

3. What is the rumor that reaches the ears of the believers in Judea, and why is it unsettling?
4. A large portion of this chapter is virtually a repetition of chapter 10. Why do you think it was important for Peter to explain “precisely” what had happened, including the details of his vision and the fact that it occurred three times?
5. What point does Peter make that silences the objections of the Jewish believers?
6. What truth are the Jewish believers beginning to grasp? (See 1 Cor. 12:12, 13) Can you think of any group(s) or individual(s) that you resist witnessing to?

Day 3: Read Acts 11:19–21.

7. How does God use the events in verses 1–19 to prepare the apostles for what transpires in verse 20?
8. What factor determines the success of a missionary enterprise (vs. 21)?

Day 4: Read Acts 11:22–24.

9. What do we already know about Barnabas from Acts 4:36 and Acts 9:27? What does Luke add to this description in verse 24?
10. How does Barnabas live up to the literal meaning of his name, i.e., “Son of Encouragement” in verse 23? If you could choose for yourself a godly nickname to aspire to, what would it be?

Day 5: Read Acts 11:25–30.

11. Christ is the Greek word for Messiah meaning “anointed one.” Why, then, is it significant that believers are called “Christians,” especially in light of the theme of our study in Acts?
12. After Agabus predicts a severe famine throughout the Roman empire, how do individual disciples respond? How might their response be instructive to you when you hear of someone in need?

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT**It's All Part of God's Plan Acts 12:1–24**

“But the Word of God continued to increase and spread.” Acts 12:24

Day 1: Read Acts 12:1–24.

1. King Herod's family had a long history of antagonism towards God's cause.
 - A. For what atrocity does his grandfather, King Herod, live in infamy? (Matt. 2:13–16)

 - B. What crime is credited to his great uncle Herod? (Matt. 14:3–12)

2. In the opening verses of Acts 12 what is King Herod doing that fulfills the legacy given him by his grandfather and great uncle?

3. Name at least one thing that motivates Herod to intensify his persecution of Christians (vs. 3).

4. Herod luxuriated in the praise of men. What is the end result for him? (vss. 21–23)

5. Think of a time when the praise of others was more important to you than the praise of God. What was the end result?

Day 2: Read Acts 12:1–17.

6. What do we know about James (vs. 2)? See also Matt. 4:21, 22; Mark 3:14, 15, 17 and 10:35–40.

7. James was one of Christ's three most intimate friends and one of the foremost apostles. Why do you suppose so little is said of his martyrdom (only 1 verse) while so much is said of Stephen's (70 verses in Acts 6 and 7)? Who is the book of Acts really about? (Acts 1:1)

8. James is beheaded while an angel comes to deliver Peter. Who does God seem to care more about—James or Peter? Explain your answer.

Day 3: Read Acts 12:1–6.

9. What resources does Herod have to insure Peter's imprisonment? What resource does the church have? Which proves more powerful?
10. The Passover (the Feast of Unleavened Bread) lasts a week; therefore Peter may have been imprisoned for several days at least. When does God send the angel to deliver Peter?
11. What is Peter's state of mind the night of his rescue? (Hint: What is he doing? See Isaiah 26:3, 4.) What does waiting do for faith? What does faith do for waiting? Give a personal example of either.

Day 4: Read Acts 12:1–17.

12. What is the church's response to Peter's arrest (vs. 5)?
13. What is the church's response to Peter's deliverance? (vss. 14, 15) What does this reveal about their faith?
14. What is the purpose of prayer? (Luke 22:42; 2 Cor. 1:9–11; Phil. 4:5–7)
15. Something to think about: Do you sometimes miss God's answers to prayer because you're too busy giving God your own answers?

Day 5: Read Acts 12:1–24.

16. What effect does the angel's touch have on Peter (vs. 7)? On Herod (vs. 23)?
17. Give at least one other example of a revelation of God having two opposite effects.
18. Describe the effect of God's touch on you.

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT**Acts 12:25—13 Barnabas and Saul Sent Off**

“Through him everyone who believes is justified from everything you could not be justified from by the law of Moses.” (Acts 13:39)

Day 1: Read Acts 12:25—13:52.

1. The kingdom of God marches on in chapter 13, but not without resistance from the desperate king of darkness. Skim the chapter and find places where he flexes his muscle.
2. In spite of the devil’s efforts, why can you rest assured that the victory is certain? Who is directing the advance of the kingdom? (vs. 2)
3. What are the leaders of the Antioch church doing when the Holy Spirit speaks to them? (vs. 2) What can you do when you don’t know what to do next? (James 1:5; 5:13)

Day 2: Read Acts 13:6–12.

4. What are the strategies the devil uses in his attempt to thwart the advance of the gospel? (Consider verses 10 and 50)
5. Time and again, the strategies of evil men play into God’s hands and propel his kingdom forward. Show how this occurs in the following instances:
 - A. Verses 4–12:
 - B. Verses 27–30:
 - C. Verses 45–48:
 - D. Verses 50–52:

Day 3: Read Acts 13:13–39.

6. Luke 24:44–46 gives us the key to understanding what we read in the Old Testament. What is that key, and how does Paul apply it to his interpretation of Scripture in verses 32–37?

