

The Acts of the Apostles

A Workbook Commentary

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A Workbook Commentary on the Book of Acts
Chapter 1

The date of the writing of Acts can be fixed with some precision based on the information given at the close of the book.

Acts 25:1 Three days after arriving in the province, _____ went up from Caesarea to Jerusalem,

Acts 28:16 When we got to Rome, Paul was allowed to live by himself, with a soldier to guard him. ... 19 But when the Jews objected, I was compelled to appeal to _____ that I had any charge to bring against my own people. ... 30 For two whole years Paul stayed there in his own rented house and welcomed all who came to see him.

From secular history, we learn that Festus was sent to Judea in AD 60. This would place Paul's arrest at Pentecost of AD 58. His departure to Rome would have been in the fall of AD 60 and his arrival in Rome would have been in the spring of AD 61. The book of Acts would have been written in early AD 63, since Luke's closing remarks are that he lived in his own hired house for two years (Acts 28:30). During his time in Rome, Paul would write letters to the Galatians, Ephesians, the Colossians, the Philippians and Philemon.

Acts 1:1 In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach 2 until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen.

Acts was written for Theophilus. The word "Theophilus" is composed of the Greek words which literally mean lover of God. Thus, we cannot be certain that this is the actual name of a man, although it would appear from this verse and Luke's gospel account, that a specific person was in mind. We also learn that Luke is the writer of this book from his statement in verse 1, but being the precise person (guided by the Holy Spirit) that he was, Luke refers to himself as a companion of Paul in Acts 20:6. At this point the pronoun "we" is used rather than the "he" or "they" used prior to this point.

Luke 1:1 Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, 2 just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. 3 Therefore, since I myself have carefully _____ everything from the beginning, it seemed good also to me to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, 4 so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.

The account in Acts continues where Luke had stopped his story some time earlier when writing the gospel bearing his name.

Acts 1:3 After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.

We do not find the exact length of time that Jesus was on the earth after his resurrection in any place other than in this verse. This would also tell us the length of time exactly between Jesus' ascension and the day of Pentecost was 10 days. It is worth noting that the fate of those who might have died during this time is exactly the same as those who died under the Law of Moses. Although Jesus had died on the cross, he had not yet offered his blood unto God. His death was the turning point, but the Hebrew writer clearly states Jesus had to enter into heaven and offer his blood to God.

Heb 9:22 In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the _____ of blood there is no forgiveness. 23 It was necessary, then, for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these sacrifices, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. 24 For _____ did not enter a man-made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, now to appear for us in God's presence. 25 Nor did he enter heaven to _____ himself again and again, the way the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood that is not his own. 26 Then Christ would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world. But now he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself. 27 Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, 28 so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.

There is no mystery associated with those who died during the 40 days referred to by Luke or during the 10 days covered in this chapter. There is also no discrepancy between the explanation given by the Hebrew writer and Paul in *Col 2:14 having canceled the _____ code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross.* The events that started at the cross are equated by the Hebrew writer to the shedding of blood, and the triumphant entry into heaven, there to offer his blood to God on our behalf.

Acts 1:4 On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about.

Jesus had made this promise to them concerning this gift. As we will see in the second chapter of Acts, his promise was true.

John 14:16 And I will ask the _____, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever-- 17 the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.

John 16:13 But when he, the _____ of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.

Acts 1:5 For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

Jesus differentiated what was going to happen to them from baptism in water, which both His disciples and John had practiced.

Luke 3:15 The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the _____. 16 John answered them all, "I baptize you with water. But one more powerful than I will come, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

John 4:1 The Pharisees heard that Jesus was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John, 2 although in fact it was not Jesus who _____, but his disciples.

Acts 1:6 So when they met together, they asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"

The disciples, even at this time, did not understand that Jesus' kingdom was not an earthly kingdom. This longing for an earthly kingdom must have been so ingrained that they still could not accept the nature of the Kingdom.

John 18:36 Jesus said, "My _____ is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place."

Luke 24:17 He asked them, "What are you discussing together as you walk along?" They stood still, their faces downcast. 18 One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, "Are you only a visitor to Jerusalem and do not know the things that have happened there in these days?" 19 "What things?" he asked. "About Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. 20 The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; 21 but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to _____ Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place.

And it would appear that only the thief on the cross truly looked for a kingdom which was not of this world, since he knew that he would die and he still asked Jesus to remember him. It seems odd to us that this thief believed that he be with Jesus after his death and the disciples of Jesus did not believe that Jesus would establish His kingdom or rise from the dead when Jesus died on the cross. We recognize the great faith the thief had, even more than the disciples. As we look back,

we must remember that we have the benefit of seeing the entire picture rather than walking through it on a day by day basis.

Luke 23:39 One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Christ? Save yourself and us!" 40 But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence? 41 We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong." 42 Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your _____." 43 Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise."

Acts 1:7 He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. 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."

Luke repeats his earlier account at this point.

Luke 24:46 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 _____ 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."

Some have said that the kingdom was not established on the earth but that Jesus' had gone to his "heavenly kingdom." We need to be reminded that Jesus had said that the kingdom would be established on the earth.

Mark 9:1 And he said to them, "I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God _____ with power."

They would not see Christ **going** to His Kingdom, but they would see the kingdom **come** and that it would **come** with power. Jesus' kingdom was not to be of this world, but being a spiritual kingdom, it was in the hearts of those who would submit to his sovereign rule. As we think of the kingdom, it will be best if we understand it to consist of those who submit to his sovereign rule, whether now living or dead.

Acts 1:9 After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. 10 They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. 11 "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

The Jehovah's Witnesses teach that Jesus returned to this earth secretly to set up his kingdom in 1914, but this is not in accord with these verses nor with other scriptures.

II Thess 1:7 and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is _____ from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels.

Rev 1:7 Look, he is coming with the _____, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him. So shall it be! Amen.

More than that the JW's are over 1900 years late, but as we shall study later in greater detail, the kingdom had already been established at the writing of Acts and those in the church at Colossae were in it because they had submitted to the sovereign will of God.

Col 1:13 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the _____ of the Son he loves,

Acts 1:12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk from the city.

Luke tells us earlier that this was in Bethany, which was about two miles distance from Jerusalem.

Luke 19:29 As he approached Bethphage and _____ at the hill called the _____, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them,

Luke 24:50 When he had led them out to the vicinity of _____, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. 51 While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven.

Acts 1:13 When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. 14 They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

The question of who Jesus' brothers are is one that is very troublesome to the Roman Catholic church. Since they believe and teach that Mary was a virgin all her life, they must conclude that Jesus had no siblings. This is not the case, however, as his brothers in the flesh did not believe in him, while his brethren in the faith believed in him implicitly.

Mt 13:54 Coming to his hometown, he began teaching the people in their synagogue, and they were amazed. "Where did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers?" they asked. 55 "Isn't this the carpenter's son? Isn't his mother's name Mary, and aren't his _____ James, Joseph, Simon and Judas? 56 Aren't all his _____ with us? Where then did this man get all these things?"

John 7:3 Jesus' _____ said to him, "You ought to leave here and go to Judea, so that your disciples may see the miracles you do. 4 No one who wants to become a public figure acts in secret. Since you are doing these things, show yourself to the world." 5 For even his own brothers did not _____ in him.

Mt 16:13 When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" 14 They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets." 15 "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" 16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the _____, the Son of the living God." 17 Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by _____, but by my Father in heaven.

Acts 1:15 In those days Peter stood up among the believers (a group numbering about a hundred and twenty)

There are those who believe that the 120 mentioned in verse 15 were all recipients of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:4. We will go into this in detail when we reach Acts 2; but let us say at this point that even these were not all the disciples that Jesus had and as a consequence, even this would not prove that all disciples received the Holy Spirit in miraculous measure.

I Cor 15:6 After that, he appeared to more than five _____ of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep.

Acts 1:16 and said, "Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through the mouth of David concerning Judas, who served as guide for those who arrested Jesus--

We must also remember that Jesus had opened the disciples' minds, that they might understand the Scriptures. *Luke 24:45 Then he opened their minds so they could understand the _____.* The statements that follow in verses 16-22 are not the ramblings of someone who unjustifiably thought that someone should be selected to take Judas' place, but Peter spoke at the inspiration of God. No one can justifiably say that Peter was doing something on his own which did not have God's approval. In verse 20, Peter quotes Ps 109:8 to justify his actions, making them in accord with the will of God.

Acts 1:17 he was one of our number and shared in this ministry."

We note especially that Judas was *one of our number and shared in this ministry.*"(v. 17). The work to which the apostles had been called was that of being witnesses of the resurrected Lord. In this the apostles of Jesus Christ differed from those today who claim to be witnesses of Jesus Christ. We shall study this matter of those who claim to be apostles today in detail shortly.

There are others who believe that Jesus was in error when he chose Judas or that Peter was in error when Judas was replaced (see below), however, neither of these can be true. Jesus knew the hearts of men and knew that Judas would surrender to Satan's suggestions.

Mk 2:8 Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their _____, and he said to them, "Why are you thinking these things?"

Acts 1:18 (With the reward he got for his wickedness, Judas bought a field; there he fell headlong, his body burst open and all his intestines spilled out. 19 Everyone in Jerusalem heard about this, so they called that field in their language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.)

Matthew's account of this incident reads:

Matt 27:3 When Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus was condemned, he was seized with remorse and returned the thirty silver coins to the chief priests and the elders. 4 "I have sinned," he said, "for I have betrayed _____ blood." "What is that to us?" they replied. "That's your responsibility." 5 So Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and hanged himself. 6 The chief priests picked up the coins and said, "It is against the law to put this into the treasury, since it is _____ money." 7 So they decided to use the money to buy the potter's field as a burial place for foreigners. 8 That is why it has been called the Field of Blood to this day.

There are those who claim the account of Luke and the account of Matthew differ in regard to the fate of Judas. However, there is no contradiction here. Perhaps we need to know the correct definition of a contradiction in order to understand this. A contradiction is when two facts cannot possibly be true. The fact that one account of an occasion gives greater or additional details does not indicate a contradiction. This may be illustrated by a man making the statement, "I saw a dog running wildly down a muddy street." One hearer of this statement may report that the man said he saw a dog running down the street. Another may say that the man said he saw a dog running wildly. Both statements are true and neither contradicts the other. The only time a contradiction arises is when one said the dog ran calmly while the other reported that the dog ran wildly.

This principle can then be used to examine both Matthew's and Luke's accounts. Now if Judas hung himself, he either was taken down or he fell down. Assuming that Luke is correct in reporting that he fell, we see that his abdomen burst, possibly due to the rotted condition of the body when he fell. Again, Luke says that this man (Judas) acquired a field with the price of his wickedness. This does not contradict Matthew's account of the chief priests buying the field as a burial place for foreigners. We encounter the idea of agency, which is used often in the Scriptures. We realize that the priests did not want the money back because it was blood money. They used the money to buy the field. This is the same idea that you see in explaining who bought a loaf of bread when I gave the money to my daughter for the purchase price. You can justifiably say that either I or my daughter bought the bread. Most properly, I bought the bread, and my daughter was the agent through whom the purchase was made. Therefore, the field, purchased with Judas' blood money, was known for the man through whom the purchase was made.

Acts 1:20 "For," said Peter, "it is written in the book of Psalms, "May his place be deserted; let there be no one to dwell in it," and, "May another take his place of leadership."

We note in verse 20 that David was writing at the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and that the eyes of the apostles had been opened to the Scriptures (Luke 24:45). Therefore, as pointed out earlier, Peter did not err in the decision to appoint another to Judas' place.

Acts 1:21 Therefore it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, 22 beginning from John's baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection." 23 So they proposed two men: Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus) and Matthias.

The statements given in verses 21 and 22 are the qualifications of an apostle of Jesus Christ. The word "apostle" simply means one sent. In today's terminology, a messenger. These messengers had a special mission; they were witnesses of Jesus' resurrection. This would mean that they had to have personally known the Lord. Otherwise, they could not have testified that Jesus was indeed the person that they saw. Today, people see Jesus on a shroud, in the screen door, on a billboard, on the side of an oil tank or wherever. These folks wouldn't know Jesus from the barber in the next town. No one has any pictures of Jesus and no one alive today was alive when Jesus walked the earth. These men were selected on the basis that they had more than a passing acquaintance with the Lord. They had been with him for a long time. We find that the last apostle called by the Lord, Paul, also claimed to have seen him.

I Cor 15:7 Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, 8 and last of all he _____ to me also, as to one abnormally born. 9 For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an _____, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without

effect. No, I worked harder than all of them--yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.

Paul must have known who Jesus was based upon his studies in Jerusalem under Gamaliel (Acts 22:3). Only in this way could Paul have claimed to know the risen Lord. The question of why he asked who Jesus was in *Acts 9:5* (*"Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are _____," he replied.*) can be explained by his immediate falling to the ground. In this prostrate condition, he would not have lifted his eyes again until the Lord had identified himself. These suppositions on my part are one way of providing the evidence that Paul knew the Lord. In truth, however, if Paul had not known the Lord, he could simply could not have been a witness of his resurrection. Today, no one can claim to have seen the risen Lord, because no one would recognize Him. At the same time, would you believe some man if he walked up to you on the street and said that he was Jesus the Christ? Most assuredly you would not, but you might talk to the authorities to make certain the crazy man didn't hurt himself or anyone else.

Acts 1:24 Then they prayed, "Lord, you know everyone's heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen"

In verse 24, we find that the apostles wanted to take human wisdom and thinking out of the selection of the twelfth apostle. For this they employed a game of chance. They did not presume to know what was in the mind of God.

I Cor 2:11 For who among men knows the _____ of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.

Those who believe that games of chance are from the devil need to examine this passage. Surely, we recognize that the game is not wrong of itself, but the ends to which the game is put are the evil that is practiced. Playing cards or dominoes is no different than playing croquet. Both can be used to sin, but it is not the game itself that makes it sin.

Acts 1:25 to take over this apostolic ministry, which Judas left to go where he belongs." 26 Then they cast lots, and the lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the eleven apostles.

The ministry spoken of here is from the Greek word "diakonia," which is translated as service. Their job was to serve even as Christ served. The apostleship to which they had been called was from Christ. Paul styles himself in this manner in Col 1:1 and Eph 1:1. The same word is used of Epaphroditus in Phil 2:25 as a messenger of the church at Philippi; of Barnabas and Saul in Acts 14:14 as a messenger of the church at Antioch; and of brethren from the Macedonian churches in II Cor 8:23.

Questions for Acts chapter 1.

1. Who wrote the book of Acts? _____
2. Who was commanded to wait in Jerusalem? _____
3. Who was promised power in verse 8? _____
4. How did Jesus leave the earth? _____
5. How will Jesus return? _____
6. Who were the brothers of Jesus? _____
7. What Scripture did Peter say had to be fulfilled? _____
8. Who bought the field of blood? _____
9. What does the word apostle mean? _____
10. What was the requirement for an apostle according to Peter? _____
11. Who was the last apostle? _____

A Workbook Commentary on the Book of Acts
Chapter 2

Acts 2:1 When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place.

The day of Pentecost was a celebration that God had commanded. It is referred to in the Old Testament as the Feast of Weeks.

Deut 16:10 Then celebrate the _____ of Weeks to the LORD your God by giving a freewill offering in proportion to the blessings the LORD your God has given you.

The specific time of this offering is given.

Lev 23:15 "From the day after the _____, the day you brought the sheaf of the wave offering, count off seven full weeks. 16 Count off fifty days up to the day after the seventh Sabbath, and then present an offering of new grain to the LORD.

The question often arises as to whom verse 1 applies; the 120 of Acts 1:15 or to the apostles? For this we must look at a little grammar. The word "they" is a pronoun. To find out whom is referred to, we must look for the antecedent of the pronoun (that means the word to which the pronoun refers). The pronoun must agree in person, number and gender with its antecedent. The Modern English Handbook tells us that "a noun expression immediately before a relative pronoun tends to be its antecedent." The noun closest to the pronoun "they" is "apostles." It agrees in all respects as the antecedent of the word "they.

This is further substantiated in verse 14 as Peter takes his stand with the eleven: a term for the rest of the apostles which has been used previously in Acts 1:26. Thus, we find that the gift of the miraculous indwelling of the Holy Spirit was not given to all believers at this time, but was given only to the apostles. This coincides with the teachings in Acts 8 where the gift was not given to those who believed, but to those upon whom the apostles laid their hands.

Acts 8:12 But when they _____ Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were _____, both men and women. 13 Simon himself believed and was baptized. And he followed Philip everywhere, astonished by the great signs and miracles he saw. ... 15 When they arrived, they prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, 16 because the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them; they had simply been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. 17 Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. 18 When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the _____ on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money

On only one other occasion do we find that the Holy Spirit was given in this manner, which is to say, without the laying on an apostle's hands. The case is that of Cornelius which is given in chapters 10 and 11 and which was given to show that the Gentiles should be admitted to the church.

Act 2:2 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. 4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

This occasion in Jerusalem was a fulfillment not only of Old Testament prophecy, but also of the words of Jesus as he had promised his disciples. The gift was promised to his apostles who had been told to wait in Jerusalem for the gift.

John 14:25 "All this I have spoken while still with you. 26 But the _____, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

John 16:12 "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. 13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all _____. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. 14 He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you.

Acts 1:2 until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the _____ he had chosen. 3 After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. 4 On one occasion, while he was eating with _____, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but _____ for the _____ my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about.

The apostles began to speak, but they were speaking in languages that they had not learned in school or been taught by traveling to foreign lands. The Greek word used for "tongue" is "glossa," which means "the tongue; by implication, a language." As we will see in the following verses, this was not an "ecstatic gibberish" or something understood only by angels or God, but was in fact a language spoken by men as are French, German and Russian today. Those hearing the words would have understood what Frenchmen, Germans or Russians today would understand if these were the languages being spoken.

Acts 2:6 When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. 7 Utterly amazed, they asked: "Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? 8 Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language? 9 Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, 10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome 11 (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs--we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!" 12 Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?"

The crowd immediately realized that each of the men who spoke were Galileans. This again would indicate that the gift was given only to the apostles, since we know that they were all from Galilee. This was not a sophisticated part of Israel, because the crowd was amazed that these ignorant and uneducated men could be speaking all of the languages of those persons present. This is not the only time that the apostles were referred to as ignorant. When they stood before the council, the council ... *saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, _____ men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.* (Acts 4:13). As if to prove the point, we then find that 15 languages are named.

Some have thought that the miracle was in the ears of the hearers, however, verse 6 says they heard them speaking in their own language. Indeed, the very next verse indicates that the hearers recognized that it was indeed the men who were speaking because those in the crowd could not understand the languages other than their own which were being spoken and immediately assumed that the men were speaking gibberish.

Acts 2:13 Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine."

Peter points out immediately that the men are neither speaking gibberish, nor are they drunk on the year's new sweet wine. This event took place in the spring and would have varied from year to year under our modern calendar depending on the time of the Passover, thus grape juice would not have been available since the ancients had no method of preservation of grape juice. The reason for this timing difference is that the Jews used a lunar calendar rather than a solar calendar. Fermentation would have taken place immediately after the grapes were crushed. The first step in fermentation is the growth of the yeast that live on the skin of the grape. This continues until the oxygen available to the yeast is gone and then the production of alcohol begins. The length of time to completely convert all of the sugar in the grape to alcohol would be dependent on the amount of growth of the yeast. Insufficient aeration would mean that a lower level of yeast would be present and this would require a longer time for complete conversion of the sugar, thus the sweet wine. In modern wines, this process is controlled scientifically (or through long years of experience of the vintner) and the amount of sweetness can be controlled. Nevertheless, from the statements of the people present on this occasion, there can be no doubt that the sweet wine could be intoxicating. (A complete explanation of fermentation in Bible times by the author is available)

Acts 2:14 Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say.

The actions of Peter on this occasion are in complete contradistinction to his actions only 50 days earlier. At that time Peter had followed, but denied three times that he knew the Lord.

Luke 22:54 Then seizing him, they led him away and took him into the house of the high priest. Peter followed at a distance. 55 But when they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and had sat down together, Peter sat down with them. 56 A servant girl saw him seated there in the firelight. She looked _____ at him and said, "This man was with him." 57 But he denied it. "Woman, I don't know him," he said. 58 A little later someone else saw him and said, "You also are one of them." "Man, I am not!" Peter replied. 59 About an hour later another asserted, "Certainly this fellow was with him, for he is a _____." 60 Peter replied, "Man, I don't know what you're talking about!" Just as he was speaking, the rooster crowed. 61 The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: "Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times." 62 And he went outside and wept bitterly.

Peter had been told by the Lord that he would deny him, but he also asked Peter to strengthen his brethren when he had found his faith. From this time on, Peter stands ready to strengthen his brethren.

Luke 22:31 "Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to _____ you as wheat. 32 But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, _____ your brothers." 33 But he replied, "Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death." 34 Jesus answered, "I tell you, Peter, before the rooster crows today, you will deny three times that you know me."

As an incidental matter, these passages also prove to be a powerful argument for the truth of the eyewitness account given here. There are those who have suggested that Peter and the apostles stole the body of the Lord from the Tomb and that there was no resurrection. Luke clearly shows that the Lord predicted Peter's cowardice and that Peter fulfilled the prediction. Peter was afraid for his own life as he saw the Roman soldiers carry away His Lord. Although he was ready to fight (Luke 22:50-51; Jn 18:10), the lack of his Lord's approval of his actions took every ounce of courage that he might have had and destroyed it. In fact, the disciples that the Lord encountered on the road to Emmaus (Lk 24:13, 17, 21) were disheartened by the death of Jesus. From this moment on, Peter, as well as the eleven, would strengthen the brethren.

Acts 2:15 These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! 16 No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

We learn another incidental fact from verse 15. The typical strength of the wine of Bible times was insufficient to produce drunkenness in the early morning. The wines of Bible times were most likely to be the same as those prepared by home vintners today, approximately 6% alcohol at a maximum. This would have equated to a strong wine and a more normal quality would have been on the order of 3-4% alcohol.

As Peter begins this first gospel sermon, he refers to the Old Testament in order to show that these things were fulfillment of prophecy. This fact is often alluded to by Jesus and the writers of the New Testament. Without the fulfillment, it would have been impossible to believe that Jesus was the Christ.

Matt 5:17 "Do not think that I have come to _____ the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to _____ them. 18 I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.

Rom 15:4 For everything that was written in the past was written to _____ us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

I Cor 10:11 These things happened to them as _____ and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come.

There are times when Christians today believe that there is nothing that anyone can do if someone doesn't believe that Jesus is the Christ. Fortunately, as the verses above and the actions of the apostle Paul immediately after his conversion indicate, this is not the case.

Acts 9:22 Yet Saul grew more and more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by _____ that Jesus is the Christ.

Acts 2:17 "In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.

This is in accord with what was happening. There are those who believe that this prophecy must still be fulfilled, however, Peter very clearly states that this is the fulfillment and that it does not lie at some point in the future. Other occasions of this occurring are given in the New Testament as Philip had daughters who prophesied.

Acts 21:8 Leaving the next day, we reached Caesarea and stayed at the house of Philip the evangelist, one of the Seven. 9 He had four unmarried daughters who _____.

Some who believe that the prophecy is still to be fulfilled, believe that it is necessary to have a modern revelation in order to know what the will of the Lord is, however, the Lord, through His apostles and prophets has assured us that this is not the case.

