

ACTS

the church that GOD built

**Reading Plan
&
Devotional**

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Week 1
September 1-6

September 1

Power from On High

Reading:

- Acts 1:6-8

Cross-Reference:

- Matthew 28:18-20 (The Great Commission)
- Acts 1:3 (Jesus speaking to them about the kingdom)

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

-Acts 1:8

Devotional Thought:

In Acts 1:8, Jesus promises the disciples the power of the Holy Spirit. This power isn't for personal gain; it's to equip them as witnesses for Him. Reflecting on this, we're reminded that our strength is limited, but with the Holy Spirit, we can accomplish God's purpose and be instrumental in extending His grace and truth to others.

Questions (write your answers below):

1.How have I seen the Holy Spirit at work in my life or the lives of others?

2.What specific area of my life do I need to invite the Holy Spirit's power?

3.In what ways can I be a witness for Christ in my community today?

September 2

Unity in Diversity

Reading:

- Acts 1:9-11

Cross-Reference:

- Luke 24:51-53 (The Ascension)
- John 14:2-3 (Jesus preparing a place for us)

“When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place.”

-Acts 2:1

Devotional Thought:

Acts 2 begins with the unity of believers. The coming of the Holy Spirit was marked by a powerful moment rooted in collective prayer and purpose. This teaches us the importance of being united as the body of Christ, valuing differences while working toward proclaiming the Gospel together.

Questions (write your answers below):

1.How can I contribute to fostering unity within my church or community?

2.Are there any biases or barriers I need to address that hinder my relationships with others?

3.What mission can we pursue together in Christ’s name to reflect our unity?

September 3

The Gift of the Spirit

Reading:

- Acts 2:1-4

Cross-Reference:

- Joel 2:28-29 (Prophecy of the Spirit's outpouring)
- John 14:16-17 (The promise of the Holy Spirit)

"And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance."
-Acts 2:4

Devotional Thought:

At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit empowers the disciples to communicate God's message in various languages, showing that the Gospel transcends barriers. This moment illustrates how God equips His people with unique gifts to build His Church and reach those in need of His love.

Questions (write your answers below):

1.What spiritual gifts has God given me, and how can I use them for His glory?

2.Have I ever felt inspired to share my faith in unique ways or languages?

3.How can I embrace diversity in my expressions of faith and service?

September 4

The Call to Repentance and Baptism

Reading:

- Acts 2:5-13

Cross-Reference:

- Genesis 11:1-9 (The Tower of Babel)
- Revelation 7:9 (Worship from every tribe and nation)

“And Peter said to them, ‘Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’”

-Acts 2:38

Devotional Thought:

Peter’s message emphasizes the importance of repentance and baptism in experiencing God’s grace. Baptism is a powerful public declaration of faith, marking the moment when we receive cleansing from sin and the new life we receive in Christ. This moment signifies the beginning of a transformed relationship with the Lord, where repentance opens our hearts to His mercy and grace.

Questions (write your answers below):

- 1.Is there anything in my life that I need to repent of to strengthen my relationship with God?
- 2.How do I view baptism, and what steps can I take to understand its significance better?
- 3.What steps can I take to share my own baptism experience with others to inspire them?

September 5

The Response to the Gospel

Reading:

- Acts 2:14-41

Cross-Reference:

- Psalm 16:8-11 (Peter's use of Old Testament prophecy)
- Romans 10:9-13 (Confessing faith for salvation)

"So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls."
-Acts 2:41

Devotional Thought:

The Day of Pentecost marked the birth of the Church and revealed a powerful response to the Gospel. Three thousand souls came to faith through the faithful preaching of Peter and the work of the Holy Spirit. As believers, we're called to not only respond to the Gospel ourselves but also to share it with others, inviting them into this transformative journey.

Questions (write your answers below):

1. Who in my life needs to hear the message of the Gospel, and how can I approach them about it?

2. In what ways can I actively participate in sharing my faith with others?

3. How can I celebrate and support my church community's growth in faith?

September 6

Reading and Reflection

Reading:

- Acts 2:42-47

Cross-Reference:

- Hebrews 10:24-25 (Encouraging one another in fellowship)
- Matthew 18:20 (Where two or three gather in His name)

Reflection:

How did the early Church live out their faith in daily life?

What practices can you adopt from their example?

Take some intentional time to pray about what you've read this week and how this can apply to what you do daily. Ask for the Holy Spirit to continue to speak to you as you read through the scriptures and devotions.

