

Life Group Leader's Guide

Seeing God's Power in Action



...letting God work in us and through us.

***First Baptist Church of Eugene
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Introduction

Seeing God's Power in Action

.....letting God work in us and through us.

Why Study the Book of Acts:

Acts is a continuation of what Jesus did in the Book of Luke. It is a book of action, not so much about the acts of Christians, but the acts of Jesus working in and through people, especially His people. In Luke, He did it through His physical body of flesh. In Acts, He works through the bodies of others. Acts helps us see and understand the true power of the church. In fact, we really can't understand the NT without the Book of Acts.

The basic question the Book of Acts asks and answers is, "What happened to make the Gospel break out of Jerusalem and reach to the ends of the earth?" Acts causes us to ask, "What needs to happen so the Gospel can break out of FBC to our Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of our world today?"

How to introduce the study of Acts:

This page can be used as a guide to facilitate your first group meeting for the Book of Acts study.

Group Discussion:

1. Before discussing the study; get to know more about each other.
 - a. Take the opportunity to get the group re-connected by catching up on what they did over the summer.
2. Discover what the group's knowledge level is of the book of Acts.
 - a. This is a new study for our Life Group. Has anyone had the opportunity to spend time in the Book of Acts before? Remember: You may have some new believers in your group that have little knowledge of the Bible.
3. What are some of your expectations about our study this year?
4. What are some of the things you would like to see our group do this year?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank God for His Word and the presence of The Holy Spirit. Pray that He will not hold anything back for us to see and experience "God's Power in Action" in us and through us during our time together.

Pray for our Mission.....

To obey Christ's command to....

be disciples who make disciples

Seeing God's Power in Action

...letting God work in us and through us.

Passage	Scripture	Passage Title
1.	The Book of ACTS	Introduction
2.	Acts 1:1-14	Beginning of a Revolution
3.	Acts 2:1-36	Birth of the Church
4.	Acts 2:37-47	True Fellowship
5.	Acts 3:1-24	Healing Power of Jesus
6.	Acts 4:1-22	Called into Question
7.	Acts 4:23-35	Better Together
8.	Acts 5:1-16	The Spirit of Truth
9.	Acts 5:17-42	The Priority of Obeying God
10.	Acts 6:1-7	The Heart of Wise Leadership
11.	Acts 6:8-7:60	Standing Up Under Pressure
12.	Acts 8:1-25	Choosing Right Motives
13.	Acts 8:26-40	Willing to Do God's Will
14.	Acts 9:1-31	Radical Change
15.	Acts 10:1-48	Facing Pride and Prejudice
16.	Acts 11:1-18	Responding to Criticism
17.	Acts 11:19-30	Helping New Believers
18.	Acts 12:1-25	When God's People Pray
19.	Acts 13:1-51	The Power of the Word
20.	Acts 14:1-20	Keeping Your Ego in Check
21.	Acts 15:1-21	Jesus is Enough
22.	Acts 15:22-41	When Christians Clash
23.	Acts 16:16-40	Believe and Be Saved
24.	Acts 17:16-33	The God Who Comes With Proof
25.	Acts 18:1-27	Investing in Others
26.	Acts 19:1-39	God's Awesome Power
27.	Acts 20:13-38	Leaving a Legacy
28.	Acts 21:37-22:30	Refusing to Be A Doormat
29.	Acts 23:1-32	Take Courage
30.	Acts 24:1-27	Almost Real Christianity
31.	Acts 25:1-22	Ready With An Answer
32.	Acts 26:1-32	Telling Your Story
33.	Acts 27:1-44	Storms in God's Will
34.	Acts 28:1-30	End of The Beginning
35.	The Book of ACTS	Year End Review

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How to use this Leader's Guide

The group story-telling and discussion time consist of five separate parts:

1. Review: (2-3 Minutes)

Take a short time to review last week's passage and draw out key points that were learned. Caution: Do not create a discussion. Example questions could be:

- a. What was one thing you remember about last week's story? or,
- b. Did someone last week say something that was particularly meaningful to you this week? Please elaborate. or,
- c. Did you find yourself sharing the story with anyone? Who? or,
- d. Ask follow-up questions of individuals who shared a particular action they were going to take as a result of last week's passage.

2. Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

- a. Briefly set the context of this week's passage.
 - Here is what has happened since last week's story and some context to this week's story.
- b. Next, ask a couple of general questions as an introduction to stimulate the group's thoughts about the upcoming passage. They help get the group focused on the story that is about to be told.
 - Example: Say, before we start the story, I would like you to be thinking about a couple things.

3. Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes)

- a. Tell the story as best as you can in your own words.
 - i. Don't stop to teach or try to make points. Just tell the story.
 - ii. This is not a performance; just think of sitting around a campfire and telling it in your own words.
 - iii. The objective is not to memorize it, but to learn it and be able to just share it.

4. Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes)

Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions.

- a. What was the first thing that happened?
- b. What Happened next? Then what happened? Then....?

If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

- a. Don't stop for discussions. Keep moving through the passage until it has been completely rebuilt.
- b. Remember the **purpose** is to:
 - i. Get everyone to participate.
 - ii. Make sure the passage is accurate. Nothing added or left out.
 - iii. Help learn and remember the passage through repetition.
- c. Participants will experience the passage four different ways.(Repetition)
 - i. Individually read it before they come.
 - ii. Hear it told orally in the group.
 - iii. Participate in rebuilding it together.
 - iv. And finally, discuss it in detail as a group.

5. **Group Discussion: (35-45 Minutes)** The group discussion time consists of three different types of questions: **Head, Heart and Feet**. Each of these has a specific purpose and should not be skipped.

Basic Questions: (What does the passage say?)