7. How does Paul emphasize that Jesus' resurrection from the dead is a historical, space-time fact and not a poetic fiction or figure of speech? (vss. 29–31; 34–37) What difference does it make to you? (1 Cor. 15:17)
8. What precisely is the “good news”? (vss. 32, 33)
9. What is the deepest need of man and how is it taken care of by Jesus Christ? (vs. 38)
10. How do we lay hold of this gift? (vs. 39)

Day 4: Read Acts 13:40–52.

11. What do Paul and Barnabas urge upon those who have already crossed over into eternal life? (vs. 43b)
12. Here is the turning point of Paul's ministry. Why does Paul change his mission focus hereafter from the Jews to the Gentiles? (vs. 46)
13. Does verse 46 imply that the inclusion of the Gentiles in God's kingdom was an afterthought to a botched plan? (Isaiah 49:6)
14. How does Paul hope his ministry to the Gentiles will ultimately affect the Jews? (Romans 11:13, 14)

Day 5: Read Acts 13: 48–52.

15. In the end, who gains eternal life? (vs. 48b) Is this a comfort to you or a stumbling block?
16. What are the disciples' emotions even after severe persecution? (vss. 50–52) How do you figure?

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT**Hardship in Ministry Acts 14**

“We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God,” they said” Acts 14:22b

Day One: Read Acts 14:1–7.

1. Considering the way the Jews treated Paul and Barnabas in Antioch (Acts 13:45, 50), why do you suppose the synagogue was the first place they went in Iconium? (See Rom. 1:16, 10:1, Acts 13:46)
2. Efficiency experts probably would have urged Paul and Barnabas to split up so they could reach twice as many people in each town they visited. Give at least two reasons that would explain why they stuck together. (Hint: John 8:17)
 - (1.)
 - (2.)
3. What do the non-believing Jews do to combat the effectiveness of Paul and Barnabas’ preaching? How do Paul and Barnabas work to counteract their response? How do you think you would respond given such opposition and potential danger?
4. What was God’s purpose in enabling Paul and Barnabas to perform signs and wonders?
5. Describe how this passage illustrates the blurring of the line between the Jews and Gentiles—both for good and for ill. What division is now becoming apparent and why is it so significant?

Day Two: Read Acts 14:8–13.

6. Describe the similarities and differences between the events of Paul’s first recorded healing with those of Peter’s in Acts 3:1–6.
7. What significance could there be in the fact that the first recorded healing of a Jew and of a Gentile are men who have been unable to walk since birth?

Day Three: Read Acts 14:8–18.

8. Contrast Paul and Barnabas' response to being heralded as gods to that of Herod in Acts 12:22, 23. How can Rom. 12:3 help you avoid either being puffed up with pride or displaying false humility?

9. In verses 15–17 Paul is speaking to a crowd with no knowledge of the scriptures, so how does he go about talking to them about God?

Day Four: Read Acts 14:19, 20.

10. What does it say about these Jews that they would travel all the way from Antioch and Iconium to make trouble for Paul?

11. Who else have we studied in Acts who went to such lengths to persecute Christians? (see Acts 9:1–3)?

12. Twice before Paul has been warned of imminent danger and been delivered from it (Acts 9:23, 24, 14:5, 6). This time, however, he is stoned and thought to be dead, yet he gets up and leaves for Derbe the next day. What does this show you about God's sovereignty? How does this encourage you?

Day Five: Read Acts 14:21–28.

13. What would motivate Paul and Barnabas to return to the very places they had experienced such hardship? What kind of testimony would their return be—to believers? to non-believers?

14. How do they go about strengthening the church (vss. 22, 23)?

15. In verse 22 Paul states that there is hardship associated with the Christian life. How has hardship affected your faith? (See James 1:2–4)

16. Upon their return Paul and Barnabas met with the believers to share all that God had done, particularly “how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.” As you reflect over their journey, what impresses you the most?

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT**Acts 15****Faith Alone**

“We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are.” Acts 15:11

Day 1: Read Acts 15:1–35. (Overview)

1. What problem arose in the Antioch church? (vs. 1)

2. In general terms, how was the problem solved?

3. What was the final outcome? (vs. 31)

Day 2: Read Acts 15:1–5.

4. Why was circumcision given to the Jewish people? (Genesis 17:1–14, especially vss. 10, 11, 14)

5. From your study in Acts, why do you think the believers among the Pharisees think this is a crucial issue?

6. Read Galatians 2:15, 16; 3:2–5.
 - A. What do the believers among the Pharisees need to learn?

 - B. What things do you think you should do or ought to do to be more “acceptable” to God? How will you learn the truth of the Galatians passage?

Day 3: Read Acts 15:6–11.

7. After reading verse 6 and the first three words in verse 7, was this a quick process? Why or why not?

8. In verse 7 Peter is referring to his vision given by God in chapter 10. Remembering Peter’s reaction in chapter 10:9–16, explain how Peter’s thinking has changed and is now aligned with God’s purpose stated in Acts 1:8.

9. How did the Christian Jews know that the Gentiles were true believers? (vs. 6)
10. What causes our hearts to be purified? (vs. 9) Why is this so very important?
11. Read verse 10. What are the ways that you see yourself doing this to others? (i.e., families, children, friends, co-workers, etc.)

