Acts – Term 3 Daily Devotions 2020

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| **Week 1** |  |  |
| Day 1 | Luke 24:45-48;  Acts 1:8 | * At the end of Luke’s Gospel, Jesus gave his disciples some instructions. What were they? * Where were the disciples to preach to? (Luke 24:47) * What extra detail is given in Acts 1:8? How does this fill out Jesus’ mission? |
| Day 2 | Acts 1:11 | * Compare Luke 1:1-4 to Acts 1:1. What does this tell you about this second volume of Luke’s writings? * How was the disciples’ understanding of who Jesus is was still flawed? Did Jesus really answer their question? * Imagine you were the disciples watching Jesus ascend into heaven? What do you think would have been going through your mind? |
| Day 3 | Acts 1:12-26 | * There is a list of the remaining disciples, what do you notice about the list? * Why do you think Peter thought it was important to replace Judas? * What were the qualifications for the new member of the 12? |
| Day 4 | Acts 2:1-13 | * There was a sudden change in the disciples. What brought about that change? * The disciples suddenly spoke in tongues. What was the purpose of them speaking in tongues on that day? * How did the crowds respond to this speaking in tongues? How have people responded to you when you tell people the gospel? |
| Day 5 | Acts 2:14-41 | * Peter told the crowd that the disciples were not drunk. What explanation did he give for what they saw that day? * What did the resurrection of Jesus prove according to Peter? How does that help us understand the gospel message? * What did the people have to repent of? How many people were saved that day? How wonderful would it be to see this today? |
| **Week 2** |  |  |
| Day 1 | Acts 2:42-47 | * From verse 42 what are the marks of the Church? What are the risks to Churches if any of these are absent? * How else did the early church express community life in practical ways from v 43-47? * How can we be “devoted” day by day to God and one another? |
| Day 2 | Acts 3:1-10 | * What was the cripple man expecting from Peter & John? Did they meet the man’s needs? Why or why not? * How did the man respond to his healing? * When you encounter someone in need, whether physically, spiritually, emotionally, or financially, what is your first response? How should the gospel inform our response in these circumstances? |
| Day 3 | Acts 3:11-26 | * List the four ways that Peter told the crowd that they had rejected Jesus. v13-15 * Peter encourages the crowds to Repent, v19 what will happen of they do and what will happen if they do not? * What was the promise made to Abraham in v25 that still applies to us today? |
| Day 4 | Acts 4:1-12 | * Peter preached his second sermon in Acts 3:12-26. What happened as a result of that sermon 4:1-4 * Does the arrest of Peter and John slow the spread of the gospel v3-4? * What does verse 12 tell us and why is it so important? |
| Day 5 | Acts 4:13-22 | * What did the Sanhedrin Council do to try and prevent the spread of the Gospel v17-18, 21 * How did Peter and John respond to the threats of the Sanhedrin Council v 19-20? * How can we prepare ourselves for the costs we may have to pay for following Christ? |
| **Week 3** |  |  |
| Day 1 | Acts 4:23-31 | * Where did the apostles go and what did they do immediately after being released by the council v 23? * What did the believers request of God, specifically, in v 29-31? What happened after their prayers? * What impresses you most about the prayer of the early church surrounding this event? |
| Day 2 | Acts 4:32-37 | * What attitude did the believers have toward one another v32? * Why were there no needy persons among the members of the early church v34? * What ways can we be generous and compassionate to our Church family? |
| Day 3 | Acts 5:1-11 | * Why was God so severe in dealing with Ananias & Sapphira? * What was wrong with what this couple did? * What’s the relationship between “lying to the Holy Spirit” v 3 and “testing the Spirit of the Lord” v9? |
| Day 4 | Acts 5:12-42 | * Peter spoke, performed miracles, and healed people in Jesus’ name. How is the reaction to Peter contrasted between the people who saw these things and the Jewish leaders? * Peter went back to preach in the temple again, even after he had been arrested and threatened. Are you prepared to stand up for Jesus in difficult situations? How can you be brave? * Notice Gamaliel is concerned about Jesus’ ongoing ministry through Peter. How can we make sure people see Jesus and not us? |
| Day 5 | Acts 6:1-7 | * In the last devotional, people were amazed by Peter and the disciples, now they are not happy with them. What changed? * What do you notice about who they picked to help them and why is that important? (Note: the names are not Jewish) * How can we help to multiply our effectiveness in ministry? Who could we mentor, promote, and encourage? |
| **Week 4** |  |  |
| Day 1 | Acts 6:8-15 | * From the previous passage, what ministry was Stephen supposed to be doing? How is that different to what he was accused of? * What does it tell you about Stephen if the Sanhedrin had to find people willing to lie about Stephen? * How important is it for us to be good and honourable in all we do as we represent Jesus to people? |
| Day 2 | Acts 7:1-53 | * This is a long speech. Why would Stephen spend so much time reminding them of Israel’s history when they already know it? * What is Stephen’s point at the end of his speech? * If someone was to ask you to explain your faith in a court of law, how would you answer them? |