September 7
Sermon Notes

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Week 2
September 8-13

September 8

Devoted to Fellowship

Reading:

- Acts 2:42

Cross-Reference:

- 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (The importance of Scripture)
- Romans 12:10 (Devotion to one another in love)

“And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.”

-Acts 2:42

Devotional Thought:

The early Church exemplified a commitment to learning and community. Their devotion to teaching and fellowship highlights the importance of growing in faith together. In our own lives, nurturing relationships with other believers can deepen our understanding of Christ and help us stay accountable in our spiritual journeys.

Questions (write your answers below):

1. Who in my life can I reach out to for deeper fellowship and accountability?
2. How can I make time in my week to devote to learning more about God’s Word with others?
3. In what ways can I encourage and support fellow believers in their faith journey?

September 9

Breaking Bread Together

Reading:

- Acts 2:43

Cross-Reference:

- Hebrews 13:8 (Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever)
- John 14:12 (Greater works will we do)

“And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.”
-Acts 2:43

Devotional Thought:

The practice of breaking bread symbolizes nourishment, both physical and spiritual. Sharing meals can foster community and serve as a reminder of Christ’s sacrifice at communion. When we gather around the table, we express love and unity, building deeper connections that reflect the heart of Jesus.

Questions (write your answers below):

1.How can I incorporate shared meals or gatherings into my routine as a way to connect with others?

2.Are there any relationships in my life that could benefit from more intentional time spent together?

3.When have I felt a strong sense of community around a meal, and how can I recreate that experience?

September 10

Committed to Prayer

Reading:

- Acts 2:44-45

Cross-Reference:

- 2 Corinthians 8:1-5 (The generosity of the Macedonians)
- Philippians 2:3-4 (Considering others' needs)

"And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers."

-Acts 2:42

Devotional Thought:

Prayer was a foundational aspect of the early Church's life. It reminds us that our relationship with God is sustained through communication. Devoting ourselves to prayer not only strengthens our connection with Him but also fosters unity in our community, as we intercede for each other and seek His guidance together.

Questions (write your answers below):

1.How can I make prayer a more intentional part of my daily routine?

2.Who in my life could use my prayers right now, and how can I reach out to them?

3.What specific requests do I need to bring before God, and how can I expect Him to respond?

September 11

Awe and Wonder

Reading:

- Acts 2:46

Cross-Reference:

- Romans 15:7 (Accept one another just as Christ accepted you)
- Hebrews 10:24-25 (Encouraging one another)

“And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles.”

-Acts 2:43

Devotional Thought:

The early Church experienced a sense of awe as they witnessed the miraculous works through the apostles. This sense of wonder is a reminder of God’s active presence in our lives. Recognizing the miracles around us, no matter how small, can cultivate gratitude and a deeper faith as we see God working in our midst.

Questions (write your answers below):

1.What moments of awe have I experienced in my own faith journey recently?

2.How can I be more attentive to the ways God is working in my life and in my community?

3.In what ways can I share the stories of God’s miracles or provision with others to inspire their faith?

September 12

Living Generously

Reading:

- Acts 2:47

Cross-Reference:

- 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (Rejoicing always, praying continually)
- Psalm 100:4 (Enter His gates with thanksgiving)

“And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need.”

-Acts 2:45

Devotional Thought:

Generosity was a hallmark of the early Church. Their willingness to share their resources revealed a profound understanding of community and love. Living generously reflects the heart of Christ, inviting us to consider how we can serve and support those in need, both within our congregation and beyond.

Questions (write your answers below):

1.In what ways can I demonstrate generosity in my own life, whether through time, resources, or support?

2.Do I have a tendency to withhold my resources from those in need? How can I work on being more open-handed?

3.What steps can I take to better understand the needs in my community and how I might help?

September 13

Reading and Reflection

Reading:

- Acts 2:42-47

Cross-Reference:

- 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 (The body of Christ)
- Ephesians 4:1-6 (Unity in the Spirit)

Reflection:

Take this day to review and summarize what you've learned throughout the week.

How can the principles from Acts 2:42-47 be applied to your local church community?

Take some intentional time to pray about what you've read this week and how this can apply to what you do daily. Ask for the Holy Spirit to continue to speak to you as you read through the scriptures and devotions.

September 14
Sermon Notes

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Week 3
September 15-20

September 15

The Power of Faith

Reading:

- Acts 3:1-2

Cross-Reference:

- Luke 18:1 (Men ought always to pray)
- 1 Thessalonians 5:17 (Pray without ceasing)

“But Peter said, ‘I have no silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!’”

