



North Christian Church

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Self-Guided Study

Topic

The Book of Acts – Chapters 1-3

Background

- See 9/18/13 Self-Guided Study outline for additional details
- Casting Lots: is similar to throwing dice or drawing straws today; it was meant to leave control over choice to God who is perfectly impartial
- Day of Pentecost: the 50th day after the Sabbath of Passover week (**Lev 23:15-16**)
- Prophecy: a message given to an individual from the Holy Spirit; may be a prediction (**Acts 11:28**) or to impart the will of God (**Acts 13:1-2; 14:1-5; 29-30**)
- The Beautiful Gate (graphic available upon request): the main gate into the Women's Court; was called the Beautiful Gate because of its rich decoration

Critical Thinking Questions

- What were the common attributes of the Apostles that God “chose” (**v1:2; 1:21-22**)? How did their contemporaries perceive them? (cp **Acts 4:13**)
- How fundamental to the storyline is the advent of the giving of the Holy Spirit?
- Can God use something terribly evil to progress His good plan? Do you see that in the first 3 chapters?
- How much of the Jewish vernacular do the apostles use in order to connect with other Jews? How often do they quote OT scripture? Why?
- How is water baptism portrayed in Acts versus the baptism of the Spirit?
- What was the purpose of God giving the apostles the power to perform miracles? (**v3:1-10**)
- What is the significance of the Jews being “first” (**v3:26**)? Is this consistent throughout the Bible?

Reading Outline

- Read the first 3 chapters in the Book of Acts
- Read more deliberately, but never stalling, than you would if you were reading the whole book for big-picture
- Don't lose sight of the overall purpose of the book, the "big-picture" themes, and any sweeping concepts
- Have FUN while reading and do not get frustrated...EVER!
- ALWAYS keep the Gospel reality at the forefront of your mind (eg: remember God's ultimate purpose for authoring the Bible – to reveal His Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ)

Post-Reading Questions/Conclusions

- **v1:3** – Is there a difference between the "Kingdom of God" that Luke mentions and the "Kingdom of Heaven" that Matthew writes about? (cp Mat 3:2; 5:3; ff)
- **v1:7, 11** – Is this proof that no one can ever say when the Rapture of the Church is going to occur?
- **v1:16-17** – In the end, how was Judas Iscariot actually used by God, even though his heart was evil? Is it uncommon for God to use something evil for good? (cp **v2:23; 3:17-18**)
- **v2:13** – How typical is it for the flesh to dismiss supernatural things?
- **v2:21** – How often is the full, proper Gospel definition stated in the Bible? Might we argue that the Gospel is actually the collective of all verses in the Bible?
- **v2:38, 41** – Is Luke writing about water or spiritual baptism? How significant is this to your own concept of baptism in the Church-Age?
- **v2:42-47** – How concerned were the new converts with money and/or possessions? Can we learn something from them?
- **v3:1** – Why would Peter and John continue to attend temple prayer? Are you surprised to learn this? If so, why? Did you assume that the apostles would've rejected the temple immediately after conversion? Why?
- **v3:12** – Why does man seem prone to attribute supernatural gifts to the person rather than to God? Does this help them cling to false doctrines? How so?

Useful Resources (furnished upon request)

- Maps: Paul's, Philip's, and Peter's journeys; geographic reach of Acts
- Timelines: harmony of the Gospels, Acts, and remaining books of NT; Paul's life
- Pictures: of places mentioned in Acts (eg: Rome); the Temple at Jerusalem