Day 4: Read Acts 15:12–35.

12. How was the truth that Peter spoke (vss. 7–11) confirmed by others participating in the discussion? In what way(s) is this truth important for our own lives?
13. Read vss. 31–34. Describe what you think are the mood and attitudes of the people.
14. What are the character qualities and attitudes of all the apostles and elders (especially Peter and James) throughout this event? How can you learn from this passage and incorporate these qualities and attitudes into your life?

Day 5: Read Acts 15:36–41.

15. What is the reason for the disagreement between Paul and Barnabas?
16. What is the immediate result of the disagreement?
17. Read Colossians 4:10, 11; II Timothy 4:11 and Philemon 24. What do these verses suggest about the future relationship between Paul and Mark? Read I Corinthians 9:6. What about the relationship between Paul and Barnabas?
18. Has a disagreement separated you from another believer? What can be done to obtain reconciliation? (Colossians 3:12–14; Romans 12:18)
19. How does II Corinthians 4:7 apply to this passage? What hope does it give you?

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT**Guidance****Acts 16**

*“What must I do to be saved? They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved.”
Acts 16:31*

Day 1: Read Acts 16:1–10.

1. Paul’s travels in Acts 16:1–10 take place in what is modern day Turkey. What is the purpose of this trip? (Acts 15:36)
2. What do we know about Timothy? (See also 1 Cor. 4:17; 2 Tim. 1:5; 3:14, 15.) How does what we know of Timothy encourage you as a parent or friend or teacher of children?
3. Why does Paul circumcise Timothy? Is this contrary to his argument in Acts 15:1, 2? Is it contrary to the Jerusalem council’s letter to Gentile believers in Acts 15:24–29? (See also 1 Cor. 9:19–23.)

Day 2: Read Acts 16:5–10.

4. What is the effect on the churches of the visit of Paul and Silas?
5. The Holy Spirit (the Spirit of Jesus) directed Paul to sail from Asia to Europe. In your life what does it mean to be controlled by the Holy Spirit? What is the alternative to being controlled by the Holy Spirit? (Rom. 7:5; 8:5–9; Gal. 4:6, 7; 5:16–26)
6. How are you different today because of the Spirit’s presence in you?
7. What change in pronouns do you notice between verses 8 and 10? What does this signify?

Day 3: Read Acts 16:11–15.

8. When the apostle Paul entered a new city he usually made a beeline for the nearest synagogue and started preaching and teaching (for example, see Acts 14:1). Why do you suppose he didn’t do this in the Roman colony of Philippi? (vss. 12, 13)
9. What were Paul and his friends looking for on that Sabbath day outside the city? What did they find? (vs. 13)

10. What do we know about Lydia? Name at least one other person in Acts who was a Gentile but a worshiper of God.
11. What was the outcome of these missionaries' readiness to be led by the Spirit?

Day 4: Read Acts 16:16–40.

12. Why do you think the evil spirit in the girl loudly advertises the fact that “these men are servants of the most high God who are telling you the way to be saved”?
13. What occupies Paul and Silas's time while in jail? What do their activities reveal about their state of mind and their attitude toward suffering?
14. Paul and Silas know that the earthquake is God's intervention, but why don't they take it as a sign that God wants them to escape? What is their primary concern?
15. Recall a time when godly wisdom caused you to act in a way that seemed illogical.
16. What is the jailer's first reaction to the earthquake? What brings him to the point of asking, “What must I do to be saved?”

Day 5: Read Acts 16:1–40.

17. As it turns out both Paul and Silas are Roman citizens. What ramifications does this have for them in Philippi, a Roman colony? (See also Acts 22:25–29.)
18. List the decisions Paul has to make in this chapter. How does he usually discern God's will?
19. How do we discern God's will? (See Ps. 19:7; 119:105; Prov. 3:5, 6; Eph. 1:17; James 1:5, 6; 3:17.) Add your own verses.

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT**In the City of Idols****Acts 17**

“Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you.” (Acts 17:23)

Day 1: Read Acts 17:1–9.

1. Paul “reasoned” and “proved” the Messiahship of Jesus from the Scriptures (i.e., the Old Testament). How does the Old Testament prove that Jesus is the “Christos” (Greek word for “Messiah”)? (Luke 24:25–27, 44; see also Isaiah 35:5, 6; 52:13—53:12; 61:1, 2)
2. What is always the strategy of the enemies of the gospel? (vs. 5) How does that compare to the “strategies” of those who hold to the gospel? (2 Corinthians 1:12; 4:2)
3. How was the accusation against the Christians in verse 7 a misleading half-truth? (John 18:36) According to Jesus, what should be our stance toward “Caesar”, or government? (Matt.22:21; Rom. 13:1)
4. What kind of “trouble”(vs. 6) were the messengers of Christ causing? When people are snug in their sin and set in their ways, how is the gospel “trouble”?

Day 2: Read Acts 17:10–15.

5. What did the brothers do when confronted with the persecution in Thessalonica? (vs. 10) Was Paul a lone ranger Christian? Did he take advice from and submit to other brothers? (vss. 10, 14)
6. What is noteworthy about the Berean people? (vs. 11) Is it a good or a bad thing to regularly examine your Bible to see if what your pastors and Women’s Bible Study leaders tell you is true?