These four questions can be used to start a discussion each week. You may not have time to cover all four which is good.

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God? (Jesus or the Holy Spirit?)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions: (What does the passage mean?)

These are extremely important questions for your group. They not only can stimulate great discussion and prompt your group members into action; they can also allow you to see into a person's heart in significant ways. There are two ways to ask life application questions:

- Use story specific questions provided in the guide, or
- Form your own questions based on hearing an individual's comments during the discussion time.

There is no particular order to ask these questions. They are used to guide the facilitator in asking follow-up questions that will reach people's hearts.

Life Application Questions: (What should we do with what we've learned?)

1. How is God asking you to respond to this passage? or,
2. What do you think God is putting on your heart to do with this passage?
 - **Important:** The Life Application Question(s) are the most important questions and are the purpose of the discussion. This is where people put the scripture into action.

Tips:

- Do not skip the Basic or Other Applications Questions. They set up the Life Application Questions.
- Manage your discussion time well to ALWAYS arrive at this question(s) with at least 10-15 minutes of discussion time left. It is intended to be the most meaningful time of the group meeting.

Prayer Thoughts:

Each discussion page will have some thoughts to assist in how the group can pray for each other and for the Life Group based on the context of the passages that were just reviewed.

Beginning of the Revolution

Acts 1:1-14

Transition to this weeks Story: (2 Minutes)

The book of Luke ends with Jesus' reappearing to the disciples to instruct them in the final preparation for his ascension. Jesus tells His disciples to stay in Jerusalem until they are filled with the Holy Spirit—to wait for the promise of the Father. He does not tell them how long that will be, but He lifts up his hands and blesses the disciples. While blessing them, he leaves them and is taken up into heaven. Luke picks up the story in the second letter he wrote the book of Acts. Here is the beginning of the story from Acts.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes) Tell the story: as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. How is your hope and confidence in Jesus affected by what you learn of Him in this passage?
2. If you were in the shoes of the apostles, how would you feel if you were first given the task described in Acts 1:8?
3. How are you affected by the promise that Jesus will return one day?
4. Why was it important for the disciples to be together? How does it relate to our Life Group?
5. What do you think they prayed about in v. 14? What do you pray about most these days? What should our Life Group be praying for?
6. How are you affected when you pray with other believers in this way?
7. What do you discover in this passage to equip, motivate, and give you confidence to complete the task that has been set before in Acts 1:8? Where is your Jerusalem? Our Judea? Our Samaria? What is your role in taking the Good News of Jesus to the ends of the earth?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

Prayer Thoughts:

Ask God to make the power of the Holy Spirit come alive in you, and pray that He will use you through His power to accomplish His tasks. Ask Him to help us see our Jerusalem and act in His power to spread the Good News.

Birth of the Church

Acts 2:1-36

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

The disciples returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives where they joined together in constant prayer, along with the women and Mary, the mother of Jesus. Peter spoke to believers to explain that the Scriptures had been fulfilled by the wicked acts of Judas. Matthias was chosen to replace Judas by casting lots which brought the number of apostles back to twelve.

Facilitator Note: Suggest you story verses 2:1-13 and have the group read versus 2:14-36.

Tell the Story: (5-6 Minutes) – Group Exercise

Tell the story: as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: (8 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. What impacted you from Peter's sermon? What does he emphasize?
2. What highlights would a reporter who is at the scene on this day of Pentecost be likely to mention?
3. What do you learn about the Holy Spirit from this passage?
4. What do you think it would be like if the Holy Spirit were suddenly withdrawn from the church?
5. People speaking in tongues were praising God; telling how great God was. What are you praising God for today?
6. People wondered what these tongues meant. What were their purposes? Do you think this purposes were achieved?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

Prayer Thoughts:

Ask the Holy Spirit to give you His words to speak the language of those who need to hear the "Good News" in our Jerusalem.

True Fellowship

Acts 2:37-47

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

The Holy Spirit filled the Apostles on the day of Pentecost. Peter stood with the Eleven to address the crowd and explain this fulfillment of the Scripture. He proclaimed Jesus as Lord, the resurrected Christ, not abandoned to the grave, but risen to the right hand of God as was foretold by the patriarch David. Peter then said to the crowd in *Acts 2:36*, "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes)

Tell the story: as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. How would you describe the fellowship of the believers in this young church, including their priorities?
2. Do you think the fellowships described in this section can be duplicated today? Why or why not? Would you want a fellowship like that? Why or why not? If you did, what would you need to do to make it happen?
3. Of the fellowship's characteristics mentioned, which do you value most? Least? Why?
4. What do you think it would be like for the Lord to add daily to the numbers of our Christian community those who are being saved?
5. How does the life and purpose of our church and community compare to this group? How about our Life Group?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

Prayer Thoughts:

Ask God to help us see how we need to change in order to experience the power of the Holy Spirit and to become an effective witness? Or, How can we do better?

Healing Power of Jesus

Acts 3:1-24

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Large crowds of people responded to Peter's message of repentance and salvation through Jesus, and about three thousand were baptized and added to their number that day. They devoted themselves to the Apostles' teaching, meeting together in the Temple Courts, and breaking bread together in their homes with glad and sincere hearts. And the Lord added to their numbers daily, those who were being saved.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes)

Tell the story: as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. In your experience, what causes non-Christians to be open to hear about Jesus?
2. To what extent does God's Word affect your confidence, actions, and attitudes about God and life?
3. How do you respond when you have opportunities like Peter to talk about Jesus? How would you like to respond?
4. What did you notice about the guy needing the healing? What do you notice about the people you know who need healing?
5. What area of your life do you need healing today? How could we pray for you?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank God for working so powerfully to change your life, and ask Him to give you the opportunity to talk about Jesus to one person this week.