| Day 3 | Acts 7:54-8:1a | * Stephen saw the glory of God along with Jesus. What did that vision do for Stephen? What did it do for the Sanhedrin? * How does Stephen’s death remind you of Jesus’ death? * How does this passage set up Saul as a character who will return later on? |
| Day 4 | Acts 8:1b-13 | * Stephen’s martyrdom started something, what was it? Who was the earthly cause of it? * Where did Philip go to and why is that significant? (Acts 1:8) * What kind of impact did Philip have among those people? |
| Day 5 | Acts 8:14-25 | * Why do you think the apostles needed to go and see what had happened in Samaria? (note: Samaritans were a mixed race made up of the defeated northern tribes of Israel and other nations) * In the previous passage, we saw that Simon believed. What do you think he believed? * Simon wanted to also be able to give the Holy Spirit. Why was that a problem? What did Simon really want? |
| **Week 5** |  |  |
| Day 1 | Acts 8:26-40 | * The Ethiopian wanted to know God. What had he done to try and find him? Was this the wrong thing to do? * Philip helped the Ethiopian understand the Bible. How did this help the Ethiopian and what was the result? * 1 to 1 Bible reading can be very affective. How can you put yourself in a position to read the Bible with someone? |
| Day 2 | Acts 9:1-6 | * How has Luke set up Saul’s character up to this point? What was Saul on his way to do? * Who and what changed Paul’s mind and mission? * How does recognising Jesus as the Lord of your life make a difference to your mission/meaning in life? |
| Day 3 | Acts 9:7-20 | * How lonely must Saul have felt after his encounter with Jesus? Why would he have felt this way and why would God have done this to him? * Being blind made Saul dependant on others. How was seeing again as much a part of him becoming Christians as going blind? * Imagine being Ananias. How do you think you would have coped meeting Saul? |
| Day 4 | Acts 9:20-31 | * How much had Saul changed? How was this change dangerous to him? * Who didn’t trust Saul? Why didn’t they trust him? * Have you ever found it hard to trust a new person/convert in church? How can we help those who were once our enemies? |
| Day 5 | Acts 9:32-43 | * How was Aeneas healed? What did Peter do for Tabitha? * How did that affect the towns of Lydda, Sharon, and Joppa? * How do these miracles remind you of the miracles of Jesus in the Gospels? |
| **Week 6** |  |  |
| Day 1 | Acts 10:1-23 | * Cornelius was a Gentile and a centurion. Why is it surprising that he feared God, prayed, and gave money to the poor? * Why would God have Peter the same vision 3 times? (Luke 22:54-62; John 21:15-19) * Cornelius met an angel, Peter had a vision & the Spirit spoke to him. Why do you think God chose to make this story supernatural? |
| Day 2 | Acts 10:24-48 | * How would Jews and Gentiles normally interact? * Peter told Cornelius the gospel and Cornelius received the Holy Spirit. Why was this so surprising? Was this a good thing? * Are you surprised when someone becomes a Christian? Do you think that some people are beyond redemption? |
| Day 3 | Acts 11:1-18 | * Who are the circumcised believers? Why would they criticise Peter’s actions? * Peter outlined the story of Acts 10. Why was Peter’s vision so important to this story? * What racial/cultural backgrounds would you struggle to speak with if they searched for Jesus? |
| Day 4 | Acts 11:19-30; 13:1-3 | * How was the ministry in Antioch work similar to Peter’s ministry to Cornelius? * How did the Christians in Antioch help those in Judea? * Barnabas and Saul were to be sent on mission. How can we encourage people to mission? |
| Day 5 | Acts 12:1-25 | * What was Herod really seeking? What did he receive? * Peter’s escape is filled with supernatural and comical moments. Compare those human responses to God’s work in people’s lives. * Compare Herod’s story to those who followed Jesus. Which story reflects how you respond/trust in Jesus? |
| **Week 7** |  |  |
| Day 1 | Acts 13:1-12 | * Names are important in this passage. What was the name of the Jewish sorcerer and why is that important (Bar means “son of”) * Why do you think it is important that Saul’s name changed to Paul in this story? * The Sorcerer became blind. How does that remind you of Saul/Paul? Why did the proconsul believe? |
| Day 2 | Acts 13:13-52 | * Paul was asked to speak to the Jews in the synagogue. He began by telling them about Israel’s history in Egypt and Canaan. Why would he tell them things they already knew about? * Paul spoke about Jesus’ death and resurrection. What did the resurrection prove? What was Paul’s main point? * The Jews ended up rejecting Paul and Barnabas. Why was that good news for the Gentiles? Why is it good news for us? |
| Day 3 | Acts 14:1-28 | * Paul was able to do a miraculous sign by healing a man. How did the people interpret that sign? Why is it important to understand the truth and not come up with our own thoughts on things? * Paul nearly died from being stoned. The apostles were run out of several towns. What makes the gospel so important that they would continue going from place to place telling people the good news of Jesus? * How would you cope if you faced opposition? Would you continue or would you give up? |