-Acts 3:6

Devotional Thought:

Peter’s words reflect the essence of faith in action. While he had no material wealth to offer the lame man, he provided something far more valuable: healing through the name of Jesus. This story urges us to consider how we can be conduits of God’s power and grace, sharing the hope of Christ with those in need around us.

Questions (write your answers below):

1.What gifts or strengths do I have that I can share with others, particularly those who are hurting or in need?

2.How can I actively look for opportunities to help those around me in a meaningful way?

3.Have I ever neglected to use my faith to reach out and minister to someone’s needs? What can I learn from that experience?

September 16

A Life Transformed

Reading:

- Acts 3:3-5

Cross-Reference:

- James 2:15-16 (Faith without works is dead)
- Matthew 25:40 (Whatever you did for one of the least of these)

“And leaping up, he stood and began to walk, and entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God.”

-Acts 3:8

Devotional Thought:

The healing of the lame man serves as a powerful image of transformation. His new ability to walk became a cause for celebration and worship. In our own lives, we may have areas where we feel stuck or broken. Recognizing God’s transformative power can inspire us to respond with gratitude and worship, celebrating His work in us.

Questions (write your answers below):

1.What areas of my life need God’s transformative power, and how can I invite Him into those situations?

2.How can I cultivate a heart of gratitude for the changes God has made in my life?

3.In what ways do I express praise for God’s goodness, both privately and publicly?

September 17

Sharing the Good News

Reading:

- Acts 3:6-8

Cross-Reference:

- Mark 16:17-18 (Believers will perform signs)
- James 5:14-15 (Prayer of faith will save the sick)

“Men of Israel, why do you wonder at this? Or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we have made him walk?”

-Acts 3:12

Devotional Thought:

Peter’s response to the crowd underscores the importance of directing glory to God rather than himself. He emphasizes that the healing was not due to personal merit but a demonstration of God’s power. This devotion encourages us to reflect on how we can effectively share the goodness of Christ and redirect credit to Him in our lives and testimonies.

Questions (write your answers below):

1.How comfortable am I with sharing my faith story and pointing others to God as the source of my strength?

2.Do I give credit to God for the good things in my life, or do I often take the glory for myself?

3.How can I practice humility in my witness to others, ensuring God is glorified?

September 18

Repentance and Renewal

Reading:

- Acts 3:9-10

Cross-Reference:

- Revelation 12:11 (Overcoming by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony)
- Psalm 105:1 (Make His deeds known among the peoples)

“Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out.”

-Acts 3:19

Devotional Thought:

In Peter’s sermon, he calls the people to repentance as a pathway to renewal. Repentance is not just about feeling sorrow for our sins but is an active decision to turn away from those behaviors and seek God’s forgiveness. This devotion invites us to explore the path of repentance in our own lives, recognizing its vital role in experiencing God’s grace.

Questions (write your answers below):

1.Are there sins or habits in my life that I need to genuinely repent for and turn away from?

2.How do I view repentance—is it a heavy burden, or do I see it as an opportunity for renewal and growth?

3.What steps can I take to create a regular practice of self-reflection and repentance?

September 19

Hope in Christ

Reading:

- Acts 3:11-16

Cross-Reference:

- 1 Peter 3:15 (Always be prepared to give an answer)
- Matthew 5:16 (Let your light shine before men)

“And in your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.”
-Acts 3:25

Devotional Thought:

Peter reminds the crowd of the promise made to Abraham about the blessing through his offspring, connecting it to Jesus. This affirmation of hope emphasizes God’s faithfulness to His promises across generations. For us, this serves as a reminder that our faith in Christ secures our hope and a future that contributes to God’s plan of salvation for all.

Questions (write your answers below):

1.How does knowing that I am part of God’s promise and plan give me hope in difficult circumstances?

2.In what ways can I share the hope of Christ with others, particularly those who feel lost or hopeless?

3.How can I deepen my understanding of God’s promises in Scripture to strengthen my faith?

September 20

Reading and Reflection

Reading:

- Acts 3:17-26

Cross-Reference:

- 2 Chronicles 7:14 (If my people humble themselves...)
- Acts 2:38 (Repent and be baptized)

Reflection:

Contemplate Peter's call to repentance for the people.

What does true repentance involve, and how does it lead to times of refreshing?

Take some intentional time to pray about what you've read this week and how this can apply to what you do daily. Ask for the Holy Spirit to continue to speak to you as you read through the scriptures and devotions.

