



North Christian Church

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Self-Guided Study

Topic

The Book of Acts – Chapters 4-6

Background

- See previous Self-Guided Study outlines for additional details
- Herod: reference to Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee and Perea (cp. **Luke 23:7-15**)
- Pontius Pilate: the Roman governor of Judea (cp. **Luke 3:1**)
- Sanhedrin: the supreme Jewish court, consisting of 70-100 men (71 being the proper number)
- The Pharisee Gamaliel: the most famous Jewish teacher of his time; Paul was a star pupil
- Freedmen: individuals who had been freed from slavery that came from different Hellenistic areas

Critical Thinking Questions

- Why were the Jewish leaders “disturbed” by Peter and John?
- Where did the apostles draw their strength? Do you think their brand of boldness was offensive to the Jewish leaders? Why? Where did the Jewish leaders derive their “strength?”
- Does a person need to be formerly educated in a seminary-type environment to know God? What might be the benefits and/or drawbacks of seminary?
- Does the Bible give us the right to side-step authority? If so, under what circumstances? (cp. **Col 3:22**)
- Is it possible that the Jewish leaders were actually the “real” slaves to those they were trying to enslave? (cp. **2Pe 2:18-19**)
- If we all lived in unadulterated grace, how would modern-day social programs change? Would there be a need for them?
- How can being flogged bring joy to a person’s soul?

- Do you see God turning evil into good continuously throughout these chapters?

Reading Outline

- Read chapters 4-6 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

- **v4:7** – how critical is it that we understand the question posed here? Is there a lesson here for all of us? (cp. **v8-10**)
- **v4:13** – courage is just another name for what? Should intellect be our primary cause for courage, or should we draw from a different well? (cp. **v4:29; v6:10**)
- **v4:17** – why were the Jewish leaders threatened by a true miracle being performed in the name of Christ?
- **v4:19** – How did the apostles turn the tables? Does false doctrine implode upon itself? (cp. **Mark 7:6-13**)
- **v4:21-22** – who were the Jewish leaders actually slaves to?...God or man?
- **v4:28** – does God ever use evil for good?
- **v4:33-34** – when grace is completely uninhibited through man, does anyone go hungry? How does this compare to socialism today?
- **v4:36-37** – is this the same Barnabas that accompanied Paul on his missionary journey? (cp. **Acts 9:27; Gal 2:9**)
- **v5:3** – how can Satan "fill" a believer's heart? (cp. **Eph 5:18**)
- **v5:13** – why might this be the case?
- **v5:17** – why "jealousy" and not rejoicing over so many being healed? What might be going on in the souls of such people?
- **v5:29** – how might this statement relate to our own good consciences before God?
- **v5:34** – is this Gamaliel the same person who had taken Paul under his wing before his conversion? (cp. **Acts 22:3**)
- **v5:40** – how was Gamaliel able to convince the Jewish leaders to avoid putting the apostles to death? What did he appeal to - Mercy or self-preservation?
- **v5:41** – how awesome is this verse, huh? (cp. **Jam 1:2-5**)
- **v6:1** – is it possible that prejudices still existed, even in the churches?

- **v6:5** – why do you think the Spirit gave Stephen a greater description? (cp. **Acts 6:8; 7:59-60**)
- **v6:11-14** – might we conclude that Stephen is a type of Christ? (cp. **Acts 7:54-60**)
- **v6:15** – what do you think they saw in Stephen’s face?

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