

TRANSFORMED



A Study of ACTS

WEEK 1

From Jesus' Ministry to the Apostles'

Acts 1

At Home

Read Acts 1. Then answer the questions below the best that you can. You will discuss these at your group meeting.

Context- The 5 W's

Read Luke 1:3. Based on what you learned there, **who** can you deduce is the author of Acts? _____

What are some of the topics of this chapter?

Read Luke 24:50-53 and compare it with Acts 1:1-11. **When** are these events taking place?

Where are these events taking place (v.12)? _____

Why is the author writing this letter to Theophilus?

List- Key Words

What words are repeated throughout? What words seem to hold some significance?

Observe- God, People, or the World

Skim through the chapter again. What do you notice about:

- God:
- People:
- The World:

Observe- New Learning

Was there anything new that you learned?

Summarize- The Passage

Summarize Acts 1 in two-three sentences. Focus on what you think is most important.



At Group

Take 5-10 minutes at the start of your study time to review the answers from the At Home portion. Then, as a group, answer the questions in this section.

Context- Cross References

You may have noticed that the Holy Spirit is mentioned a few times at the beginning of this letter. As you go through the book of Acts over the next several weeks, you will notice that the Holy Spirit is a central figure. Some have even called this book: *The Acts of the Holy Spirit*. If you have a study Bible, use it to look up verses about the Holy Spirit. Have each person look up one verse, then read the verses and share what each person found. If no one in your group has a study Bible, use these verses: Judges 3:10, Zechariah 4:6, John 14:15-17, John 14:26, Luke 24:49, 1 Corinthians 6:19, Galatians 5:16, Romans 8:26.



Leadership Tip

Have each group member summarize or infer the meaning of their verse. Then, ask other group members if they inferred anything different.

List- Key Verses

What key verses in Acts 1 tie in or relate to what you discovered above?



Observe- What Convicts, Inspires, or Encourages

It's time to start opening your hearts to the work of the Holy Spirit in your lives. He is always working to show you new things and often it comes across as a conviction, inspiration, or encouragement.

Take a moment to observe the work that the Holy Spirit is doing in your heart. Below are some topics or applications to consider:

- v.3: Jesus presented himself alive by many proofs. Are you familiar with the proofs? Could you defend your faith to an unbeliever?
- v.8: Jesus promises that the disciples will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes. We all have the Holy Spirit living within us (Eph 4:30). Do you experience that power on a regular basis?
- v.14: The apostles were steadfastly continuing in prayer "with one accord", meaning they were united in purpose and in mind. How united in purpose do you feel with your fellow believers or the people in your church? How committed to prayer with them are you?

Record your thoughts below. Then, share what with your group. You could say something like, "I am inspired by" or "I feel convicted because..." Let each person share quickly.

Search- Your Heart Condition

Let's dig a little deeper. Here's where true discipleship happens. Discipleship is not just Bible study; it is transformation. Bible study happens in the head; transformation happens in the heart. Yet, understanding our heart can be difficult to do on our own (Jeremiah 17:9). Thankfully, the Holy Spirit helps us (John 14:26). In addition, we are to help one another (Galatians 6:1).

Have a time of open discussion where each person reflects on one or more of the questions on the next page and shares it with the group. If a group member is unsure, they should share what they can and be

ready for other group members to weigh in with wisdom. This is a time of group discussion, mutual discipleship, and encouragability.



Discipleship Tip

Encouragability is accountability that encourages, not shames. In Galatians 6, we see that we are to keep a humble attitude and a loving heart that is always *for* others.

- Did the Holy Spirit prick your heart to some way of living that you need to change?
- What unhealthy habits have you allowed in your life? Name them.
- What unhealthy thoughts or lies are you believing or have been told that are not true?
- Where do you need to be honest with yourself and with the Holy Spirit?
- Is shame causing you to cover sin or hide from God in some way? If so, how?



Experience- Action Steps

Actions follow beliefs. How do you want to act on the truth of God’s Word? What steps can you take this week towards growth? This should be very specific to each person and to the passage. For example, “Pray more” is not a sufficient answer. If more prayer is needed, then why? How does it relate to the passage? Instead, a person could say, “I want to pray and live out Philippians 4:6-7 each time I have an anxious thought. I’m going to memorize these verses and keep a card with the verse in my pocket as a reminder.”

A simple plan for action can follow this pattern:

1. Capture the thought or lie.
2. Identify it by calling it what it is.
3. Choose to disagree with it and replace it with truth from God’s Word.

Record each group member’s response here. You will revisit this at the beginning of the next group.

Name of Person	Action Step/ Solution
<i>Example</i>	<i>Memorize Philippians 4:6-7 and pray it every time they (group member) are anxious.</i>

Leader Preparation

This section is for group leaders to do before their group meeting each week. It is an extra step that will help leaders to prepare to lead and disciple well. The questions are designed to stimulate thought about the needs of the group and find scripture that can encourage group members as unhealthy habits, attitudes, and behaviors surface in the group discussion time.