September 21
Sermon Notes

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Week 4
September 22-27

September 22

Boldness in the Face of Opposition

Reading:

- Acts 4:1-3

Cross-Reference:

- John 15:18-20 (If the world hates you...)
- 2 Timothy 3:12 (All who wish to live godly in Christ will be persecuted)

“And when they had set them in the midst, they inquired, ‘By what power or by what name did you do this?’”
-Acts 4:7

Devotional Thought:

Peter and John found themselves facing the Sanhedrin, a powerful council that had the authority to intimidate and threaten. However, they didn't waver in their witness. This passage challenges us to evaluate our own responses to opposition. Are we willing to stand firm in our faith, even when pressures from the world around us rise?

Questions (write your answers below):

1. When have I faced opposition for my beliefs, and how did I respond?

2. What fears hold me back from sharing my faith boldly with others?

3. How can I seek God's strength to confront challenges in my faith journey with courage?

September 23

Filled with the Holy Spirit

Reading:

- Acts 4:4

Cross-Reference:

- Romans 1:16 (The Gospel is the power of God for salvation)
- 1 Corinthians 3:6-7 (God gives the increase)

“Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them...”
-Acts 4:8

Devotional Thought:

Peter's bold proclamation was not through his own resolve but because he was filled with the Holy Spirit. This highlights the importance of relying on God's Spirit for empowerment and guidance. In our daily lives, we must cultivate a close relationship with the Holy Spirit to be bold witnesses for Christ.

Questions (write your answers below):

1.How often do I consciously invite the Holy Spirit to work in and through me?

2.What practices can I implement to be more sensitive to the Holy Spirit's leading?

3.In what areas of my life do I need the Holy Spirit's empowerment right now?

September 24

The Name Above All Names

Reading:

- Acts 4:5-7

Cross-Reference:

- Proverbs 28:1 (The righteous are as bold as a lion)
- 1 Peter 3:15 (Always be prepared to give an answer)

“...by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead.”
-Acts 4:10

Devotional Thought:

Peter's declaration emphasizes the power in the name of Jesus, who brings healing and salvation. By attributing the healing of the lame man to Jesus, Peter clarified that faith in Christ is central to the Gospel. This devotion beckons us to recall the power of Jesus' name in our prayers and lives, recognizing that it holds authority over all circumstances.

Questions (write your answers below):

1. How can I incorporate the name of Jesus into my daily prayers and conversations?

2. What does it mean for me to rely on the authority of Jesus in challenging situations?

3. In what areas of my life do I need to invoke the name of Jesus for healing, hope, or strength?

September 25

The Importance of Community

Reading:

- Acts 4:8-10

Cross-Reference:

- Luke 12:11-12 (The Holy Spirit will teach you what to say)
- Ephesians 6:19-20 (Pray for boldness in proclaiming the Gospel)

“And they recognized that they had been with Jesus.”
-Acts 4:13

Devotional Thought:

The Sanhedrin noticed that Peter and John had been with Jesus. Our time spent with Christ through prayer, reading Scripture, and community will reflect in our character and actions. This profound connection fosters transformation, making us recognizable as His followers. How are we cultivating our personal relationship with Jesus, and how does it impact our witness?

Questions (write your answers below):

1.How does my relationship with Jesus influence my daily life and interactions?

2.What can I do to deepen my time spent with Him in prayer and Scripture?

3.How can my church community support me in growing closer to Christ?

September 26

The Challenge of Silence

Reading:

- Acts 4:11-12

Cross-Reference:

- Ephesians 2:19-22 (Jesus as our cornerstone)
- John 14:6 (Jesus as the way, the truth, and the life)

"For we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard."
-Acts 4:20

Devotional Thought:

Peter and John boldly declared their commitment to share the Gospel, regardless of the threats against them. This devotion invites us to reflect on the essential nature of our testimony. In what ways are we silenced in our faith, and how can we be more vocal about the impact Jesus has had on our lives?

Questions (write your answers below):

1.What prevents me from speaking about my faith more openly with friends, family, or colleagues?

2.How can I practice sharing my personal testimony in everyday conversations?

3.What role does gratitude play in my willingness to speak boldly about Christ?

September 27

Reading and Reflection

Reading:

- Acts 4:13-22

Cross-Reference:

- Acts 5:29 (We must obey God rather than men)
- Matthew 10:32 (Whoever acknowledges me before others...)

Reflection:

Reflect on the Sanhedrin's response and the resolve of Peter and John.