II Pet 1:3 His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our _____ of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.

Acts 2:18 Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. 19 I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. 20 The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. 21 And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'

As Peter continues this introduction, he tells us that salvation is open to all and not to a certain select few. There is nothing more foreign to the Scriptures than the idea of an elect who are called, regardless of their effort in the matter. Peter states specifically in this quotation from Joel 2:28-32, that everyone who calls on the Lord will be saved. Paul addresses the same idea.

Rom 10:13 for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." 14 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone _____ to them?

Paul goes even further concerning the preaching of the gospel as he writes the Corinthians.

For the message of the cross is _____ to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. (I Cor 1:18)

Jesus had said this earlier in *John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ... 36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever _____ the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him."*

The idea of rejecting in John 3:36 is the idea of obedience from the Greek, *apeitheo*, which is translated as disobedient, obey not, not believe or unbelieving in the KJV.

It is clear the offer that Peter was making is open to anyone who was willing to believe the message preached and to be obedient to it. That Peter himself did not understand this at this time is pointed out most forcefully by the Lord in Acts 10 and 11 when the Gentiles are finally allowed into the church

Acts 2:22 "Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. 23 This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. 24 But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. 25 David said about him: "I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. 26 Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will live in hope, 27 because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay. 28 You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence."

As Peter continues this lesson, he pointedly tells his audience that they are guilty of sin. He does not mince words as do some today, but since the deed was known by all, he clearly indicts them.

Again, Peter begins to buttress his arguments by returning to the Old Testament and quotes from Psalms 16:8-11. A question arises concerning the state of the dead since David in prophecy speaks as the Lord in saying "*Acts 2:27 Because thou wilt not leave my soul in _____, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. (KJV)*

The word hell in the KJV is translated "the grave" in the NIV and Hades in the NASV and the ASV. The question of Jesus being in hell, a place of torment for the unjust, is settled by the better translations of this passage in which the Greek word "hadon" is used for the place of the dead. Jesus refers to this same place as paradise.

Lk 23:43 Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise." (Greek, paradeiso).

The account of Lazarus and the rich man indicates that the righteous go to a place of rest, characterized as Abraham's bosom, and the unrighteous go to a place of torment (Lk 16:19-31). Further there is a great gulf (or chasm) between the two divisions of this unseen world which cannot be crossed. Jesus was not, therefore, taken to a place of torment, but to a place of comfort, there to await his resurrection.

Acts 2:29 "Brothers, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. 30 But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. 31 Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay. 32 God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. 33 Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. 34 For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, "The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand 35 until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet." ' 36 "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."

In summation of this lesson, Peter again condemns his audience in the strongest possible terms. For him, there can be no question of where the blame lies and how soundly his audience must be condemned. At stake are the very souls of his listeners. We would all do well to remember this example when confronted with the opportunity to win souls to Christ. The very action that Peter took obtained the only acceptable response from his audience; they believed!

Acts 2:37 When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"

The text does not state explicitly that they believed, but we can perceive no alternative reason for their being cut to the heart and for the later statement in verse 41 that they "accepted" the things said.

The answer to the question of "what shall we do?" will be many different things if asked of religious persons today. Some would ask you to pray the "sinners prayer." Others might tell you to simply accept Jesus as Lord of your life. It often amazes me that religious people know so little of the word of God. We would do well to remember Peter's simple statement when we are confronted with this question today.

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, "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."

Repentance is not the reformation of life that some believe.

Acts 3:19 Repent, then, and _____ to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord,

In this verse repentance (the changing of one's mind) and turning to God (the acts of obedience carried out) are distinguished from one another. In this way, we understand how a man can say I repent seven times

Lk 17:4 If he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times comes back to you and says, 'I repent,' _____ him."

The repentance is not the correction of the action, but the changing of one's mind about his past actions. Paul tells us that just as repentance leads to correcting one's future actions, Godly sorrow causes one to change one's minds about their actions.

II Cor 7:8 Even if I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it. Though I did regret it-- I see that my letter hurt you, but only for a little while-- 9 yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to _____. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us. 10 _____ sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.

We also find that there are those who do not understand the Biblical use of the "name of Jesus." They have decided that there is some mystical value in the name "Jesus" and some have gone even further to say that this is the name of God and must be used as a set formula in baptism. However, we find that someone saying that they were casting out demons in "the name" of Jesus did not mean that Jesus was with them.

Acts 19:13 Some Jews who went around driving out evil spirits tried to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who were demon-possessed. They would say, "In the name of _____ whom Paul preaches, I command you to come out." 14 Seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this. 15 the evil spirit answered them, " _____ I know, and I know about Paul, but who are you?" 16 Then the man who had the evil spirit jumped on them and overpowered them all. He gave them such a beating that they ran out of the house naked and bleeding.

When people say that they are doing mighty works in "the name" of Jesus it did not mean that Jesus was with them.

Matt 7:21 "Not everyone who _____ to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the _____ of my Father who is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' 23 Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'

Rather we find that when the rulers wanted to know about "the name" in which Peter and John were preaching, they used the phrase "by what power" to equal to that expression and it is clear that they were asking for the authority by which Peter and John were preaching.

Acts 4:7 They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them: "By what _____ or what _____ did you do this?" 8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: "Rulers and elders of the people! 9 If we are being called to

account today for an act of kindness shown to a cripple and are asked how he was healed, 10 then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the _____ of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed.

Thus, we find that our religious authority is obtained today by the authority of Jesus.

Matt 28:18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All _____ in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

Col 3:17 And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the _____ of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

The authority of Jesus had been given to Him by God. The authority of Jesus, the Holy Spirit and God as mentioned in Matt 28:19 is the same because of its source, not because the three persons mentioned are the same person. That these three are separate is clearly shown by Jesus as he prays.

John 17:20 "My _____ is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, 21 that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: 23 I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have _____ me.

This passage clearly shows that Jesus is not God the Father, otherwise He would be talking to Himself. You can easily substitute the appropriate pronoun or noun in the above passage to show this. In this way you will be able to tell who is really speaking, God or Jesus. Remember the teaching of the Oneness Pentecostal is that all of the names of God are really titles and that Jesus is the name of God. If this were true, it would make the above passage read "Father (who is really ME), just as you (who is really ME) are in me (which is really YOU or possibly ME) and I (which is really YOU) am in you (which is either YOU or ME). May they also be in us (which is either ME or YOU, BUT certainly NOT US) so that the world may believe that you (which is really ME) have sent me (which I did MYSELF)." Anyone can see that such treatment of the passage is absolute nonsense. When this passage is used in this way to talk to a oneness Pentecostal, it is quite effective in showing others the error of their teaching.

Jesus' teaching came directly from the Father.

John 17:7 Now they know that _____ you have given me comes from you. 8 For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me.

We have now established that the phrase "calling on the name of the Lord" means to appeal to Jesus' authority. Let us look at the way this phrase was used in the New Testament and what people did if they wanted to be saved. They were baptized! They had believed already and so were fit candidates to be baptized. This is in accord with John's statement *John 1:12 Yet to all who received him, to those who _____ in his name, he gave the _____ to become children of God--* .

The fact that they believed that Jesus was the Christ and that they had crucified Him did not save them. They had to be baptized. Later we find that Peter watched as the Gentiles received the power to speak in different languages just as the apostles had on the day of Pentecost and he wanted them to be baptized in water.

Acts 10:47 "Can anyone keep these people from being _____ with _____? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have." 48 So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days.

Acts 2:39 The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off-- for all whom the Lord our God will call."

The message was not just for the Jews but as Joel had prophesied, it was for "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord." Again, we should point out that we are called by the gospel: *II Thess 2:14 He called you to this through our _____, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.* We should be eternally grateful to those who truly preach the gospel as they have taught us the words of eternal life; *Acts 2:21 And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'*

I Pet 1:9 for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls. 10 Concerning this _____, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, 11 trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. 12 It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the _____ to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.

Lk 1:77 to give his people the knowledge of _____ through the forgiveness of their sins,

Acts 2:40 With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation."

Peter continues to preach, telling them of the difference in the life they lived in the past and the one they should live in Christ Jesus.

II Tim 1:9 who has saved us and called us to a _____ life-- not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time,

Acts 2:41 Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

There is a difference, a vast one at that, in those who will accept the message and those who will not. Paul tells of two classes of the lost.

II Thess 1:8 He will punish those who do not _____ God and do not _____ the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

There are many today who will not be obedient to the command to be baptized for the forgiveness of their sins. They fall under the condemnation of II Thess 1:8 as they either do not know the will of God or they will not be obedient to it. They make light of the fact that Jesus commanded it (Matt 28:19), these on the day of Pentecost practiced it and that Peter later says that it (baptism) saves us.

I Pet 3:20 who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through _____, 21 and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also--not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

There is no way to be saved from sin, except like those in Noah's time were saved from sin; by the cleansing of water. It's this simple, you can't have a good conscience toward God if you will not submit to baptism.

Acts 2:42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 43 Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles.

We note in verse 42, that their religious activities were in keeping with the commands given later to New Testament Christians. Although the breaking of bread is not clearly specified here to be the Lord's Supper, nevertheless, in keeping with the context, this is by far the most likely supposition. Partaking of the Lord's Supper was commanded is shown by Paul's statements in I Cor. Paul asks the Corinthians to correct their abuses of coming together for a common meal by eating common meals at home and coming together to eat the Lord's Supper.

1 Cor 11:20 When you come together, it is _____ the Lord's Supper you eat, ... 26 For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you _____ the Lord's death until he comes.

The time they came together is established by Paul at I Cor 16:2 as he talks about the collection.

1 Cor 16:2 On the _____ day of _____ week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.

They had to meet to take up a collection if they didn't want to take one up when he came, therefore, they met **every first** day of the week.

There can be no doubt that it was practiced in Acts 20:6 But we sailed from Philippi after the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and five days later joined the others at Troas, where we stayed _____ days. 7 On the _____ day of the week we came together to break bread. Paul spoke to the people and, because he intended to leave the next day, kept on talking until midnight.

We have the command by Jesus in Mt 26:29 and Paul in I Cor 11:20. The example of Acts 20:7 and the command of I Cor 16:2 tells when this command was carried out by New Testament Christians. Some may say that the evidence is too small to be acceptable, however, there is no doubt of the evidence. It clearly says this is what the disciples did. Until someone can show that there is evidence that the New Testament church gathered to proclaim the Lord's death on another day, we need to accept the words of Paul, given by inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Col 3:17 And _____ you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the _____ of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Acts 2:44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. 46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts,

We will deal with the idea that communism was practiced by the early church in our discussion of the events at the end of Acts 4 and the beginning of Acts 5. At this point we simply note that the charity that is to characterize Christians was practiced from the beginning of the church.

Acts 2:47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

The word "number" used by the NIV in this verse comes as a result of a difference in the earliest manuscripts of the Greek text. The Greek "to auto" means a number. A variation in some late manuscripts, used in the KJV translation have the Greek word, "ekklesia". There can be no question that the church is spoken of here as the number to which they were added was that of the saved. The saved are in the church.

1 Cor 1:2 To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ-- their Lord and ours:

The church of our Lord is not a building in which men gather to worship, but is the people who have been saved when considered as a group. The church does not exist apart from those who are saved. Preachers sometimes draw a large circle and put dots in it to represent the church. Supposedly, the dots are the people and the circle represents the gathering. However, this illustration fails in its effort to accurately represent the church. The circle isn't found in the Scripture because the church is the people. Then too if the circle is the church, what is the white space around the dots? We must remember the truth of this passage; the church is the number, the group, those who are saved, not the building or some human organization.

The church and the kingdom of God or kingdom of heaven are one and the same when this term is used to designate those on earth who have submitted to the sovereign will of Jesus Christ.

Mk 9:1 And he said to them, "I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the _____ of God come with power."

Jesus says that His kingdom would come during the lifetime of those standing near. That the Jehovah's Witnesses would say that it came in 1914 is to say that the kingdom of which the JW's speak is not the kingdom Jesus said He would establish.

Jesus said that the kingdom was not something that was two thousand years from being founded.

Mt 4:17 From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the _____ of heaven is near."

We see that those in the church at Colossae were already in the kingdom as Paul wrote to them; *Col 1:13 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the _____ of the Son he loves, just as we noted above in our discussion of verse 30.*

As this passage clearly teaches, the number is not what saves, but rather the blood of Jesus Christ. The Roman Catholic church teaches that the church saves, the Scriptures do not. One must always ask what is the action and the consequence. We are saved as a consequence of contacting the blood of Jesus Christ through baptism. That same act of obedience results in the Lord numbering

us among his people. We do not "join the church" and find that by that action we have been saved. We focus on "Christ and him crucified."

Questions on Acts 2.

1. Who were all together in one place? _____
2. Who began to speak? _____
3. What was the region where the speakers came from? _____
4. How do you know that others could understand the "tongues?" _____
5. Were any women with the 120 of Acts 1:15? _____
(Hint: see Acts 1:14)
6. Were the 120 speaking in Acts 2? _____ (were any women speaking, Acts 2:15)_____
7. In what time period did this event happen? _____ (See Acts 2:17)
8. What did verse 21 say they would have to do to be saved? _____
9. What did Peter tell them to do to be saved? (v38) _____
10. What accreditation did Jesus have? _____
11. Did Jesus descend to hell? _____
12. Where does Jesus sit now? _____
13. Why were they cut to the heart? _____
14. What did Peter tell them would happen when they were baptized?

15. To whom was the promise given? _____
16. What did those who believed do? _____
17. To what did the disciples devote themselves? _____
18. How did these believers get into the Lord's church? _____

A Workbook Commentary on the Book of Acts
Chapter 3

Acts 3:1 One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer-- at three in the afternoon. 2 Now a man crippled from birth was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful, where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple courts. 3 When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money. 4 Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, "Look at us!" 5 So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them. 6 Then Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk."

This account of Peter healing the crippled man is most important in this present age. The truth is that no one today can do a miracle such as this. We know that some will claim that any healing of a religious person is a miracle. What does the word miracle mean as it is used in the Bible?

W.E. Vines Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words - miracle, power, inherent ability, is used of works of a supernatural origin and character, such as could not be produced by natural agents and means.

Ans. _____

Which of the two meanings given below for the word miracle as it is used at the present time come closer to the Biblical definition, 1 or 2?

Webster's New World Dictionary for Young readers - miracle, 1. a happening that seems to be against the known laws of nature or science, thought of as caused by God or a god [the miracles of the Bible] 2. an amazing or remarkable thing; marvel [It will be a miracle if we win]

Ans. _____

Looking at the miracle performed in this passage by Peter, which of the definitions above fits best?

Ans. _____

Was the healing of the lame man by Peter and John a setting aside of the natural ways men are healed or was it merely a remarkable thing? _____

Was what Peter and John did a marvelous thing or was it something that set aside God's natural laws?

Ans. _____

This life is filled with many wonderful happenings. We all know of people who have recovered from some dreadful disease or who have survived a horrible accident. Sometimes the recovery is complete and sometimes people walk away from what appeared to be certain death without a scratch. Unfortunately, we all know people who have had the exact opposite occur to them. Sometimes it seems that the best and most religious people we know have many calamities fall on them. There are those in the religious world who immediately seize on these good things and say that they are miracles. At the same time, they will often accuse someone who has had a great calamity in their life of being sinful and bringing God's wrath on themselves. This is not what we see in the Bible. The marvelous recovery from a dread disease happens all the time, both to the religious and the atheist. These are not miracles as spoken of in the Bible, but are truly marvelous happenings. A miracle in the Bible requires the setting aside of the laws of nature. It is something that would not happen naturally, but requires the divine intervention of God.

The miracles of the Bible are not those of making someone who is slightly hard of hearing hear somewhat better. The miracles of the Bible are not merely making someone feel better. These miracles were not something that happened rarely, but we find that they were performed routinely to show that the things being preached came from God. The miracles of the Bible could be seen and heard clearly by others.

These miracles were carried out on the basis of the faith of the one performing the miracle in nearly every case. Jesus had told them that this would be the case.

Mt 17:14 When they came to the crowd, a man approached Jesus and knelt before him. 15 "Lord, have _____ on my son," he said. "He has seizures and is suffering greatly. He often falls into the fire or into the water. 16 I brought him to your disciples, but they could not heal him." 17 "O unbelieving and perverse generation," Jesus replied, "how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy here to me." 18 Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of the boy, and he was healed from that moment. 19 Then the disciples came to Jesus in private and asked, "Why couldn't we drive it out?" 20 He replied, "Because you have so little faith. I tell you the truth, if you have _____ as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."

This is a far different thing than we commonly see on the television shows where some man tries to heal another person.

Did this crippled man in Acts 3:6 know who Peter and John were? _____

(Hint: Would he have asked them for gold if he had known them and knew that they were poor?)

If the crippled man didn't know Peter and John, who had the faith that healed him, Peter and John or the crippled man? _____

Acts 3:7 Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong. 8 He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God.

In fact, the crippled man did not even have the faith to stand up. It was necessary for Peter to reach down and help him up. At this point the man was completely well. Again, this differs from the "healings" we see today where people are told to "wait on the Lord."

How long did it take for the man to be healed? _____

Was it necessary for this man to "wait on the Lord?" _____

Today when those claiming to be able to miraculously heal fail in their attempts, they often try to put off the witnesses by telling them that they must "wait on the Lord." This is a perversion of the Scriptures as we can see that all of the miracles performed by the Lord and his disciples occurred instantly as in this passage.

Acts 3:9 When all the people saw him walking and praising God, 10 they recognized him as the same man who used to sit begging at the temple gate called Beautiful, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

Did many people know that the lame man could not walk? _____

Acts 3:11 While the beggar held on to Peter and John, all the people were astonished and came running to them in the place called Solomon's Colonnade.

Solomon's colonnade was a covered area approximately 60 by 1530 feet. Thus, a crowd of several thousand could be accommodated. This was probably the place where the first gospel sermon (Acts 2) was preached as it seems to be a favorite gathering place (Acts 5:12) for the disciples. We find that the apostles were always ready to preach and Peter begins speaking to the gathered crowd. This illustrates the reason for the giving of the miraculous gifts.

Mk 16:20 Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and _____ his word by the _____ that accompanied it.

Acts 3:12 When Peter saw this, he said to them: "Men of Israel, why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? 13 The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus. You handed him over to be killed, and you disowned him before Pilate, though he had decided to let him go. 14 You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you. 15 You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this. 16 By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through him that has given this complete healing to him, as you can all see. 17 "Now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did your leaders.

Sometimes, the truth written here is not put forth as forcefully as it should be. When someone is guilty of sin, there is no way that they can be saved until they face the fact and turn to Christ. Unless men are willing to turn to Christ, they are eternally lost. Our joy is that we have hope; *Heb 5:9 and, once made perfect, he became the _____ of eternal _____ for all who obey him.*

Peter refers to these Jews as brothers. They were not his brothers in Christ, but in the flesh as they were all Jews and related to one another. This does not give us the right to call those in religious denominations brethren, unless they are our brothers in the flesh.

Acts 3:18 But this is how God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, saying that his Christ would suffer.

The central theme of the gospels is that Jesus fulfilled the prophecy of the Old Testament. Jesus stated this specifically.

Mt 5:17 "Do not think that I have come to _____ the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. 18 I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is _____.

All too often, religious people get carried away with the idea that there are tremendous revelations in the Old Testament concerning the future coming of Jesus and the end of the world. What Jesus said is that in His coming and His kingdom, all of the Old Testament prophecy would be fulfilled. There is not a single prophecy in the Old Testament that remains to be fulfilled. Peter is telling us here as he did in Acts 2:16, that Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament prophecy.

Acts 3:19 Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord,

Repentance is very often confused with penance, even by brethren. These are two separate things. Repentance is changing your mind. Penance is something you do to atone for your past actions. There is nothing that you can do to atone for your sins. Fortunately for us, Christ Jesus has done it all. In His blood, we are freed from the guilt of all our sins. This passage shows us very clearly that repentance (changing your mind) is different than turning to God (reforming your life by doing the things God would have you do). John the Baptist put it this way: *Mt 3:8 Produce fruit in keeping with _____*. The apostle Paul told Agrippa the difference in repentance in the deeds that follow it.

Acts 26:19 "... I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven. 20 First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and to the Gentiles also, I preached that they should _____ and _____ to God and prove their repentance by their deeds.

Repentance is not something that you or I can immediately see in someone else. Repentance is proved by the actions that we make as a response to our change of mind. And we must all be willing to change our minds:

Acts 17:30 In the past God overlooked such _____, but now he commands all people everywhere to _____. 31 For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead."

At the same time, we must distinguish between repentance and sorrow for what you have done. The kind of sorrow that you have will determine what kinds of deeds you will do.

II Cor 7:9 yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to _____. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us. 10 Godly _____ brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.

Godly sorrow causes you to change your mind and follow Jesus, while the sorrow of this world is like the sorrow Judas had over betraying the Son of God. He went out and hanged himself.

The reason that we are to repent and turn to God is so that our sins may be wiped away. Repentance alone will not save us. We must also turn to God by being obedient to His commands. We do not turn to God by prayer as most modern religions believe. Ananias did not tell Saul to pray; he had been doing that for three days. He told him to get up and be baptized and wash away his sins.

Acts 22:16 And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be _____ and wash your sins away, calling on his name.'

Acts 3:20 and that he may send the Christ, who has been appointed for you-- even Jesus. 21 He must remain in heaven until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets. 22 For Moses said, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you must listen to everything he tells you. 23 Anyone who does not listen to him will be completely cut off from among his people.'

Moses delivered the people from their oppression. In the same way, Jesus came to deliver us from oppression; the oppression of sin.

Mt 1:21 She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their _____."

Acts 3:24 "Indeed, all the prophets from Samuel on, as many as have spoken, have foretold these days. 25 And you are heirs of the prophets and of the covenant God made with your fathers. He said to Abraham, 'Through your offspring all peoples on earth will be blessed.' 26 When God raised up his servant, he sent him first to you to bless you by turning each of you from your wicked ways."

Once again we are told that every prophet has told about Jesus and His kingdom. Surely, we must believe that the prophecies of the Old Testament which touch upon Jesus Christ and his kingdom have all been fulfilled.

Mt 5:17 "Do not think that I have come to _____ the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. 18 I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until _____ is accomplished."

Those who would go hunting in the Old Testament for prophecies that tell us about the end of time or of the wars which are yet to come are hunting in the wrong place. These prophecies have been completely fulfilled.

Lk 24:44 He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: _____ must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms." 45 Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.

Questions on Acts 3

1. How do we know that the crippled man didn't know Peter and John? _____

2. What is a miracle in the New Testament? _____
3. What is the difference in a miracle and something marvelous?

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4. Are there any examples of the disciples being unable to heal? _____
 5. Why were the disciples unable to heal the man's son? _____
 6. Did the crippled man believe that he had been healed when Peter told him he could walk? _____
 7. How long did the crippled man have to "wait on the Lord?" _____
 8. What did the healing of the crippled man allow Peter to do? _____
 9. Has all Old Testament prophecy concerning Christ been fulfilled? How do we know?