Context- Culture

Leaders can help their members make reasonable applications by giving some advance thought to the culture of the passage of study and the culture or current events going on in the lives of their group members.

Consider the following for Acts 1:

- The chapter ends with the apostles casting lots to select a new apostle to replace Judas. This probably will seem strange to many group members. Do some research on the Old Testament practice of casting lots and record your findings below. See page 12 for Bible Study Tools you can use.

- Think about how we select leaders today. Does it leave room for (or leave out) God?

- Do we see the Jewishness of the way the book was written (Ex: A Sabbath's day walk, Acts 1:12)? Why is that important to the context?

List- Key Ideas and Events

Every passage is full of detail- key events or ideas that connect the verses. They can be easy to gloss over and hard to remember. Yet, group time will run more smoothly if you, as the leader, have a good grasp of the details.

As you read through the passage, list these key details so that you have a full picture of what is going on. Write the verses next to them as you go. You can clump verses together according to the ideas or events.

Observe- What May Anger or Confuse Some People

The Bible has some difficult to understand and hard to digest concepts. A prepared leader will anticipate sticking points for their group.

Think about and pray over your group members and their lives. What topics or verses in this passage may anger or confuse them? Write down what God puts into your mind as you are praying.

Search- Possible Unhealthy Behaviors or Attitudes this Passage Addresses

As your group goes through the search section, unhealthy behaviors and attitudes may be shared. It is good to have some Bible verses on hand to encourage group members on the spot.

To prepare for this (and any sticking points you thought of in the previous section) read a commentary, use a keyword search, or search God's promises or affirmations. We have provided a list of Bible Study Tools on page 12. The goal should be to find truth and encouragement that can help your group see the beauty of God's Word and the good of His commands. Record your findings here and be ready to share them in your group when the moment arises.



Discipleship Tip

If you use one of the affirmations or promises above, consider encouraging your group members with them at some point during the week with a quick text.

Crossing the Culture Bridge

**Adapted from Duvall, J. Scott, & Hays, J. Daniel (2001). Grasping God's Word (3rd ed.).*

Zondervan.

We want to see the Bible not just as a book, but as a companion that we can lean into when we need wisdom. Even if we don't think we have specific questions, it is more inspiring when we read our Bibles with a sense of wonder than a sense of obligation. So, what questions do you have? What causes a sense of wonder? What specifics are you curious about?

One piece of the puzzle that can cause a lot of confusion but also bring a lot of clarity is culture. The stories we read happened in a time and culture that is so different from ours today. Sometimes we can infer the cultural difference, like when men had multiple wives; other times it is more subtle. Studying culture can help us understand what the text meant to whom it was written. Biblestudytools.com and Gotquestions.org are great online resources to use.

Here are some topics you could try searching:

- People groups (Philistines, Assyrians, Philippians)
- Customs (inheritance rights, job of an armor bearer)
- Clothing or Tools (ephod, the armor of God)
- Key Places (Valley of Achor, Jacob's Well)
- Old vs. New Testament (Levitical Law, Beatitudes)
- Key Events (Triumphal Entry, Babylonian Captivity)

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

CULTURE AND HISTORY

www.gotquestions.org

Great for investigating all of those "I wonder why..." thoughts.



VERSE-BY-VERSE RESEARCH

Constable's Commentary

Julie's favorite for help with confusing sections.



CROSS REFERENCES

www.openbible.info/labs/cross-references/

Find *related verses* to the topic.



KEY WORDS

www.biblehub.com/lexicon

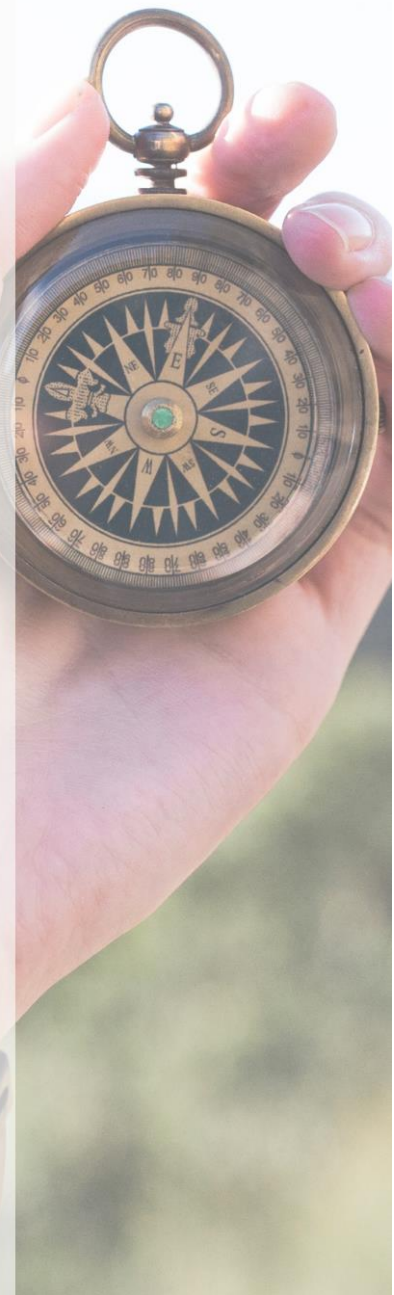
Gives you the original word and its *meaning* in the Greek or Hebrew.