How can we remain committed to our faith despite opposition or pressure to remain silent?

Take some intentional time to pray about what you've read this week and how this can apply to what you do daily. Ask for the Holy Spirit to continue to speak to you as you read through the scriptures and devotions.

September 28
Sermon Notes

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Week 5
September 29 -
October 4

September 29

The Power of Community Prayer

Reading:

- Acts 4:23-24

Cross-Reference:

- Hebrews 10:24-25 (Encouraging one another)
- Galatians 6:2 (Bear one another's burdens)

"When they were released, they went to their friends and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them."

-Acts 4:23

Devotional Thought:

Upon their release, Peter and John immediately sought out their community. This moment emphasizes the importance of sharing our burdens with fellow believers. When we face challenges, reaching out for support and prayer not only strengthens our resolve but also unites us as the body of Christ.

Questions (write your answers below):

1. Who do I turn to when I need support or encouragement in my faith?

2. How can I be more open about sharing my struggles with my church community?

3. In what ways can I offer support to others facing challenges in their lives?

September 30

Acknowledging God's Sovereignty

Reading:

- Acts 4:25-26

Cross-Reference:

- Psalm 2:1-2 (Why do the nations rage?)
- Acts 2:23 (God's predetermined plan)

"Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them..."

-Acts 4:24

Devotional Thought:

The early Christians began their prayer by acknowledging God's sovereignty over all creation. This acknowledgment shifted their perspective, reminding them that God is in control despite their circumstances. In our own prayers, reflecting on God's greatness helps us approach challenges with renewed faith and recognition of His power.

Questions (write your answers below):

1.How does acknowledging God's sovereignty change my perspective on the challenges I face?

2.What specific areas of my life do I need to trust God's authority over?

3.How can I remind myself of God's greatness during difficult times?

October 1

The Purpose of Persecution

Reading:

- Acts 4:27-28

Cross-Reference:

- Isaiah 53:10 (The suffering servant)
- Luke 24:44 (Jesus explaining the Scriptures)

“For truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel...”

-Acts 4:27

Devotional Thought:

The early Church recognized that the persecution of Jesus was part of God’s plan for salvation. This helps us understand that challenges and hardships can lead to growth and deeper understanding of grace. God can use our struggles for His purpose, even when we can’t see it.

Questions (write your answers below):

1.How have I seen God’s hand at work during my own struggles or those of others?

2.What is my attitude toward persecution or trials—do I see them as opportunities for growth?

3.How can I stay focused on God’s purpose when facing difficulties?

October 2

A Prayer for Boldness

Reading:

- Acts 4:29

Cross-Reference:

- Ephesians 6:19-20 (Pray for boldness)
- 2 Timothy 1:7 (God has not given us a spirit of fear)

“And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness.”

-Acts 4:29

Devotional Thought:

Instead of praying for protection from persecution, the disciples boldly asked for continued strength to proclaim God’s Word. This illustrates their unwavering commitment to their mission. Their example encourages us to pray not for comfort, but for courage to boldly share our faith, regardless of the circumstances.

Questions (write your answers below):

1. When faced with challenges, do I typically pray for safety or for boldness in my faith?
2. How can I be more courageous in sharing my faith with others around me?
3. What specific situations in my life call for boldness in speaking about Christ?

October 3

The Response of the Holy Spirit

Reading:

- Acts 4:30-31

Cross-Reference:

- Mark 16:17-18 (Signs will accompany those who believe)
- John 14:12 (Those who believe will do even greater works)

“And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.”

-Acts 4:31

Devotional Thought:

The powerful response to their prayer shows how God affirms and empowers His people. Being filled with the Holy Spirit is crucial for effective ministry and witness. This reminds us that when we seek God genuinely, He equips us with the strength and boldness needed to step out in faith.

Questions (write your answers below):

1.How am I currently seeking the filling of the Holy Spirit in my life?

2.What are the signs of the Holy Spirit's presence in my daily activities?

3.How can I create space in my life for the Holy Spirit to lead and guide me?

October 4

Reading and Reflection

Reading:

- Acts 4:1-31

Cross-Reference:

- Ephesians 5:18 (Be filled with the Spirit)
- Acts 2:4 (They were all filled with the Holy Spirit)

Reflection:

•Consider the result of their prayer: being filled with the Holy Spirit and speaking the Word of God boldly.

How can we seek to be filled with the Spirit in our own lives?

Take some intentional time to pray about what you've read this week and how this can apply to what you do daily. Ask for the Holy Spirit to continue to speak to you as you read through the scriptures and devotions.

