

Questions for personal reflection and/or discussion

1. Take time this week to read through the first section of Acts (1:9 – 6:7). Try to get a sense of the early development of this new church. Be sure to read this section in light of Acts 1:8, which should be seen as the “Table of Contents” for the entire book.
2. Think about the first sermons or speeches of the first Christian church (Acts 2:14-41; Acts 3:11-26; Acts 4:8-12). Are there common themes that can be found in these speeches/sermons? Why were they delivered/preached, and what style or format do the speeches/sermons follow (if any)?
3. In light of question #2 about the first Christian sermons, do these examples have any significance for us? Should we read these chapters of Acts as descriptive (telling us what happened) or prescriptive (telling us what should happen today)? If these speeches/sermons were intended to be prescriptive, what style or type of preaching should we have today?
4. Read Acts 2:42-47. This is the first descriptive passage about the first Christian church. As you think about how this church is described, what parts of the description should be considered normal and desirable today? Which parts (if any) should be considered cultural and not especially relevant for today? Be sure to think about why you think what you think – are your thoughts biblical (meaning being clearly taught in the Bible) or are they personal and/or cultural?
5. Think about the first problems and difficulties the first church experienced. These were both from without (Acts 4:1-21; 5:17-42) and from within (Acts 5:1-11; 6:1-7). In what ways can we learn from the experiences of this first congregation with respect to external attacks and internal personal and organizational challenges?

Moving Forward (3)

Pastor Alan Robinson, February 22, 2009

Luke 24:45-49 (church Bible page 749)

(45) Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. (46) He told them, "This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, (47) and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. (48) You are witnesses of these things. (49) I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."

Acts 1: 8 (church Bible page 770)

(8) But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

Introduction and Table of Contents: Acts 1:8

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in **Jerusalem**, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Part 1: The spread of the good news about Jesus in Jerusalem.

Acts 1:9 – 6:7.

Closing summary to the section is in Acts 6:7:

“So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in **Jerusalem** increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.”