PROMISES

www.biblestudytools.com

Search *God's Promises* to find an endless list of verses.



WEEK 2

From Following the Law to Following the Spirit

Acts 2

At Home

Read Acts 2. Then answer the questions below the best that you can. You will discuss these at your group meeting.

Context- The 5 W's

Who- There are a lot of people mentioned in this section. List out all the people and **where** they are from.

What is the major event happening in the beginning of this section?

When is this event taking place? During which Jewish festival (v.1)?

Read Luke 24:49. **Why** is this event significant?

List- Key Words

What word is repeated in v.33 and v.39 in reference to the Holy Spirit? _____

What other words seem to hold some significance?

Observe- God, People, or the World

Skim through the passage again. What do you notice about:

- The Holy Spirit:
- People’s Reaction Before Conversion (vv.7-13):
- People’s Reaction After Conversion (vv.42-47):

What exactly was speaking in tongues or speaking in languages? See vv. 7 and 8.

Summarize- The Passage

Summarize Acts 2 in two-three sentences. Focus on what you think is most important.

Reflect- Last Week’s Action Step

Take a moment and reflect on how you did with last week’s action step. What was the outcome of your faithfulness to God’s Word? Be ready to share with your group at the meeting.



At Group

Take 10-15 minutes at the start of your study time to review the answers from the At Home portion. Don't forget the Reflect step. This is an important part of Accountability. Then, as a group, answer the questions in this section.

Context- Cross References and Symbolism

The Old Testament is saturated with symbolism of Jesus and the New Covenant. Let's take a look at two that are referenced in this section: The Feast of Pentecost and the imagery of fire.

The promised Holy Spirit comes upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost. This is significant.

Read Leviticus 23:15-21, which describes the Feast of Weeks, also known as the Feast of Pentecost. What are some of the commands the Lord gives for observing the Feast of Weeks?

Now look back at Leviticus 23:10. The Feast of Firstfruits came before the Feast of Weeks. What had to happen before the Israelites could celebrate either of these feasts? Keeping in mind that the Old Testament feasts were symbols of what was to come in the New Testament, why is this condition important? Do you see any correlation or symbolism of the coming of the Holy Spirit?

We see in this passage that “tongues of fire” rested on the disciples when the Holy Spirit came upon them. Fire is a frequently used symbol in the Bible. Have you ever wondered why? Let’s do a word study.

If you have a study Bible, use the concordance in the back to look up verses including the word *fire*. If no one in your group has a study Bible, use these verses: Deuteronomy 4:24, Jeremiah 23:29, Matthew 18:9, Mark 9:43, John 15:6, 1 Corinthians 3:13, 1 Peter 1:7, Revelation 20:14. Record what you learn.

Challenge: What is fire used for in the lives of believers versus the lives of unbelievers?

List- Key Verses

Read closely through Acts 2:16-18 and list key concepts you learn about the Holy Spirit.



Observe- What Convicts, Inspires, or Encourages

It's time to start opening your hearts to the work of the Holy Spirit in your lives. He is always working to show you new things and often it comes across as a conviction, inspiration, or encouragement.

Take a moment to observe the work that the Holy Spirit is doing in your heart. Below are some topics or applications to consider:

- v.4 and 13: The disciples are filled with the Holy Spirit and then are mocked by those who don't understand the power of the Holy Spirit? Would you say you understand what it means to be filled by the Holy Spirit? Have you ever been the mocker when it comes to actions or experiences in the church that you don't understand?
- v.28: Peter recites a psalm of David that promises that the Lord will make him full of gladness with his presence. Do you experience the joy of the Lord on a regular basis? Do you feel full of gladness? Are you experiencing his presence?
- v.42: The new believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship. Are you devoted to studying God's Word? Are you devoted to the community of believers you are in?

Record your thoughts below. Then, share what with your group. You could say something like, "I am inspired by" or "I feel convicted because..." Let each person share quickly.

Search- Your Heart Condition

Have a time of open discussion where each person reflects on one or more of the questions below and shares it with the group. If a group member is unsure, they should share what they can and be ready for other group members to weigh in with wisdom.

- Did the Holy Spirit prick your heart to some way of living that you need to change?
- What unhealthy habits have you allowed in your life? Name them.
- What unhealthy thoughts or lies are you believing or have been told that are not true?
- Where do you need to be honest with yourself and with the Holy Spirit?
- Is shame causing you to cover sin or hide from God in some way? If so, how?



Discipleship Tip

Everyone has wisdom to share. As believers in Christ, we all share the same Holy Spirit and we all have the ministry of reconciliation. Don't just rely on leaders to do all of the discipleship. If you have something to share that is biblically based, then share with confidence knowing that God can use you to disciple others, too.