October 5
Sermon Notes

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Week 6
October 6-11

October 6

Unity Among Believers

Reading:

- Acts 4:32-33

Cross-Reference:

- Philippians 2:1-2 (Being of one accord, of one mind)
- 2 Corinthians 8:1-4 (The grace of generosity)

“Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul...”
-Acts 4:32a

Devotional Thought:

The early Church’s unity of heart and soul highlights the importance of community in the life of believers. This model encourages us to build strong, loving connections within our church family, fostering an environment where we support one another and act in harmony for the sake of the Gospel.

Questions (write your answers below):

1.How can I contribute to unity in my church or community?

2.Are there any divisions or conflicts I need to address to promote peace and harmony?

3.What actions can I take to actively support and encourage fellow believers?

October 7

Generosity in Action

Reading:

- Acts 4:34-37

Cross-Reference:

- 1 John 3:17 (If anyone has material possessions...)
- Matthew 6:19-21 (Lay up treasures in heaven)

“And no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common.”

-Acts 4:32b

Devotional Thought:

The early Christians demonstrated radical generosity, sharing their resources to ensure no one was in need. This devotion challenges us to reflect on our own approach to generosity. Are we willing to share our time, talents, and resources to support others and further God’s Kingdom?

Questions (write your answers below):

1. In what ways can I practice generosity beyond my financial resources?

2. How do I feel about sharing what I have with those in need?

3. What holds me back from being more generous, and how can I overcome those barriers?

October 8

The Danger of Deception

Reading:

- Acts 5:1-2

Cross-Reference:

- 1 Timothy 6:18 (Do good, be rich in good deeds)
- Galatians 6:9-10 (Doing good for all people)

“But a man named Ananias...with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, and with his wife’s knowledge he kept back for himself some of the proceeds...”

-Acts 5:1-2

Devotional Thought:

Ananias and Sapphira’s story serves as a stark warning against deception and hypocrisy. Their desire to appear generous while holding back reveals the dangers of pretending to be something we’re not. It encourages us to live authentically and align our actions with our professed beliefs, ensuring our hearts match our outward expressions.

Questions (write your answers below):

1.Are there ways in which I’ve been dishonest or hypocritical in my faith?

2.How comfortable am I with living openly and authentically before God and others?

3.What steps can I take to ensure that my actions reflect my true intentions in serving God?

October 9

Accountability in Community

Reading:

- Acts 5:1-3

Cross-Reference:

- Jeremiah 17:9 (The heart is deceitful above all things)
- Matthew 6:24 (You cannot serve both God and money)

“Peter said, ‘Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit...?’”

-Acts 5:3

Devotional Thought:

Peter’s confrontation of Ananias illustrates the importance of accountability within the Christian community. When we live authentically, we have others who can lovingly call us out when we stray. This emphasizes the need to remain transparent and accountable to fellow believers, fostering an environment of truth and integrity.

Questions (write your answers below):

1.Who in my life can I trust to hold me accountable in my spiritual walk?

2.How well do I respond to accountability when it’s offered?

3.What practices can I establish to be more open and honest about my struggles?

October 10

The Seriousness of Our Commitment

Reading:

- Acts 5:3-11

Cross-Reference:

- Proverbs 12:22 (Lying lips are an abomination)
- Colossians 3:9 (Do not lie to one another)

“And great fear came upon the whole church and upon all who heard of these things.”

-Acts 5:11

Devotional Thought:

The response to Ananias and Sapphira’s punishment caused fear and reverence within the early Church. This highlights the gravity of our commitment to God and underscores the seriousness of our actions. It reminds us to approach our faith with humility, recognizing the profound implications our choices can have within the body of Christ.

Questions (write your answers below):

1.How does the seriousness of this story change my perspective on my own commitments to God?

2.In what areas of my life do I need to take my faith more seriously?

3.How can I cultivate a deeper reverence for God in my daily walk?

October 11

Reading and Reflection

Reading:

- Acts 5:1-11

Cross-Reference:

- Hebrews 12:14 (Pursue holiness)
- 1 Peter 1:15-16 (Be holy, for I am holy)

Reflection:

- Consider the judgment that befell Ananias and Sapphira.

What does this story teach about the consequences of sin and the holiness of God?

Take some intentional time to pray about what you've read this week and how this can apply to what you do daily. Ask for the Holy Spirit to continue to speak to you as you read through the scriptures and devotions.