Called into Question

Acts 4:1-22

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Peter healed the crippled beggar and the onlookers were filled with wonder and astonishment. He proclaimed that the source of healing and power was from the One whom they disowned and condemned to be killed. The power comes from the name of Jesus and the faith that comes through Him by the Father who has raised His glorious Servant from death and appointed Him over all.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes)

Tell the story: as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. When has your faith in Jesus been challenged?
2. How do you feel and how do you respond when you are challenged or criticized about your faith in Jesus?
3. In what ways does the church confront the world with Jesus today? How does the church fail to do this? How do you fail to do this?
4. What is the significance of their unity in the midst of being challenged

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank God that He has given us His Helper, The Holy Spirit. Pray that He will fill us with His Word and courage to stand firm when our faith is called into question.

Better Together

Acts 4:23-35

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Peter and John stood before the Sanhedrin on trial because they were proclaiming the name of Jesus. As a result, they were put in jail and commanded by the Sanhedrin to stop teaching in the name of Jesus; however, they remained steadfast in their faith saying, "We cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard."

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes)

Tell the story: as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. How are your prayers similar to and different from the prayer in this section?
2. If God knows everything, why do you think these people tell Him all the details? What can you learn from this?
3. If you were Peter or John, what would you have asked after the encounter with the Jewish religious leaders, knowing that they had just crucified Jesus? Why?
4. What inhibits you from letting the Holy Spirit make you bolder in your witness? What would need to happen for you to let go of this inhibition?
5. What does this passage teach you about the use of our resources? How does this compare with what you see our church doing? How about what our Life Group is doing?
6. What does their prayer tell you about their faith in the character and power of God? What do your prayers communicate about your view of God?
7. What did they finally request in the last part of their prayers?
8. In what ways do you need the power of the Holy Spirit to face the world today?
9. Would you classify yourself as bold or cautious? Why?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank the Lord for being the Creator of Heaven and Earth and everything in it. Ask God to allow you to speak His Word with great boldness.

The Spirit of Truth

Acts 5:1-16

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Peter and John were released from prison and they returned to their own people to report all that had happened. They all lifted their voices together in prayer, were filled with the Holy Spirit, and spoke the Word of God boldly. All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possession was his own, but they shared everything they had. Putting it at the Apostle's feet; it was distributed to anyone as he had need.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes)

Tell the story: as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. How does this story demonstrate the high value that God places on truth and unity within the body of Christ?
2. In what ways do we lie to each other today within our Christian communities?
3. How does not telling the truth with each other bring about death (in spiritual and emotional sense) within our Christian community?
4. What difference would it make in our witness to the world today if believers were "highly regarded by the people"?
5. What has God put on your heart to do this week as a result of this passage?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank God for His truth. Pray that we grow in a community of love and trust in Christ that our lives individually and as a group bring light to the world of unbelievers.

The Priority of Obeying God

Acts 5:17-42

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Ananias and Sapphira sold pieces of their property and held back a portion for themselves before placing the rest at the Apostles' feet. Peter rebuked them for lying to the Holy Spirit and they both fell dead, one after the other. Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events. The Apostles' performed many miraculous signs and wonders among the people. The people brought their sick and those tormented by evil spirits, and all of them were healed.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes)

Tell the story: as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. What circumstances can you tell us about when you had to make a choice and say; "I choose to obey God and not man?"
2. How would you feel if you were sent to jail for what you believe? How would your family feel? What do you think this would do to your life?
3. What has this passage taught you personally about persecution? What are some of the costs you have experienced for sharing your faith?
4. What conflicts are you facing today and how do you think God is leading you to deal with them? How could we pray for you as a group?
5. What things could you do better this coming week to deal with the unavoidable conflicts with leaders, co-workers, family, friends and the world?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank God for His holiness. Pray that we remain strong in Christ and obedient to him in the midst of our daily challenges.

The Heart of Wise Leadership

Acts 6:1-7

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

The High Priest and Sadducees were filled with jealousy because of the many miraculous signs and healing performed by the Apostles and because the people were beginning to follow them. During the night an angel of the Lord opened the doors and sent them to the temple courts to "tell the people the full message of this new life." When discovered, they were once again brought before the Sanhedrin for questioning. They were flogged, given strict orders not to teach in the name of Jesus, and then released. The Apostles rejoiced that they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the name of Jesus. They never stopped teaching and proclaiming the Good News that Jesus is the Christ.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes)

Tell the story: as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. As the number of disciples increased, what practical needs began to present themselves? What does the response of the Twelve teach you about God? How does their response to the need compare and contrast to our Christian community?
2. What did you learn about leadership? How do you describe yourself; a leader or a follower? How so?
3. What did you see God's people do in this passage when they were faced with a problem? How was the problem solved?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank God for each other, our fellowship and our community. Ask God to give us wisdom and the spirit of unity when facing the challenges of leadership.

Standing Up Under Pressure

Acts 6:8-7:60

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

The numbers of disciples were increasing and the many daily tasks of food distribution were beginning to overlook some of the widows. The Apostles chose seven men, including Stephen, that were filled with the Spirit and wisdom to oversee the widows and daily distribution of food.

Facilitator Note: Suggest the entire group share in telling the story. Approx 6-7 verses each.

Tell the Story: (12 Minutes) – Group Exercise

Tell the story: as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: (12 Minutes) Highlight the key points only because of the number of verses.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. Think about a person who makes you want to know God better. What are the qualities you see in that person and why are you encouraged to know God better because of him or her?
2. What do you learn about Stephen throughout this passage?
3. Throughout the passage, we see evidence of Stephen being full of the Spirit and wisdom. What are evidences today of being full of the Spirit and wisdom?
4. In what aspect of your life would you like to reflect more of the Spirit and wisdom?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank God for His gift of the Spirit and that the Holy Spirit fill each of us with the courage and wisdom to hold up under pressure.