Experience- Your Group's Action Steps

Actions follow beliefs. How do you want to act on the truth of God's Word? What steps can you take this week towards growth? How can you show love to others? This should be very specific to each person and to the passage. For example, "Love others more" is not a sufficient answer. If more love is needed, then why? How does it relate to the passage? Instead, a person could say, "I am going to show love to (name of person) this week by (naming a specific action)."

Record each group member's response here. You will revisit this at the beginning of the next group.

Name	Action Step

Leader Preparation

Context- Culture

Consider the following for Acts 2:

Your group members were asked to describe speaking in tongues or languages as part of their At Home assignment. We hear a lot about speaking in tongues in our modern church, so there will probably be some who have questions or opinions about speaking in tongues. Use the Bible Study Tools on page 12 to do some research of your own and be ready to answer their questions. We recommend the following two articles. Record what you learned.

- “What is the gift of speaking in tongues?” from GotQuestions.org
<https://www.gotquestions.org/gift-of-tongues.html>

- “Is speaking in tongues evidence for having the Holy Spirit?” from GotQuestions.org
<https://www.gotquestions.org/tongues-Holy-Spirit.html>

List- Key Ideas or Events

As you read through the passage, list these key details so that you have a full picture of what is going on. Write the verses next to them as you go.

Observe and Search

You did a lot of work this week learning about the gift of speaking in tongues and listing out key ideas and events, so we are going to condense these last two sections of leader preparation.

Think about and pray over your group members and their lives. What concerns is God placing on your heart? Are there any additional topics covered in this section that you are concerned about? Do you foresee your group members needing Biblical affirmations or promises of God to help them apply this section to their lives? Use the Bible Study Tools on page 10 to help. If nothing comes to mind, just pray over the group time you will have and ask God to make it fruitful.



Discipleship Tip

Oftentimes unforeseen topics come up during group time. It is okay to not have all the answers. It is also okay to table that discussion until next time after you, and others, have had time to do a little research. Don't shoot from the hip only to have to correct yourself later.

WEEK 3

From Promises to Fulfillment

Acts 3

At Home

Read Acts 3. Then answer the questions below the best that you can. You will discuss these at your group meeting.

Context- The 5 W's

Who are the key people mentioned in this passage? Think of both who is present in this event and who is referenced from the past.

What is the major event happening?

When and where is this event taking place (3:1-2)?

List- Key Words

Name all the ways Jesus is referred to in this passage? (Hint: See vv. 6, 13, 14, 15, 18, 22.)

Observe- God, People, or the World

Skim through the passage again. What do you notice about:

- Why the people are amazed (vv. 8-11):
- To whom they want to give the glory (v. 12):
- Peter's Response (v. 16):

Summarize- The Passage

Summarize Acts 3 in two-three sentences. Focus on what you think is most important.

Reflect- Last Week's Action Step

Take a moment and reflect on how you did with last week's action step. What was the outcome of your faithfulness to God's Word? Be ready to share with your group at the meeting.



At Group

Take 5-10 minutes at the start of your study time to review the answers from the At Home portion. Don't forget the Reflect step. Then, as a group, look up verses and answer the questions in this section.

Context- Cross References

Jesus is the fulfillment of the prophets' teaching. Several prophecies are mentioned in this passage. Read each one and then discuss how we see it fulfilled.

- “The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me (Moses) from your brothers.”
 - Deuteronomy 18:15-19
 - Fulfillment-

- “Repent therefore and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out.”
 - Isaiah 43:25, 44:21-22
 - Fulfillment-

- “In your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.”
 - Genesis 12:1-3
 - Fulfillment-

List- Key Verses

A key theme in this passage is restoration. What verses illuminate this theme?



Observe- What Convicts, Inspires, or Encourages

It's time to start opening your hearts to the work of the Holy Spirit in your lives. He is always working to show you new things and often it comes across as a conviction, inspiration, or encouragement.

Take a moment to observe the work that the Holy Spirit is doing in your heart. Below are some topics or applications to consider:

- v.4: When the lame man asked to receive alms from Peter and John, Peter directed his gaze at him and said, “Look at us.” When you come across a homeless person or beggar, are you comfortable looking them in the eye? Do you treat them with dignity and respect as Peter and John did? Do you treat all people with dignity and respect?
- v.10: The people are filled with wonder and amazement at the healing that God performed through Peter. We may not see healing everyday, but God is always working. Do you notice God’s hand in everyday events? Are you filled with wonder and amazement?
- v.12: Peter takes no credit for the healing but gives all the glory to God. Do you do this? Think about your everyday circumstances, not just serving at church or in big moments of God’s intervention.
- v.19: Once again (see 2:38), Peter’s testimony is one of a call to repentance. He even says that Jesus was sent to turn men from their wickedness (3:26). Do you view the gospel this way or do you focus more on the grace of salvation from our sins? Do you live this way (continually trying to turn from your wickedness) in your walk with the Lord by continually seeking deeper sanctification?