| Day 4 | Acts 15:1-21 | * Some of the Jewish Christians wanted the Gentile Christians to follow the Jewish Law. Why do you think they thought this was an important thing to do? * Why did Peter and James speak against this? What role does grace have in this argument? * James says that they don’t have to follow all the Jewish Law but they should follow a few laws. Why? |
| Day 5 | Acts 15:22-16:5 | * How did the churches respond to the letter? Why do you think they responded so well? * Even Paul and Barnabas disagreed. How did God use a bad thing for his good? Has God done this in your life? * How well did Paul’s ministry continue with Silas and Timothy? |
| **Week 8** |  |  |
| Day 1 | Acts 16:6-40 | * This is now Paul’s third missionary journey. Who or what is directing their plans? * Here we see Paul encounter three different types of people. How does he engage with each one differently? * Paul and Silas were not put off by the persecution they faced. How does this challenge our attitude to mission/outreach? |
| Day 2 | Acts 17:1-15 | * When Paul went to Gentile areas, where did he start preaching first? * Why did he try to show that the Messiah/Christ *had to* suffer? What did the Jews think the Messiah would do for them? * The Jews in Berea were commended for examining the Scriptures. What does this tell us about where our authority should lie? |
| Day 3 | Acts 17:16-34 | * Why was Paul distressed while waiting at Athens? How does this challenge our desires/priorities? * Paul reasoned with the people. How does he connect the good news of Jesus to their culture? * What does God call all people everywhere to do? What responses do we see? How does this inform our church’s mission today? |
| Day 4 | Acts 18:1-28 | * How do the Jews respond to the gospel in Corinth? * How does Jesus encourage Paul during this time of persecution? * Paul also returned to visit the churches he had planted to encourage them. How important is encouraging believers in your life? |
| Day 5 | Acts 19:1-20:12 | * How does the Lord show his power at Ephesus? * You would think with all these shows of power, everyone would believe. What happens instead? * How would you describe the opposition to the gospel in Ephesus? What treatment should we expect as followers of Jesus? |
| **Week 9** |  |  |
| Day 1 | Acts 20:13-38 | * Here we see an amazing number of people and places mentioned. What does that say about the spread of the gospel? * This moving farewell speech shows the heart of the gospel message. What response did Paul call for in his hearers? * What warning and encouragement does Paul give to the elders? How does this shape the focus of our teaching and lives? |
| Day 2 | Acts 21:1-40 | * Here we see Paul going against prophets speaking by the Spirit. What does this tell us about New Testament prophecy? * Why does Paul do some Jewish purification rites? Does this stop the Jews from persecuting him? * Paul doesn’t run away from persecution but submits to it. What does this tell us we should expect as followers of Jesus? |
| Day 3 | Acts 22:1-30 | * Paul says he used to be an enemy of Christians. What changed his mind? * Why did Jesus tell Paul to leave Jerusalem? How did the Jews respond to Paul’s commission to the Gentiles? * What would you say to someone who asks you, ‘Why do so many Jews not believe in Jesus?’ |
| Day 4 | Acts 23:1-35 | * What clever way does Paul defend himself before the Sanhedrin (Jewish court)? * How does the Lord protect Paul from the plot to kill him? * Jesus tells Paul that he will testify about him in Rome too. How do we see this start to be fulfilled? |
| Day 5 | Acts 24:1-27 | * What charges do the Jews make against Paul? * How does Paul defend himself? * How does Paul’s desire to share the gospel go beyond defending himself? What should our desire be for non-Christians? |
| **Week 10** |  |  |
| Day 1 | Acts 25:1-27 | * Festus, the new Governor questions Paul. How does Paul deal with the authorities? * Festus then consults with King Agrippa. What are the secular leaders’ motivations? How do they compare with Paul? (cf. Ac 23:11) * How do Paul’s motivations and actions provide a role-model for us? (cf. Colossians 4:5-6). |
| Day 2 | Acts 26:1-32 | * This is the third time Paul tells the story of his conversion. How does he appeal to the Jewish hope of the Messiah? Why? * King Agrippa was the puppet King of the Jews (for the Romans). How does Paul go further than just defending himself? * How do Paul’s actions demonstrate his priorities and focus? How does this challenge our priorities in life? |
| Day 3 | Acts 27:1-44 | * Why are they travelling to Italy? How does the centurion treat him? * Paul predicts that the voyage will be difficult, but they don’t listen. How does the Lord assure him that they will be safe? * How does God use this difficulty to bring glory to himself? What promises do we have for our lives? (c.f. Romans 8:28-30) |
| Day 4 | Acts 28:1-16 | * What happens when they reach Malta? How does God use their own beliefs to show them that Paul is innocent? * God uses miracles to make the islanders warm towards Paul. How can God use miracles in pre-evangelism today? * When Paul is greeted by fellow believers his heart is encouraged and thankful. Who can you encourage today? |
| Day 5 | Acts 28:17-31 | * Why does Paul assemble all the Jews in Rome? * What does the response of the Jews tell us about God’s plan for the gospel? * Paul proclaimed the kingdom of God without hindrance while he was under house arrest! How can we continue God’s mission? |