Choosing Right Motives

Acts 8: 1-25

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Stephen was a man of God full of His power and grace. Opposition rose up against Stephen, but they could not stand up against his wisdom or the Spirit by whom he spoke. His opposition secretly plotted against him with lies, stirring up the people, and had him seized and brought before the Sanhedrin. Stephen testified how God was revealed to them in Jesus yet they killed all who predicted the coming of the Righteous One, and they even killed Jesus himself. This outraged the Jewish leaders so they rushed him, drug him outside, and stoned him to death.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes)

Tell the story: as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. Thinking about the Sorcerer, what were some of the signs that his power was not from the Holy Spirit? Do you see examples of that today?
2. Where ever the gospel goes, what seems to go with it?
3. What do you think some differences are between authentic Christianity and "phony" Christianity?
4. What was your primary motivation in receiving Jesus Christ as your Savior? What's your primary motivation for continuing in the faith?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank God for the truth of His Word and The Holy Spirit to understand it. Pray that our motives remain genuine in taking the Gospel to our Jerusalem.

Willing to Do God's Will

Acts 8:26-40

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

A great persecution broke out on the day that Stephen was stoned to death and the Apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. Philip went to Samaria and proclaimed Christ there. When the Apostles, who were in Jerusalem, heard that Samaria had received the Word of God, they sent Peter and John to pray that the believers might receive the Holy Spirit. The Apostles encountered Simon the Sorcerer who was being followed by the people because of his magic. Simon saw the Spirit given by the Apostles and offered them money to also receive it. Peter rebuked him because his heart was not right before God. Peter and John returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel in many Samaritan villages on their way.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes)

Tell the story: as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. What are the factors involved in the eunuch's coming to know the Lord?
2. What principles of sharing your faith do you observe throughout this passage?
3. What do you feel you need to know or do to become a more effective witness for Jesus? How about our Life Group?
4. Has there ever been a time when you felt God was leading you to someone? Who do you think is the Ethiopian in your life today? What will you do about it?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank God for the amazing gift of his Son. Pray for the Holy Spirit to lead you in sharing your faith with those that need to know Jesus.

Radical Change

Acts 9:1-31

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

The Spirit drew Philip towards the Ethiopian so he could help the Ethiopian understand the words of Isaiah as he was reading them. Philip shared the Good News of Jesus with the Ethiopian. As they traveled along the road, they came to some water where the Ethiopian ordered the chariot to stop so that Philip could baptize him. When they came out of the water, the Spirit took Philip away, but the Ethiopian went on his way rejoicing. Philip appeared in Azotus and traveled about preaching the gospel in all the towns until he reached Caesarea.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes)

Tell the story: as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. Whose conversion to Christianity has been most astonishing to you? Why?
2. How would you describe Saul's encounter with Jesus? How does your conversion compare and contrast with Saul's?
3. Consider the people in your life; who are most antagonistic to Christianity? How might God use you to bring them to Christ?
4. Barnabus means "Son of Encouragement." When have you experienced someone being a Barnabus to you? When have you been a Barnabus to someone?
5. What was one thing that you learned about fear? Courage? How could you use this to disciple someone?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank God for the people He has put in your life at just the right time to encourage us. Pray that we would be used by Him to encourage someone else in their faith.

Facing Pride and Prejudice

Acts 10:1-48

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Saul heard the voice of Jesus saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" This was followed by Saul's conversion of faith and travel to Damascus. The Lord used Ananias to remove his blindness and instruct him that he was chosen by the Lord to carry His name before the Gentiles, kings, and the people of Israel. Paul then spent time with the Apostles who accepted him and defended his conversion of faith to others.

Facilitator Note: Suggest the entire group share in telling the story. Approx 6-7 verses each.

Tell the Story: (10 Minutes) – Group Exercise

Tell the story: as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: (8-9 Minutes) Highlight the key points only because of the number of verses.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. How do you think Cornelius and Peter were changed through this event? Who do you think was changed more? What does this teach you about God?
2. How has God changed you when you've shared the Gospel with others?
3. What do you learn about the Gospel from this passage?
4. Who are you most comfortable sharing the Gospel with? Why?
5. What are some of the barriers you face when getting the opportunity to share the Good News with others?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank God for creating all of us to be unique and special to him. Pray that Jesus will continue to do his work in us so He can spread the Good News to others through us.

Responding to Criticism

Acts 11:1-18

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

God's angel spoke to Cornelius and had him send for Peter. Peter came knowing it was against the law for a Jew to associate with the Gentiles, but spent time with Cornelius in Caesarea. He preached the Good News of Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all, seeing that God does not show favoritism, but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right. While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message and he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes)

Tell the story: as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. Think about times when you have been most criticized. What was it like for you?
2. When have you been criticized by other Christians for doing what is right?
3. What are you like when someone criticizes you? What can you learn from the way Peter responded to the critics?
4. What can you do to not be a critic of others?
5. What role do you think our Life Group could play in breaking down barriers of indifference? Building unity? Building community?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank God for the many blessing he has given us. Pray that he fills our hearts with the same love for others that He has for us.

Helping New Believer's

Acts 11:19-30

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Peter had spent time with Cornelius in Caesarea teaching the impartiality of God and baptized many Gentiles in the name of Jesus Christ. When Peter returned to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him for entering and eating in the house of the uncircumcised. Peter spent time explaining and teaching that God gave all who believe in Jesus Christ the same gifts and who are we to oppose God. When they heard this, they had no further objections and praised God saying "God has granted even Gentiles repentance unto life."