Record your thoughts below. Then, share what with your group. You could say something like, “I am inspired by” or “I feel convicted because...” Let each person share quickly.

Search- Your Heart Condition

Have a time of open discussion where each person reflects on one or more of the questions below and shares it with the group. If a group member is unsure, they should share what they can and be ready for other group members to weigh in with wisdom.

- Did the Holy Spirit prick your heart to some way of living that you need to change?
- What unhealthy habits have you allowed in your life? Name them.
- What unhealthy thoughts or lies are you believing or have been told that are not true?
- Where do you need to be honest with yourself and with the Holy Spirit?
- Is shame causing you to cover sin or hide from God in some way? If so, how?



Discipleship Tip

Transparency is needed for discipleship to truly occur. Consider what helps you to open up to others and maybe ask some friends what helps them. Then, put these ideas into practice with one another.



Experience- Your Group's Action Steps

Actions follow beliefs. How do you want to act on the truth of God's Word? What steps can you take this week towards growth? How can you show love to others? This should be very specific to each person and to the passage. For example, "Share the Gospel" is not a sufficient answer. If we feel the conviction to share the gospel, how will it be done? Instead, a person could say, "I am going to pray over and seek to share the Gospel with (a person's name) when I see/speak with them (name a time)"

Record each group member's response here. You will revisit this at the beginning of the next group.

Name	Action Step

Leader Preparation

This week we see Jesus as the fulfillment of all the Old Testament promises. This may bring up some questions about the overarching themes or the overall story of the Bible. To prepare, you are going to study the overarching biblical narrative or story of the Bible.

Watch the Bible Project's video "The Story of the Bible." You can Google "Bible Project Story of the Bible" or go to (https://youtu.be/7_CGP-12AE0). Take notes on what you learned.

Think about a typical story. It has a problem, turning point, and resolution. The main character faces a problem which leads them into a series of events or choices that usually go from bad to worse. Eventually, a climax is reached and the story faces a turning point that eventually brings about a resolution. Think of the main events of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. If all of mankind is the main character, what are the main parts of the story? Try to identify the following parts:

- Mankind's Problem:

- The Turning Point for Mankind:

- The Resolution:

How could you share this with your group and why might it be important to everyday life or to studying the Bible?

WEEK 4

Transformation of the Priesthood

Acts 4

At Home

Read Acts 4. Then answer the questions below the best that you can. You will discuss these at your group meeting.

Context- The 5 W's

Who are the new people mentioned at the beginning of this passage?

What is happening?

When is this event taking place?

Why is this event significant?

List- Key Words

What words do the leaders use to describe Peter and John? What words do they use to describe the miracle in v. 16?

Observe- God, People, or the World

Skim through the passage again.

- What do you notice about the leader’s response?
- What do you learn about Jesus through Peter’s testimony?

Summarize- The Passage

Summarize Acts 4 in two-three sentences. Focus on what you think is most important.

Reflect- Last Week’s Action Step

Take a moment and reflect on how you did with last week’s action step. What was the outcome of your faithfulness to God’s Word? Be ready to share with your group at the meeting.



At Group

Take 5 minutes at the start of your study time to review the answers from the At Home portion. Don't forget the Reflect step. Then, as a group, look up verses and answer the questions in this section.

Context- Cross References

Read Hebrews 4:14-16. Contrast Jesus, our High Priest, to the priests and high priestly family in Acts 4.

List- Key Verses

What verses are evidence of the transition of power from the priestly family to the priesthood of the apostles through Jesus, the High Priest?



Observe- What Convicts, Inspires, or Encourages

It's time to start opening your hearts to the work of the Holy Spirit in your lives. He is always working to show you new things and often it comes across as a conviction, inspiration, or encouragement.

Take a moment to observe the work that the Holy Spirit is doing in your heart. Below are some topics or applications to consider:

- v.4: The leaders were greatly annoyed because the apostles were teaching something contrary to their beliefs; yet, the apostles demonstrated compassion (3:17). How do you react to other beliefs?
- v.13: Peter and John spoke with boldness even though they were uneducated. Do you have the same confidence in sharing or do you struggle with thoughts of being “uneducated”?
- v.19: Despite persecution, Peter and John held fast to doing what God called them to do. Does that convict, inspire, or encourage you?
- v.32-37 portrays a beautiful picture of the early church. Are you convicted, inspired, or encouraged by it?

Record your thoughts below. Then, share what with your group. You could say something like, “I am inspired by” or “I feel convicted because...” Let each person share quickly.

Search- Your Heart Condition

Have a time of open discussion where each person reflects on one or more of the questions below and shares it with the group.

- Did the Holy Spirit prick your heart to some way of living that you need to change?
- What unhealthy habits have you allowed in your life? Name them.
- What unhealthy thoughts or lies are you believing or have been told that are not true?
- Where do you need to be honest with yourself and with the Holy Spirit?
- Is shame causing you to cover sin or hide from God in some way? If so, how?