 10. What is repentance? _____
 11. What was the theme of the Old Testament prophets? _____

A Workbook Commentary on the Book of Acts
Chapter 4

Acts 4:1 The priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to Peter and John while they were speaking to the people. 2 They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead. 3 They seized Peter and John, and because it was evening, they put them in jail until the next day. 4 But many who heard the message believed, and the number of men grew to about five thousand.

The Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection from the dead.

Mt 22:23 That same day the _____, who say there is no resurrection, came to him with a question.

Acts 23:8 (The _____ say that there is no resurrection, and that there are neither angels nor spirits, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all.)

The fact that the Sadducees could have them thrown in jail is some indication of the political power they had. The divisions among the Jews were quite sharp.

The persecution that occurs here does not affect the number of those believing. The church in Jerusalem at this point must have numbered above 10,000-15,000 in attendance due to the presence of the women and children. Although the subject under discussion here is not the matter of the number of cups that can be used in communion, it might interest you to know that if 10,000 people drank from one cup and they took the same amount that modern cups used for communion hold, the one cup would contain 18 gallons of the fruit of the vine. It is ridiculous to think of someone trying to serve the communion from a small barrel rather than using multiple vessels. The same is true today of those who would misplace the emphasis of the Lord's supper by concentrating on the vessel rather than the contents.

Another misconception that can be easily taken care of by this passage concerns those who feel that any time a church gets over 200, it is time to split and form another. We have only two references to the size of the church; this verse and Acts 2:41. No such compulsion toward small size is seen in the early church. In fact, although the city of Jerusalem at this time contained perhaps 250,000 people, there is no mention of smaller churches within the city to facilitate travel. Refugees from the destruction in 70 AD said that 600,000 died, but since the city occupies only about 1.25 square miles, this is hardly likely.

Acts 4:5 The next day the rulers, elders and teachers of the law met in Jerusalem. 6 Annas the high priest was there, and so were Caiaphas, John, Alexander and the other men of the high priest's family.

Mt 26:3 Then the chief priests and the elders of the people assembled in the palace of the high priest, whose name was _____.

There is some confusion among some about who the high priest was during Jesus' lifetime. During this period of Jewish history, the Romans appointed the high priest. Quirinius, who was governor of Syria in 7 AD, appointed Annas to this post. Annas was then replaced with his son-in-law, Caiaphas in 15 AD, by Valerius Gratus. Josephus tells us that 5 of his sons and his son-in-law held the post successively. His fifth son, Annas II caused James the brother of the Lord to be stoned in approximately 62 AD. The power Annas held in the nation is seen in the passing comment of Luke, *during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas (Lk 3:2). Jn 18:13 and brought him first to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the _____ that year.* Josephus tells us that Annas and his family were Sadducees.

Acts 4:7 They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them: "By what power or what name did you do this?" 8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: "Rulers and elders of the people!"

In fulfillment of prophecy, Peter begins to speak.

Mt 10:17 "Be on your guard against men; they will hand you over to the local _____ and flog you in their synagogues. 18 On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as _____ to them and to the Gentiles. 19 But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say.

Peter is questioned as to the authority by which this man was healed. The Jews were always questioning how the miracles that were done could be performed, however, at this time they had learned not to say that such things were done by the power of Satan, as Jesus had told them such blasphemy could not be forgiven.

Mt 12:24 But when the Pharisees heard this, they said, "It is only by Beelzebub, the prince of _____, that this fellow drives out _____." 25 Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and every city or household divided against itself will not stand. 26 If Satan drives out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then can his kingdom stand? 27 And if I drive out _____ by Beelzebub, by whom do your people drive them out? So then, they will be your judges. ... 31 And so I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. 32 Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.

What was the unforgivable sin? _____

Acts 4:9 If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a cripple and are asked how he was healed, 10 then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. 11 He is "the stone you builders rejected, which has become the capstone." 12 Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."

Simply saying something was being done in the name of the Lord did not mean that the Lord was pleased with such.

Mt 7:21 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my _____ who is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out _____ and perform many miracles?' 23 Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'" The phrase, "calling on the name of the Lord", indicates that they were appealing to Jesus' authority. When the priests called in Peter and John, they wanted to know who authorized them to preach and to heal. Peter and John said Christ Jesus gave them the right to heal and to preach. Jesus has all authority and whenever we speak religiously, we must appeal to Jesus' teaching, the New Testament. We must not turn to the Law of Moses as so many religious groups do because Jesus has established a new covenant, his own!

Phil 2:9 Therefore God exalted him to the _____ place and gave him the name that is above every name,

Jn 20:30-31 30 Jesus did many other miraculous _____ in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. 31 But these are _____ that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have _____ in his name.

Mt 28:18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All _____ in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

Col 3:17 And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord _____, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Heb 9:15 For this reason Christ is the _____ of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance--now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first _____. 16 In the case of a _____, it is necessary to prove the death of the one who made it, 17 because a will is in force only when somebody has _____; it never takes effect while the one who made it is living.

If we go beyond or fall short of what Jesus has taught, we share in a wicked work.

II Jn 9 Anyone who runs ahead and does not continue in the _____ of Christ does not have God; whoever continues in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. 10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take him into your house or welcome him. 11 Anyone who welcomes him _____ in his wicked work.

Jesus said that baptism should be by his authority, which was given to Him by God the Father, thus baptism is done with the authority of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

Mt 28:19 Therefore go and make _____ of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

These three are one in their purpose although they are separate personalities.

Jn 17:20 "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, 21 that all of _____ may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may _____ that you have sent me. 22 I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be _____ as we are one:

The common misconception about calling on the name of the Lord is that one may merely repeat the name of Jesus and thus be saved. This is far different than the idea we have seen presented in the Scriptures. This phrase is clearly seen to be referring to the authority by which the apostles were, or we are to, operate. Jesus did not delegate his authority to anyone. We are to abide by the word of God. The fact that Paul speaks of his authority does not deny this concept as we find that Paul tells us that all of his writings were from God

II Cor 10:8 For even if I boast somewhat freely about the _____ the Lord gave us for building you up rather than pulling you down, I will not be ashamed of it.

I Cor 14:37 If anybody thinks he is a _____ or spiritually gifted, let him acknowledge that what I am writing to you is the Lord's command.

Paul as well as the rest of us obeyed the precept laid down in

Col 3:17 And whatever you do, whether in _____ or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Acts 4:13 When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus. 14 But since they could see the man who had been healed standing there with them, there was nothing they could say. 15 So they ordered them to withdraw from the Sanhedrin and then conferred together. 16 "What are we going to do with these men?" they asked. "Everybody living in Jerusalem knows they have done an outstanding miracle, and we cannot deny it. 17 But to stop this thing from spreading any further among the people, we must warn these men to speak no longer to anyone in this name." 18 Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. 19 But Peter and John replied, "Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to obey you rather than God. 20 For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard."

Evidently, the area of Galilee was known as an educational backwater. That ordinary and unschooled men should be able to speak with such forcefulness in the presence of those who were highly educated and born to high station is an indication of the power of God. Men who have not had a great deal of practice in speaking before audiences are normally incapable of addressing the rulers of the people. However, the Holy Spirit was with them. This was not the first time that these fishermen from Galilee had astonished the multitudes.

Acts 2:7 Utterly amazed, they asked: "Are not all these men who are speaking _____?"

When the Lord was crucified and then arose from the grave, the rulers took a different tack. They completely denied what had occurred.

Mt 27:64 So give the order for the tomb to be made _____ until the third day. Otherwise, his disciples may come and steal the body and tell the people that he has been raised from the dead. This last _____ will be worse than the first."

Acts 4:21 After further threats they let them go. They could not decide how to punish them, because all the people were praising God for what had happened. 22 For the man who was miraculously healed was over forty years old. 23 On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them.

At this point, they return to the church. It is styled here as "their own people" or the KJV says company. We are reminded that the church is not an institution or an organization of men, but it is the saved of God, the group of Christ.

Acts 4:24 When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God. "Sovereign Lord," they said, "you made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and everything in them. 25 You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David: "Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? 26 The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the Lord and against his Anointed One.' 27 Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. 28 They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen. 29 Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. 30 Stretch out your hand to heal and perform miraculous signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus."

Our prayer should be the same for all of God's servants; that they might preach the gospel with all boldness. Paul declared that he had *not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole _____ of God.*(Acts 20:27). We need more men who are willing to do the same now.

Acts 4:31 After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.

Prayer is a powerful tool, even in this day when the miraculous workings of the Holy Spirit have passed.

Ja 5:16 Therefore _____ your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The _____ of a righteous man is powerful and effective. 17 Elijah was a man just like us. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. 18 Again he _____, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops.

Acts 4:32 All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had. 33 With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all. 34 There were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned lands or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales 35 and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone as he had need.

We now come to the point at which the extraordinary closeness of the church is seen. Today, there is relatively little sharing. This must be due to the lack of a common goal seen among brethren. At the same time, when someone who is a faithful and active member of the church needs help, brethren are always there to be of assistance. Our problem comes with those who only show up at the church doors when they hit a stretch of tight funding. Once their funding problems are over, they are scarcely seen. No one should use the following case to try to say that it forms the basis for

having everything in common. It shows the extraordinary need of brethren who had come to Jerusalem to worship and stayed to learn about the Christ. Again, there are those who believe that all of the Christians thought that Jesus was returning within a short period to restore the kingdom to Israel. They had been warned of the impending destruction of Jerusalem, but the day of Jesus return had not been given. In fact, John tells us that the mistaken idea some had of Jesus imminent return was not so in John 21

Jn 21:22 Jesus answered, "If I want him to remain _____ until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me." 23 Because of this, the rumor spread among the brothers that this disciple would not die. But Jesus did not say that he would not _____; he only said, "If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you?" 24 This is the _____ who testifies to these things and who wrote them down. We know that his testimony is true. Jesus had earlier said in Matt 24:36 "No one knows about that day or hour, not even the _____ in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

Another point that should be mentioned is that the disciples did not give the houses or lands to the church. The kind of squabbles that men may get into over the valuation of the property was thus avoided. Again, this shows that the work of the church is not to be diverted to business of any kind. Such things are properly in the hands of the individual and the group is not to be bothered with such. Lest anyone think that this is an opinion, remember that the Hebrew writer argues from the silence of the Scriptures (Heb 7:14; 8:4) and unless we have Scriptures showing that the church is to get into business, let the individual take care of the business and then give such funds as they may see fit for the work of the group.

Acts 4:36 Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means Son of Encouragement), 37 sold a field he owned and brought the money and put it at the apostles' feet.

We do not know whether this is the same man who later went with Saul, later called the apostle Paul, on his first missionary journey, but we do know that the man was generous in his giving. Evidently, he was much admired for the extent of the gift. As we learn here and in the first few verses of chapter 5, the apostles and the disciples knew of the size of the gift. We learn from this that Jesus' comment to the disciples concerning the widow's mite and its value to the Lord did not indicate that others might not know of the size of our gift. But at the same time, we are not to give for the prestige it might bring us.

Matt 6:1 "Be _____ not to do your 'acts of righteousness' before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no _____ from your Father in heaven. 2 "So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. 3 But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 so that your giving may be in secret. Then your _____, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Questions on Acts 4.

1. Why did the priests, the captain and the Sadducees lay hands on Peter and John?

2. What did the gathered rulers, elders and teachers want to know from Peter and John?

3. Who did Peter say his authority came from? _____
4. What did Peter and John do about the decision of the rulers concerning preaching the gospel?

5. Did this constitute breaking the law? _____
6. What did Peter say this decision constituted? v. 29 _____
7. Who gave witness to the resurrection? _____
8. What did Barnabas do with his land, give it to the church or give the money to the church?

9. What does this say about remembering the church in your will?

A Workbook Commentary on the Book of Acts
Chapter 5

Acts 5:1 Now a man named Ananias, together with his wife Sapphira, also sold a piece of property. 2 With his wife's full knowledge he kept back part of the money for himself, but brought the rest and put it at the apostles' feet. 3 Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? 4 Didn't it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn't the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied to men but to God."

One of the biggest problems that we have in the church is exemplified here. These brethren wanted to gain the glory without giving up the gold. As we learn from this passage, others may know what a Christian gives. But if a Christian gives with the motive of gaining glory, the gift has no value before God. This thought is repeated often in the Scriptures.

Mt 23:2 "The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. 3 So you must obey them and do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. 4 They tie up heavy loads and put them on men's shoulders, but they _____ are not willing to lift a finger to move them. 5 "Everything they do is done for men to see: They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long; 6 they _____ the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues; 7 they _____ to be greeted in the marketplaces and to have men call them 'Rabbi.'

Rom 12:9 _____ must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. 10 Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. _____ one another above yourselves.

Heb 5:3 This is why he has to offer sacrifices for his own sins, as well as for the sins of the people. 4 No one takes this _____ upon himself; he must be called by _____, just as Aaron was.

Mk 12:41 Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the _____ putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. 42 But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a fraction of a penny. 43 Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the _____ than all the others. 44 They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything--all she had to live on."

A matter which is of great concern in the church is the matter of giving. It is a concern to those who give liberally in that they are concerned about having sufficient funds for the work of the church. It is a concern for those who give sparingly because they are worried that they have given too much. There are never sufficient funds to meet all of the opportunities that the church or the individual has. We must therefore be wise in our use of funds. Sometimes there are those who are

blessed with this world's goods and they attempt to hide this from the brethren. It simply results in others talking about them and wondering if they are "lovers of money." At no point should a Christian try to hide the amount of their gift but if a justified inquiry arises, the Christian should honestly admit, without increasing or decreasing, the size of their gift. To do less is dishonest and to fail to provide the information does no good to anyone. At the same time, we do not have the right to judge others in the amount of their giving unless they fail to give to the point that they qualify as "lovers of money." This is a difficult decision, however, I fail to understand how anyone could be thought to be generous who did not equal the Jews in their giving. Those who would be leaders of the Lord's church must set an example that speaks for itself.

I Tim 3:2 Now the _____ must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, 3 not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a _____ of _____.

The child of God has no less responsibility than does one who is a teacher of God's word or a shepherd of the flock.

II Cor 9:7 Each man should give what he has _____ in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a _____ giver.

I Cor 16:1 Now about the collection for God's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. 2 On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of _____ in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no _____ will have to be made.

We need to remember that we are merely stewards while on this earth and that what we have does not really belong to us, God has only entrusted it to our care for a short while.

I Tim 6:7 For we brought _____ into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. 8 But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. 9 People who want to get _____ fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. 10 For the _____ of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, _____ for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

We see in Acts 5:2 that Ananias was the one who made the decision, while in verse 3, Satan is said to have filled Ananias' heart. The question of whether this deed came from a man or from Satan often troubles believers. The correct answer is that Satan suggested the evil deed, but that Ananias was ready to go with the suggestion. This is always the answer since each of us is a "free moral agent" and can make our own decisions. We should always bear in mind that we are responsible for these decisions.

Ja 1:14 but each one is _____ when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed.

Ja 4:1 What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your _____ that battle within you? 2 You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask _____. 3 When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong _____, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures. 4 You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an _____ of God.

After reading this passage of early church history, there should be no question that the knowledge by others of what one gives or that one is generous is not sinful. We find that Barnabas is still known throughout the ages for his charity towards his brethren.

Acts 4:36 Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called _____ (which means Son of Encouragement), 37 sold a field he owned and brought the money and put it at the apostles' feet.

Acts 5:5 When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard what had happened. 6 Then the young men came forward, wrapped up his body, and carried him out and buried him. 7 About three hours later his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. 8 Peter asked her, "Tell me, is this the price you and Ananias got for the land?" "Yes," she said, "that is the price." 9 Peter said to her, "How could you agree to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also." 10 At that moment she fell down at his feet and died. Then the young men came in and, finding her dead, carried her out and buried her beside her husband.

Another question that comes up from this episode is why Ananias and Sapphira were not given time to repent. Any answer other than that given, they lied to the Holy Spirit, is clearly speculation on our part, but in this age where all saw miracles take place, they must have been aware of the story of Nadab and Abihu and of Uzzah. In addition, they were asked and then they lied again about the money.

Lev 10:1 Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu took their _____, put fire in them and added incense; and they offered _____ fire before the LORD, contrary to his command. 2 So fire came out from the presence of the LORD and consumed them, and they died before the LORD. 3 Moses then said to Aaron, "This is what the LORD spoke of when he said: "Among those who approach me I will show myself holy; in the sight of all the people I will be _____." Aaron remained silent. 4 Moses summoned Mishael and Elzaphan, sons of Aaron's uncle Uzziel, and said to them, "Come here; carry your cousins outside the camp, away from the front of the sanctuary." 5 So they came and carried them, _____ in their tunics, outside the camp, as Moses ordered.

II Sam 6:3 They set the ark of God on a new cart and brought it from the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. Uzzah and Ahio, sons of Abinadab, were guiding the _____ cart

4 with the ark of God on it, and Ahio was walking in front of it. 5 David and the whole house of Israel were celebrating with all their might before the LORD, with songs and with harps, lyres, tambourines, sistrums and cymbals. 6 When they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah _____ out and took hold of the ark of God, because the oxen stumbled. 7 The LORD'S anger _____ against Uzzah because of his _____ act; therefore God struck him down and he died there beside the ark of God. 8 Then David was angry because the LORD'S wrath had broken out against Uzzah, and to this day that place is called Perez Uzzah.

Something else that can be learned from this passage on giving is that there was always a need for that which was given. All too often in this present age, we find that churches have bank accounts far in excess of their uses. I do not say needs because as I pointed out earlier, the need always exceeds the funds available. I say uses simply because some brethren treat the funds given as if they were their own and not to be used for the reason for which they were given. Should some wag say that they were given to set in the bank account, they would be right, but the gift given for the work of the Lord will not set in a bank account. The church is not in the business of putting away money for a rainy day, but in the business of diligently serving the Lord. The church needs a respectable place in which to meet. Such a place serves as the best advertising that can be purchased. However, there is a limit to advertising versus proclaiming the word of the Lord and the latter is far more important. Never in the NT do we read of the church saving funds except for a specific need. Also, no church in the NT put their effort into securing an elegant place in which to meet.

Acts 11:28 One of them, named Agabus, stood up and through the Spirit predicted that a _____ famine would spread over the entire Roman world. (This happened during the reign of Claudius.) 29 The disciples, _____ according to his ability, decided to provide help for the brothers living in Judea. 30 This _____ did, sending their gift to the elders by Barnabas and Saul.

Phil 4:15 Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church _____ with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only; 16 for even when I was in Thessalonica, you _____ me aid again and again when I was in need.

The passage often cited when brethren give of their means while they are gathered is

I Cor 16:1 Now about the collection for God's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. 2 On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.

We would do well to bear in mind that this was not for the local work but for the needy saints in Jerusalem. The collection for the local work would probably be better based on I Cor 9:6-15 coupled with II Cor 11:8 as Paul says that preachers should be supported to those to whom they preach and that the church in Corinth could have supported him, although other churches did.

I Cor 9:14 In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should _____ their living from the gospel. 15 But I have not used any of these rights. And I am not writing this in the hope that you will do such things for me. I would rather die than have anyone _____ me of this boast.

II Cor 11:8 I robbed other churches by receiving _____ from them so as to serve you. 9 And when I was with you and needed something, I was not a burden to anyone, for the brothers who came from Macedonia supplied what I _____. I have kept myself from being a burden to you in any way, and will continue to do so.

Acts 5:11 Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events.

If the Lord still reacted in the same way, we would all see a lot more giving and a lot less discussion of how we don't have the money to carry out the work of the Lord in our community. Today too many in the church are willing to tolerate wickedness, even the wickedness of loving the money in the church's treasury so much that they will not see it put to the purpose intended. Such Christians are not following Christ and should be disciplined. Sin, in whatever form it takes should not be tolerated.

Rom 1:32 Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only _____ to do these very things but also _____ of those who practice them.

I Cor 5:1 It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that does not occur even among pagans: A man has his father's wife. 2 And you are proud! Shouldn't you rather have been filled with _____ and have put out of your _____ the man who did this?

I Cor 5:9 I have written you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people-- 10 not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world. 11 But now I am writing you that you must not _____ with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or _____, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat. 12 What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? 13 God will judge those outside. "Expel the wicked man from among you."

Gal 2:11 When Peter came to Antioch, I _____ him to his face, because he was clearly in the wrong. 12 Before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group. 13 The other Jews joined him in his _____, so that by their hypocrisy even Barnabas was led astray. 14 When I saw that they were not acting in line with the truth of the gospel, I

said to Peter in front of them all, "You are a Jew, yet you live like a Gentile and not like a Jew. How is it, then, that you force Gentiles to follow Jewish customs?"

I Tim 5:19 Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses. 20 Those who sin are to be rebuked _____, so that the others may take _____.

Acts 5:12 The apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders among the people. And all the believers used to meet together in Solomon's Colonnade. 13 No one else dared join them, even though they were highly regarded by the people. 14 Nevertheless, more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number. 15 As a result, people brought the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and mats so that at least Peter's shadow might fall on some of them as he passed by. 16 Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by evil spirits, and all of them were healed.

The reason for the signs and wonders was to show that the word the apostles spoke came from God.

Mk 16:17 And these _____ will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; ... 20 Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and _____ his word by the signs that accompanied it.

I Cor 12:7 Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the _____ good.

Solomon's Colonnade was 60 by 1500 feet which would have given plenty of room for the disciples to gather. The fact that no one would approach the apostles at this time would indicate that others were not yet able to perform these miracles. There is no indication in the Scriptures of the point at which others were given this power although we find Stephen able to do signs and miracles in Acts 6:8. It is also possible, but not necessarily so, that the power was given prior to the appointing of the deacons in Acts 6. Stephen is especially mentioned in verse 5 as being "a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit" previous to the laying on of the apostle's hands.

In the New Testament, the healing occurred immediately. In modern times, when the malady is an obvious defect such as a broken bone, there is always either an insufficient amount of faith on the part of the one to be healed or the one to be healed is told to "wait on the Lord," meaning that given enough time the recovery may occur. The unfortunate gullibility of those wanting to be healed and paying money for such has resulted in the downfall of many modern day "faith healers," none of whom can heal. A deeper study of this situation is reserved for Acts 8. We will note, however, that the only ones performing miracles were the apostles. There were a large number of believers, but no mention is made of them being able to perform the miracles.

Acts 5:17 Then the high priest and all his associates, who were members of the party of the Sadducees, were filled with jealousy. 18 They arrested the apostles and put them in the public jail.

On more than one occasion, the jealousy of this group led them to do evil.

Mt 26: 3 Then the chief priests and the elders of the people assembled in the palace of the high priest, whose name was _____, 4 and they plotted to arrest Jesus in some _____ way and kill him. 5 "But not during the Feast," they said, "or there may be a _____ among the people."

Acts 5:19 But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the doors of the jail and brought them out. 20 "Go, stand in the temple courts," he said, "and tell the people the full message of this new life." 21 At daybreak they entered the temple courts, as they had been told, and began to teach the people. When the high priest and his associates arrived, they called together the Sanhedrin--the full assembly of the elders of Israel--and sent to the jail for the apostles.

The apostles had a mission that was not to be set aside. As we read of the proclamation of this new life, we realize that it is a new life for those who believe and that the story they believe is from God.

I Cor 15:3 For what I _____ I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ _____ for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 that he was _____, that he was _____ on the third day according to the Scriptures,

Acts 1:22 beginning from John's baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a _____ with us of his resurrection."