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes)

Tell the story: as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. What kind of evidence of new life do you look for in new believers?
2. What kind of care did they give to the new believers? How does your care for new believers compare and contrast to the care given in this passage?
3. How can you help younger Christians grow in their faith? In what ways can our Life Group help? How would a new believer feel in our Life Group today?
4. How were you helped or encouraged the most as a new believer? What steps can you take to help someone in the same way? Who has God put on your heart and in your path that needs your help and encouragement this week?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank God for how He used His people at just the right time to help and encourage us as new Believers. Pray and ask God to use you in some way to help and encourage a person in your life, just as He sent someone to you.

When God's People Pray

Acts 12:1-25

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Many of those who were scattered by the persecution connected to Stephen's stoning ended up in Antioch and began to speak to Greeks and share the Good News. Barnabas was sent to Antioch and saw the Lord's hand was with them. He went to get Paul and returned where they spent a whole year meeting with the church and teaching a great number of people.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes)

Tell the story: as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. How have you seen God respond to a group of people that were earnestly praying?
2. Do you recall a time when God answered one of your prayers. Describe how you felt about it?
3. How is your motivation to pray influenced by what you see in this passage?
4. What motivated these people to pray? What motivates you to pray? Not to pray? How did their prayer affect Peter?
5. How are you like the people at the prayer meeting in this story? What are some of your prayers that you'd be surprised if God answered? Why?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank God that he knows our hearts better than we do and knows what we need before we ask him. Pray that through all circumstances God will show us what His will is and what we must do to bring all the glory to Him.

The Power of the Word

Acts 13:1-51

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Peter was imprisoned by Herod and scheduled to stand public trial after the Passover. An angel of the Lord appeared and woke Peter, released his chains, walked him past the prison guards and the gates opened by them selves as he walked through them. Peter went to the house of Mary, mother of Mark, where many people had gathered and were praying. Peter joined them and told them everything that had happened.

Facilitator Note: *Suggest the entire group share in telling the story. Approx 6-7 verses each.*

Tell the Story: (8-9 Minutes) – Group Exercise

Tell the story: as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: (10 Minutes) Highlight the key points only because of the number of versus.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. What is one way the Word of God has impacted you?
2. How do you honor the Word of God in your everyday life?
3. What influence does the Word have on the decisions you make each day for your family? Work? Friends?
4. How did the Word influence your decisions ten years ago and how does that compare to its influence today?
5. What are some of the ways you spend time in God's Word? Are you satisfied with the time you have alone with God to let Him speak into your heart?
6. What is one of the most meaningful experiences you have ever had sharing the Word of God with others?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank God for His Word and pray that we will share it with others in our Jerusalem with boldness and confidence.

Keeping Your Ego in Check

Acts 14:1-20

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Paul traveled to Pisidian Antioch and spoke God's Word to the people including the Synagogue leaders. On the next Sabbath, almost the whole city gathered to hear the Word of God. The Jews were filled with jealousy and talked abusively against what Paul was teaching. Paul and Barnabas responded to the Jews boldly telling them that they have rejected the Word and did not consider themselves worthy of eternal life, so they will now turn to the Gentiles. The Word of the Lord spread throughout the whole region, but the Jews continued to incite God-fearing leaders and expelled Paul and Barnabas from their region.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes)

Tell the story: as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. Do you think Paul and Barnabas were trying to be crowd pleasers? Why? Do you know any crowd pleasers today? What are some of their motives?
2. What is one thing you learned about leadership from this passage?
3. Is there anything or anyone in your past that you have worshiped? How about now?
4. What wisdom has God given you through this passage about sharing the Good News and how will you use it?
5. What is one way you can/can't identify with Paul in this passage? What would you like God to help you with this week?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank God and worship Him for being our source of power and strength. Pray that our hearts remain obedient and totally dependent on Jesus so our lives will be a testimony to the one and only true God.

Jesus is Enough

Acts 15:1-21

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Paul and Barnabas continued to travel and teach so effectively in the Jewish synagogues that a great number of Jews and Gentiles believed. They healed a crippled man in Lystra which caused the crowd to call them gods and then began to worship them. Paul and Barnabas rushed into the crowd shouting, "We are only men like you who are bringing you Good News." Jews came from Antioch and stoned Paul, drug him outside the city thinking he was dead. The next day Paul got up and went back into the city. They traveled to Derby and won many new disciples by preaching the word. On their way back to Antioch they revisited many of cities they previously traveled to encourage them and teach the Word of God.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes)

Tell the story: as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. When you were growing up, what religious rules were you required to follow? Why? How did you feel about this? How do you feel about it today?
2. What does this passage teach you about the law? How could you use this to help disciple others?
3. In what ways do you think you are putting yokes on others? What yokes do you feel have been put on you? How will you remove them?
4. What do you think is essential to salvation? Why?
5. If you were to make three suggestions to new believers about what might be helpful to their spiritual growth, what would you tell them? Why?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank God that He has given the gift of Eternal Life, by grace, to all who believe in His Son Jesus. Pray that we understand the gift of grace and that we do not put yokes on others that will hinder their growing and vibrant relationship with Jesus.