Day 3: Read Acts 17:16–21.

7. What distressed Paul in Athens? (vs. 16) What are some idols Paul would find if he came to 21st century America? What are some of the more subtle idols in your own heart?
8. How did the people of Athens spend their time? (vs. 21) What becomes of people like that? (2 Timothy 3:7)

9. What is always the heart of Paul's message everywhere he goes? (vs. 18b)

Day 4: Read Acts 17:22–34.

10. How does Paul show godly wisdom and cunning in his communication with the Athenians? (vs. 22) Can you think of ways you can also “meet people where they're at”?

11. How is Paul's God distinctive from and superior to the plethora of compartmentalized gods of Athens? (vs. 24)

12. Without ridiculing or demeaning his hearers, how does Paul show the silliness of worshipping idols? (vss. 24–30; Read also Isaiah 44:12–20)

13. What does God need from His creatures? (vs. 25; Ps. 50:12)

14. So if God did not create us, or save us, because He needs us, then why? (Deut.7:7, 8)

15. What did God determine about you before you were even born? (vs. 26b) (Does that mean He hand-picked your parents too!) For what purpose did He put you right where He did? (vs. 27)

Day 5: Read Acts 17:30–34.

16. In what sense is God “not far from” all men (vs. 27)? What tiny step (yet great chasm) divides men from God's offered salvation? (Rom.10:6–11)

17. What does God command all people everywhere? (vs. 30) Why is it more serious to reject God now in New Testament times than in times before Christ? (vs. 30; Hebrews 10:28, 29)

18. What day is coming to all men? (vs. 31) Who is the man God has appointed to do this? What is the proof that God has chosen him? (vs. 31b)

19. What double-edged impact does gospel preaching always have? (vss. 32–34; 2 Cor 2:15, 16)

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

The Journey Continues

Acts 18

“Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent.” Acts 18:9

Day 1: Read Acts 18:1–28.

1. List the places where Paul went during this chapter.
 - A. Attached is a map. Find the cities on the map and draw a line from city to city to indicate where Paul traveled.
 - B. Which of these places are connected with books of the New Testament?
2. How is Acts 1:8 continuing to be fulfilled in this chapter?

Day 2: Read Acts 18:1–6.

3. Who does Paul meet in Corinth? (vs. 2) What do we know about them? (see also Romans 16:3, 4; 1 Corinthians 16:19)
4. Why do you think Paul is tentmaking? (Acts 20:34; 1 Corinthians 9:3–18)
5. What do you think changed so that Paul is able to devote himself to preaching?

Day 3: Read Acts 18:6–11.

7. In verse 6, Paul’s words are very stern to the Jews. Yet what is the desire of his heart for his fellow Jews? (Romans 9:1–5)
8. What do you think is Paul’s state of mind? (vss. 8–11)

Read 4: Read Acts 18:12–17.

7. What charge do the Jews bring against Paul?

8. What are the results of the Jews bringing Paul before Gallio?

Day 5: Read Acts 18:18–28.

9. Describe Apollos. What information about Jesus did Apollos know? What information about Jesus did Apollos not know?

10. What role did Priscilla and Aquila play in the life of Apollos and therefore the life of the early church?

11. Priscilla and Aquila had an “open home” policy. What does Scripture teach about hospitality? (Romans 12:13; Isaiah 58:6, 7; Matthew 25:35, 36; Psalm 68:6a)

Reflection:

12. Some commentaries indicate that Paul was at a point of discouragement in chapter 18. Using the following verses as a *guide*, explain the encouragement God gave to Paul throughout the whole chapter.
 - A. Verses 2, 3:

 - B. Verse 7:

 - C. Verse 8:

 - D. Verses 9, 10:

 - E. Other verses you came up with:

16. Think about the recent events in your own life. Have there been any events that God was using for your encouragement? Please consider sharing one of these events so that you can encourage others in your group.

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT**Power Encounters****Acts 19**

“In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power.” Acts 19:20

Day One: Read Acts 19:1–7.

1. The disciples Paul encounters know only the baptism of John. Read Mark 1:1–8 to better understand his discussion with them.
 - A. According to Mark 1:5, what did people do to receive the baptism of repentance?
 - B. Looking at Mark 1:7, 8 and today’s passage, what part of John’s message had they not heard?
2. The name “Jesus” is Greek for the Old Testament name Joshua, and it means “God saves.” What does this indicate about the difference between receiving John’s baptism and being baptized “in the name of Jesus” (vs. 5)?

Day Two: Read Acts 19:8–12.

3. How does Luke describe those whom Paul was unable to persuade about the truth of the gospel?
4. What warning does Paul give in Rom. 2:5 to those who refuse to believe?
5. Give an example from your own life of what’s happened when you have hardened your heart toward God.
6. Miracles, by definition, are something supernatural and out of the ordinary, and Luke has recorded numerous miracles in his gospel and in Acts. So why do you think he describes the miracles in verses 11 and 12 as “extraordinary”?
7. In verse 11 who does Luke say did the miracles? Why do you think he made a point to express it this way?