Jn 17:6 "I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have _____ your word. 7 Now they know that everything you have _____ me comes from you. 8 For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me.

The preaching that the apostles did was based on a revelation from God as claimed by the Jesus, the twelve and by Paul.

Jn 14:26 But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you _____ and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

II Pet 3:2 I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your _____.

Gal 1:15 But when God, who set me apart from birth and called me by his grace, was pleased 16 to _____ his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not _____ any man, 17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before I was, but I went immediately into Arabia and later returned to Damascus.

I Cor 14:37 If anybody thinks he is a _____ or spiritually gifted, let him acknowledge that what I am writing to you is the Lord's _____.

Rom 1:16 I am not ashamed of the _____, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

Jude 3 Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt I had to write and urge you to _____ for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints.

The verse above tells us that there will be no further revelations. In addition, we find that the word given is sufficient and will make us complete if incorporated into our lives.

II Pet 1:3 His divine power has given us _____ we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.

II Tim 3:16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for _____, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the man of God may be _____ equipped for every good work.

Acts 5:22 But on arriving at the jail, the officers did not find them there. So they went back and reported, 23 "We found the jail securely locked, with the guards standing at the doors; but when we opened them, we found no one inside." 24 On hearing this report, the captain of the temple guard and the chief priests were puzzled, wondering what would come of this.

The fact that these folks were not immediately converted shouldn't amaze us since there are more incredible things than this that surround us and still men do not believe and turn to God.

Rom 1:18 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who _____ the truth by their wickedness, 19 since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. 20 For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities--his eternal power and divine nature--have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without _____. 21 For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.

Acts 5:25 Then someone came and said, "Look! The men you put in jail are standing in the temple courts teaching the people." 26 At that, the captain went with his officers and brought the apostles. They did not use force, because they feared that the people would stone them. 27 Having brought the apostles, they made them appear before the Sanhedrin to be questioned by the high priest. 28 "We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name," he said. "Yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are determined to make us guilty of this man's blood." 29 Peter and the other apostles replied: "We must obey God rather than men!"

If ever there were a verse that needs to be memorized, Acts 5:29 is that verse. It agrees with the words of the Lord in Mt 15:9 *They worship me in _____, their teachings are but rules taught by men."* It is strange that the Sanhedrin and the high priest should worry about Jesus' blood being on their hands at this point. They had surely been present when the crowd cried out at Jesus trial, *All the people answered, "Let his _____ be on us and on our children!" (Mt 27:25).*

Acts 5:30 The God of our fathers raised Jesus from the dead--whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. 31 God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel. 32 We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him."

The lesson that Peter begins to preach duplicates his lesson on Pentecost.

Acts 2:36 "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you _____ both Lord and Christ."

As children of God, we sometimes wonder whether a preacher can be too harsh in calling for repentance. Peter accuses the highest court of Israel of being guilty of crucifying the son of God. On numerous occasions during my preaching and teaching, I have had church members come and tell me that they didn't want me to point out the sin of some religious friend who was going to attend services. Although I have always acceded to their request not to name the denomination, I wonder what Peter would have done if someone told him that he was going to offend the Sadducees. He did not misrepresent them, but merely stated the facts. He did not call them names, but it was clear that he believed that they had crucified the Lord of Heaven and Earth and as a result they wanted to kill the apostles. We need to take a lesson from Peter and the apostles and deal directly with sin and those who practice it.

Acts 5:33 When they heard this, they were furious and wanted to put them to death. 34 But a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law, who was honored by all the people, stood up in the Sanhedrin and ordered that the men be put outside for a little while. 35 Then he addressed them: "Men of Israel, consider carefully what you intend to do to these men. 36 Some time ago Theudas appeared, claiming to be somebody, and about four hundred men rallied to him. He was killed, all his followers were dispersed, and it all came to nothing. 37 After him, Judas the Galilean appeared in the days of the census and led a band of people in revolt. He too was killed, and all his followers were scattered. 38 Therefore, in the present case I advise you: Leave these men alone! Let them go! For if their purpose or activity is of human origin, it will fail. 39 But if it is from God, you will not be able to stop these men; you will only find yourselves fighting against God." 40 His speech persuaded them. They called the apostles in and had them flogged. Then they ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.

One of the first lessons that we need to learn in studying the Bible is that the words of ignorant and evil men are incorporated. They are not to be obeyed for they are clearly the words of uninspired men; *They worship me in vain; their teachings are but _____ taught by men."* (Mt 15:9) Gamaliel's advice is just that; the words of an uninspired and ignorant man. Clearly the track record of the Mormon church in growing from 4 to 8 million in the last twenty years shows that things that do not come from God can prosper.

Gal 1:8 But even if we or an _____ from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned!

This verse shows that the angel Moroni and his followers are eternally condemned but their numbers are growing tremendously! The Islamic faith has lasted for centuries and has no connection at all with the living God. Yet, from time to time, I have heard brethren repeat Gamaliel's statement as though we should accept it as God's word. The statement worked out to the furtherance of the gospel then, but we should not sit back and allow those who have doctrines of human origin to prevail against the truth of the gospel.

The flogging that the apostles underwent was prescribed by the law of Moses. It was not sufficient to kill or maim, but would have been a significant pain.

Deut 25:1 When men have a dispute, they are to take it to court and the judges will decide the case, acquitting the innocent and condemning the guilty. 2 If the guilty man deserves to be _____, the judge shall make him lie down and have him flogged in his presence with the number of lashes his crime deserves, 3 but he must not give him more than _____ lashes. If he is flogged more than that, your brother will be degraded in your eyes.

The apostle Paul shows how diligent the Jews were in keeping the law as he tells of his ordeals in preaching the gospel. They always held back one stroke, lest they miscount and break the

law. It is interesting to note that the Jews, who had just been accused of killing the Lord of heaven and earth, would be so self-righteous as to observe the law so rigorously.

II Cor 11:24 Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes _____ one.

Acts 5:41 The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name.

The apostles counted it a privilege to be able to suffer for the cause of Christ. Disciples today, especially in the US, have no such worries. The biggest fear they have is that of being looked down upon as a religious fanatic. The apostles did not think of this as a duty or a responsibility, but rather as a privilege. There are lands, even today, where the cause of Christ is actively persecuted and we need to remember to pray for these disciples, even as we thank the Lord that we are allowed to lead quiet and peaceable lives

I Pet 4:14 If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are _____, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. 15 If you _____, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. 16 However, if you suffer as a _____, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name.

Acts 5:42 Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ.

All evangelists need to take a lesson from the apostles in never ceasing to proclaim the good news. Numbers are not the goal of the evangelist, but every number added to the body of the Lord is one less in the camp of Satan. Truly a soul saved from death. We need to be about our Father's business.

Rom 1:16 I am not _____ of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

Rom 10:14 How, then, can they _____ on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? 15 And how can they _____ unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

Questions on Acts 5

1. What do you think would qualify you as "a liberal giver?"

2. Based on Acts 5, for whom is the church responsible in benevolence?

3. Who were performing miracles at this time?

4. What message did the angel ask to be preached? _____

5. How did the apostles get out of prison? _____

6. Of what did the high priest accuse Peter and John? _____

7. Quote Acts 5:29

8. What advice did Gamaliel give?

9. What examples can you think of in which Gamaliel's advice was wrong? _____

10. What examples can you think of in which those in the church have failed to rejoice in suffering?

11. When was the last time you proclaimed the good news to your neighbor? _____

A Workbook Commentary on the Book of Acts
Chapter 6

Acts 6:1 In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food.

The occurrences of the past few months had resulted in news of the church being spread throughout Jerusalem. Many of those who had come for the feast at Pentecost and heard the message would not have left town due to their desire to know more about Jesus. At this time, when travel might take months to complete, it was not as unusual as it might be now for travelers to delay their plans to return. In addition, the growth of the church had been nothing short of phenomenal as we see from the accounts of those being baptized.

Acts 2:41 Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about _____ thousand were added to their number that day.

Acts 2:47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their _____ daily those who were being saved.

Acts 4:4 But many who heard the message believed, and the number of men grew to about _____ thousand.

Acts 5:14 Nevertheless, _____ and _____ men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number.

Whenever problems arise, people, even Christians, are known to grumble. It is a wise leadership that will bring everything out in the open for a full discussion, even though it may take a large amount of time for this to occur. If everyone has not been heard, someone will have their feelings hurt and will be offended. Jesus said concerning children, but I believe including those who are babes in Christ, *But if anyone causes one of these little ones who _____ in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.* (Mt 18:6) Nevertheless, the child of God must not grumble about God's plan, even though they may be disappointed in those charged with carrying it out.

1 Cor 10:10 And do not _____, as some of them did-- and were killed by the destroying angel.

A wise preacher once told me that any eldership that didn't have regular business meetings was an eldership in trouble. They just didn't know it yet. Some elderships will have regular meetings with the preacher and the deacon, as though they were the all seeing eye. I knew some elders who called the deacons together and said we want to know what's happening and no one tells us anymore. This can be avoided by taking prompt action when a problem is mentioned. Hearing

results from asking everyone, and I do mean everyone, what is on their minds. It must be done at a time or place when feelings can be freely expressed. Every preacher who has tried to ignore the advice of little old ladies in the congregation can freely attest to their power, achieved through grumbling, when they have reached their next work. They will most certainly lose their position in any church in which a significant segment of the congregation is grumbling.

The apostles took prompt action, further indicating the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, who directed them in this decision.

Jn 14:26 But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will _____ you all things and will _____ you of everything I have said to you.

The Grecian Jews were those who had lived abroad and returned for the feast or perhaps on business. Their families had traveled with them and during the passage of time the number of widows of these men had become such that they required looking after on a regular basis. This was already being carried out for those Hebrew widows about whom the disciples knew most probably due to long association with the family. It was those with whom they were not familiar that they had failed to fulfill their responsibility. Those who are least in the church are just as important as those who appear to be in the forefront of responsibility. The child of God cannot simply associate with friends or family alone, but must seek out the widow and the stranger among them.

I Cor 12:22 On the contrary, those parts of the _____ that seem to be weaker are indispensable, 23 and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with _____ modesty, 24 while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honor to the parts that lacked it, 25 so that there should be no _____ in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other.

We cannot be certain of how the daily serving of food was carried out, but by whatever means this was provided, it appears that certain men were chosen to "wait on tables." There may have been a communal kitchen or food may have been prepared, collected and distributed, but we can be sure that this was on a daily basis and not a bag of food given once a week or a month. This justifies a kitchen in a church building to provide for the widows if this is the best way to take care of their needs, but it does not justify a kitchen in the building to provide a place for "fellowship meals." Paul very clearly states that the church does not come together for the purpose of any but one fellowship meal, and that is with our Lord.

If anyone is hungry, he should eat at _____, so that when you meet together it may not result in judgment. And when I come I will give further directions. (I Cor 11:34)

Widows within the church were to be taken care of by the community of believers and this was commanded as well by the law of Moses and thus familiar to all of the Jews.

Deut 24:19 When you are harvesting in your field and you overlook a _____, do not go back to get it. Leave it for the alien, the fatherless and the _____, so that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands.

Deut 26:12 When you have finished setting aside a tenth of all your produce in the third year, the year of the tithe, you shall give it to the Levite, the alien, the fatherless and the _____, so that they may eat in your towns and be satisfied.

Acts 6:2 So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. 3 Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them 4 and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word."

Some have said that the apostles used their own thoughts to direct the church in this matter and use this as an example of an expedience. We must remember that Jesus had directly told these men that the Holy Spirit, *whom the Father will send in my name, will _____ you all things and will _____ you of everything I have said to you. (Jn 14:26)* In addition, the things concerning the church were written by the apostles, whether the twelve or Paul so that *you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's _____, which is the _____ of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth. (1 Tim 3:15)* We have no examples of the church doing something approved by God which was not a direct result of God's direction through the Holy Spirit.

There is a question as to whether these men were deacons or whether they were just chosen from among the men to take care of a problem. A study of the Greek in which Luke penned the original manuscript can answer that question for us. The word translated "wait on" in verse 2 is the Greek word "diakoneo."

Strong's # 1247 is defined: to be an attendant, i.e. wait upon (mentally or as a host, friend, or [figuratively] teacher); techn. to act as a Christian deacon: KJV-- (ad-) minister (unto), serve, use the office of a deacon.

You can see that it is related to the "ministry of the word" in verse 4 where the word ministry is defined by Strong as:

1248 diakonia from 1249; attendance (as a servant, etc.); figuratively (eleemosynary) aid, (official) service (especially of the Christian teacher, or techn. of the diaconate): KJV-- (ad-) minister (-ing, -tration, -try), office, relief, service (-ing).

Vines Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words defines MINISTERING, MINISTRATION, MINISTRY as: 1. diakonua ^1248^, "the office and work of a diakonos."

There are two ministries mentioned here. The first is the ministry of serving and the other is the ministry of the word. Both of these are based on the Greek word from which we get our English word "deacon."

1 Tim 3:10 They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as _____.

Just as the apostles did, the elders are to serve the "ministry of the word" and the deacons are to serve the "ministry of the tables," that is to say, of physical things.

Tit 1:9 He must hold firmly to the trustworthy _____ as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.

1 Tim 3:2 Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to _____,

Jeremiah spoke of this work in prophecy, 3:14 *"Return, faithless people," declares the LORD, "for I am your husband. I will choose you--one from a town and two from a clan--and bring you to Zion. 15 Then I will give you _____ after my own heart, who will lead you with knowledge and understanding.* All too often in this present time, the preacher does the elder's work, the elders are busy doing the deacon's work and the deacons don't know what their work is. It is clear from the scriptures that the elder (synonyms are shepherd, guardian, overseer, presbyter, bishop, and pastor) are to indeed "pastor (feed) the flock."

Acts 20:28 Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be _____ of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

It simply is not God's design for elders to preside over business meetings, building plans and the like any more than it would have been proper for the apostles to do the same.

The next question that arises is who chose these men. Was it the men's business meeting, the elders or the church? A careful reading of verse 3 and 5 will tell us the whole church chose the men. The word "brothers" of verse 3, does not refer specifically to the men of the group, but is directed to the whole church. This is the way the same word is used, for example, in Mt 23:8, Acts 1:15, Rom 1:13, I Th 1:4 or Rev 19:10.

Mt 23:8 "But you are not to be called 'Rabbi,' for you have only one _____ and you are all brothers.

Acts 1:14 They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers. 15 In those days Peter stood up among the believers (a group numbering about a hundred and twenty) 16 and said, "Brothers, the _____ had to be fulfilled which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through the mouth of David concerning Judas, who served as guide for those who arrested Jesus--

Rev 19:10 At this I fell at his feet to _____ him. But he said to me, "Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your _____ who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

The question of whether the church voted on these men, had a general meeting to discuss their qualifications, or simply passed out questionnaires, is not answered. Nevertheless, the church is charged with the selection of the men. Any method which ensures that the whole church participates in the selection falls within those methods which are acceptable.

The character of the men is to be beyond reproach from verse 3. Their character and wisdom would be seen by their actions.

Ja 1:5 If any of you lacks _____, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.

Jam 3:13 Who is _____ and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from _____. 14 But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. 15 Such "wisdom" does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, of the devil. 16 For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice. 17 But the _____ that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. 18 Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness.

Paul later spells out the qualifications in detail so we are well aware of what it means to be full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom.

1 Tim 3:8 _____, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. 9 They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. 10 They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as _____. 11 In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything. 12 A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must _____ his children and his household well. 13 Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus.

The question of ordination also arises, since the KJV says that the apostles would "turn over (KJV - appoint)" these men. We find in the NT that ordination was carried out by the apostles and the evangelist (Acts 6:3 and Tit 1:5). The ordination or appointment consists of just what is indicated here. A public acknowledgment of the responsibility given to the men in question. It is not some ceremony that is cooked up by men and not mentioned anywhere in the scripture.

Tit 1:5 The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and _____ elders in every town, as I directed you.

Acts 6:5 This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. 6 They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

The names of all of these men are Greek names rather than Hebrew, as though the congregation were attempting to make up for their oversight. Nonetheless, the men were well qualified for the work.

The question of the laying on of hands also arises, since there are two meanings to this ritual in the NT. One is that of the giving the Holy Spirit in miraculous measure and the other is conferring approval on the person on whom the hands were laid.

The conferring of approval is the meaning of this gesture from antiquity. Israel is the first person recorded in the scriptures who used the laying on of hands in Gen 48:14, however, numerous mention of this action is made in the OT (see Num 8:18; Num 27:18; Deut 34:9). It is also used in this fashion in the NT in Acts 13:3. Heb 6:2 refers to this action as one of the elementary principles, but from the context at that point, we cannot be certain about which of these uses is indicated by this reference.

Gen 48:14 But Israel reached out his _____ hand and put it on Ephraim's head, though he was the younger, and crossing his arms, he put his left _____ on Manasseh's head, even though Manasseh was the firstborn.

Acts 13:3 So after they had fasted and prayed, they _____ their hands on them and sent them off.

In Acts 8:17 and Acts 19:6, the laying on of hands clearly refers to the conferring of miraculous abilities of the Holy Spirit by the apostles.

Acts 8:17 Then Peter and John _____ their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

Acts 19:6 When Paul _____ his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied.

These men are said to be full of the Holy Spirit in Acts 6:3 and Stephen is particularly singled out in verse 5. We must remember from our study of Acts 2:38, that all receive the Holy Spirit when they are baptized. Thus, we cannot determine for certain that the miraculous ability had not already been given and that this is a public approval of these men, or whether the ability to do miracles was conferred at some other unspecified point.

*Acts 8:5 Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the _____ there.
6 When the crowds heard Philip and saw the miraculous signs he did, they all paid close attention to what he said.*

Acts 21:8 Leaving the next day, we reached Caesarea and stayed at the house of _____ the evangelist, one of the Seven. 9 He had four unmarried daughters who prophesied.

From the language in Acts 13:3, it would seem that this “laying on of hands” refers to public approval. Since no mention of the apostle Paul's laying on of hands in the appointment of elders in Acts 14:23. Again, we cannot be certain if this laying on of hands in the appointment of the eldership was to bestow the ability to do signs and miracles or whether it was a sign of approval in their appointment to the office.

Acts 13:3 So after they had _____ and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

Acts 14:23 Paul and Barnabas appointed _____ for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust.

1 Tim 4:14 Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a _____ message when the body of elders laid their hands on you.

The question of the elders bestowing miraculous gifts on Timothy should not be seen as a contradiction of Acts 8:17, but rather as a sign of approval. Paul, on the other hand, did give Timothy these special powers.

2 Tim 1:6 For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you _____ the laying on of my hands.

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.

Evidently the miracles and the resurrection of the Lord were sufficient in these priests to overcome the doubts some of the leaders had during Jesus' personal ministry. Here the priests are said to have been obedient. There are many degrees of faith, but the only type of faith that will save is one that leads one to obedience. The faith of the NT Christians was not based on emotion or on "simply accepting Jesus," but rather on a rational examination of the evidence followed by its acceptance.

Jn 12:42 Yet at the same time many even among the leaders _____ in him. But because of the Pharisees they would not confess their faith for fear they would be put out of the synagogue;

Ja 2:19 You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the _____ believe that--and shudder.

Romans 1:5 Through him and for his name's sake, we received grace and apostleship to call people from among all the Gentiles to the _____ that comes from faith.

Acts 6:8 Now Stephen, a man full of God's grace and power, did great wonders and miraculous signs among the people. 9 Opposition arose, however, from members of the Synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called)-- Jews of Cyrene and Alexandria as well as the provinces of Cilicia and Asia. These men began to argue with Stephen, 10 but they could not stand up against his wisdom or the Spirit by whom he spoke.

Stephen was able to perform miracles at this point and Phillip does in the next recorded event after Stephen's death. We cannot say that this power was given at the time of their approval as deacons, yet it appears that no one other than the apostles could do these things prior to this time as Acts 5:12-16 shows that only the apostles were performing these miracles just a few days prior to this problem arising in the church. This problem required the appointment of others to take care of the matter.

Again, we see that debate on the existence of Jesus and whether he was the son of God is a time honored tradition among Jesus' followers. The truth, ably presented, will always reduce those who oppose it to the same kinds of actions that these men took against Stephen. Paul was treated in the same way. The actions of Stephen and Paul were brought about by their love of the Lord. In the same way, we are to "contend for the faith."

Acts 9:22 Yet Saul grew more and more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by _____ that Jesus is the Christ.

II Cor 5:14 For Christ's love _____ us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died.

Jude 3 Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt I had to write and urge you to _____ for the faith that was once for all _____ to the saints.

Acts 6:11 Then they secretly persuaded some men to say, "We have heard Stephen speak words of blasphemy against Moses and against God." 12 So they stirred up the people and the elders and the teachers of the law. They seized Stephen and brought him before the Sanhedrin. 13 They produced false witnesses, who testified, "This fellow never stops speaking against this holy place and against the law. 14 For we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs Moses handed down to us." 15 All who were sitting in the Sanhedrin looked intently at Stephen, and they saw that his face was like the face of an angel.

They couldn't overcome his wisdom nor the word given by the Holy Spirit and so they resort to chicanery. This was not the first time that this group of men resorted to such evil.

Matt 28:12 When the chief priests had met with the elders and _____ a plan, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money,

John 10:33 "We are not _____ you for any of these," replied the Jews, "but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God."

Only speculation can be given for what the face of an angel looked like, but we can be sure that it was not that of a winged being, but rather that of a man.

Questions on Acts 6

1. What does the word "deacon" mean? _____
2. Were the men appointed in Acts 6 deacons? _____
3. Who decided on the requirements and the number of men to be chosen? _____
4. What are the responsibilities of deacons today? _____
5. What are the responsibilities of elders today? _____
6. What was the responsibility of the apostles? _____
7. Who was Nicolas? _____
8. Did Luke think of Nicolas as a Jew or a Gentile? _____
9. What causes the word of God to spread today? _____
10. What is a miracle? _____
11. What is blasphemy? _____

A Workbook Commentary on the Book of Acts
Chapter 7

Evidently the Sanhedrin was meeting in the temple since it was the only place that would have been of any concern to the Jews. When Stephen was asked if the charges of changing the customs of Moses and the destruction of the temple were true, he launches into a short history of the Jews. Our own study will be somewhat more detailed, examining not only the facts of the history as Stephen presents them, but also looking at the ancient accounts on which Stephen based his defense.

Acts 7:1 Then the high priest asked him, "Are these charges true?" 2 To this he replied: "Brothers and fathers, listen to me! The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham while he was still in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran. 3 'Leave your country and your people,' God said, 'and go to the land I will show you.' 4 "So he left the land of the Chaldeans and settled in Haran. After the death of his father, God sent him to this land where you are now living.

There are three promises which God made to Abram at the point Stephen begins, however, Stephen chooses to deal with only one of those, the gift of the land of Canaan to Abraham and his descendants. This obedience to the command of God was based upon faith. Acceptable faith before God is always an obedient faith.

Gen 12:1 The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. 2 "I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your _____ great, and you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all _____ on earth will be blessed through you."

Neh 9:7 "You are the LORD God, who chose Abram and brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans and named him _____. 8 You found his heart faithful to you, and you made a _____ with him to give to his descendants the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Jebusites and Gergashites. You have kept your promise because you are _____.