When Christians Clash

Acts 15:22-40

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Paul and Barnabas came into sharp disagreement with some of the men in Antioch who were teaching that you must be circumcised to be saved. They were sent to Jerusalem to consult with the Apostles and Elders regarding this. In Jerusalem, the Pharisees stood in agreement with this, however, Peter stood and proclaimed that God had already showed his acceptance of the Gentiles by giving them the Holy Spirit. God made no distinction between Jews or Gentiles; He purified their hearts without circumcision. Peter's judgment was to not make it difficult for the Gentiles that were turning to God and to write them a letter telling them to abstain from food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from the meat of strangled animals and from blood.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes)

Tell the story: as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. What are you like when you are in strong disagreement with others?
2. Describe the conflict that arises between believers in this passage. Describe the steps that were taken to resolve the conflict and spirit of those involved.
3. What principles do you observe that are vital to follow as we face conflict with others in our Christian community?
4. Which of these principles do you struggle with the most to implement?
5. What would be one thing you would like to ask prayer for as a result of this passage?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank God for giving us each other. Pray that the Holy Spirit works in our hearts to help us communicate with the love of Jesus and remain united in Him, even during times of conflict or disagreement.

Believe and Be Saved?

Acts 16:16-41

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

The Apostles and Counsel sent a letter to the Gentile believers in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia due to a disturbance there and sent Judas and Silas's to help encourage them. Paul and Barnabas remained in Antioch, however, they got in a sharp disagreement over taking Mark with them to revisit the towns where they preached. Paul did not think it was wise because Mark had deserted them on an earlier trip. This caused them to part company; Paul chose Silas and Barnabas took Mark and they went their separate ways.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes)

Tell the story: as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. How do you see Paul directed by God throughout this passage?
2. What principles of guidance do you see? What are some differences in living a Gospel centered life?
3. When have you experienced God's leading in your life?
4. There are many reasons people reject the gospel. What are reasons you see today for rejecting the truth?
5. How does your response to opposition and suffering for the gospel compare and contrast to that of Paul and Silas?
6. If a person asked, "What must I do to be saved?" how would you answer?
7. What did this passage teach you about where God works? Where do you see him working in your life?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank God for His mercy of withholding what we deserve, (His judgment), and giving us what we don't deserve, (His Grace), in His Son Jesus. Pray that God will show each of us the task or person that He might be calling us to. Pray that our Life Group continues to be Missional minded by reaching out to those that need the love and message of the Gospel.

The God Who Comes with Proof

Acts 17:16-33

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Paul and Silas were stripped, beaten, severely flogged and thrown into prison. As they were praying and singing hymns to God, there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations shook, the doors flew open and everyone's chains fell off. The jailer wanted to take his own life fearing that the prisoners would escape, however, Paul shouted, we are all here. The Jailer fell before Paul and Silas feet and asked, "What must I do to be saved?" Paul and Silas were released after they declared they were Roman citizens.

Facilitator Note: Suggest the entire group share in telling the story. Approx 6-7 verses each.

Tell the Story: (10 Minutes) – Group Exercise

Tell the story: as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: (8-9 Minutes) Highlight the key points only because of the number of verses.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. What kinds of philosophies do you encounter as you attempt to communicate the Gospel in our modern world?
2. What are ways that you might be tempted to compromise the message of the Gospel as you communicate it to certain people?
3. What do you need to do and know in order to more effectively communicate the Gospel to others?
4. How does this passage describe the different ways that people receive your spiritual message? What do you think God is helping you understand with this passage?
5. What is God pressing on your heart to do as a result of this passage?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank God for the Holy Spirit. Pray that the Holy Spirit puts the simplicity and clarity of the Gospel message in our hearts along with the desire to share the Good News with those God puts in our paths.

Investing in Others

Acts 18:1-27

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Paul and Silas went to Thessalonica and taught the Word in the synagogues. Some of the Jews, a large number of God-fearing Greeks, and a few prominent women were persuaded to follow Jesus. The Jews became jealous so they organized a mob to start a riot sighting that these men teach of a king greater than Cesar, called Jesus. Soon after Paul and Barnabas left the area and went to Berea, Athens, and Corinth where their message was received with great eagerness by some, but rejected by others.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes)

Tell the story: as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. Think about one person who profoundly affected your life. What are the ways that this person influenced you?
2. When have you been sustained by someone bringing you good news, resources, etc.
3. What keeps you from allowing others to enter your life and ministry in such ways?
4. How could you begin a profound affect on someone's life today?
5. Who is God pressing on your heart for you to invest in? When will you get started?
6. What would be one thing you would like to ask God for right now as a result of this passage?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank God for the way He works through His people and especially those he has sent to minister to each of us. Pray that God will use the unique gifts and relationships He has given us to invest in others the way He has invested in each of us.

God's Awesome Power

Acts 19:1-39

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Paul traveled to Ephesus where he left Priscilla and Aquila. He taught in the synagogue and then sailed to Caesarea where he greeted the church and then traveled down to Antioch. He traveled throughout the entire region strengthening all the disciples. Aquila and Priscilla meet a learned man named Apollos and invited him to their home where they explained to him the way of God more adequately.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes)

Tell the story: as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. How would you like to see the power of God revealed in our Christian community?
2. Wherever the Gospel is communicated with effectiveness, there will be both positive and negative responses. What are the positive results throughout this passage? The negative responses?
3. What modern day negative and positive responses have you seen as a result of the Gospel being communicated with power?
4. How are you seeing the power of "God in Action" in your life? In our Life Group?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank God for the work he is doing in us. Pray that we submit and remain obedient to the work that he wants to do through us.

Leaving a Legacy

Acts 20:13-38

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Paul traveled through Ephesus and discovered that some disciples had not heard of the Holy Spirit. He baptized them and stayed to teach for three months. He went to Tyrannus for two years so all the Jews and Greeks would hear the Word of the Lord. God did extraordinary miracles through him. Some Jews attempted to use the name of Jesus to cast out evil spirits but were rejected by them, and in one case, attacked by them causing great fear to spread throughout the region. For this reason, the name of the Lord Jesus began to be held in high honor.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes)

Tell the story: as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. Think about a time you said goodbye to someone special in your life that you would never see again. Describe your thoughts and feelings.
2. What do you see and feel as you read this passage?
3. What does Paul say about his ministry to the Ephesians?
4. Which of these do you want to be able to say at the end of your own life? Why?
5. Who is in your spiritual care? How are you preparing those that you nurture spiritually to be left with the same confidence?
6. What has this passage taught you as it relates to our Life Group?
7. What thoughts has this passage given you about the purpose and future of our Life Group?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank God for those in leadership that has been so faithful in serving the Lord by serving others. Pray that the Lord will continue to equip and raise up people in His kingdom to lead and shepherd others in a way that glorifies Him.