Discipleship Tip



A large part of our faith is telling others about Jesus. Consider discussing each others' personal witness. How effective are each of you in your homes, work, or community? How can the group be praying, encouraging, or equipping one another to reach others

for Christ?



Experience- Your Group's Action Steps

Actions follow beliefs. How do you want to act on the truth of God's Word? What steps can you take this week towards growth? How can you show love to others?

Record each group member's response here. You will revisit this at the beginning of the next group.

Name	Action Step

Leader Preparation

Context- Culture

Today we speak of the priesthood of believers. What do you know about this? What could you share with your group? If you need more information go to <https://www.gotquestions.org/priesthood-believers.html>.

List- Key Ideas or Events

As you read through the passage, list these key details so that you have a full picture of what is going on. Even write the verses next to them as you go.

Observe- What Confuses or Angers Us

Many believers believe that the gift of healing still exists. We recommend reading the following commentaries to learn more. Then, answer the questions below to prepare for your group time.

- Dr. Constable's Commentary on Acts 3
<https://planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/acts.pdf> (pages 97-98)

- *What is the Spiritual Gift of Healing?* Gotquestions.org <https://www.gotquestions.org/gift-of-healing.html>

- What is the difference between believing in healing and believing in the gift of healing?

Search- Our Heart Attitudes and Beliefs

Think about and pray over your group members and their lives. What applications do you think your members will make? How can you encourage them to take healthy steps of faith in order to experience more of the Holy Spirit in their lives?

WEEK 5

From Favor to Persecution

Acts 5

At Home

Read Acts 5, focusing on 5:12-42. Then answer the questions below the best that you can. You will discuss these at your group meeting.

Context- The 5 W's

Who are the main people mentioned?

What are some of the topics of this chapter?

List- Key Words

What words are repeated throughout? What words seem to hold some significance?

Observe- God, People, or the World

Skim through the chapter again. What do you notice about:

- The change in response of the leaders in Acts 5:17-18 and 5:33 from 4:2:
- The change in people's response (5:13):

Observe- New Learning

Was there anything new that you learned? If yes, what?

Summarize- The Passage

Summarize Acts 5 in two-three sentences. Focus on what you think is most important.

Reflect- Last Week's Action Step

Take a moment and reflect on how you did with last week's action step. What was the outcome of your faithfulness to God's Word? Be ready to share with your group at the meeting.



At Group

Take 5-10 minutes at the start of your study time to review the answers from the At Home portion. Then, as a group, answer the questions in this section.

Context- Cross References

In Acts 5, we see the apostles rejoicing because of their suffering for the sake of the gospel. This is a perspective on suffering that many of us need to have.

Use a study Bible to do a word search on suffering. Write down all that you find. If your group doesn't have a study Bible, look up the following verses: Acts 9:16, Romans 8:17, Romans 8:36, 2 Corinthians 1:7, Philippians 1:29, Philippians 3:10, Hebrews 11:24-26, 1 Peter 2:20, and 1 Peter 5:10.

List- Key Verses

Do you see any of what you learned in your study of suffering echoed in Acts 5? Write the key verses below:



Observe- What Convicts, Inspires, or Encourages

Take a moment to observe the work that the Holy Spirit is doing in your heart. What convicts, inspires, or encourages you? Record your thoughts below. *In previous weeks, we gave you verses and topics to consider. This week, and in the weeks following, we are encouraging you to make your own observations.*

Search- Your Heart Condition

Have a time of open discussion where each person reflects on one or more of the questions below and shares it with the group.

- Did the Holy Spirit prick your heart to some way of living that you need to change?
- What unhealthy habits have you allowed in your life? Name them.
- What unhealthy thoughts or lies are you believing or have been told that are not true?
- Where do you need to be honest with yourself and with the Holy Spirit?
- Is shame causing you to cover sin or hide from God in some way? If so, how?

Discipleship Tip



Discipleship groups should be centered around the study of God's Word. God's Word needs to be held as the ultimate authority and the ultimate *truth* when it comes to evaluating the world and how it works (2 Timothy 3:16). Therefore, it is the lens through which everything else is viewed and through which every decision is made. For someone to truly be disciplined, the leader needs to impart this understanding. They should model and challenge their disciple to turn to God's Word to live a god-honoring life in times of abundance and times of need.



Experience- Action Steps

Actions follow beliefs. How do you want to act on the truth of God's Word? What steps can you take this week towards growth?

Record each group member's response here. You will revisit this at the beginning of the next group.

Name of Person	Action Step/ Solution

Leader Preparation

You are more than halfway through the study. Hopefully by this point, you have gotten to know your group members well, especially their struggles. Use this week to revisit your group members' action steps from previous weeks. How are they doing? How do they still need encouragement? Take time to pray specifically for each one. Write down any verses or words of encouragement that come to mind.