Josh 24:2 Joshua said to all the people, "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'Long ago your _____, including Terah the father of Abraham and Nahor, lived beyond the River and worshiped other gods. 3 But I took your father Abraham from the land beyond the River and led him throughout _____ and gave him many descendants. I gave him Isaac,

Gen 11:31 Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law _____, the wife of his son Abram, and together they set out from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to Canaan. But when they came to _____, they settled there.

Gen 12:5 He took his wife _____, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated and the people they had acquired in Haran, and they set out for the land of _____, and they arrived there.

Heb 11:8 By _____ Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. 9 By _____ he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise.

Acts 7:5 He gave him no inheritance here, not even a foot of ground. But God promised him that he and his descendants after him would possess the land, even though at that time Abraham had no child.

Until the time of Sarah's death, Abraham did not own any of the land promised to him. We find that it was necessary for him to buy a burial plot at her death. Through all of these years, Abraham maintained his faith in God, even though he had no children. He did not understand God's plan and both Abraham and Sarah tried to help God out, but God was to carry out his plan so that all might understand it was God who worked through Abraham.

Gen 23:2 She died at Kiriath Arba (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan, and Abraham went to mourn for _____ and to weep over her. 3 Then Abraham rose from beside his dead wife and spoke to the Hittites. He said, 4 "I am an alien and a stranger among you. _____ me some property for a burial site here so I can bury my dead." ... 13 and he said to Ephron in their hearing, "Listen to me, if you will. I will pay the price of the field. Accept it from me so I can bury my dead there." ... 19 Afterward Abraham buried his wife Sarah in the _____ in the field of Machpelah near _____ (which is at Hebron) in the land of Canaan. 20 So the field and the cave in it were deeded to Abraham by the Hittites as a burial site.

Heb 11:11 By _____ Abraham, even though he was past age--and Sarah herself was barren--was enabled to become a father because he considered him faithful who had made the promise. 12 And so from this one man, and he as good as _____, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore.

Gen 15:2 But Abram said, "O _____ LORD, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my _____ is Eliezer of Damascus?" 3 And Abram said, "You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir." 4 Then the word of the LORD came to him: "This man will not be your heir, but a son coming from your own _____ will be your heir." 5 He took him outside and said, "Look up at the heavens and count the stars--if indeed you can count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be."

Gen 17:16 I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her. I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her." 17 Abraham fell facedown; he laughed and said to himself, "Will a son be born to a man a _____ years old? Will Sarah bear a child at the age of _____?" 18 And Abraham said to God, "If only Ishmael might live under your blessing!" 19 Then God said, "Yes, but your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac. I will establish my _____ with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him.

Acts 7:6 God spoke to him in this way: 'Your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own, and they will be enslaved and mistreated four hundred years.'

At this point there arises an apparent discrepancy in the account of Stephen and that of the OT. Let us first look at the OT accounts.

Ex 12:40 Now the length of time the Israelite people lived in Egypt was _____ years. 41 At the end of the _____ years, to the very day, all the LORD'S divisions left Egypt.

Gal 3:17 What I mean is this: The law, introduced _____ years later, does not set aside the covenant previously established by God and thus do away with the _____.

Skeptics have claimed that this is a contradiction in the scriptures. Some commentators have suggested that Stephen speaks in a general way, thus rounding off the time the people were in Egypt. Another, and I believe better, explanation is that the length of time the Israelites were enslaved and mistreated for four hundred years while the number of years that they were treated reasonably was thirty years. Joseph was 30 years old at the start of the famine (Gen 41:47). Since crops were harvested once a year, there would normally be at least one year's supply of food stored, making the age of Joseph something over 38 years when the famine came to his father's house. Given his age, the time of the coming of Joseph's brethren and their families to Egypt would have allowed Joseph's works to be forgotten within 30 years. The memory of new royalty for the deeds of anyone which does not reflect glory on the present royalty is quite short. Thus, the contradiction is easily explained by a sojourn of 430 years and slavery and mistreatment for 400 of those years.

Acts 7:7 But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves,' God said, 'and afterward they will come out of that country and worship me in this place.'

Gen 15:14 But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterward they will come out with _____ possessions.

Ex 3:12 And God said, "I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have _____ the people out of Egypt, you will _____ God on this mountain."

Acts 7:8 Then he gave Abraham the covenant of circumcision. And Abraham became the father of Isaac and circumcised him eight days after his birth. Later Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob became the father of the twelve patriarchs.

This covenant was between Abraham, his descendants and God. It is not the covenant that God made with his people Israel. It was not a covenant of decrees or statutes nor was it written; thus it is not the covenant that Paul referred to in Col 2:14 *having canceled the _____ code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, _____ it to the cross.*

Gen 17:9 Then God said to Abraham, "As for you, you must keep my _____, you and your descendants after you for the generations to come. 10 This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every _____ among you shall be circumcised. 11 You are to undergo circumcision, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and you. 12 For the generations to come every male among you who is eight days old must be circumcised, including those born in your household or bought with money from a foreigner--those who are not your offspring. 13 Whether born in your household or bought with your money, they must be circumcised. My covenant in your flesh is to be an _____ covenant. 14 Any uncircumcised male, who has not been circumcised in the flesh, will be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant."

Rom 4:9 Is this blessedness only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? We have been saying that Abraham's _____ was credited to him as righteousness. 10 Under what circumstances was it credited? Was it after he was circumcised, or before? It was not after, but before! 11 And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness that he had by _____ while he was still uncircumcised. So then, he is the father of all who believe but have not been circumcised, in order that _____ might be credited to them.

Gal 3:16 The _____ were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. The Scripture does not say "and to seeds," meaning many people, but "and to your seed," meaning one person, who is Christ. 17 What I mean is this: The _____, introduced 430 years later, does not set _____ the covenant previously established by God and thus do away with the promise.

Isaac was born miraculously to Sarah in her old age. It is not a miracle that an old man should have children and Abraham had more children after Sarah's death, but Isaac was the promised seed.

Gen 21:1 Now the LORD was gracious to Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did for Sarah what he had promised. 2 Sarah became _____ and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the very time God had promised him. 3 Abraham gave the name Isaac to

the son Sarah bore him. 4 When his son Isaac was eight days old, Abraham circumcised him, as God commanded him. 5 Abraham was a _____ years old when his son Isaac was born to him. 6 Sarah said, "God has brought me laughter, and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me." 7 And she added, "Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would _____ children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age."

Acts 7:9 "Because the patriarchs were jealous of Joseph, they sold him as a slave into Egypt. But God was with him

The story of God's use of jealousy is one of the most interesting stories of the OT, showing us that God can use everything to work his will.

Gen 37:4 When his brothers saw that their father _____ him more than any of them, they hated him and could not speak a kind word to him. 5 Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers, they hated him all the more. 6 He said to them, "Listen to this dream I had: 7 We were binding sheaves of grain out in the field when suddenly my sheaf rose and stood upright, while your _____ gathered around mine and bowed down to it." 8 His brothers said to him, "Do you intend to reign over us? Will you actually rule us?" And they hated him all the more because of his dream and what he had said. 9 Then he had another dream, and he told it to his brothers. "Listen," he said, "I had another dream, and this time the sun and moon and _____ stars were bowing down to me." 10 When he told his father as well as his brothers, his father rebuked him and said, "What is this dream you had? Will your mother and I and your brothers actually come and bow down to the ground before you?" 11 His brothers were _____ of him, but his father kept the matter in mind.

Acts 7:10 and rescued him from all his troubles. He gave Joseph wisdom and enabled him to gain the goodwill of Pharaoh king of Egypt; so he made him ruler over Egypt and all his palace.

The story of Joseph's troubles in Egypt is too long to recount here, but turn in your Bible and read Gen 41:12-46 to learn this story. As a result of God's willingness to give Joseph the meaning of the dreams, Joseph is finally made ruler, second only to Pharaoh.

Gen 42:6 Now Joseph was the _____ of the land, the one who sold grain to all its people. So when Joseph's brothers arrived, they bowed down to him with their faces to the ground.

Acts 7:11 "Then a famine struck all Egypt and Canaan, bringing great suffering, and our fathers could not find food. 12 When Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent our fathers on their first visit. 13 On their second visit, Joseph told his brothers who he was, and Pharaoh learned about Joseph's family.

Gen 41:54 and the seven years of _____ began, just as Joseph had said. There was famine in all the other lands, but in the whole land of Egypt there was food. 55 When all Egypt began to feel the famine, the people cried to Pharaoh for food. Then Pharaoh told all the Egyptians, "Go to Joseph and do what he tells you." 56 When the famine had spread over the whole country, Joseph opened the _____ and sold grain to the Egyptians, for the famine was severe throughout Egypt. 57 And all the countries came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph, because the famine was severe in all the world.

The story of the trips to Egypt by Joseph's brothers is recounted in Gen 42-46 and is well worth reading again to learn how God fulfilled the dreams Joseph had. Most amazing of all is the lack of anger that Joseph had for his brothers, recognizing the hand of God in the entire affair.

Acts 7:14 After this, Joseph sent for his father Jacob and his whole family, seventy-five in all.

In time Joseph received his father and all their relatives.

Gen 46:31 Then Joseph said to his brothers and to his father's household, "I will go up and speak to Pharaoh and will say to him, 'My _____ and my father's household, who were living in the land of _____, have come to me.

Gen 46:26 All those who went to Egypt with Jacob--those who were his _____ descendants, not counting his sons' wives--numbered sixty-six persons. 27 With the two sons who had been born to _____ in Egypt, the members of Jacob's family, which went to Egypt, were seventy in all.

Deut 10:22 Your forefathers who went down into Egypt were _____ in all, and now the LORD your God has made you as _____ as the stars in the sky.

The difference in the number given by Stephen and the accounts in both Genesis and Deuteronomy have been held to be a contradiction. The Septuagint is the earliest Greek translation of the OT. In both Gen 46:27 and Ex 1:5, the Septuagint translates the number as 75 whereas the Massoretic text has 70. The people to whom Stephen was speaking were evidently more familiar with the Septuagint text and thus Stephen uses this version for his defense. This difference is accounted for by the grandsons Joseph had in Egypt who are named in the Septuagint text in Gen 46:20.

Acts 7:15 Then Jacob went down to Egypt, where he and our fathers died. 16 Their bodies were brought back to Shechem and placed in the tomb that Abraham had bought from the sons of Hamor at Shechem for a certain sum of money.

We note that Stephen clearly identifies not only Jacob's body, but also those of "he and our fathers" as the bones which were returned from Egypt.

Heb 11:21 By faith Jacob, when he was dying, _____ each of Joseph's sons, and worshiped as he leaned on the top of his staff. 22 By faith _____, when his end was near, spoke about the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and gave instructions about his bones.

Ex 13:19 Moses took the _____ of Joseph with him because Joseph had made the sons of Israel swear an oath. He had said, "God will surely come to your aid, and then you must carry my _____ up with you from this place."

Gen 49:29 Then he gave them these instructions: "I am about to be gathered to my people. _____ me with my fathers in the cave in the field of Ephron the Hittite, 30 the cave in the field of Machpelah, near Mamre in Canaan, which Abraham bought as a burial place from Ephron the Hittite, along with the field. 31 There Abraham and his wife Sarah were buried, there Isaac and his wife _____ were buried, and there I buried Leah. 32 The field and the cave in it were bought from the Hittites."

Josh 24:32 And Joseph's _____, which the Israelites had brought up from Egypt, were buried at Shechem in the tract of land that Jacob bought for a hundred pieces of silver from the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem. This became the _____ of Joseph's descendants.

Acts 7:17 "As the time drew near for God to fulfill his promise to Abraham, the number of our people in Egypt greatly increased. 18 Then another king, who knew nothing about Joseph, became ruler of Egypt. 19 He dealt treacherously with our people and oppressed our forefathers by forcing them to throw out their newborn babies so that they would die. 20 "At that time Moses was born, and he was no ordinary child. For three months he was cared for in his father's house. 21 When he was placed outside, Pharaoh's daughter took him and brought him up as her own son.

Ex 1:9 "Look," he said to his people, "the Israelites have become much too numerous for us. 10 Come, we must deal _____ with them or they will become even more numerous and, if war breaks out, will join our enemies, fight against us and leave the country." 11 So they put slave masters over them to oppress them with forced labor, and they built Pithom and Rameses as _____ cities for Pharaoh. 12 But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread; so the Egyptians came to dread the

Israelites 13 and worked them ruthlessly. 14 They made their lives bitter with hard labor in brick and _____ and with all kinds of work in the fields; in all their hard labor the Egyptians used them ruthlessly.

Ex 2:2 and she became pregnant and gave birth to a _____. When she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him for three months. 3 But when she could hide him no longer, she got a papyrus basket for him and coated it with tar and pitch. Then she placed the child in it and put it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile. 4 His _____ stood at a distance to see what would happen to him. 5 Then Pharaoh's daughter went down to the Nile to bathe, and her attendants were walking along the river bank. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her slave girl to get it. 6 She opened it and saw the _____. He was crying, and she felt sorry for him. "This is one of the _____ babies," she said. 7 Then his sister asked Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and get one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for you?" 8 "Yes, go," she answered. And the girl went and got the baby's _____. 9 Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this baby and nurse him for me, and I will _____ you." So the woman took the baby and nursed him. 10 When the child grew older, she took him to Pharaoh's daughter and he became her son. She named him Moses, saying, "I drew him out of the water."

Acts 7:22 Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was powerful in speech and action.

One of the strongest evidences of the revelation of God's will to man is made by the dietary and medical laws laid down by Moses for the people of Israel. Moses was steeped in the learning of the Egyptians and his rules vary so greatly from their accumulated knowledge that it is not possible for him to have known the reasons and wisdom behind these laws without a revelation from God.

Ex 15:26 He said, "If you listen carefully to the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his _____ and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the _____ I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, who heals you."

A careful study of the laws given to Moses will show that the nation of Israel would indeed prosper, both in number and in general health, when compared to the heathen nations around them.

Acts 7:23 "When Moses was forty years old, he decided to visit his fellow Israelites. 24 He saw one of them being mistreated by an Egyptian, so he went to his defense and avenged him by killing the Egyptian. 25 Moses thought that his own people would realize that God was using him to rescue them, but they did not.

Heb 11:24 By _____ Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. 25 He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the _____ of sin for a short time. 26 He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward.

Ex 2:11 One day, after Moses had grown up, he went out to where his own people were and watched them at their hard labor. He saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his own people. 12 _____ this way and that and seeing no one, he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. 13 The next day he went out and saw two Hebrews fighting. He asked the one in the wrong, "Why are you hitting your fellow Hebrew?" 14 The man said, "Who made you ruler and judge over us? Are you thinking of _____ me as you killed the Egyptian?" Then Moses was afraid and thought, "What I did must have become known."

Acts 7:26 The next day Moses came upon two Israelites who were fighting. He tried to reconcile them by saying, 'Men, you are brothers; why do you want to hurt each other?' 27 "But the man who was mistreating the other pushed Moses aside and said, 'Who made you ruler and judge over us? 28 Do you want to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?' 29 When Moses heard this, he fled to Midian, where he settled as a foreigner and had two sons.

Ex 2:15 When Pharaoh _____ of this, he tried to kill Moses, but Moses fled from Pharaoh and went to live in Midian, where he sat down by a well. 16 Now a priest of Midian had seven daughters, and they came to draw water and fill the troughs to water their father's flock. 17 Some shepherds came along and drove them away, but Moses got up and came to their rescue and watered their flock. 18 When the girls returned to Reuel their father, he asked them, "Why have you returned so early today?" 19 They answered, "An _____ rescued us from the shepherds. He even drew water for us and watered the flock." 20 "And where is he?" he asked his daughters. "Why did you leave him? Invite him to have something to eat." 21 Moses agreed to stay with the man, who gave his daughter _____ to Moses in marriage.

Acts 7:30 "After forty years had passed, an angel appeared to Moses in the flames of a burning bush in the desert near Mount Sinai. 31 When he saw this, he was amazed at the sight. As he went over to look more closely, he heard the Lord's voice: 32 'I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.' Moses trembled with fear and did not dare to look. 33 "Then the Lord said to him, 'Take off your sandals; the place where you are standing is holy ground.

Ex 3:5 "Do not come any _____," God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are _____ is holy ground."

Ex 3:15 God also said to Moses, "Say to the Israelites, 'The _____, the God of your fathers--the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob--has sent me to you.' This is my _____ forever, the name by which I am to be remembered from generation to generation.

Although the tetragrammaton, YHWH, translated as LORD, is not the only name by which God is called, we find that this name is the one most commonly used for God.

The idea of showing reverence by the removal of shoes is often given in the OT.

Josh 5:15 The commander of the LORD'S army replied, "Take off your _____ for the place where you are standing is holy." And Joshua did so.

Acts 7:34 I have indeed seen the oppression of my people in Egypt. I have heard their groaning and have come down to set them free. Now come, I will send you back to Egypt.' 35 "This is the same Moses whom they had rejected with the words, 'Who made you ruler and judge?' He was sent to be their ruler and deliverer by God himself, through the angel who appeared to him in the bush. 36 He led them out of Egypt and did wonders and miraculous signs in Egypt, at the Red Sea and for forty years in the desert.

In Exodus, chapters 7 to 13, the ten plagues which were visited upon Egypt are given. In Exodus 14, we read the story of the parting of the red sea. In Exodus 15, Moses brings water from a rock to the people in the desert at Marah. In Exodus 16, the people think they will starve and the Lord provides manna from heaven which tasted like honey and coriander. Then because the people complained that they had no meat, God sent quail, one of the finest foods available, to stop the murmuring. In Exodus 17, God again brings the people water in the middle of the desert at a place named Meribah.

In Exodus 19 and 20, we read of the delivery of the 10 commandments to Moses, followed by the destruction of the tables on which they were written due to the idolatry of the people of God as reported in Exodus 32. Their clothes didn't wear out during this time according to Deut 8:4 *Your clothes did not wear out and your _____ did not swell during these forty years.* They were provided with a pillar of fire by night and a cloud by day to lead them through the desert.

Neh 9:12 By day you led them with a pillar of cloud, and by night with a _____ of fire to give them light on the way they were to take. 13 "You came down on Mount Sinai; you _____ to them from heaven. You gave them regulations and laws that are just and right, and decrees and commands that are good. 14 You made known to them your holy _____ and gave them commands, decrees and laws through your servant Moses.

Acts 7:37 "This is that Moses who told the Israelites, 'God will send you a prophet like me from your own people.' 38 He was in the assembly in the desert, with the angel who spoke to him on Mount Sinai, and with our fathers; and he received living words to pass on to us. 39 "But our fathers refused to obey him. Instead, they rejected him and in their hearts turned back to Egypt. 40 They told Aaron, 'Make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who led us out of Egypt--we don't know what has happened to him!' 41 That was the time they made an idol in the form of a calf. They brought sacrifices to it and held a celebration in honor of what their hands had made. 42 But God turned away and gave them over to the worship of the heavenly bodies. This agrees with what is written in the book of the prophets: "Did you bring me sacrifices and offerings forty years in the desert, O house of Israel?"

Stephen introduces the subject of this discourse when he gives the prophecy of God to Moses.

Deut 18:15 The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must _____ to him.

The translation of v. 38 gives "assembly" for the Greek *ekklesia* which is translated most often in the NT as "church." There are a number of other words used, however, depending on the translation you happen to be using. This Greek word is used in Acts 19:32, 39, and 41 indicating an unruly mob or a legal group.

Acts 19:32 The assembly was in _____: Some were shouting one thing, some another. Most of the people did not even know why they were there. ... 39 If there is anything further you want to bring up, it must be settled in a _____ assembly. ... 41 After he had said this, he _____ the assembly.

It is also used to refer to the assembly of Jews in Mt 18:17, where it is often erroneously applied to the church of our Lord. There is no question that the method used is useful in settling disputes among brethren, but the church of our Lord had not been established at the time of which Matthew writes.

Mt 18:17 If he _____ to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, _____ him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

The word of the Lord given to Moses was not something to be put away, never to be used again, but it was to be used to change the lives of the people. The word given through Jesus was to be used in the same way; to change our lives.

Heb 4:12 For the word of God is _____ and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing _____ and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

I Pet 1:23 For you have been born again, not of _____ seed, but of imperishable, through the _____ and enduring word of God.

It is interesting indeed, that the Israelites recognized that the idol which Aaron made for them was not God, but represented God. They had already left the land of Egypt, yet Aaron pronounces the idol to the people the told them it had "brought you up out of Egypt." In the same way today, religions such as the Roman Catholic church makes idols that only represent God, however, they worship them through prayer and bowing down to them.

Ex 32:2 Aaron answered them, "Take off the gold _____ that your wives, your _____ and your daughters are wearing, and bring them to me." 3 So all the people took off their earrings and brought them to Aaron. 4 He took what they handed him and made it into an idol cast in the _____ of a calf, fashioning it with a tool. Then they said, "These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt." 5 When Aaron saw this, he built an altar in front of the calf and announced, "Tomorrow there will be a festival to the _____." 6 So the next day the people rose early and sacrificed burnt offerings and presented _____ offerings. Afterward they sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in revelry. 7 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go down, because your people, whom you brought up out of Egypt, have become corrupt. 8 They have been quick to turn away from what I commanded them and have made themselves an idol cast in the shape of a calf. They have _____ down to it and sacrificed to it and have said, 'These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.' ... 17 When Joshua heard the noise of the people shouting, he said to Moses, "There is the sound of _____ in the camp." 18 Moses replied: "It is not the sound of victory, it is not the sound of defeat; it is the sound of singing that I hear." 19 When Moses approached the camp and saw the _____ and the dancing, his anger burned and he threw the _____ out of his hands, breaking them to pieces at the foot of the mountain. 20 And he took the calf they had made and burned it in the fire; then he ground it to _____, scattered it on the water and made the Israelites drink it. 21 He said to Aaron, "What did these people do to you, that you led them into such great sin?" 22 "Do not be angry, my lord," Aaron answered. "You know how prone these people are to _____. 23 They said to me, 'Make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don't know what has happened to him.' 24 So I told them, 'Whoever has any gold jewelry, take it off.' Then they gave me the gold, and I _____ it into the fire, and _____ came this calf!"

Acts 7:43 You have lifted up the shrine of Molech and the star of your god Rephan, the idols you made to worship. Therefore I will send you into exile' beyond Babylon.

Throwing a child into a burning fire to appease the god Molech was a practice of the pagans who lived in the land of Canaan. The horror of the mother of such a child can only be imagined.

Lev 18:21 "Do not give any of your children to be _____ to Molech, for you must not profane the name of your God. I am the LORD.

Lev 20:2 "Say to the Israelites: 'Any Israelite or any alien living in Israel who gives any of his children to Molech must be put to death. The people of the community are to _____ him. 3 I will set my face against that man and I will cut him off from his people; for by giving his children to Molech, he has defiled my sanctuary and profaned my holy name. 4 If the people of the community close their eyes when that man gives one of his children to Molech and they fail to put him to death, 5 I will set my face against that man and his family and will cut off from their people both him and all who follow him in _____ themselves to Molech.

The children of Israel had short memories if we read the OT, however, the number of intervening years and generations made the practice of idolatry a common sin in the OT.