October 12
Sermon Notes

ACTS

the church that GOD built

Week 7
October 13-18

October 13

The Power of Healing

Reading:

- Acts 5:12-16

Cross-Reference:

- Mark 16:17-18 (Signs will accompany those who believe)
- John 14:12 (Whoever believes in Me will do the works I do)

“And many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles.”
-Acts 5:12

Devotional Thought:

The early Church experienced the power of God’s healing through the apostles. These miracles served to affirm the message of the Gospel and demonstrate God’s compassion. This reminds us that God is still at work today, performing miracles in our lives and communities. Our faith and reliance on God’s power can bring comfort and hope to those around us.

Questions (write your answers below):

1. Have I witnessed or experienced God’s healing or miracles in my life? How can I share that testimony?
2. How can I be an instrument of God’s healing in my community or circle of influence?
3. What miracles do I need to pray for in my life or for others?

October 14

Boldness in the Face of Persecution

Reading:

- Acts 5:17-27

Cross-Reference:

- John 3:19-20 (Men love darkness rather than light)
- Matthew 23:13 (Woe to you, teachers of the law...)

“And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest questioned them.”

-Acts 5:27

Devotional Thought:

The apostles faced serious consequences for their bold proclamation of the Gospel. Rather than cower in fear, they stood firm in their faith. Their example encourages us to recognize the importance of boldness in the face of persecution. As we face our own challenges for our beliefs, we can remember that we are not alone and that God equips us for every situation.

Questions (write your answers below):

- 1.What fears do I face when it comes to sharing my faith with others?
- 2.How can I develop a posture of boldness and confidence in sharing the Gospel?
- 3.In what ways can I support others who are experiencing persecution for their faith?

October 15

The Priority of Obedience

Reading:

- Acts 5:28-29

Cross-Reference:

- Psalm 34:7 (The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear Him)
- Matthew 28:5-6 (Angelic announcement of Christ's resurrection)

"We must obey God rather than men."

-Acts 5:29

Devotional Thought:

Peter's declaration emphasizes the importance of prioritizing obedience to God over human authority. This challenges us to assess our own priorities and where we find ourselves wavering. Living for Christ may require difficult choices, but our commitment to God should ultimately guide our actions.

Questions (write your answers below):

1.Are there any situations in my life where I feel pressured to compromise my faith?

2.How can I better discern God's voice and prioritize obedience to His calling in my decisions?

3.What does it mean to me to have a life that reflects obedience to God amidst societal expectations?

October 16

The Reward of Suffering

Reading:

- Acts 5:30-41

Cross-Reference:

- Acts 4:17 (Their spreading of the Gospel must be stopped)
- 1 Corinthians 1:18 (The message of the cross is foolishness...)

“Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name.”

-Acts 5:41

Devotional Thought:

The apostles experienced joy in suffering for Christ, illustrating an extraordinary perspective on trials. Their response reminds us that suffering can deepen our relationship with God and strengthen our witness. Embracing the honor of suffering builds resilience and draws us closer to the heart of Christ.

Questions (write your answers below):

1.How do I typically respond to suffering or challenges in my life?

2.Can I find moments of gratitude in my difficulties? How might they shape my faith?

3.How can I support others in my community who are facing their own trials or suffering?

October 17

The Seriousness of Our Commitment

Reading:

- Acts 5:42

Cross-Reference:

- 1 John 1:2 (We proclaim to you the eternal life...)
- Romans 1:16 (For I am not ashamed of the Gospel)

“And every day in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus.”

-Acts 5:42

Devotional Thought:

The apostles were relentless in their mission to spread the Gospel, teaching daily regardless of the opposition they faced. Their commitment inspires us to remain steadfast in our own mission. The call to share Christ continues, and we must seek innovative ways to reach those around us, whether through conversations, service, or acts of love.

Questions (write your answers below):

1.How can I be more persistent in sharing the Gospel in my daily life?

2.Are there creative or new ways I can engage with my community about my faith?

3.What barriers do I need to overcome to stay committed to my mission as a follower of Christ?

October 18

Reading and Reflection

Reading:

- Acts 5:33-42

Cross-Reference:

- 2 Timothy 3:12 (All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted)
- Romans 8:28 (All things work together for good...)

Reflection:

- Reflect on the mixed responses of the council and the wise counsel of Gamaliel.

What does this passage teach us about perseverance in the face of persecution and trusting in God's ultimate plan?

Take some intentional time to pray about what you've read this week and how this can apply to what you do daily. Ask for the Holy Spirit to continue to speak to you as you read through the scriptures and devotions.