WEEK 6

From Jerusalem to the Ends of the Earth

Acts 8

Note: Acts 6 and 7 are not covered in this study.

At Home

Read Acts 8. Then answer the questions below the best that you can. You will discuss these at your group meeting.

Context- The 5 W's

Who are the missionaries, people groups, and key people mentioned in this passage?

What is the cause of these events (v.1)?

Where are people scattered (v.1)?

When is this event taking place (v.2)?

Why do you think “all were scattered, *except the apostles*” (v. 1)?

List- Key Words

What do you think are the key words in this passage and why?

Observe- God, People, or the World

Skim through the passage again. What do you notice about:

- The Holy Spirit:
- People:
- The World at this time:

Summarize- The Passage

Summarize Acts 8 in two-three sentences. Focus on what you think is most important.

Reflect- Last Week's Action Step

Take a moment and reflect on how you did with last week's action step. What was the outcome of your faithfulness to God's Word? Be ready to share with your group at the meeting.



Observe- What Convicts, Inspires, or Encourages

Take a moment to observe the work the Holy Spirit is doing in your heart. Record your thoughts below. Have each person share quickly.

Search- Your Heart Condition

Have a time of open discussion where each person reflects on one or more of the questions below and shares it with the group.

- Did the Holy Spirit prick your heart to some way of living that you need to change?
- What unhealthy habits have you allowed in your life? Name them.
- What unhealthy thoughts or lies are you believing or have been told that are not true?
- Where do you need to be honest with yourself and with the Holy Spirit?
- Is shame causing you to cover sin or hide from God in some way? If so, how?



Discipleship Tip

Spiritual transformation is not behavior modification. We are not seeking to just change our outward behavior like many self-help books do today. Spiritual transformation is something that happens on the inside and then is witnessed in our attitudes and actions on the outside.



Experience- Your Group's Action Steps

Actions follow beliefs. How do you want to act on the truth of God's Word? What steps can you take this week towards growth? How can you show love to others? Record each group member's response here. You will revisit this at the beginning of the next group.

Name	Action Step

Leader Preparation

Context- Culture

You will be discussing the Dispersion in the Group Time. In preparation, read the following article and take notes below. You will need this information to help your group answer the third question on pg. 41.

- “What does the Bible mean when it refers to the Diaspora?” from GotQuestions.org
<https://www.gotquestions.org/diaspora.html>

List- Key Ideas or Events

As you read through the passage, list these key details so that you have a full picture of what is going on. Write the verses next to them as you go.



Discipleship Tip

When Jesus called the disciples to be fishers of men, he was telling them he wanted to give them a purpose that would matter for eternity. To be a disciple of Jesus, we have to believe the same: what we are calling others to is eternally valuable. And what happens here on this earth can serve eternal purposes. Keep an eternal focus when discipling and it will keep you motivated to continue the good work (Gal. 6:9).

WEEK 7

From Disunity to Unity

Acts 10:1-11:18

At Home

Read Acts 10:1-11:18. Then answer the questions below the best that you can. You will discuss these at your group meeting.

Context- The 5 W's

Who is Cornelius?

What happened to Cornelius?

When did it happen?

Where is Cornelius from and where is he told to go?

List- Key Words

What words seem significant? Which words are repeated?

Observe- God, People, or the World

Skim through the passage again. What do you notice about:

- How God communicates with Cornelius vs. Peter:

- How Cornelius is described by the people:

- Peter’s interpretation of the vision (v.28):

Summarize- The Passage

Summarize Acts 10:1-11:18 in two-three sentences. Focus on what you think is most important.

Reflect- Last Week’s Action Step

Take a moment and reflect on how you did with last week’s action step. What was the outcome of your faithfulness to God’s Word? Be ready to share with your group at the meeting.



At Group

Take 5-10 minutes at the start of your study time to review the answers from the At Home portion. Don't forget the Reflect step. Then, as a group, look up verses and answer the questions in this section.

Context- Cross References

Peter is afraid to eat even though God commands him three times in the vision. Read Deuteronomy 4:4-10 to understand why Peter was so afraid. What does this teach us about the New Testament freedom vs. the Old Testament law? Read Galatians 3 for help.

List- Key Verses

The Holy Spirit confirms the faith of the believing Gentiles in Acts 10:44-48. List out the key events in the order they happen.

Which came first: the anointing of the Holy Spirit or baptism? What can we conclude from this?



Observe- What Convicts, Inspires, or Encourages

Take a moment to observe the work the Holy Spirit is doing in your heart. Record your thoughts below. Then, share what you are observing with your group. You could say something like, "I am inspired by" or "I feel convicted because..." Let each person share quickly.

Search- Your Heart Condition

Have a time of open discussion where each person reflects on one or more of the questions below and shares it with the group.

- Did the Holy Spirit prick your heart to some way of living that you need to change?
- What unhealthy habits have you allowed in your life? Name them.
- What unhealthy thoughts or lies are you believing or have been told that are not true?
- Where do you need to be honest with yourself and with the Holy Spirit?
- Is shame causing you to cover sin or hide from God in some way? If so, how?