I Kings 11:4 As Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully _____ to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father had been. 5 He followed Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and Molech the detestable god of the Ammonites. 6 So _____ did evil in the eyes of the LORD; he did not follow the LORD completely, as David his father had done. 7 On a hill east of Jerusalem, Solomon built a _____ place for Chemosh the detestable god of Moab, and for Molech the detestable god of the Ammonites. 8 He did the same for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and offered sacrifices to their gods.

II Kings 17:16 They forsook all the commands of the LORD their God and made for themselves two idols cast in the _____ of calves, and an _____ pole. They bowed down to all the starry hosts, and they worshiped Baal. 17 They sacrificed their sons and daughters in the fire. They practiced divination and _____ and sold themselves to do evil in the eyes of the LORD, provoking him to anger. 18 So the LORD was very angry with Israel and removed them from his presence. Only the tribe of Judah was left,

II Kings 21:1 Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem fifty-five years. His mother's name was Hephzibah. 2 He did evil in the eyes of the LORD, following the _____ practices of the nations the LORD had driven out before the Israelites. 3 He rebuilt the high places his father Hezekiah had destroyed; he also erected altars to Baal and made an _____ pole, as Ahab king of Israel had done. He bowed down to all the starry hosts and worshiped them. 4 He built altars in the temple of the LORD, of which the LORD had said, "In _____ I will put my Name." 5 In both courts of the temple of the LORD, he built altars to all the starry hosts. 6 He sacrificed his own son in the fire, practiced sorcery and divination, and consulted mediums and spiritists. He did much _____ in the eyes of the LORD, provoking him to anger.

From the New International Bible Dictionary we learn the following about idol worship and Babylon, to which the Jews were taken.

Remphan (Rephan, RSV, NIV, NEB; Rompha, NASB) was an idol worshiped by Israel in the wilderness. This may be the same pagan god as Chiun (Amos 5:26); (Kiyyun, NASB; Kaiwan your star-god, RSV), or Saturn.

Amos 5:26 You have lifted up the _____ of your king, the pedestal of your idols, the star of your god-- which you made for yourselves.

Babylon was an ancient walled city between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers and capital of the Babylonian Empire. The leading citizens of the nation of Judah were carried to this city as captives about 587 B. C. after Jerusalem fell to the invading Babylonians.

Babylon's glory reflected the king's imperial power. Captured kings were brought to his court at Babylon. These included the Judean kings Jehoiachin, 2 Kin. 24:15, and Zedekiah, 2 Kin. 25:7. During the reign of Nabonidus (555-539 B. C.), while Belshazzar was co-regent, Daniel 5, the city surrendered to the Persians without opposition.

Acts 7:44 "Our forefathers had the tabernacle of the Testimony with them in the desert. It had been made as God directed Moses, according to the pattern he had seen.

Moses was told to make the tabernacle "according to the pattern." Today, we have many members of the church who have not learned this lesson and want to change the pattern. We need to ever keep in mind the words of Paul in Col 3:17 *And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the _____ of the Lord Jesus*, so that we may be pleasing to our God.

Ex 38:21 These are the amounts of the materials used for the tabernacle, the tabernacle of the Testimony, which were _____ at Moses' command by the Levites under the direction of Ithamar son of Aaron, the priest.

Ex 25:40 See that you make them _____ to the pattern shown you on the mountain.

Acts 7:45 Having received the tabernacle, our fathers under Joshua brought it with them when they took the land from the nations God drove out before them. It remained in the land until the time of David,

Josh 3:5 Joshua told the people, " _____ yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do amazing things among you." 6 Joshua said to the priests, "Take up the ark of the _____ and pass on ahead of the people." So they took it up and went ahead of them. 7 And the LORD said to Joshua, "Today I will begin to exalt you in the eyes of all Israel, so they may know that I am with you as I was with Moses. 8 Tell the priests who

carry the ark of the covenant: 'When you reach the edge of the Jordan's waters, go and _____ in the river.'" 9 Joshua said to the Israelites, "Come here and listen to the words of the LORD your God. 10 This is how you will know that the living _____ is among you and that he will certainly drive out before you the Canaanites, Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites, Gergashites, Amorites and Jebusites.

Acts 7:46 who enjoyed God's favor and asked that he might provide a dwelling place for the God of Jacob. 47 But it was Solomon who built the house for him. 48 "However, the Most High does not live in houses made by men. As the prophet says:

The introduction of the dwelling place of God reminds us that God had the Israelites build him a tabernacle that he might dwell with the people.

Ex 25:8 "Then have them make a _____ for me, and I will dwell among them. 9 Make this tabernacle and all its furnishings _____ like the pattern I will show you.

Ex 29:42 "For the _____ to come this burnt offering is to be made regularly at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting before the LORD. There I will _____ you and speak to you; 43 there also I will meet with the Israelites, and the place will be consecrated by my glory. 44 "So I will consecrate the Tent of Meeting and the altar and will consecrate Aaron and his sons to serve me as priests. 45 Then I will dwell among the _____ and be their God. 46 They will know that I am the LORD their God, who brought them out of _____ so that I might dwell among them. I am the LORD their God.

David served the Lord faithfully except in the matter of Bathsheba (I K 15:5), where his casual attitude at the time led to additional trouble. In everything else, David turned to the Lord without the intervention of a man. However, David was a man of war and wasn't allowed to build the temple.

Acts 13:22 After removing _____, he made David their king. He testified concerning him: 'I have found David son of _____ a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.'

II Sam 7:2 he said to Nathan the prophet, "Here I am, living in a palace of cedar, while the ark of God remains in a tent." ... 12 When your days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your _____ to succeed you, who will come from your own body, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his _____ forever.

I Kings 6:1 In the four hundred and eightieth year after the Israelites had come out of Egypt, in the fourth year of _____ reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, the second month, he began to build the _____ of the LORD. ... 13 And I will _____ among the Israelites and will not abandon my people Israel."

As opposed to the dwelling of God in the tabernacle or in the temple under the Law of Moses, today God lives in the hearts of those who will subject their will to him.

Jn 4:24 God is spirit, and his worshipers must _____ in spirit and in truth."

Acts 17:24 "The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in _____ built by hands. 25 And he is not _____ by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else.

II Cor 6:16 What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will _____ with them and _____ among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people."

I Cor 3:16 Don't you know that you yourselves are God's _____ and that God's Spirit lives in you?

Acts 7:49 "Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. What kind of house will you build for me? says the Lord. Or where will my resting place be? 50 Has not my hand made all these things?"

I Kings 22:19 Micaiah continued, "Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD _____ on his throne with all the host of heaven standing around him on his _____ and on his left.

Jn 4:21 Jesus declared, "Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will _____ the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. 22 You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. 23 Yet a time is coming and has now come when the _____ worshipers will worship the Father in _____ and in _____, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks.

Jer 32:17 "Ah, Sovereign LORD, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. _____ is too hard for you.

Acts 7:51 "You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your fathers: You always resist the Holy Spirit! 52 Was there ever a prophet your fathers did not persecute? They even killed those who predicted the coming of the Righteous One. And now you have betrayed and murdered him-- 53 you who have received the law that was put into effect through angels but have not obeyed it."

Stephen begins his summary based on the history he has given the Jews. Each of the deliverers of Israel, Joseph, Moses and Jesus has been persecuted. These were not the only prophets that were treated in this manner, but they clearly show the Jews that they had indeed disobeyed the law and mistreated those who were the deliverers.

Mt 23:31 So you _____ against yourselves that you are the descendants of those who murdered the prophets. 32 Fill up, then, the measure of the sin of your forefathers! 33 "You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell? 34 Therefore I am sending you _____ and wise men and teachers. Some of them you will kill and crucify; others you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town. 35 And so upon you will come all the righteous blood that has been shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of _____ son of Berekiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. 36 I tell you the truth, all this will come upon this generation. 37 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your _____ together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing.

I Pet 1:10 Concerning this _____, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, 11 trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the _____ of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.

Acts 3:14 You disowned the Holy and _____ One and asked that a murderer be released to you.

Acts 22:14 "Then he said: 'The God of our _____ has chosen you to know his will and to see the _____ One and to hear words from his mouth.

Acts 2:23 This man was _____ over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of _____ men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross.

Heb 2:2 For if the message spoken by _____ was binding, and every violation and disobedience received its just punishment,

The question of where angels are involved in the giving of the Law of Moses can be explained by the definition of angel which is "a messenger." Moses was the messenger who gave the law to the people.

Ex 19:3 Then Moses went up to God, and the _____ called to him from the _____ and said, "This is what you are to say to the house of Jacob and what you are to tell the people of Israel:

Acts 7:54 When they heard this, they were furious and gnashed their teeth at him. 55 But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. 56 "Look," he said, "I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."

The people of NT times were given to violence of the worst sort. In this age, we cannot imagine a crowd of people gnashing their teeth. The civilizing influence of the gospel of Jesus Christ has made the world a far better place in which to live. This is not the first nor the last time that the Jews will behave in this manner.

Acts 5:33 When they heard this, they were _____ and wanted to put them to death.

Acts 22:22 The crowd listened to Paul until he said this. Then they raised their voices and shouted, "Rid the earth of him! He's not _____ to live!" 23 As they were shouting and _____ off their cloaks and _____ dust into the air,

Acts 6:5 This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose _____, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. ... 8 Now Stephen, a man full of God's grace and power, did great wonders and miraculous signs among the people. 9 _____ arose, however, from members of the Synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called)--Jews of Cyrene and Alexandria as well as the provinces of Cilicia and Asia. These men began to argue with _____, 10 but they could not stand up against his _____ or the Spirit by whom he spoke.

Evidently Stephen was the only one who could see this vision. No doubt the vision was given to comfort him in the nearness of death. We note that this was not the return of Jesus, when all shall see him with his mighty angels.

Acts 1:10 They were looking intently up into the _____ as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. 11 "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same _____, who has been taken from you into heaven, will _____ back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

Heb 8:1 The point of what we are saying is this: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the _____ hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven,

Acts 7:57 At this they covered their ears and, yelling at the top of their voices, they all rushed at him, 58 dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. Meanwhile, the witnesses laid their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul. 59 While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." 60 Then he fell on his knees and cried out, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he fell asleep.

The Jews felt that they were doing exactly what was commanded of them in the Law of Moses.

Lev 24:14 "Take the _____ outside the camp. All those who heard him are to lay their hands on his head, and the entire assembly is to stone him. 15 Say to the Israelites: 'If anyone curses his God, he will be held _____; 16 anyone who blasphemes the name of the LORD must be put to death. The entire assembly must _____ him. Whether an alien or native-born, when he blasphemes the Name, he must be put to _____.

Deut 13:6 If your very own brother, or your son or daughter, or the wife you love, or your closest friend _____ entices you, saying, "Let us go and _____ other gods" (gods that neither you nor your fathers have known, 7 _____ of the peoples around you, whether near or far, from one end of the land to the other), 8 do not yield to him or listen to him. Show him no pity. Do not spare him or shield him. 9 You must certainly put him to death. Your hand must be the first in putting him to death, and then the _____ of all the people. 10 Stone him to death, because he tried to _____ you away from the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

Deut 17:7 The hands of the _____ must be the first in putting him to death, and then the hands of all the people. You must purge the _____ from among you.

Paul later recounts his participation in this shameful incident. To have spoken thus must have brought intense shame to Paul, even though he did it ignorantly and in unbelief.

Acts 22:20 And when the _____ of your martyr Stephen was shed, I stood there giving my approval and guarding the _____ of those who were killing him.'

The question arises of whether Stephen asked the Lord something that is impossible since the people had not repented of their sin. We find that Jesus is guilty of asking the Father for the same thing. We conclude that to make this request of God is not sinful of itself. The interpretation of this event must be that they are not willing that God should charge the event against the evildoer on their account, but this does not relieve the responsibility of the evildoer before God to repent of his sins. Stephen and Jesus were simply following the commands they had taught.

Lk 23:34 Jesus said, "_____, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

Mt 5:44 But I tell you: Love your _____ and pray for those who persecute you, 45 that you may be _____ of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

Lk 6:28 bless those who _____ you, pray for those who mistreat you.

The Scriptures often use the idea of falling asleep to indicate death.

Acts 13:36 "For when _____ had served God's purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep; he was buried with his fathers and his body decayed.

I Th 4:13 Brothers, we do not want you to be _____ about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope.

Questions on Acts 7

1. What promise did God make Abraham? _____
2. How long were the Israelites to be mistreated? _____
3. What covenant did God give Abraham? _____
4. How long did Moses live with his parents? _____
5. What kind of education did Moses have? _____
6. How old was Moses when he left Egypt? _____
7. Where did Moses go when he left Egypt? _____
8. How long did Moses stay? _____
9. How long did Israel wander in the desert? _____
10. How was Moses told to make the tabernacle? _____
11. Who built the temple? _____
12. Where did Stephen see Jesus? _____
13. For what two things did Stephen pray? _____

The major characters in the history of Israel as related by Stephen are given below, please give a short piece of information about each:

Abraham _____

Joseph _____

Jacob _____

Moses _____

Aaron _____

David _____

A Workbook Commentary on the Book of Acts
Chapter 8

The first thoughts in this chapter continue those of chapter 7 where Saul has just watched over the coats of those who stoned Stephen, evidently to keep them from being stolen by others.

Acts 8:1 And Saul was there, giving approval to his death. On that day a great persecution broke out against the church at Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. 2 Godly men buried Stephen and mourned deeply for him.

Luke mentions the worst points of Saul, no doubt to show that he is fair in reporting the true background and so that his readers will get a true picture of the ability of God to forgive even the deepest of sins. Even as we recognize that the Holy Spirit guided the pen with which Luke wrote, we see that this book is based upon the highest standards and does not seek to hide the inadequacies of the men who are used by God to reveal his will. The books of men seek to present men in the best light possible or the worst light possible rather than showing both good and bad. This is a strong evidence that the Bible is from God and not from man.

Acts 8:3 But Saul began to destroy the church. Going from house to house, he dragged off men and women and put them in prison.

Later we will see that Saul had brought so much fear to the disciples that the church would refuse to meet with him (Acts 9:26 *When he came to Jerusalem, he tried to _____ the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, not _____ that he really was a disciple.*). In our own time, Chinese Christians have had the same problem due to their participation in the Red Guard and the fear of their new brethren that they would betray the church to the Chinese officials, endangering the lives of all the Christians. Nevertheless, the gospel can truly change lives;

I am not _____ of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who _____: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. (Rom 1:16)

I Tim 1:1 Paul, an _____ of Christ Jesus by the command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope, ... 12 I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me faithful, _____ me to his service. 13 Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown _____ because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. 14 The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. 15 Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save _____ --of whom I am the worst.

Acts 8:4 Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went.

We should never be amazed that God works through evil as well as good men to accomplish his will. The word "those" includes both men and women. The teaching of the word is something that is the responsibility of every faithful Christian.

II Tim 2:2 And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to _____ men who will also be _____ to teach others.

The word "men" in the above passage is the Greek word *anthropos* which means mankind, as opposed to just males (Greek word *aner*). The second word of importance is translated "faithful" in the KJV. The idea of preparing oneself to accurately teach the word of God is given to the young evangelist Timothy.

II Tim 2:15 Do your _____ to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who _____ handles the word of truth.

The inaccurate use of the Scripture is also warned against by Peter.

II Pet 3:15 Bear in mind that our Lord's _____ means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. 16 He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people _____, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.

Unfortunately, the word of God is all too often ignored by the child of God, resulting in a lack of knowledge which would prevent the spread of the gospel by those who have been "scattered."

Heb 5:12 In fact, though by this _____ you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! 13 Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. 14 But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to _____ good from evil.

Acts 8:5 Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Christ there. 6 When the crowds heard Philip and saw the miraculous signs he did, they all paid close attention to what he said. 7 With shrieks, evil spirits came out of many, and many paralytics and cripples were healed. 8 So there was great joy in that city.

We now find that Philip can do the same miraculous acts that Stephen was doing in Acts 6:8.

Acts 6:8 Now Stephen, a man full of God's grace and power, did great _____ and miraculous signs among the people.

The ability to perform miracles was limited since prior to the indication that Stephen and Philip could perform miracles, we find that only the apostles could perform the miracles and that everyone else was in awe of their ability.

Acts 5:12 The _____ performed many miraculous signs and wonders among the people. And all the believers used to meet together in Solomon's Colonnade. 13 No one else dared join them, even though they were highly regarded by the people. 14 Nevertheless, more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number. 15 As a result, people brought the _____ into the streets and laid them on beds and mats so that at least Peter's shadow might fall on some of them as he passed by. 16 Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by evil spirits, and all of them were healed. 17 Then the high priest and all his associates, who were members of the party of the Sadducees, were filled with _____. 18 They arrested the apostles and put them in the public jail.

Later in this chapter and in chapter 19, we find that only the apostles had the ability to transfer the power to perform miraculous gifts. This power was given to a select few, the apostles only, and it is also true that they could not pass the power to give this gift to anyone else. This is proved by the case of a man named Simon who wanted to purchase this power. Philip had the power and could not give it to Simon. Simon had seen a number of persons baptized by Philip and none of them had been given this gift. As a result his desire to buy the gift, Simon was told that he and his money would perish together. This represents the first case of a baptized believer being told that he would lose his soul as a result of his sin.

Acts 8:9 Now for some time a man named Simon had practiced sorcery in the city and amazed all the people of Samaria. He boasted that he was someone great, 10 and all the people, both high and low, gave him their attention and exclaimed, "This man is the divine power known as the Great Power." 11 They followed him because he had amazed them for a long time with his magic. 12 But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

Simon had preyed on the gullible by performing tricks. His "magic" was far different than the miracles that Philip could perform. Today the gullible are taken in by the tricks of televangelists as they claim to perform miracles in order to obtain money. One of these "faith healers," Robert Tilden, is being sued by two women whose husbands were sending money to be cured of their disease. In both cases, the men had died and they continued to receive promises of a cure from Tilden if only they would continue to contribute money to Tilden.

A second problem is that people fail to distinguish the difference in the marvelous and the miraculous which we studied in chapter 3. Miracles are those occurrences which set aside the laws of nature, while the marvelous include those things that occur through the laws of nature, no matter how stupendous they might be.

This passage tells us that preaching the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus include the plan of salvation which calls upon men to be baptized. So often people want to just "preach the man and not the plan" and they don't even realize that in preaching Jesus, we must preach the plan just as Philip did here in Samaria. We must follow the same teaching and obey in the same way; by believing that Jesus is the Christ and being baptized.

Acts 8:13 Simon himself believed and was baptized. And he followed Philip everywhere, astonished by the great signs and miracles he saw.

It is noteworthy that a performer of magic tricks believed and was baptized. Those who are skilled in a profession are those most likely to be able to determine the trickery of those who say that they are performing miracles and are instead performing tricks. Thus, the conversion of Simon is a key piece of evidence that the miracles the apostles performed were truly supernatural events and not merely amazing tricks.

We should be aware that the only thing that was taught was the "good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ." Thus, in preaching Christ, we must preach baptism for the remission of sins, even as Jesus told his disciples to do.

Mt 28:19 Therefore go and make _____ of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

Mk 16:15 He said to them, "Go into all the world and _____ the good news to all creation. 16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be _____, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

Acts 8:14 When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them.

The Catholic doctrine of the primacy of Peter is dealt a mortal blow by this passage. Peter was not the one in charge, but the apostles considered what should be done and then send Peter, along with John, to Samaria. The distance from Samaria to Jerusalem being 42 miles and with no transportation, we find that the Peter and John enjoyed a nice long walk. Another point that should be made is that Philip didn't tell the people to just pray for the Holy Spirit or that if they had been saved they were able to speak in tongues. Instead, it is necessary for Peter and John to come down from Jerusalem to give the Holy Spirit in miraculous measure.

Acts 8:15 When they arrived, they prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, 16 because the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them; they had simply been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.

None of the believers in Samaria could speak in tongues although they believed and were baptized. We find that Philip could do signs and wonders and that he was full of the Holy Spirit. However, Philip did not tell the Samaritans to pray for the Holy Spirit to come on them and the Samaritans did not get the Holy Spirit when they believed. They were not baptized in the Holy Spirit but in water. Philip did not tell the Samaritan believers that they had to speak in tongues to show that they were saved. In fact, none of the believers in Samaria could work a single miracle. They couldn't pick up snakes or drink poison without harm. Why people today will say that the signs of Mark 16:17-20 were given to all believers when these baptized believers did not receive the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit is not based on the Bible. Certainly, this ability was not present in these baptized believers.

Mk 16:17 And these signs will accompany those who _____: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; 18 they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well." 19 After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God. 20 Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and _____ his word by the signs that accompanied it.

We find that the Holy Spirit is promised to those who believe and are baptized for the remission of their sins. Not only that, the Holy Spirit is given as a deposit of our salvation.

Jn 3:2 He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know you are a _____ who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him." 3 In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is _____ again." 4 "How can a man be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!" 5 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of _____ and the _____. 6 Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. 7 You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' 8 The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, "Repent and be _____, 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.

Eph 1:13 And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were _____ in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is a deposit guaranteeing our _____ until the redemption of those who are God's possession--to the praise of his glory.

We reconcile these passages by realizing that the Holy Spirit is given in two ways. The first, to every believer, occurs at baptism. The second, the miraculous ability exhibited by the apostles at the

beginning of the church and to the household of Cornelius to show that Gentiles could be baptized in water for the remission of their sins was given by God directly and all others who received it did so through the laying on of an apostles' hands. We see this in both this chapter and later in chapter 19.

The baptism which these believers had undergone was the one baptism that believers are to undergo (*Eph 4:5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism;*). This baptism is the same baptism that Cornelius and his household were to receive (*Acts 10:47 "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with _____? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have."*)

Acts 8:17 Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. 18 When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money 19 and said, "Give me also this ability so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit."

Verse 17-18 clearly states that the miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit was given to others through the laying on of the apostles' hands. The power that Simon wanted to buy was the power to give others the ability to do miraculous things. He had continued with Philip for several days if not weeks and Philip had amazed him with the things he could do. Even so, Simon was tremendously impressed with what Peter and John could do and he recognized that this power belonged to the apostles alone. Later we see that the apostle Paul had this same power.

Acts 19:5 On hearing this, they were _____ into the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. 7 There were about _____ men in all.

Acts 8:20 Peter answered: "May your money perish with you, because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money! 21 You have no part or share in this ministry, because your heart is not right before God. 22 Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive you for having such a thought in your heart. 23 For I see that you are full of bitterness and captive to sin."

This is a clear example of a man who has believed (v. 13) and was baptized who has lost his soul. He has fallen from grace. There could be no clearer picture than this. Some have said that Simon didn't really believe, but the Holy Spirit, guiding Luke in the writing of this history, says that Simon did believe and that he was baptized. Therefore, no one should doubt that he had done everything that Jesus told Nicodemus was necessary for entering the kingdom of God. God himself

Acts 8:13 Simon himself believed and was _____. And he followed Philip everywhere, astonished by the great signs and miracles he saw.