Day Three: Read Acts 19:13–22.

8. Compare verses 13–16 with Acts 8:18–23. Although the circumstances are different, what warning would you take for anyone attempting to use the power of God for his or her own purposes?
9. List four ways God was glorified as the result of what occurred in verses 17–20.
 - A.
 - B.
 - C.
 - D.
10. Verse 19 mentions the high monetary value of the magic scrolls. Some might suggest that the scrolls could have been sold rather than burned and the money used to finance Paul's missionary journeys. What do you think of their choice?

Day Four: Read Acts 19:23–27.

11. What is it that motivates Demetrius to do something about Paul?
12. Despite his personal motivation, what does Demetrius stress to stir up the others to take action?
13. What instance(s) from your own life can you give where you used one argument to persuade someone to do something when you were actually motivated by something else?

Day Five: Read Acts 19:28–40.

14. Why does Alexander try to speak to the crowd? Why do you think the crowd shouts him down when they realize he is a Jew?
15. In verses 31 and 35–41 civil leaders act (both directly and indirectly) to protect Paul and his companions. What does this show us about the relationship between God and civil authority? (Recall Rom. 13:1)
16. As you reflect on Acts 19 as a whole, what aspect of the power of God stands out to you the most—and why?

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT**Acts 20 A Farewell**

“However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the gospel of God’s grace.” Acts 20:24

Day 1: Read Acts 20:1–6.

1. What one thing does Paul do with the disciples when he is leaving? (vs. 1) In what way can this be an example for us as we interact with one another?
2. Romans 15:25–29 states one of the reasons for the trip to Macedonia. What is the reason?
3. Paul has a number of people accompanying him on this trip. Why would Paul want these men to be with him? (2 Corinthians 8:19–21 gives one explanation)
4. There is a change in the personal pronoun in verse 5. What is significant about this?

Day 2: Read Acts 20:7–12.

5. What does verse 7 state that Paul did when he arrived in Troas?
6. What happened to Eutychus? What was Paul’s immediate response? What do you think was the purpose of recording the miracle of Eutychus’ life being spared?
7. In verse 7 the people “came together to break bread” and in verse 11 “he went upstairs again and broke bread and ate.” In the New Testament, the breaking of bread can have two different uses. What might have been the difference in these two verses? (see Acts 2:42, 46)

Day 3: Read Acts 20:13–24.

8. What words would you use to describe this trip?
9. How does Paul describe his ministry as he addresses the elders of Ephesus?
10. What are the ways Paul has served the people?
11. Describe Paul's future. If you had the same understanding of your future, would you react as Paul did or differently? Explain.
12. What does Paul consider to be the most important thing in his life? (Philippians 3; II Corinthians 4; Ephesians 3:14–17) Are you able to say the same? Why or why not? (II Corinthians 4:16–18)

Day 4: Read Acts 20:25–31.

13. How is it that Paul is “innocent of the blood of all men?” How is this important?
14. What exhortation does Paul give to the elders? Explain this exhortation in terms of today's church and also your own caring for others.

Day 5: Read Acts 20:32–38.

15. What is Paul's blessing to the elders?
16. Reviewing the whole chapter, how is Paul an example to the elders and to all of us?
17. Describe their last time with Paul. What legacy did Paul leave the elders of Ephesus? What legacy do you want to leave those you love?

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT**On to Jerusalem****Acts 21:1-36**

“I am ready not only to be bound, but to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.”
Acts 21:13b

Day 1: Read Acts 21:1–3.

1. How does the language of verse 1 remind us of the high cost of following Christ? (See also Luke 18:28–30)
2. Using your imagination, what kinds of “costs” or sufferings might Paul and his companions have endured on the journey described in verses 1–3? (See also 2 Corinthians 11:25–27)
3. All in all, what was Paul beginning to learn since becoming a Christian? (Acts 9:16) Where have you seen the reality of Acts 9:16 in your own life?

Day 2: Read Acts 21:4–16.

4. What do we note about the disciples of Christ in verses 4a, 7, 8, 16, 17, and throughout “Acts”? (1 Peter 4:9) Should that be the normal Christian practice?
5. The brothers were urging Paul “through the Spirit” (vss. 4, 11) not to go to Jerusalem. But Paul also was in the Spirit in his determination to go! Does the Spirit contradict Himself? Discuss what’s going on here.
6. What characteristically happens at the partings between Paul and the other disciples? (Acts 20:36, 37; 21:5, 6) Would that be a good practice for you and your friends too?

Day 3: Read Acts 21:4–16.

7. Agabus had four daughters who “prophesied”. Do you think that gift is entirely out of reach for you and done away with these days? (**Discuss** 1 Corinthians 14:1 and Rev 19:10)
8. Paul at other times submits to the judgment of the brothers (Acts 17:10; 21:23ff). Why does he not do so in verses 4, 5, 12–14?

9. Is the verbal exchange in verses 12, 13 reminiscent of an incident in Jesus' own ministry? What were Paul's loving and well-intentioned friends unwittingly in danger of doing? (Consider Mark 8:31–33)
10. Do the words quoted in verse 14 remind you of another incident in Jesus' life? (Matt 26:39)

Day 4: Read Acts 21:17–36.