Refusing to Be A Doormat

Acts 21:37-22:30

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Paul traveled to Ephesus where he said his final goodbyes to the church leaders. He filled them with reminders of God's grace and warned them of the many savage wolves that will come and not spare the flock. Paul committed them to God and to the Word of His grace. He left them with the example of Jesus' words, "It is better to give than to receive." He prayed with them and left for Jerusalem knowing he would never see them again.

Facilitator Note: *Suggest the entire group share in telling the story. Approx 6-7 verses each.*

Tell the Story: (10 Minutes) – Group Exercise

Tell the story: as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: (10-11 Minutes) Highlight the key points only because of the large number of verses.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. What does this passage teach you about persecution?
2. What do you learn about people who start to persecute you?
3. In what way did Paul establish a common ground with others to tell his story? How do you?
4. What is one thing that stands out to you about the way Paul deals with his current circumstances? How would you compare them to your ways? In what way would you like to improve?
5. What has this passage taught you about the results you might expect from sharing your testimony? What affect do these results have on you?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank God that Jesus has completed the work of salvation and that we do not have to be responsible for the results of sharing the Gospel. Pray that the Holy Spirit gives us the confidence to boldly share and stand firm in the truths of the Gospel.

Take Courage

Acts 23:1-32

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

After Paul said farewell to the Ephesians, he returned to Jerusalem. When he arrived, the brothers greeted him warmly but some Jews from the province of Asia stirred up the crowds and seized him. They accused him of bringing Greeks into the temple area and defiling the Holy Place. The city was in an uproar and people seized Paul and tried to kill him. Paul was arrested and taken by soldiers to the barracks. At the steps of the barracks, Paul was given permission to speak to the crowd. Paul gave his complete testimony of his background, his conversion, and the story of God in his life. Paul declared that he was a Roman citizen at which time the commander immediately removed his chains and took him before the Sanhedrin to find out exactly what he was being accused of.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes)

Tell the story: as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. How many people did Paul have supporting and encouraging him?
2. What circumstances have you had to stand alone in your conviction of faith?
3. What is one of the biggest disputes you have ever been involved in? How many people did you have supporting your position? How did that affect you?
4. Who have you had to stand before and defend yourself because of your faith?
5. What is one thing you learned from Paul's defense that encourages you? How can you use that to disciple someone who is weak in their faith?
6. What are some of the consequences you face each day as you stand firm for Jesus?
7. How is God using this passage to strengthen you?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank God for the strength and confidence He gives us to stand up under trials and persecution. Pray to stand firm in God's promise that He will not give us more than we can bear and that He will give us the courage to stand firm in our faith.

Almost Real Christianity

Acts 24:1-27

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Paul stood before the Sanhedrin to defend himself in service to Christ. Paul challenged the Sadducees and Pharisees by informing them that he was also a Pharisee and his hope was in Jesus. This caused a division and dispute in the assembly. The dispute became so vigorous that Paul was removed and taken back to prison where the Lord visited him the following night saying, "Take courage! As you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome." Paul was transferred to Caesarea to stand before Governor Felix.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes)

Tell the story: as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. What did you learn in this passage about Felix after Paul spent several years teaching him in the Word? What does this teach you about people?
2. In what ways have you been like Felix? If you could pass on a word to Felix; what would you say?
3. What is "inconvenient" for you about being a Christian?
4. What is the Holy Spirit convicting you of as you have studied this passage?
5. What's the difference between being acquainted with the Way and being a Believer?
6. How long were you well acquainted with the Way before you became a Believer?
7. What affect did Paul's courage and self control have on Felix? Have on You?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank God that he has sent someone out with the message of Good News to each of us. Pray that God continues to empty our hearts of self and replace it with truths that make us more like his son Jesus.

Ready with an Answer

Acts 25:1-22

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Paul was transferred to Caesarea and the high priest brought his charges against Paul to stand trial before Governor Felix. Paul once again spoke in his defense with his knowledge and agreement with the law, but clearly pointed out that the charges are because of his statement about the resurrection of the dead. Paul remained in prison for two years while meeting with Felix who was succeeded by Governor Festus.

Tell the Story: (3-4 Minutes)

Tell the story: as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: (5-6 Minutes) Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. Think of a time when you had to defend your faith. What thoughts do you have about how you answered in your defense?
2. What was a situation in your past when you wished you had a better answer? How would you be better prepared now than back then?
3. How do you answer questions in a way that defends God rather than you? Can you give an example?
4. Have the words to defend your faith ever reached people that you never expected? How so?
5. What truths do you find most reassuring when defending your faith?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank God that he does not need us to defend him. Pray that the Holy Spirit will provide the words and wisdom to answer questions to our accusers' of why we have chosen to follow Jesus.

Telling Your Story

Acts 26:1-32

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Paul was brought before the Sanhedrin, and then before Governor Festus, to tell his story. Governor Festus was uncertain how to handle Paul so he consulted King Agrippa and now King Agrippa has asked to hear Paul story himself. Let's see how the story continues this week.

Facilitator Note: Suggest the entire group share in telling the story. Approx 6-7 verses each.