Jn 3:1 Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. 2 He came to Jesus at _____ and said, "Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him." 3 In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again." 4 "How can a man be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely he cannot enter a _____ time into his mother's womb to be born!" 5 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit.

said that this man believed. His belief was not as that of the demons in *Ja 2:19 You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the _____ believe that--and shudder.,* but rather Simon's belief was an obedient belief as we see that he had been baptized. Jesus had commanded that his disciples should baptize in *Mt 28:19 Therefore go and make _____ of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,* as well as in *Mk 16:15 He said to them, "Go into all the world and _____ the good news to all creation. 16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.* Peter had told the believers who wanted to know what to do when they heard the word proclaimed on the day of Pentecost in the very first gospel sermon ever preached *Acts 2:36 "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you _____, both Lord and Christ."* *37 When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" 38 Peter replied, "_____ and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the _____ of the Holy Spirit.*

No one should try to claim that Simon had not done what the Lord required when the Lord himself is the witness to his belief and baptism. Yet -- this man was going to perish along with his money. The Bible for Today's Family states it in simple language "You and your money will both end up in hell if you think you can buy God's gift!" This could not have referred to physical death for all men since Adam have been subject to that death, save Enoch, Elijah and Jesus. No, this was a spiritual death based upon sin. Simon's heart was not right with God. Simon had placed his own personal gain above the power of God.

I Jn 3:4 Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, _____ is lawlessness.

Ja 1:14 but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is _____ away and enticed. 15 Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is _____, gives birth to death.

There are numerous other passages that teach us that one can fall from grace. We must remain true to God's word if we expect to stand in the day of judgment.

I Cor 15:1 Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the _____ I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. 2 By this gospel you are

saved, if you hold _____ to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.

Gal 5:4 You who are trying to be _____ by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from _____.

I Cor 10:12 So, if you think you are _____ firm, be careful that you don't fall!

Rev 2:10 Do not be afraid of what you are about to _____. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the _____ of life.

Another point that is often overlooked by those who believe that you must be baptized in the Holy Spirit, is that Simon had been baptized. Philip, the evangelist, one of the deacons chosen in Acts 6 and said to *be full of the Spirit and wisdom. (Acts 6:3)*, is the one who has told him to be baptized. No one should even think that Philip had not been around the apostles long enough to know the elementary doctrine of baptisms.

Heb 6:1 Therefore let us leave the _____ teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, 2 instruction about _____, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.

Acts 8:24 Then Simon answered, "Pray to the Lord for me so that nothing you have said may happen to me."

The apostles had told Simon that he was going to hell, along with his money. Simon, and all right thinking people, dislike the idea of eternal destruction. We find a request from a man who was a babe in Christ, asking that the apostles pray for him. The apostles did not say that this was unnecessary, however. This would indicate that the Holy Spirit felt that Luke's inspired account should include the idea of prayer on behalf of a brother that he might be delivered from his sin. James tells us, *Therefore _____ your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. (Ja 5:16)* We recognize that the sinner must repent of his sins and confess them to God in order to be forgiven of these sins,

Acts 3:19 Repent, then, and _____ to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord,

I Jn 1:9 If we _____ our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

The apostles told Simon to repent and pray (v. 22) which tells us that the child of God receives forgiveness of his sins in a different manner than the alien sinner. While those who have not been

baptized are told to *"Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the _____ of your sins."* (Acts 2:38), the child of God is told to "repent and pray" for forgiveness of sins; the prayer being the confession to God of the sins that the Christian has committed. Any child of God who will not repent and pray will suffer the consequences of eternal damnation, as the apostles indicated would happen to Simon, a baptized believer (Acts 8:13).

This section should lay to rest forever the idea that once you are saved you cannot be lost. A careful reading of the Scriptures will teach one what they need to do to be saved and to remain in that condition. Simon was saved by obedience to the preaching of Jesus as Christ and was lost by his sin and attitude of heart. He was reinstated in that saved condition from which he had fallen by repenting of his sin and asking God for forgiveness.

Acts 8:25 When they had testified and proclaimed the word of the Lord, Peter and John returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel in many Samaritan villages.

Peter and John, as any good preacher would do, did not miss the opportunity to spread the news about the redeeming grace of Jesus Christ.

Jn 4:35 Do you not say, 'Four months more and then the harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are _____ for harvest.

With the close of the story of Simon, Philip continues his preaching in a new and fertile area as we learn of the obedience of the Ethiopian eunuch.

Acts 8:26 Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Go south to the road-- the desert road-- that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." 27 So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, 28 and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the book of Isaiah the prophet. 29 The Spirit told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it." 30 Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. "Do you understand what you are reading?" Philip asked. 31 "How can I," he said, "unless someone explains it to me?" So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

The humility of the Ethiopian eunuch always amazes me. Here was a man who was important. A man who dealt with great sums of money and must have had a large number of people reporting to him. The question that Philip asks is one that would have insulted most men, yet this Ethiopian simply wants an explanation. He didn't understand and he was willing to take a chance that this man who had just run up to the chariot could tell him what he wanted to know about the Scripture.

Acts 8:32 The eunuch was reading this passage of Scripture: "He was led like a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before the shearer is silent, so he did not open his mouth. 33 In his humiliation he was deprived of justice. Who can speak of his descendants? For his life was taken from the earth." 34 The eunuch asked Philip, "Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?" 35 Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.

The passage that the eunuch was reading was Isaiah 53:7. This chapter of Isaiah is known as a messianic prophecy. The prophet, Isaiah, was foretelling the story of Jesus, the messiah (messiah is from the Hebrew *mashiyach* and means anointed one; it is an exact synonym of the Greek *christos*). Jesus of Nazareth fulfilled over 400 such prophecies in his birth, life and death. We note that Philip did not start explaining church doctrine nor the theories of men, but he begins using the Scripture to tell the eunuch the good news (gospel means good news). We have no record of Philip telling the eunuch anything other than the good news. As we see in the next few verses, telling someone the good news about Jesus means telling them about the entrance into an eternal kingdom. The entrance is supplied through baptism. There are many in the world who don't believe that baptism is necessary for one to be saved, but when the eunuch heard the good news, only one question was on his mind.

Lk 24:44 He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is _____ about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms." 45 Then he opened their minds so they could _____ the Scriptures.

Mt 5:17 "Do not think that I have come to _____ the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. 18 I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least _____ of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is _____.

Acts 8:36 As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?"

The eunuch didn't want to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. He didn't want an experience that was "better felt than told." The eunuch's only question is "Why shouldn't I be baptized?" He wanted to be baptized in water. Again, there are those who don't believe in water baptism. The eunuch had heard the good news and he wanted to be baptized in water. Philip, a man full of the Spirit and wisdom (Acts 6:3), a preacher of the good news, had told this man about the benefits of baptism because that is exactly what the eunuch wanted; to be baptized!

It's unfortunate that more people don't ask the same question when they hear the good news. It's a shame that people don't preach Jesus, because preaching Jesus includes preaching baptism. It did for Philip the evangelist and it does for any man worthy of the title, evangelist, today!

As the eunuch asked for baptism in water, we should remember that there is no question about this text as there is in the next verse. The baptism of the Holy Spirit that so many people want today in order to perform miracles is not the baptism that one who has been taught only *the good news about Jesus* will want to undergo.

Acts 8:37 [And Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."] (NAS)

The NIV doesn't include this verse because it is not found in most ancient versions. I have provided this translation from the New American Standard Version. The NAS footnote reads "Many mss. do not contain this v." The KJV, being translated from the Latin is based on the Byzantine text whereas the NIV was based on evidence from the ancient Greek and other manuscripts which were discovered in the last two hundred years. Depending on the scholarship and the belief in the texts, each of the modern versions of the NT include or exclude a number of passages. This began shortly after the historic discoveries of OT manuscripts beginning in the 1800's.

This verse is not included in any of the most ancient Greek manuscripts available to us, called uncials after the type of script used or in the papyri, which are rare due to the fragility of the papyrus on which they were written. These include the Sinaitic (also known as Codex Sinaiticus or Codex aleph, after the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet), written in the fourth century AD, Codex Vaticanus (also known as Codex B) written in the fourth century, Codex Alexandrinus (Codex A), written in the fifth century AD and was thought at one time by the leading textual critics (Westcott and Hort) to be the only true copy of the Bible. Codex C, also known as Codex Ephraemi, is an incomplete copy of a part of the OT and 145 out of 238 pages of the NT written in the fifth century. Codex D, also known as Codex Bezae, was written in the fifth or sixth century and contains the Gospels and Acts. The verse is included in Codex E dating from the sixth century and in an unknown Greek manuscript accessible to Bede in 735. A variant rendering (differing considerably) is found in a number of miniscules, lectionaries and in quotes by early church fathers, including Irenaeus of the second century, Cyprian in 258 and Ambrosiaster in 384.

Of the two papyri known which contain Acts, P⁴⁵ and P⁷⁴ dating from third and seventh centuries respectively, neither contains this verse.

The NIV and the NASV are translated from the Greek based on the best modern scholarship to determine the correct wording in the ancient Greek versions. The KJV and the NKJV are based on the Byzantine text which was a Latin translation.

Despite this doubt about what the eunuch said at this point, we know from other Scripture that we must be willing to confess Jesus as Christ.

Mt 10:32 "Whoever _____ me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. 33 But whoever _____ me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven.

Jn 12:42 Yet at the same time many even among the _____ believed in him. But because of the Pharisees they would not confess their faith for fear they would be put out of the synagogue; 43 for they loved praise from men more than _____ from God.

Rom 10:9 That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and _____ in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you _____ and are saved.

Acts 8:38 And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. 39 When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing.

We find that the baptism that the eunuch desired was one that required two persons to go into the water. They didn't go up to the water and stand on the side when Philip baptized the eunuch. The eunuch didn't stop the chariot, reach down under the seat and hold up a jug of water and say "Look, here is _____. Why shouldn't I be baptized?" (Acts 8:36b). They needed enough water for Philip and the eunuch to go down into the water and after the baptism, they came up out of the water. The jug that would allow that is too large to be lifted and the seat on the chariot beneath which it would be placed would be too high for a man to sit upon. The Biblical record is clear; the amount of water needed for the baptism that one learns about when Jesus is preached requires much water. Enough water for two men to go into and there baptize the believer.

John's baptism also required much water. *Jn 3:23 Now John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because there was _____ of water, and people were constantly coming to be baptized.* The Greek word *baptizo* is defined as "to dip, to immerse." The Greek was not translated, but was transliterated, i.e., the Greek was changed to an English ending instead of being translated. Thus the Greek *baptizo* became the English *baptize* in order to confirm the practice in 1611 of sprinkling rather than immersion for baptism.

Acts 8:40 Philip, however, appeared at Azotus and traveled about, preaching the gospel in all the towns until he reached Caesarea.

Philip, the evangelist, wanted to spread the word and he continues doing so. He did not stop preaching when he reached Caesarea, he merely stopped traveling for the time.

1. Who is entitled to preach the gospel? _____
2. How can we know that only the apostles could pass on the power to perform miracles? _____

3. What did the Samaritans do when they believed? _____
4. How do we know that Peter was not the chief apostle? _____
5. How can we show that once we are saved we can lose our salvation? _____

6. Why would Simon perish? _____
7. What did Philip preach to the eunuch? _____
8. What was the eunuch's response to the preaching? _____
9. What question did Philip ask the eunuch? _____
10. In what did Philip baptize the eunuch? _____
11. What does Messiah mean? _____
12. What are the three primary ancient Greek manuscripts for translating the NT? _____

A Workbook Commentary on the Book of Acts
Chapter 9

Acts 9:1 Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest 2 and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem.

Luke once again takes up the story of Saul of Tarsus. Saul, a devout Jew who had never done anything to defile his conscience even though he persecuted the church, was evidently the major cause of terror for those who were turning to the Lord. The story of his persecution and his conversion is given here and in chapters 22, 23, and 26. The letters that he obtained were authorizations for the taking of prisoners, both men and women, and perhaps leaving them to die there.

Acts 23:1 Paul looked straight at the Sanhedrin and said, "My brothers, I have fulfilled my duty to God in all good _____ to this day."

Acts 26:9 "I too was _____ that I ought to do all that was possible to oppose the name of Jesus of Nazareth.

Acts 22:4 I _____ the followers of this Way to their death, arresting both men and women and throwing them into prison, 5 as also the high priest and all the Council can testify. I even obtained letters from them to their brothers in Damascus, and went there to bring these people as _____ to Jerusalem to be punished.

Acts 22:19 "Lord," I replied, "these men know that I went from one synagogue to another to imprison and beat those who _____ in you.

Acts 26:11 Many a time I went from one _____ to another to have them punished, and I tried to force them to blaspheme. In my obsession against them, I even went to foreign cities to _____ them.

Acts 9:13 "Lord," Ananias answered, "I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your _____ in Jerusalem. And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name."

Acts 9:21 All those who heard him were _____ and asked, "Isn't he the man who raised havoc in Jerusalem among those who _____ on this name? And hasn't he come here to take them as prisoners to the chief priests?"

Just like many of us today who were once disobedient, we persecuted the church. Perhaps not to the same degree that Paul did, but nevertheless, if we are not for the Lord, we are against him.

Mt 12:30 "He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not _____ with me scatters. The only reason that can be given for such actions is the one given by Paul to Titus, foolishness. This is coupled with the second great reason which leads to unbelief and that is ignorance. By this word, I do not mean lack of intelligence, but simply not knowing what the Lord would have us do.

Titus 3:3 At one time we too were _____, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in _____ and envy, being hated and hating one another.

Acts 17:30 In the past God overlooked such _____, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent.

The disciples were simply known as "The Way." It is not until Acts 11 that they were known as Christians. They were given no denominational titles and the church was simply "the group" or "the number." They were viewed as a sect of the Jews by those outside the church.

Acts 19:23 About that time there arose a great _____ about the Way.

Acts 22:4 I persecuted the followers of this _____ to their death, arresting both men and women and throwing them into prison,

Acts 28:22 But we want to hear what your views are, for we know that people everywhere are talking against this _____."

Acts 2:47 praising God and enjoying the _____ of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

The Greek word "ekklesia," which is most often translated "church" in the KJV, discussed in depth in our comments about Acts 2:47 on p. 21 of this workbook, is not used in these passages, but the Greek word "hagous" is used here to refer to the body of believers. It is evident from the passages above that the Way consisted of obedient believers in Christ and are called the church elsewhere.

Acts 9:3 As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. 4 He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"

Saul fell to the ground because he perceived that the God was showing his power. There is nothing in the text to make us believe that the force of the light pushed Saul to the ground or that he was thrown to the ground. Saul literally prostrated himself on the earth in the presence of almighty God.

Persecution of the Lord's disciples is persecution of the Lord. In the spiritual warfare between God and Satan, those who are on the Lord's side are characterized as the Lord's own and as such, any deed done to them is done to the Lord himself.

Rev 17:14 They will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings--and with him will be his _____, chosen and _____ followers."

Mt 10:40 "He who _____ you receives me, and he who receives me receives the one who sent me. 41 Anyone who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and anyone who _____ a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a righteous man's reward. 42 And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my _____, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward."

Mt 25:40 "The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, _____ you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.' ... 45 "He will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did _____ do for one of the least of these, you did _____ do for me.'

Although Saul had seen the Lord and knew him by sight, he does not look to see the Lord at this point, but simply remains on the ground. The reason for my saying that Paul knew Jesus by sight is based upon the requirements for one to be an apostle of the Lord. Peter gives the requirements in Acts 1:21-22.

Acts 1:21 Therefore it is _____ to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, 22 beginning from John's baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a _____ with us of his resurrection."

Paul further declares that he did see the risen Lord.

I Cor 15:5 and that he _____ to Peter, and then to the Twelve. 6 After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. 7 Then he appeared to _____, then to all the apostles, 8 and last of all he appeared to _____ also, as to one abnormally born.

A witness, in order to be credible, must be an eyewitness. Saul met this requirement as we shall show. Saul would not have been able to have lived in Jerusalem and not have been aware of Jesus and his disciples. His age must have been in his late 20's or early 30's due to his advancement in Judaism. This advancement would not have been possible at an earlier age and his study at the feet of Gamaliel required him to be in Jerusalem rather than in Tarsus. Had Saul not known Jesus by sight, he would have been scoffed at as a dreamer and an imitator of the twelve, but instead he

defends himself as not being less than the other apostles. Thus, Saul, later called Paul the apostle, knew Jesus by sight and remains a dependable witness of the risen Lord.

Gal 1:14 I was advancing in Judaism beyond many Jews of my own age and was _____ zealous for the traditions of my fathers.

Acts 22:3 "I am a Jew, born in _____ of Cilicia, but brought up in this city. Under Gamaliel I was thoroughly _____ in the law of our fathers and was just as zealous for God as any of you are today.

II Cor 11:5 But I do not think I am in the least _____ to those "super-apostles."

Acts 9:5 "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. 6 "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

At this point, Saul must still be on the ground and could not have yet looked up to see his Lord, since he asks who is speaking. Many do not recognize the voice of others unless they know them well. Too, the Lord's voice may have differed coming from heaven as opposed to coming from Jesus upon the earth.

Saul is not saved at this point, even though he asks for identification and is told that Jesus is speaking. The Lord does not save us by coming in a "still, small voice in the middle of the night" or in some miraculous way. It is through the message preached that men are to hear and obey the word of God.

Rom 10:13 for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be _____." 14 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone _____ to them? 15 And how can they _____ unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

I Cor 1:21 For since in the _____ of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was _____ to save those who believe.

II Cor 5:11 Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to _____ men. What we are is _____ to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience.

Acts 9:7 The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone.

We now come to what skeptics claim to be a contradiction in the accounts. Saul says that a light shown around about (9:3) and later says that his companions saw the light. The fact that something is not mentioned in every account does not make a contradiction. A contradiction exists only when there is no way to reconcile the facts. In this case Paul mentions the light here and in his account before King Agrippa.

Acts 22:9 My companions _____ the light, but they did not _____ the voice of him who was speaking to me.

Acts 26:13 About noon, O king, as I was on the road, I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, _____ around me and my companions. 14 We all fell to the ground, and I _____ a voice saying to me in Aramaic, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.'

We also find a supposed contradiction in the statement the KJV that *they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they _____ not the voice of him that spake to me.* (Acts 22:9, KJV) and *And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, _____ a voice, but seeing no man.* (Acts 9:7, KJV) The NIV clears up the misconception in showing that the men heard the voice but did not understand what the voice said. We use this same language today when asking someone to repeat because "I didn't hear what you said." This is accommodative language which means that we did not hear the speaker distinctly enough to understand what the speaker said even though we heard his voice and that we would like to obtain clarification by repeating the message distinctly enough for us to understand the message.

Acts 9:8 Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So they led him by the hand into Damascus. 9 For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything.

At this point, Saul is reduced to utter helplessness and must be taken into Damascus where he fasts and prays. We learn this last point from Jesus' speaking to Ananias, as recorded in the next few verses. Notice that Paul's prayer does not save him from his sins. If it had there would be no need for the actions that followed.

Acts 9:10 In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, "Ananias!" "Yes, Lord," he answered. 11 The Lord told him, "Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying. 12 In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight." 13 "Lord," Ananias answered, "I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your saints in Jerusalem. 14 And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name."

We learn from Saul's later account that Ananias was still keeping the law, even though he was a disciple. It is not until Acts 15 that the matter of keeping the law is settled and then it is still bound upon the Jews. Later we learn the church in Jerusalem was still keeping the law at A.D. 57 when James wants to make sure that all the Jews know that Paul keeps the Law of Moses. In the minds of those today who keep the Sabbath, the question has still not been settled.

Acts 22:12 "A man named Ananias came to see me. He was a _____ observer of the law and highly respected by all the Jews living there.

Acts 21:21 They have been informed that you teach all the _____ who live among the Gentiles to _____ away from Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children or _____ according to our customs. ... 24 Take these men, join in their purification rites and pay their expenses, so that they can have their heads shaved. Then everybody will know there is no truth in these reports about you, but that you yourself are living in _____ to the _____. 25 As for the _____ believers, we have written to them our decision that they should _____ from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality."

It is not until after Paul's imprisonment and release that the Holy Spirit clearly declares through him that the Law is done away.

Gal 3:22 But the Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was promised, being given through _____ in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe. 23 Before this _____ came, we were held prisoners by the law, locked up until faith should be revealed. 24 So the _____ was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. 25 Now that _____ has come, we are no longer under the _____ of the law. 26 You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, 27 or all of you who were _____ into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28 There is neither _____ nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all _____ in Christ Jesus. 29 If you belong to _____, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

We learn from later accounts (Acts 22:16) that Saul was still in his sins although he had been praying for three days. Saul was a sinner and he is not told to "kneel down and say the sinner's prayer" as we often hear on the radio today. Rather Ananias told Paul to get up in order to be obedient to God.

Acts 22:16 And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be _____ and wash your sins away, calling on his name.'

Ananias had heard a great deal about Saul and none of it was good.

Acts 8:3 But Saul began to _____ the church. Going from house to house, he dragged off men and women and put them in _____.

Acts 22:4 I persecuted the followers of this Way to their _____, arresting both men and women and throwing them into prison,

Acts 22:19 "Lord," I replied, "these men know that I went from one _____ to another to imprison and _____ those who believe in you."

Acts 26:10 And that is just what I did in Jerusalem. On the authority of the chief priests I put many of the saints in _____, and when they were put to death, I cast my _____ against them.

1 Tim 1:13 Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in _____ and unbelief. 14 The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the _____ and love that are in Christ Jesus. 15 Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save _____ -- of whom I am the _____.

The question of the meaning of "calling on his name" has been discussed previously at Acts 4:7, 12. The brief answer to this question is that those who "call on his name" appeal to him, i.e., Jesus Christ, for authority in all things. Ananias, being one who devoutly kept the law (Acts 22:12), did not understand this answer completely, however we can comprehend it fully due to the sweeping view that we have of the NT.

II Cor 3:14 But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil _____ when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away. 15 Even to this day when _____ is read, a veil covers their hearts. 16 But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is _____ away.

Ananias recognizes that saints are not those who have been dead for 40 years or who have performed miracles, but rather saints are those who have been set apart from the world due to their active obedience to God. Thus, Paul also calls the brethren in Corinth, to whom he later writes, saints.

1 Cor 1:2 To the church of God in Corinth, to those _____ in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with all those everywhere who _____ on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ-- their Lord and ours:

The Lord does not intend that men shall hear the words of the gospel directly from him, but rather through the agency of man brings the message that is able to save our souls. Paul is first approached in this way as is Cornelius, the first Gentile to be converted.

Acts 10:22 The men replied, "We have come from Cornelius the _____. He is a righteous and God-fearing man, who is respected by all the Jewish people. A holy angel told him to have you come to his house so that he could _____ what you have to say."

Acts 11:13 He told us how he had seen an angel appear in his _____ and say, 'Send to Joppa for Simon who is called Peter. 14 He will bring you a _____ through which you and all your household will be saved.'

Acts 9:15 But the Lord said to Ananias, "Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel."

The foreknowledge of God is evident in many passages in the scripture, even as it is here. Yet this foreknowledge does not take away the free choice that God gives us. Saul could have refused to have humbled himself or to have changed his ways, yet God who knows the heart of all men, knew that Saul would be a faithful servant once he had found his faith. God does not control the actions of all men nor does he know what everyone will do in every instance. This is clearly shown by the actions of Satan, who tells God that the only reason Job obeys him is because he

Jer 1:5 "Before I _____ you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a _____ to the nations."