11. What is the first thing Paul and company do when they arrive in Jerusalem? (vs. 19), and how do the brothers respond? (vs. 20a). Are we interested in our own missionaries' reports from the field?
12. What is the false report about Paul circulating among the believing Jews? (vss. 21, 28)
13. What is Paul's actual view of circumcision? (Galatians 5:6; 6:15)
14. Did either Paul or Jesus teach Jews to "turn away from Moses", as Paul is being accused of in verse 21? (Matt.5:17)

Day 5: Read Acts 21:17–36.

15. In this delicate transition period in Christian history, how do Paul and the elders show sensitivity to the Jewish believers, and affirm that being a Christian need not mean abandoning harmless "customs" (vs. 21)? (vss. 20–24) How is their judgment an illustration of 1 Corinthians 9:20–22 and Romans 14:2–7?
16. In what sense is a person who is saved by grace supposed to "live in obedience to the law" (vs. 24)? (John 14:21a; 1 John 2:3–6)
17. As for the Gentiles, what are they urged to abstain from, in accordance with the Jerusalem Council directives of Acts 15:20, 29?
 - A. Why is it best for them to abstain from food sacrificed to idols? (1 Cor 10:23–33)
 - B. Why is this out of consideration for other people's conscience and not their own? (Col 2:20, 21)

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FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT**Acts 21:37–22:29****You Are My Witnesses**

“You will be his witness to all men of what you have seen and heard.” Acts 22:15

Day 1: Read Acts 21:37–22:2.

1. Paul is in custody and yet the arresting officer does not know who he is or what charges have been leveled against him. How has this come about? (See 21:27ff.)
2. What does the commander wrongly assume about Paul?
3. Describe the setting in which Paul makes his speech.
4. What charge is leveled against Paul by the Jews? (see 21:28) Why doesn't he simply deny their accusations?

Day 2: Read Acts 21:37–22:21.

5. What languages does Paul speak? What things do you notice about Paul's language and speech that allow him to be heard?
6. Who are the brothers and the fathers whom Paul addresses in 22:1?
7. How does Paul establish his credentials as a Jew? (22:3–5) As a young man what does his study of the law lead him to do? What effect should this have on his listeners?
8. What event does Paul relate in detail? How did this event change his thinking? How has your conversion changed your thinking?
9. In speaking of Ananias, Paul chooses his words carefully. What particular phrases in verses 12 and 14 would have made an impression on the Jewish listeners?

Day 3: Read Acts 22:12–21.

10. In verses 3 and 12 Paul describes himself (before his conversion) and Ananias, the follower of Christ, as both being devoted to the Law. Explain how they could be devoted to the same Law and yet be going in opposite directions.

11. What does the Law look like through the eyes of the Gospel? How does his new view of the Law change Paul's goal in life? What impact has your understanding of the Gospel made on your goals?
12. Why does Ananias command Paul to be baptized? If baptism washed your sins away (as 22:16 seems to suggest), how often would you need to be baptized? What are some of the things that baptism symbolizes? (See Rom. 6:3, 4; Titus 3:3–6; and 1 Peter 3:21.)

Day 4: Read Acts 22:14–23.

13. As a Christian, what is Paul a witness to (22:14, 15)? Compare this with Jesus' command to his disciples in Acts 1:8. As Christians, to what (to whom) are we witnesses?
14. In what context does Paul put the account of his commissioning to go to the Gentiles (vss. 17–21)? What impact does Paul think these facts should have on his listeners?
15. At what particular words do Paul's listeners erupt in fury? Why? (See vs. 21 and also 21:28 and Rom. 3:29, 30.)

Day 5: Read Acts 21:37–22:29.

16. How is Paul saved from being flogged? With what is the commander impressed?
17. Why does Paul wait so long to divulge his Roman citizenship? What does Paul's citizenship mean to him? What does your citizenship in God's kingdom mean to you?
18. What word does Paul use to describe his speech before the Jews? (22:1) In one sentence summarize the main point of his defense. What aspect of his defense makes it irrefutable?
19. What element do you see in Paul's defense that is essential for every Christian's testimony? Jot down a brief outline of your own testimony and pray that God would give you an opportunity to share it with someone this week.

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

If They Have Hated Me, They Will Hate You Acts 22:30—23

“Paul looked straight at the Sanhedrin and said, ‘My brothers, I have fulfilled my duty to God in all good conscience to this day.’” Acts 23:1

Day One: Read Acts 22:30.

1. Review Acts 21:27–32. Describe the events that resulted in the Romans taking custody of Paul.
2. In light of Acts 21:33–39 and 22:25–29, why do you think the Roman commander is so concerned to find out exactly why Paul is being accused by the Jews?

Day Two: Read Acts 23:1–5.

3. What did Paul mean when he said he has fulfilled his duty to God “in all good conscience”? (See also 2 Cor. 1:12; Acts 20:24) What does this mean for your life?
4. Given Paul’s background and position many scholars find it hard to believe that he didn’t know who the high priest was. They suggest that his remark in verse 5 is made in a sarcastic tone of voice. If that’s true, what point is Paul making?
5. Did Paul sin when he called the high priest a whitewashed wall? Why or why not? (Check out Matt. 23:27, 28).

