

Victoria Fellowship Church

International & Interdenominational

Bible Study Worksheet – March 29, 2020

Theme: The Acts of The Apostles **Topic: Review and Summary**

Key verse: Acts 28:31 – “preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him.” (NKJV)

Outlined below are the topics covered as we explored The Acts of The Apostles

The Promise of the Holy Spirit {Text: Acts 1: 1-26}

- This promise of the Holy Spirit is different from what obtained in the Old Covenant. In the Old Covenant, the Holy Spirit came on certain individuals and only for certain specific tasks. In this dispensation of the promise, the Holy Spirit indwells the believer always.
- As a result of this indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the believer, Jesus Christ continues His work in each of us everywhere, all the time.
- And this working of Jesus Christ in the Believer, through the Holy Spirit is how the gospel is able to reach the ends of the earth.

Empowered to Witness {Text: Acts 2: 1-41}

- The primary ministry of the Holy Spirit is witnessing; and should be central too, to a believer in Jesus Christ.
- The Holy Spirit is the One who empowers the believer to share the gospel boldly and correctly. When the promised Holy Spirit came on the day of Pentecost, the disciples were empowered (boldness, courage) to stand before the people who crucified Jesus a few weeks back)
- The Holy Spirit not only empowers the believer to witness but empowers the witness of the believer to have impact in the lives of the hearer. It is not about our delivery. Without the Holy Spirit, no real conversion can take place!

Fellowship of the Believers {Texts: Acts 2: 42-47; 4:32- 5:11}

- True fellowship of the believers is possible only because of what God has done for us in Christ Jesus.
- There is tangible and practical benefit when the body of believers interact with one another out of a deep appreciation of the grace of God and devotion to His word and prayer
- True fellowship advances the gospel, creates an atmosphere for God to manifest His power and glory.

Empowered to Heal {Texts: Acts 3: 1-26; 5:12-16}

- As believers in Christ, we have His mandate to administer healing to the sick. But we should not be presumptuous about it. We must rely on the leading of the indwelling Holy Spirit and act confidently when moved to pray for the sick.
- Whenever healing is administered by the believer, God alone should be given all the glory and praise. A believer can administer healing ONLY in the Name (power and authority) of Jesus; the believer's own power or godliness cannot bring about any healing (Acts 3:12).
- God's ultimate purpose for healing is create opportunities for the salvation of lost souls (Acts 3:11f).

Courage in the Face of Threats {Text: Acts 4:1-31}

- Doing the will of God does not immune us from threats and opposition
- Courage comes from a deep knowledge of who God is; that He is more than any threat we can ever face
- God is pleased when we ask for courage rather than asking for Him to remove the threat

Unhindered by Persecution {Text: Acts 5: 17-42}

- Persecution is to be expected and may take different forms.
- The real reason behind persecution is to limit or stop the gospel of Jesus from being preached, not necessarily to make believers suffer.
- Living for God often brings on persecution, but with it comes the opportunity to tell the good news of salvation

Empowered to Serve {Texts: Acts 6:1-7; Romans 12: 3-8}

- Meeting physical needs in the Church is necessary for the growth of the gospel.
- Serving is a valid ministry which requires certain qualifications (spiritual and otherwise) if it must be done well.
- Every believer has been given some spiritual gift/abilities with which to serve the body of Christ

Stephen: A Man of Faith and Power {Texts: Acts 6: 8 – 15; 7: 51-60}

1. Faith is necessary for power to be evident in every area of life
2. Faith and power are for the pursuit of God's purposes not our personal convenience
3. Faith and power are necessary if we must love like Jesus and forgive our enemies; to live like and die for Jesus.

Philip: An Effective Witness {Texts: Acts 8:4-8; 26-40}

- A disciple must be prepared both in heart and mind to witness in any and every situation
- An effective witness contextualizes his/her message - using an individual's felt need(s) to point them to Jesus
- An Effective witness is about Jesus' death on the Cross

Saul: Convicted and Converted {Text: Acts 9: 1-31}

- The reach of God's grace to save: That God's grace can reach anyone, even the most vicious God-hater can be saved
- Conversion comes through a personal encounter with Jesus Christ, resulting in an acknowledgement of one's rebellion against God and bowing to the Lordship of Christ.
- That true conversion is of the heart but is accompanied by visible evidence of the transformation that is taking place internally.

The Divine Visit {Text: Luke 1:26-38}

- God's grace and favor can locate us wherever we are
- God's favor may sometimes come with what would seem like a huge price. But if we prioritize His will above our comfort and convenience, His favor leads to a vista of blessings that transcends generations
- Jesus' birth by a virgin makes Him holy (free from the sin nature) and a perfect sacrifice for sin.