October 19
Sermon Notes

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Week 8
October 20-25

October 20

The Importance of Service

Reading:

- Acts 6:1

Cross-Reference:

- 1 Corinthians 12:25-26 (Members of the body should have the same care for one another)
- Galatians 3:28 (There is neither Jew nor Gentile...)

“Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution.”

-Acts 6:1

Devotional Thought:

As the early Church grew, so did the need for effective service and care within the community. The complaint about the neglect of certain widows illustrates the importance of listening and responding to the needs of all members of the body of Christ. This teaches us that serving others is not only a priority but an integral part of what it means to be the Church.

Questions (write your answers below):

1.How aware am I of the needs within my community or church?
Do I actively seek to address them?

2.In what ways can I contribute to fostering a culture of service and care for others?

3.Are there overlooked groups in my community that I need to advocate for or support?

October 21

Recognizing the Call to Serve

Reading:

- Acts 6:2-4

Cross-Reference:

- 1 Timothy 4:14-15 (Neglect not the gift that is in you)
- Romans 12:4-8 (Different gifts within the body of Christ)

“Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty.”

-Acts 6:3

Devotional Thought:

The apostles understood the importance of appointing capable men to serve, highlighting the value of leadership and accountability within the Church. This decision reflects the need to recognize and empower gifted individuals to fulfill their calling. It challenges us to consider how we can identify and develop leaders who will serve effectively within the community.

Questions (write your answers below):

- 1.How can I identify and encourage the gifts and leadership potential in others around me?
- 2.Am I actively using my gifts to serve within my community or church?
- 3.What characteristics do I believe are essential for effective leaders in the Church?

October 22

The Power of Unity

Reading:

- Acts 6:5

Cross-Reference:

- 1 Timothy 3:1-13 (Qualifications for church leaders)
- 2 Timothy 2:2 (Entrust to faithful men)

“And what they said pleased the whole gathering...”

-Acts 6:5

Devotional Thought:

The unity demonstrated in the early Church was critical for its growth and effectiveness. The positive response to the apostles' proposal shows the importance of working together to find solutions to problems. A spirit of cooperation fosters harmony and strengthens the body of Christ, allowing us to pursue mission together.

Questions (write your answers below):

1.How can I contribute to fostering unity in my church or community?

2.What conflicts or divisions might I need to address to promote harmony?

3.In what ways can I be a peacemaker among my peers and within the Church?

October 23

Commitment to Prayer and the Word

Reading:

- Acts 6:4-7

Cross-Reference:

- 1 Peter 5:2-4 (Shepherd the flock of God)
- Acts 13:3 (Fasting and prayer in appointing leaders)

“But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”

-Acts 6:4

Devotional Thought:

The apostles prioritized prayer and the ministry of the Word, underscoring the essential nature of spiritual nourishment and guidance. This commitment encourages us to reflect on our own dedication to prayer and Scripture, recognizing that they are vital for personal and community growth in faith.

Questions (write your answers below):

1.How can I cultivate a deeper commitment to prayer in my own life?

2.Am I regularly engaging with God’s Word, and how does it inform my daily choices?

3.In what ways can I encourage others to prioritize spiritual growth through prayer and Scripture?

October 24

Growth in the Church

Reading:

- Acts 6:7

Cross-Reference:

- Matthew 9:37-38 (The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few)
- Ephesians 4:15-16 (Growing and building itself up in love)

“And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem...”

-Acts 6:7

Devotional Thought:

The growth of the early Church is a testament to the power of the Gospel and the effectiveness of a well-functioning community. The intentional focus on service and spiritual development led to an increase in disciples. This encourages us to pursue both spiritual depth and outreach, recognizing that God honors efforts made for His Kingdom.

Questions (write your answers below):

1.How can I contribute to the growth of my church community, both spiritually and numerically?

2.What role do I play in sharing the Gospel and inviting others into a relationship with Christ?

3.How can I foster an environment in which others feel welcome to explore their faith?

October 25

Reading and Reflection

Reading:

- Acts 6:1-7

Cross-Reference:

- Philippians 2:1-4 (Unity and humility in service)
- Hebrews 13:17 (Obey your leaders and submit to them)

Reflection:

- Take time to review what you've learned this week about leadership, service, and conflict resolution in the church.

How can these principles be applied in your own church community?

Take some intentional time to pray about what you've read this week and how this can apply to what you do daily. Ask for the Holy Spirit to continue to speak to you as you read through the scriptures and devotions.

October 26
Sermon Notes