Day Three: Read Acts 23:6–11.

6. How do the beliefs of the Sadducees differ from those of the Pharisees?
7. How does Paul use these differences to follow Jesus’ admonition to be “as shrewd as a serpent and as innocent as a dove” (Matt. 10:16) when he speaks to the Sanhedrin?

8. Notice the similarity between what the Pharisees say about Paul in vs. 9 and what Pilate said about Jesus in John 19:6, yet neither one is set free. Why do you think God allows both to remain prisoners?
9. Give at least two ways that verse 11 would be encouraging to Paul. How is this message to Paul an encouragement to you?

Day Four: Read Acts 23:12–22.

10. Note down all the parties who become involved in the plot to kill Paul. When did a similar group take a similar action? (See Mark 14:1, 2).
11. What could be going on in the hearts of these religious men that would lead them to do such a thing?
 - A. Describe a time in your own life when you thought you were doing the “will of God” when in fact you were doing the opposite.
 - B. What was going on in your heart at that time?
12. Who exposes the plot to kill Paul? What reaction, if any, did you have to this new information?
13. What reasons would the commander have for telling Paul’s nephew to keep quiet?

Day Five: Read Acts 23:23–35.

14. Describe your impressions of the way the Roman commander took care of Paul.
15. How does the Roman commander’s care of Paul reflect God’s care of us?
16. Review this chapter noting how Paul’s experiences in Jerusalem are similar to those of Jesus before his death. How do Paul’s words in 1 Cor. 11:1, “Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.” speak to you?

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

Three Trials

Acts 24—26

“So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man.” Acts 24:16

Day One: Read Acts 24:1–27.

1. As you read through these three chapters over the week, be aware of the character qualities of Felix, Festus, and Agrippa. (See question 19.)
2. What indicates how important this trial is to the Jews. (vs. 1)
3. What are the charges Tertullus brings against Paul?
4. List at least six points of Paul’s defense. How does his defense compare and contrast with the charges brought against him?
5. What are Felix’s responses to :
 - A. Paul’s defense? (vss. 25, 26)
 - B. Paul’s instruction on faith in Christ? (vss. 25, 26)
 - C. his succession by Porcius Festus? (vs. 27)

Day Two: Read Acts 24:16, 27; Acts25:1–11.

6. What does it mean for Paul to “strive always” to keep his conscience clear before God and man? What does this mean for you? Are there any areas in which you do not have a clear conscience? What do you need to do to become like Paul (and ultimately like Christ)? (Heb. 9:14; Heb. 10:22)
7. How much time has passed since the trial of Paul before Felix and the succession of Festus? (24:27) What is your reaction to this information? How does Paul keep from being bitter? (Gal. 5:22–25; Heb. 12:2, 3)

8. In verse 3, the Jewish leaders ask Festus for a favor. In verse 9, Festus wanted to do a favor for the Jews. What do you think are the motivations behind these favors?
9. What is the outcome of Paul's defense? What do you think is Paul's purpose? (vs. 11)

Day Three: Read Acts 25:9–27.

10. What are Festus' reasons for asking Paul to be tried in Jerusalem? (vss. 9, 18–20)
11. What prophecy did God give to Ananias about Paul in 9:15? How is this now being fulfilled?
12. Why did Paul stand before King Agrippa? (vss. 15–27)

Day Four: Read Acts 26.

13. What important fact does Paul state about King Agrippa? (vs. 3) What could be concluded about King Agrippa from this statement? (see also vs. 27)
14. Did you learn anything new about Paul in his defense before King Agrippa? Jot down what you learned.
15. What is the desire of Paul for King Agrippa (and everyone) who hears his defense? (vs. 29)
16. What is the verdict of King Agrippa? (vs. 31) Why was Paul not released? (vs. 32) How much choice has Paul had in this decision?

Day Five: Reflection.

17. Read 24:15, 21; 25:19; 26:7, 8. What idea does Paul express in all of these passages? Why is this important?
18. Look over the character qualities of the three men, Felix, Festus and Agrippa. What is similar about them; what is different? How does each one respond to hearing the truth of Christ?
19. How is Paul's life, in these three chapters, an example for you?

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT**Paul Sails for Rome Acts 27**

“...for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me.” Acts 27:25b

Day 1: Read Acts 27:1–12.

(Time permitting, read the chapter in a sitting, with all its rich detail, and get the feel for this adventure and the navigational nightmare that Paul and the soldiers and sailors went through together.)

1. Verse one makes it sound as if it is King Agrippa and Governor Festus (26:30–32) who have decided Paul’s fate. In reality, who has determined long before not only that Paul would go to Jerusalem (20:22) but that he would go to Rome?
2. Prisoner Paul is assigned to a centurion named Julius who shows him kindness (vss. 3, 43). What would you think Paul does with all the hours he spends with Julius? (Ephesians 5:15, 16)
3. Julius was inexplicably kindly disposed toward Paul. God has his “plants” everywhere—in your life too. Recall someone in your life whom the Lord sent to lighten your trial in the midst of terrible circumstances.

Day 2: Read Acts 27:13–20.