The Gospel to the Gentiles {Text: Acts 10: 24-48}

- God's desire that the gospel be preached to the end of the earth means that HE is ready to justify anyone, anywhere, from any nation. And we should not allow our personal or cultural hang-ups to stand in the way of His plan.
- God has only one way of saving people; namely, justification by faith in Jesus Christ. "There is only one God, and He makes people right with Himself only by faith, whether they are Jews or Gentiles." Romans 3:30 NLT
- The gospel of Jesus Christ is simply that justification (getting right with God) is by faith, not works. So, one's ethnicity, religion or experience is neither an advantage nor a disadvantage.

Grace for All {Text: Acts 11: 1-18}

- All- Jews and Gentiles alike - have sinned and in equal need for salvation. Without a firm understanding of this truth, one can easily develop the arrogance of the Pharisee who thought that he had right standing with God because of his strict observance of his religious disciplines of fasting and prayer (Luke 18:9-14)
- Grace is necessary for salvation for any and everyone. No human being can earn even the minutest bit of his/her salvation. Our Christian disciplines only serve to demonstrate the transformation taking place inside us; they are because we have been saved.
- God's grace makes no tribal, racial, religious distinctions. It does not matter one's pedigree, all come to God based on God's grace expressed in Christ Jesus.

Barnabas: The Encourager {Text: Acts 11: 18-30}

1. Barnabas was someone who lived out what he believed (full of faith); and the Holy Spirit used that and his peculiar background to suit him for the ministry of encouragement. And we can be used in similar fashion by the Holy Spirit if we let Him.
2. Being an encourager is more than helping people through difficult times. It is more about helping believers grow in their walk and devotion to God.
3. If we are willing to extend ourselves just a little, opportunities abound to be encouragers. There is a crying need for encouragers in the Church. We may not be as gifted as Barnabas, but to be an encourager is really a simple thing to do. It could be a kind word to a friend; a genuine complement or giving someone a chance to be blessing to others.

The Miraculous Deliverance {Text: Acts 12: 1-25}

1. When calamities happen, it's easy to wonder, "Where is God in all of this? Why did He allow this to happen? We should learn the lesson that although God is almighty, He may allow the untimely deaths or difficulties, for some of His children (12:1-4). As difficult as it is, we need to view such happenstance from God's eternal perspective, not from our temporal perspective.
2. Though they were not expecting Peter's deliverance, as evidenced by their doubting Rhoda when she told them that Peter was the one at the door knocking, nonetheless, their lack of faith did not stop God from delivering Peter in the spectacular manner HE chose to.
3. All through Scriptures, and even to this day, miracles consistently serve to point people to the one true God, ultimately revealed in Jesus Christ. Their primary purpose is not to meet human need, although human beings often get blessed in the process. But they essentially demonstrate the supremacy of God and of His Christ over all rivals. And then, it is dangerous to try to predict when they may occur or try to force God to work miracles upon demand.

The Mission Focused Church {Text: Acts 13:1-3, 13-52}

1. God can use any circumstance to move His gospel into un-reached places. But HE would rather that His chosen people (and Church) be deliberate in taking the gospel into the nations.
2. Whatever ministry we might be engaged in as a Church and in the Church, taking the gospel to the lost must remain on the front burners. And the Church must be intentional and strategic in playing her role in mission sending. Intentional sending of gospel workers is more effective and fruitful- the gospel reached more territories in the 12 years of missionary sending (of Barnabas, Saul/Paul) than the 18 years of pre-missionary sending (from the time of Pentecost to when Barnabas went to Antioch); and
3. Just as Barnabas and Saul knew beforehand the work the Holy Spirit had called them to do – which was to take the gospel to the Gentiles - and they were ready when the marching orders came; and so, must the Church (individually and collectively) be today.

Consistent Witnessing {Text: Acts 14:1-28}

1. As Christ's witnesses, our approach may change but our message must remain the same irrespective of the times or season or place. Also, our focus must remain to take the gospel to wherever we find ourselves
2. As we go about bearing witness for Jesus and about Jesus, it will lead us to people of varying backgrounds and context. So, like Paul and Barnabas did, we must know the word of God well enough and understand the gospel adequately to be able to properly contextualize the good news to whomever

we are witnessing to without distorting the message. The goal of contextualization is to aid understanding not to make the gospel easier to accept.

3. Jesus said that unless we are ready to take up our cross daily and follow Him, we would not be able to faithfully discharge our calling. Paul and Barnabas would not be deterred by oppositions, tribulations (Acts 14:22).