Discipleship Tip

After the Fall, Adam and Eve hid from God. It is interesting that God calls to them, "Where are you?" We know God is all knowing, so obviously He knew where they were.

Perhaps, he was asking them to identify for themselves where they were in relation to Him.

Sin is a heart condition; not a place of being. So when God asked them where they were; He may have been trying to get them to acknowledge that they were in a place of hiding *because* their heart was distant from him. When you don't know where to start with your disciple, a great question to ask is:

Where are you in your relationship with God right now?



Experience- Your Group's Action Steps

Actions follow beliefs. How do you want to act on the truth of God's Word? What steps can you take this week towards growth? How can you show love to others? Record each group member's response here. You will revisit this at the beginning of the next group.

Name	Action Step

for yourself as for them. Be humble and recognize that what they need to learn, you may need to learn too.

List- Key Ideas or Events

As you read through the passage, list these key details so that you have a full picture of what is going on. Write the verses next to them as you go.

Observe- What Confuses or Angers Us

Unity is a key concept in the New Testament. Who in your group might have difficulty accepting this concept? Why? Is there hurt, prejudice, or legalism that is causing disunity? What verses could you use to encourage them? Consider doing a word study on unity in the New Testament.

Search- Our Heart Attitudes and Beliefs

Think about and pray over your group members and their lives. What applications do you think your members will make? How can you encourage them to take healthy steps of faith?

WEEK 8

From Jew to Christian

Acts 9 and 11

At Home

Read Acts 9:1-31 and 11:19-30. Then answer the questions below the best that you can. You will discuss these at your group meeting.

Context- The 5 W's

Who are the key people in these passages?

What transformation do you see in the life of Paul (or Saul)?

Where are the key places that Paul and Barnabas went?

List- Key Words

What are the believers in Antioch called in v. 26. Why is this significant?

Summarize- The Passage

Summarize the passage in two-three sentences. Focus on what you think is most important.

Reflect- Last Week's Action Step

Take a moment and reflect on how you did with last week's action step. What was the outcome of your faithfulness to God's Word? Be ready to share with your group at the meeting.



At Group

Take 5 minutes at the start of your study time to review the answers from the At Home portion. Don't forget the Reflect step. Then, as a group, look up verses and answer the questions in this section.

Context- Cross References

We see the first instance of the name Christian in this week's passages. Was this something that simply became a trend or does the name have meaning? Compare 1 Peter 4:16-17 with Galatians 2:20 for insight.

List- Key Verses

Read through Acts 9 again. What would you say is the key verse in the account of Paul's conversion? Why? (This question is opinion-based and meant simply to stimulate conversation. There is no right answer.)



Observe- What Convicts, Inspires, or Encourages

Take a moment to observe the work the Holy Spirit is doing in your heart. Record your thoughts below. Then, share what you are observing with your group. You could say something like, "I am inspired by" or "I feel convicted because..." Let each person share quickly.

Search- Your Heart Condition

Have a time of open discussion where each person reflects on one or more of the questions below and shares it with the group.

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- Is shame causing you to cover sin or hide from God in some way? If so, how?



Discipleship Tip

Peter, James, and Paul were all leaders that messed up big. Peter boasted that he could lead the way through Jesus' darkest hour, then denied him more than the rest.

James, the half brother of Jesus, probably heard first hand accounts of his miraculous birth; yet ridiculed him (Mark 3:21). Paul calls himself the "least of all the apostles" not worthy of the name because he persecuted the church so heavily before His conversion (1 Corinthians 15:9).

All three of these men could have chosen to hide in their shame or rationalize their actions; but they didn't. They all stepped into the light and openly confessed their wrong ways. And they all found this truth: the light doesn't expose you, it purifies you (James 5:16).



Experience- Your Group's Action Steps

Actions follow beliefs. How do you want to act on the truth of God's Word? What steps can you take this week towards growth? How can you show love to others? Record each group member's response here. You will revisit this at the beginning of the next group.

Name	Action Step

Search- Our Heart Attitudes and Beliefs

Think about and pray over your group members and their lives. What applications do you think your members will make? How can you encourage them to take healthy steps of faith in order to experience more of the Holy Spirit in their lives?



Final Discipleship Tip

Our hearts will not be whole until they are full with Him. God is the Creator of our hearts, and as such, he not only knows the way they work best; he delights to be the One who fills them. He alone can give us our hearts desires. So when we give guidance, we don't give worldly guidance or self help skills. We don't give guidance to simply modify behavior. We guide others to ask the Lord for what they need and to fill up on His goodness and love.

Remember, all sin is an attempt to fill a legitimate need (love, acceptance, purpose) in an illegitimate way (comfort, people pleasing, selfish ambition, control). Sin hinders spiritual growth and effectiveness. Therefore, discipleship seeks to point another to a healthier path that is free from the entanglements of sin and filled with God.

The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and *everything*.

Acts 17:24-25