Tell the Story: (10 Minutes) – Group Exercise

Tell the story: as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: (10-12 Minutes) Highlight the key points only.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. What things have you learned about Paul's story over the past few weeks?
2. What motivates you to tell your story to non-Christians about Jesus? To what degree are you concerned about your non-Christian friends becoming Christians? Explain.
3. What do you think people most remember about Christianity from your witness?
4. What do you think non-Christians have more trouble with - God? Church? People? How does your story address their concerns?
5. How does Paul's heart for King Agrippa compare or contrast with your heart for those around you who do not know Jesus?
6. What is the difference between sharing your testimony and sharing the gospel?
7. Would one of you be willing to tell your story next week? I will ask you to tell it in under 7 minutes.

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank God that he has a unique and powerful story to tell through each one of us who have accepted Jesus. Pray that God shows us the story of himself in our lives and the Holy Spirit gives us the perfect words to share it with who God draws us to.

Storms in God's Will

Acts 27:1-44

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Once again Paul found himself in a position to tell the story of how Christ intersected with his life and how he came to faith. While Paul was speaking to King Agrippa, Festus interrupted and shouted to Paul, "You're out of your mind". King Agrippa could not find that Paul had done anything that deserved death or imprisonment. King Agrippa's verdict was that Paul "could have been set free had he not appealed to Caesar." Now Paul begins his journey to Rome just as Jesus had told him he would.

Facilitator Note: Suggest the entire group share in telling the story. Approx 6-7 verses each.

Tell the Story: (10 Minutes) – Group Exercise

Tell the story: as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: (10-12 Minutes) Highlight the key points only because of the number of verses.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. What is the worst shipwreck in life you have ever been in? What made it so bad?
2. Paul is doing God's will and yet he goes through this experience. How do you explain why shipwrecks come to us in the midst of doing God's will? What does it teach you about God's ways?
3. What has this passage taught you about kindness and compassion? How has unexpected kindness and compassion come to you this past month?
4. Whose advice do you wish you had followed at one time in your life? What happened because you didn't? How did God continue to work with you despite your unwise decision?
5. What circumstances in your life sometimes overwhelms you? How has this passage helped you see what to do?
6. When does God show up in this story? When does He most commonly show up in your life story?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank God for his promise that He will never forsake us. Pray that we can see His purpose in all of the shipwrecks of our lives and we are able to learn what He desires to teach us in these circumstances.

End of the Beginning

Acts 28:1-30

Review Last week's Story: (2-3 Minutes) Helps transition the group into scripture.

1. What was one thing you remember about last week's story?
2. What comments were particularly meaningful to you?

Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)

Paul was put on a ship with other prisoners and set sail for Rome. The sailing conditions had become very dangerous because of the late season and high winds. After many stops along the way their ship was swept off course by hurricane force winds and the crew was unable to control the boat. Paul continued to speak to the prisoners and crew with great wisdom and confidence which guided the crew and prisoners off the boat that was run aground. They all made it to the Shore of Malta Island safely.

Facilitator Note: *Suggest the entire group share in telling the story. Approx 6-7 verses each.*

Tell the Story: (10 Minutes) – Group Exercise

Tell the story: as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

Rebuild: (10-11 Minutes) Highlight the key points only because of the number of verses.

Basic Questions:

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus, Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

Other Application Questions:

1. If your life were a chapter in the Book of Acts, what do you think it would be about? What would you like it to say?
2. In what way is your life a continuation of the Book of Acts? How does this make you feel? What does it make you want to do? Why?
3. What is God showing you through this passage and Book about how he wants to use you?
4. What has God shown you from the book of Acts about how He might want to use our Life Group?

Life Application Question(s):

1. How is God asking you, us, to respond to this passage?
2. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

Prayer Thoughts:

Thank God for revealing who He is; who we are and what He has called us to do. Pray that God will reveal himself "in us" and show what He wants to do "through us" to spread the Good News of His Son Jesus to ends of the earth.

Year End Review Leaders Guide

Purpose:

To help group members recognize the personal growth they have experienced in their relationship with Christ and with each other as a group.

Facilitators Notes/Suggestions

- *You might handout the following questions the prior week so group members can come better prepared to share their answers.*

Discussion Questions:

Curriculum Review

1. What was one of the most meaningful passages for you this past year? Why?
2. What is one way you have been surprised by this study of passages?
3. What is one theme that you are walking away with from this past study of God's Word?
4. What is one area that you have grown the most in as a result of this study?
5. How do you feel you are better equipped to share the Word of God with others?
6. What is one thing that God has put on your heart as a result of this past years study?

Life Group Experiences Review

1. What is one way you have been surprised about your Life Group experience this past year?
2. What is one way you have personally grown this past year as a result of our Life Group?
3. What have been your biggest challenges this past year and what influence has our Life Group had on it for you?
4. What things have you appreciated most about being together this past year?
5. How would you describe a Life Group to someone who has never experienced it before?
6. Is there any group member's contribution that has been particularly meaningful to you? Who, What and Why?
7. What are some of the ways you would like to grow this coming year? Why?
8. Who do you know that we could be praying for this year to join us or another Life Group?
9. What would you like to see our Life Group become this coming year? Why?

Prayer Thoughts:

- You can ask a group member to begin accumulating both individual and group prayer requests from the discussion.
- You can pray as each request surfaces from the discussion time.
- Prayers can be written down and sent out later to remind each member of what they are committing to individually and the group.
- Pray for the Leadership of your Life Group, the development of new leaders to branch and fill the needs of our growing biblical community.

We are thankful for...

- The instruction book that God has written for us for life.
- The personal and loving relationship he has pursued with each of us through Jesus.
- The personal relationships we have developed together as a Life Group.
- The prayers and encouragement that has been so meaningful this past year.
- You fill in the rest!