4. When “a gentle south wind” begins to blow, the pilot and ship owner and other sailors think this confirms the wisdom of their decision to sail on. (vss. 9–13) Share a time when an unwise or sinful decision at first seemed like it would be “clear sailing”.
5. Brave and sea-hardened men try increasingly desperate strategies to save life and limb before finally giving up all hope. (vss. 15–20) Who else gave up all hope?
6. How do you think Paul was feeling during this time? What do you think he was doing? (Consider James 5:13a) How do you view prayer—is it a first or last resort?

Day 3: Read Acts 27:21–26.

7. In verse 21, do you think Paul is just rubbing it in, or does he have another reason for reminding the men that he was right? (See vss. 22–26)

8. Why is there no way Paul is going to die on that ship? (vs. 24a) What can we know about our own future? (Psalm 139:16; Luke 12:6, 7)

Day 4: Read Acts 27:21–26.

9. In this world sometimes innocents suffer because of the guilty (Jer.12:4b), and sometimes guilty ones are spared because of the righteous. (vs. 24; Gen.18:26)

A. What do you conclude from this about the ways of the Lord? (Isa. 55:8, 9)

B. Do you personally know of any instances in which the kindness of God to a righteous person has “spilled over” onto an unbeliever? (Consider also 1 Cor. 7:13, 14)

10. Paul says he has “faith in God that it will happen just as he told me.” (vs. 25) “Nevertheless we must run aground on some island.” (vs. 26)

A. What has God told you is His plan for you? (Phil. 1:6; Rom. 8:28, 29; II Tim. 1:9) Do you have faith in God that this is true?

B. What does verse 26 add to your understanding about how God’s promises in your life work out?

Day 5: Read Acts 27:27–44.

11. After the sailors hear that God will save them, do they sit back and do nothing for the rest of the trip? (vss. 27–29, 34, 40, 41) What does this say about how we should live?

12. Notice how Paul responds in crisis, even better than the seasoned sailors. (vss. 30–35) Why can a Christian be more cool-headed in crises and trials than an unbeliever? (Job 19:25; Luke 6:46–49)

13. One by one all human hopes are cut off, including, finally, the lifeboat. (vs. 32) What is left for the sailors, as well as Paul, to hold on to? Why does God orchestrate things this way? (2 Cor. 1:9)

14. Imagine the soldiers and sailors and centurion going home to their families after this adventure. What details of the trip do you think lived in their memories and were recounted again and again to the folks back home?

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

Paul in Rome

Acts 28

“Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and turn, and I would heal them.” Acts 28:27

Day 1: Read Acts 28.

1. Read through this last chapter. Approximately how much time passes in Acts 28?
2. What do the Maltese people assume about Paul during the snake incident? How and why does their opinion change soon after?
3. Why do you think God allowed Paul to be bitten by the viper? Why is it not wise to judge people by the things that happen to them?
4. Jot down some words and phrases (with reference verses) that give us clues to Paul’s state of mind during the events of verses 1–15.

Day 2: Read Acts 28:16–28.

5. During this imprisonment in Rome, Paul writes letters to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and to Philemon.
 - A. What does Phil. 1:12–14 indicate about his attitude during this time?
 - B. Recall a time in your own life when an apparent set-back became an opportunity for God to advance the gospel.
6. Verses 17–28 are concerned with Paul’s preaching and teaching in Rome. What’s his main point in each of the following passages:
 - A. vss. 17–20
 - B. vss. 23
 - C. vss. 25–28
7. In verse 20, Paul says that he is chained “because of the hope of Israel.” Explain what he means. (see Acts 26:6, 7)

8. What difference, if any, do you see between the attitudes towards Christianity of the Jews in Jerusalem and the Jews in Rome? (Compare verse 22 with 21:27–31.)

Day 3: Read Acts 28:23.

9. If you were to “declare the kingdom of God,” what would you say? (Dan. 7:14; Matt. 4:17; 7:21; 13:44, 45; Lk. 17:20, 21; Jn. 3:3, 5)
10. Pick one or more of the following passages and explain how it could be used (as Paul did) to “convince” a Jew about Jesus: Gen. 3:15; Num. 21:9; Is. 7:14; Is. 9:6; Is. 40:10, 11; Is. 53.

Day 4: Read Acts 28:24–28.

11. In verse 24 we read that “some were convinced...but others would not believe.” What does the use of the words “would not” indicate about man's responsibility upon hearing the Gospel? (See also Acts 19:9.)
12. What concluding remark of Paul's expresses the main thrust of the entire book of Acts? What is the reaction of Paul's listeners to this and to his interpretation of Isaiah 6:9, 10? Why is this their reaction? (vss. 24, 25)
13. How are Paul's words in verse 28 being fulfilled even as Paul speaks? Specifically what is the result among the soldiers who had to guard Paul? (See Phil. 1:13 and Acts 28:16).

Day 5: Read Acts 28:28–31.

14. Now that we've come to the end of Acts, explain how Jesus' prophecy in Acts 1:8 has been fulfilled during the course of the book. How has it continued to be fulfilled in the 2000 years since then?
15. In verses 30 and 31 what do we learn about Paul's activities in Rome?
16. What is the main thing that the Holy Spirit has taught you through your study of Acts this year?