One in Christ {Text: Acts 15: 1-35}

1. Adding anything to the gospel of salvation through Christ distorts the gospel and amounts to self-righteousness. Salvation is by grace from first to last (Romans 1:17)
2. The Body of Christ (the Church) is made up of people from every tribe, tongue, race, background; the sophisticated and not so sophisticated. And it is through Christ that we or anyone becomes a member of that Body; not by means of any human effort
3. The word of God MUST be the final arbiter in any questions about salvation through Christ and not our personal, cultural or denominational preferences; no matter how wise and sensible those preferences may be.

The Ministry in Macedonia {Text: Acts 16:1-40}

1. The Great Commission is God's work. While it is required that we pursue the ministry opportunities we become aware of, we should be ready to allow God to direct His work, when and how HE chooses. We should be open to His direction as well, like when HE closes what looks like a fruitful ministry opportunity, we should, like Paul and his team, be ready to follow His lead.
2. God is working out His world evangelization plan. His strategy is the best- HE knows just the right people and places to reach with the gospel so that the gospel will spread to every nook and cranny. Let us pray that HE will lead us to those strategic persons and places. Lydia and the Jailer must have spurred the generosity for which the Philippian Church was later to be known for.
3. God must have prompted Paul and Silas to be silent about their Roman citizenship and rights for a much greater good – the salvation of the Jailer and perhaps his household. Being mindful of the gospel can sometimes lead us to embrace difficulties or ignore our rights for a season.

The Berean and Athenian Experience {Text: Acts 17: 10-34}

1. While the Great Commission is God's work, His servants must be resilient in the face of difficulties and resistance.
2. Like the Bereans, we MUST take the Scriptures as, as we have it, as the only and final authority, far and above the words or experience of any human. And to avoid error and falling into false teachings, a daily habit of searching the Scriptures is a MUST.
3. No human exists apart from God. He is the One who created all things and all men; the gospel of the resurrected Christ is God's only remedy for sin, for Jews and Gentiles, atheist and idol worshippers alike; no matter how foolish and how offensive it may be to some.

Speak for I am with you {Text: Acts 18: 1-28}

1. What may appear as difficulties and challenges in ministry are in themselves ministry opportunities for the gospel.
2. As decadent and daunting as a city might be, God has many in every such city. And we must rely on His empowering to evangelize and disciple in a big multi-cultural/ethnic/religious city, like Lagos as daunting as that may be. John 15:5; Matthew 28:20
3. Busy professionals and businesspeople can have significant influence and role in advancing the gospel. All it may require is availability and adjustment of priorities

The Holy Spirit at work {Text: Acts 19: 1 - 20}

1. The presence of the Holy Spirit is a non-negotiable for every true disciple
2. Repentance (baptism of John) is only:
 - a) Is symbolic representation of changing one's mind and going in a new direction
 - b) Is Preparatory

- c) Is only a recognition of one's sin and an expression of one's desire for spiritual cleansing – Matthew 3:11
 - d) Being baptized into Christ or in the name of Jesus is one's identification with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is complete and completely washes away one's sins
 - e) So, true Christianity is the one which starts with believing in Jesus Christ for salvation. It is more than going to Church or doing any other religious duty
3. It takes more than the invocation of the name of Jesus to perform miracles. The Holy Spirit is the power of God to perform miracles (Matthew 12:27-30). And HE does it not to entertain us but to glorify God and advance the gospel of Jesus.

Complete the task {Text: Acts 20: 17-37}

1. We must be ready to give our all if we must complete our God-given ministry with joy
2. If we give our all in the specific field God has assigned us, we can boldly declare like Paul, that we are innocent of the blood of all men
3. Leaders and leadership of the Church have a pivotal role in the pursuit of the mandate of the Church. If they fail, the consequences can be grave

Victory Over the storm {Text: Acts 27: 1 – 44}

1. Everyone will face one or more major storms in life. Therefore, it is not a question of if but rather a question of how we deal with them when they arise. Being at the center of God's will does not mean one will be free from the storms of life
2. Whether the storm is due to our own or others' presumptuous or self-willed actions, God can save, and we can confidently look to Him
3. As for saving, God will save us from any and every storm. But HE alone decides how He wants to save us

Reflections:

1. In what way(s) did these studies increase your knowledge of God the Father or Jesus Christ or the Holy Spirit?
2. How has this increased knowledge affected your walk with God and your involvement in God's plan for the nations?
3. What questions in these studies would you like further comments on?

Prayer

Heavenly Father, may we, in the power of Your Holy Spirit, not relent in preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, in Jesus' name, Amen