Acts 13:2 While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to _____ I have called them."

has given him everything. The same is true of Peter who was to be tried by Satan and Jesus said, knowing that the trial would take place, that he had prayed that his faith might not fail. This would clearly show that it could fail, otherwise Jesus had no need to pray that it might not fail. Notice that Jesus does not say that Peter's faith was going to fail, but that he had prayed that it might not fail.

Job 1:8 Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is _____ and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil." 9 "Does Job fear God for nothing?" Satan replied. 10 "Have you not put a _____ around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land. 11 But stretch out your hand and _____ everything he has, and he will surely _____ you to your face."

Lk 22:31 "Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to _____ you as wheat. 32 But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your _____ may not fail. And when you have turned _____, strengthen your brothers."

Saul was to preach to the Gentiles and God had already chosen him for this task.

Gal 1:15 But when God, who set me _____ from birth and called me by his grace, was pleased 16 to _____ his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not consult any man,

Gal 2:7 On the contrary, they saw that I had been entrusted with the _____ of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, just as Peter had been to the Jews. 8 For God, who was at work in the _____ of Peter as an apostle to the _____, was also at work in my ministry as an apostle to the _____.

Eph 3:7 I became a servant of this _____ by the gift of God's grace given me through the working of his power. 8 Although I am less than the _____ of all God's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable _____ of Christ,

I Tim 2:7 And for this purpose I was appointed a _____ and an apostle--I am telling the truth, I am not lying--and a teacher of the _____ faith to the Gentiles.

II Tim 4:17 But the Lord _____ at my side and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully _____ and all the Gentiles might hear it. And I was delivered from the lion's mouth.

Acts 9:16 I will show him how much he must suffer for my name."

Saul was told of his suffering and we find his suffering was prolonged above any of the apostles. James, the brother of John, was put to death by Herod, yet to continue to live on the earth can bring more pain than an early death. Saul would suffer over the years, not only from those opposed to the Lord, but also from brethren. I often think of how ashamed Saul must have been in later years as others read Luke's account in his presence and as the eyes of those amazed brethren must have turned upon him, as he must have burned with shame. Yet he did these things and he points out that others could not doubt the grace of Jesus because of his dealings with Saul. The love shown by Jesus must have driven Saul on as he sought in some small measure to make amends for the pain that he had caused the Lord.

II Cor 11:23 Are they _____ of Christ? (I am out of my mind to talk like this.) I am more. I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to _____ again and again. 24 Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. 25 Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was _____, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, 26 I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own countrymen, in _____ from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from _____ brothers. 27 I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known _____ and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked.

II Tim 1:11 And of this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher. 12 That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet I am not _____, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to _____ what I have entrusted to him for that day.

2 Tim 3:11 _____, sufferings-- what kinds of things happened to me in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, the _____ I endured. Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them.

II Cor 5:14 For Christ's love _____ us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died.

Acts 9:17 Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord-- Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here-- has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." 18 Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized,

Ananias did not lay his hands on Saul in order to give him the miraculous indwelling of the Holy Spirit, but to restore his sight, according to v. 12. This allows Paul to say truthfully that he was not behind any of the apostles because the Lord treated him even as he did the twelve. At the same time, Saul did receive the Holy Spirit at baptism as a sign of his salvation as all obedient believers do (Acts 2:38, Eph 1:13).

Acts 22:13 He stood beside me and said, `Brother Saul, receive your sight!' And at that very moment I was able to see him. 14 "Then he said: `The God of our fathers has _____ you to know his will and to see the Righteous One and to hear words from his mouth. 15 You will be his _____ to all men of what you have seen and heard.

2 Cor 11:5 But I do not think I am in the least _____ to those "super-apostles."

Gal 1:15 But when God, who set me apart from birth and called me by his grace, was pleased 16 to reveal his Son in me so that I might _____ him among the Gentiles, I did not consult any man, 17 nor did I go up to _____ to see those who were apostles before I was, but I went immediately into Arabia and _____ returned to Damascus.

Acts 1:26 Then they cast lots, and the _____ fell to Matthias; so he was added to the eleven apostles. 2:1 When the day of _____ came, they were all together in one place. ... 4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other _____ as the Spirit enabled them.

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, "Repent and be _____, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will _____ the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Eph 1:13 And you also were included in Christ when you heard the _____ of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a _____, the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is a deposit _____ our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession--to the praise of his glory.

Once again, we note that Saul was not saved by his praying. Rather, Ananias had to tell him what to do. We find that baptism was clearly necessary for Saul to cleanse himself of his sins. If he had sins to wash away, he was still in sin and thus unsaved. Prayer had not removed the sin of Saul, since at this time he was outside the body of Christ (Rom 6:3-4; Gal 3:27). Baptism is required for one to be "in Christ." Today, we can put on Christ in exactly the same way, with exactly the same results; the remission of our sins.

Acts 22:16 And now what are you _____ for? Get up, be baptized and _____ your sins _____, calling on his name.'

Rom 6:3 Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were _____ into his _____? 4 We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as _____ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

Gal 3:27 for all of you who were _____ into Christ have _____ yourselves with Christ.

Acts 9:19 and after taking some food, he regained his strength. Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus. 20 At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God. 21 All those who heard him were astonished and asked, "Isn't he the man who raised havoc in Jerusalem among those who call on this name? And hasn't he come here to take them as prisoners to the chief priests?" 22 Yet Saul grew more and more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Christ.

Today we need to establish the same thing that Saul preached. Jesus is the Christ! I have heard Christians say that there is nothing that we can do if someone doesn't believe that Jesus is the son of God, but Saul proved that Jesus was the Christ. The evidence both we and Saul must use is Jesus' fulfillment of OT prophecy and the miracles which he performed.

In 20:30 Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his _____, which are not recorded in this book.31 But these are written that you may believe that

Jesus is the _____, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Lk 24:44 He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is _____ about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms."45 Then he opened their minds so they could understand the _____.

Mt 5:17 "Do not think that I have come to _____ the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to _____ them. 18 I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least _____ of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until _____ is accomplished.

Acts 17:3 explaining and _____ that the Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead. "This Jesus I am _____ to you is the Christ," he said.

Acts 28:23 They arranged to meet _____ on a certain day, and came in even larger numbers to the place where he was staying. From _____ till evening he explained and declared to them the kingdom of God and tried to _____ them about Jesus from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets.

Acts 9:23 After many days had gone by, the Jews conspired to kill him, 24 but Saul learned of their plan. Day and night they kept close watch on the city gates in order to kill him. 25 But his followers took him by night and lowered him in a basket through an opening in the wall.

Many years later, Paul refers to this incident of being lowered in a basket as one of the sufferings he endured.

II Cor 11:32 In Damascus the governor under King Aretas had the _____ of the Damascenes guarded in order to arrest me. 33 But I was lowered in a _____ from a window in the wall and slipped through his hands.

Acts 9:26 When he came to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he really was a disciple. 27 But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. He told them how Saul on his journey had seen the Lord and that the Lord had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had preached fearlessly in the name of Jesus. 28 So Saul stayed with them and moved about freely in Jerusalem, speaking boldly in the name of the Lord.

Saul reaches Jerusalem after a period of approximately 3 years as we learn from his account to the Galatians, but of which fact Luke makes no mention at this time. Barnabas evidently introduces Saul to Peter and James, the Lord's brother. When Saul, then called Paul,

next reaches Jerusalem, it is for the discussion on circumcision in Acts 15, a time span of 14 years.

Gal 1:16 to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not - _____ any man, 17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before I was, but I went immediately into Arabia and later _____ to Damascus. 18 Then after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to get acquainted with _____ and stayed with him fifteen days. 19 I saw none of the other apostles--only _____, the Lord's brother.

The modern day equivalent of this incident of refusal to associate with a disciple is not the voting that some congregations do on whom they will accept into their membership nor the decision of the elders or the preacher on whether someone should be added to the local directory, but has to do with whether the body of believers will even allow such a person to know when services will be held. In China, a man who had been a member of the Red Guard, was baptized and the other Chinese, fearing that he was merely a government informer, would not allow the American missionaries to bring this man to their assemblies. That is the native Chinese were afraid of him and would not let him see who they were lest they be persecuted by their government for being Christians. These Christians in Jerusalem knew of Saul's history and would not even meet him for fear that he (Saul) was a "government informer." Some religious denominations will vote on whether they should accept the "salvation story" of one who has led a life of sin, but we find that the decision of who is "in the church" is in God's hands.

Acts 2:47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their _____ daily those who were being saved.

Barnabas is probably the Barnabas we read about in Acts 4, a somewhat wealthy man who was willing to share with his brethren. Barnabas and Paul evidently are close in their work in the Lord due to Barnabas' knowledge of Paul displayed in these verses and in the subsequent missionary journey which they undertook.

Acts 4:36 Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the _____ called Barnabas (which means Son of Encouragement), 37 sold a field he owned and _____ the money and put it at the apostles' feet.

Acts 13:2 While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set _____ for me Barnabas and Saul for the _____ to which I have called them."

Acts 9:29 He talked and debated with the Grecian Jews, but they tried to kill him.

There are a number of Christians today who want to avoid controversy and frown on debates. We see that Paul not only talked but also debated the Grecian Jews showing them the error of their ways to the point that they wanted to kill him. Very few of us make those who

speaking against the word of God so angry today. That may be one of the reasons that Paul had so much success and we have so little success. Unless someone becomes upset with their present situation, they do not understand that they have to change. Coming to Christ is an upsetting proposition. Certainly Paul was not personally offensive in this effort, but he would not allow error to stand for a moment. When error is immediately pointed out, the proud will resist and often become enraged.

Acts 9:30 When the brothers learned of this, they took him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus. 31 Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace. It was strengthened; and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it grew in numbers, living in the fear of the Lord.

Whenever we hear that the church is growing, we find that there is peace among the brethren even if there is opposition on the outside. Good teachers, preachers and pastors are needed to feed the flock of God and to bring in the lost.

Eph 4:11 It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be _____ and teachers, 12 to _____ God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the _____ of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the _____ of Christ.

At the same time, opposition on the outside often serves to strengthen those on the inside in their efforts to spread the gospel. We recognize that we are not to rest while here on the earth but that our rest comes after we have crossed through the valley of death to reach that other shore.

Acts 8:1 And Saul was there, giving _____ to his death. On that day a great persecution broke out against the church at Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were _____ throughout Judea and Samaria. ... 4 Those who had been scattered preached the _____ wherever they went.

Heb 4:8 For if Joshua had given them _____, God would not have spoken later about another day. 9 There _____, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; 10 for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his. 11 Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that _____, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience.

1 Thes 5:10 He died for us so that, whether we are _____ or asleep, we may live together with him.

There are those who fail to fear the Lord. The fear of God that the Christian has differs from the alien sinner who has no hope. The fear that these brethren had was a respect, knowing

what the Lord would do to those who fell and the great difference in power between the Lord and them.

Psalms 86:11 Teach me your way, O LORD, and I will walk in your _____; give me an undivided heart, that I may _____ your name.

Psalms 111:10 The fear of the LORD is the _____ of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding. To him belongs _____ praise.

Col 1:10 And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may _____ him in every way: bearing _____ in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God,

Acts 9:32 As Peter traveled about the country, he went to visit the saints in Lydda. 33 There he found a man named Aeneas, a paralytic who had been bedridden for eight years. 34 "Aeneas," Peter said to him, "Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and take care of your mat." Immediately Aeneas got up. 35 All those who lived in Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord.

The KJV gives the disease as "palsy" while the NIV calls the man a "paralytic." The kind of miracle that the apostles did were those that could not be doubted. There was no case of a man hard of hearing or one who had a pain in his chest, but like Aeneas, they were afflicted with a visible disease. This is the reason that so many turned to the Lord. There was no question in their minds that Peter was preaching the gospel; his works confirmed the message taught.

Mk 16:17 And these _____ will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; 18 they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink _____ poison, it will not _____ them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well." 19 After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God. 20 Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord _____ with them and _____ his word by the signs that accompanied it.

Jesus had healed in the same fashion. It was not the belief of those who needed healing, but the power of God demonstrating the approval of the one doing the healing.

Jn 3:1 Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the _____ ruling council. 2 He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know you are a _____ who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are _____ if God were not with him."

Mt 8:5 When Jesus had _____ Capernaum, a centurion came to him, asking for help. 6 "Lord," he said, "my servant lies at home _____ and in terrible

suffering." 7 Jesus said to him, "I will go and heal him." 8 The centurion replied, "Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just _____ the word, and my servant will be healed. 9 For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." 10 When Jesus heard this, he was _____ and said to those following him, "I tell you the truth, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great _____. 11 I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. 12 But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." 13 Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go! It will be done just as you believed it would." And his servant was _____ at that _____ hour.

Another example of a NT miracle in which there could be no doubt about the outcome was given in Acts 3 (See p. 24 ff).

Acts 3:6 Then Peter said, "Silver or _____ I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." ... 12 When Peter saw this, he said to them: "Men of Israel, why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us as if by our own _____ or godliness we had made this man walk? ... 16 By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is _____' name and the faith that comes _____ him that has given this complete healing to him, as you can all see.

Acts 9:36 In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which, when translated, is Dorcas), who was always doing good and helping the poor. 37 About that time she became sick and died, and her body was washed and placed in an upstairs room. 38 Lydda was near Joppa; so when the disciples heard that Peter was in Lydda, they sent two men to him and urged him, "Please come at once!" 39 Peter went with them, and when he arrived he was taken upstairs to the room. All the widows stood around him, crying and showing him the robes and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was still with them. 40 Peter sent them all out of the room; then he got down on his knees and prayed. Turning toward the dead woman, he said, "Tabitha, get up." She opened her eyes, and seeing Peter she sat up. 41 He took her by the hand and helped her to her feet. Then he called the believers and the widows and presented her to them alive. 42 This became known all over Joppa, and many people believed in the Lord. 43 Peter stayed in Joppa for some time with a tanner named Simon.

Tabitha is Aramaic and means a gazelle. Luke translates to the Greek so that all those who read his account in that language would know the meaning of the name. Names were given in that day which would call to mind some attribute rather than merely sound cute. Thus, Jesus called Simon Peter which means a small rock which was contrasted with the large rock (Gr. *petra*) upon which Jesus built his church.

Mt 16:18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the _____ of Hades will not overcome it.

As we think of how others will remember us when we have gone we should remember that the child of God is to share, to help those in need and to be in sympathy with others. Dorcas was all of these and rightly deserves her place in this book.

Tabitha was a disciple, one who is a follower or learner, of Christ. We can wish for no higher distinction than this.

1. Where was Saul going? _____

2. Why was Saul going there? _____

3. Did the men with Saul hear the voice? _____

4. Why was Ananias sent to Saul? _____

5. Who chose Saul to be an apostle? _____

6. What did Saul do for the first three days in Damascus? _____

7. Why was Saul baptized? _____

8. Quote Acts 22:16 _____

9. How did Saul "prove" that Jesus was the Christ? _____

10. Who was Aeneas? _____

11. Who was Tabitha? _____

A Workbook Commentary on the Book of Acts
Chapter 10

Acts 10:1 At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion in what was known as the Italian Regiment. 2 He and all his family were devout and God-fearing; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly.

The KJV tells us that Cornelius was one of the Italian Band, which does not refer to a group of people who play musical instruments, but as we see in the NIV, it refers to the regiment of the Roman army in which Cornelius served. There is no question that most people today would think that Cornelius was saved since he prayed, he gave to the poor and he was devout and God-fearing. However, this is not enough to save someone. Jesus came into this world to save us from our sins.

Mt 1:21 She will give _____ to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their _____."

We know that Cornelius was not saved because of his words in Acts 11. There would have been no need for the message if Cornelius was saved.

Acts 11:14 He will bring you a message through which you and all your household will be _____.'

Some have suggested that Cornelius was not a sinner because of what an uninspired man had to say on the subject.

Jn 9:31 We know that God does not listen to _____. He listens to the godly man who does his will.

Psalms 66:18 If I had _____ sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened; 19 but God has surely listened and _____ my voice in prayer. 20 Praise be to God, who has not rejected my prayer or withheld his love from me!

Prov 15:29 The LORD is far from the _____ but he hears the prayer of the righteous.

We must keep what this healed, blind man of Jn 9:31, had to say in perspective, since he merely states what the Jews believed. From Rom 3:23 *for all have _____ and fall short of the glory of God*, we learn that no one is without sin. John tells members of the church *If we claim we have not _____, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives. (I Jn 1:10)*. Just previous to this he has said *If we _____ our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. (I Jn 1:9)*. Thus, God does hear us when we have sinned, however, our hearts must be turned to him. God is our

heavenly father and we are his children and he treats us as we would treat one of our children. *Heb 12:6 because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a _____.* 7 *Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what _____ is not disciplined by his _____?* If someone is not yet a son of God, a child of God by adoption (*Gal 4:5 to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full _____ of sons.*), just as Cornelius was not a child of God prior to his adoption, then God treats him as he would someone else's child. Yet all who are willing to repent and turn to God may pray that God will show them the way.

Psalms 141:2 May my _____ be set before you like incense; may the lifting up of my hands be like the evening sacrifice.

You may have a good conscience but that does not mean that you are saved. Paul tells us that he never did anything to offend his conscience and yet he rightly felt that he was the "chief of sinners" (KJV)

Acts 23:1 Paul looked straight at the Sanhedrin and said, "My brothers, I have fulfilled my duty to God in all good _____ to this day."

I Tim 1:15 Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save _____ --of whom I am the _____.

There is no question that Cornelius had many of the attributes that Christians are to have today since he was generous in his giving to those less fortunate than he, he prayed and he feared God.

Heb 13:16 And do not forget to do good and to _____ with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

I Thess 5:17 pray _____;

II Cor 7:1 Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us _____ ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of _____ for God.

Acts 10:3 One day at about three in the afternoon he had a vision. He distinctly saw an angel of God, who came to him and said, "Cornelius!" 4 Cornelius stared at him in fear. "What is it, Lord?" he asked. The angel answered, "Your prayers and gifts to the poor have come up as a memorial offering before God. 5 Now send men to Joppa to bring back a man named Simon who is called Peter. 6 He is staying with Simon the tanner, whose house is by the sea." 7 When the angel who spoke to him had gone, Cornelius called two of his servants and a devout soldier who was one of his attendants. 8 He told them everything that had happened and sent them to Joppa.

Cornelius was evidently praying for God to guide him since the answer God gave to his prayers was to send Peter to tell him what to do to be saved (*Acts 11:14 He will bring you a _____ through which you and all your household will be saved.*)

God adopts us as sons when we are saved (*Acts 2:47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord _____ to their _____ daily those who were being saved.*), which results in our being added to the number (the church, see comments on Acts 2:47 for a detailed discussion), which is Christ's body (*Eph 1:22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the _____, 23 which is his body, the _____ of him who fills everything in every way.*).

Cornelius had been prepared for the events to follow. When Cornelius heard what the Lord wanted him to do, he didn't delay. When we hear what the Lord wants us to do we should be just as quick to do it. Saul, as we learned earlier, had no hesitation when he heard from the Lord.

Acts 9:5 "Who are you, _____?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be _____ what you must do."

As 10:4 clearly shows, God hears the cry of those who would know him. However, he does not save them as they are but requires that they be obedient to him upon learning his will. God will provide the way for them to hear his will, but they must be obedient upon hearing.

Cornelius is told to send men to Joppa, a seaport on the Mediterranean Sea, about 35 miles northwest of Jerusalem. The city itself is 116 feet above the sea on a rocky cliff overlooking the sea. The name, which means beautiful, is probably taken due to the scene observed as the sunlight was reflected from the buildings in the city.

Cornelius is told to get Simon who is called Peter to come and teach him what he needs to do to be saved. Jesus himself, gave Simon that nickname.

Mark 3:16 These are the twelve he appointed: _____ (to whom he gave the name _____);

John 1:42 And he _____ him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You will be called _____" (which, when translated, is _____).

God has always had someone to take the message to those who would be willing to hear it and does not deal directly with the person to be saved, unless he was one of the apostles chosen by Christ himself. It is no different now than it was then. Those who believe in the Pentecostal presence for this age should review the method by which God calls men to him in the NT.

Acts 9:6 "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be _____ what you must do."

Romans 10:14 How, then, can they call on the one they have not _____ in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they _____ without someone _____ to them? 15 And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!" 16 But not all the Israelites accepted the good news. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our message?" 17 Consequently, faith comes from _____ the message, and the _____ is heard through the word of Christ.

II Cor 5:11 Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to _____ men. What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience.

I Cor 1:21 For since in the _____ of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was _____ to save those who believe.

Prayer is not sufficient for remission of sins. Cornelius did not pray the "sinner's prayer." Cornelius did not kneel down and ask Jesus to come into his life. Cornelius did as the Lord directed and called for someone to come to teach him what he needed to do to be saved as we learn from Peter's account of the incident. It was through the message preached that Cornelius and those with him would learn what to do to be saved. Their prayers had not and could not save them. They needed additional information which God chose to give through the preacher. He did not give it directly through the Holy Spirit.

Acts 11:14 He will bring you a _____ through which you and all your household will be saved.'

Acts 10:9 About noon the following day as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the roof to pray. 10 He became hungry and wanted something to eat, and while the meal was being prepared, he fell into a trance. 11 He saw heaven opened and something like a large sheet being let down to earth by its four corners. 12 It contained all kinds of four-footed animals, as well as reptiles of the earth and birds of the air. 13 Then a voice told him, "Get up, Peter. Kill and eat." 14 "Surely not, Lord!" Peter replied. "I have never eaten anything impure or unclean." 15 The voice spoke to him a second time, "Do not call anything impure that God has made clean." 16 This happened three times, and immediately the sheet was taken back to heaven.

To Jews certain things were unclean, although from the beginning, God had planned for man to use everything that he found on the earth. God had given Moses instructions that would prevent them from having the diseases that the Egyptians had due to their foods and customs. Peter, as a faithful keeper of the law of Moses, and not yet understanding that the law had been

taken out of the way (Col 2:14), had never eaten anything that fell under the dietary restrictions placed on the Jews.

Col 2:14 having canceled the written _____, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he _____ it away, nailing it to the cross.

These restrictions were given so that the Israelites would not be sick due to impure or improperly cooked food.

Ex 15:26 He said, "If you listen carefully to the voice of the LORD your God and do what is _____ in his eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the _____ I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, who heals you."

Lev 11:2 "Say to the Israelites: `Of all the _____ that live on land, these are the ones you may eat: 3 You may eat any animal that has a _____ hoof completely divided and that _____ the cud. 4 "There are some that only chew the cud or only have a split hoof, but you must not eat them. The camel, though it chews the cud, does not have a split hoof; it is ceremonially unclean for you. 5 The coney, though it chews the cud, does not have a split hoof; it is unclean for you. 6 The rabbit, though it chews the cud, does not have a split hoof; it is _____ for you. 7 And the pig, though it has a _____ hoof completely divided, does not chew the cud; it is unclean for you. 8 You must not eat their meat or touch their _____; they are unclean for you.

Their descendants were to be as the sands of the sea and it would be necessary for them to have more children, who would live longer and suffer less if that prophecy was to be fulfilled.

Gen 22:16 and said, "I swear by myself, declares the LORD, that because you have done this and have not _____ your son, your only son, 17 I will surely bless you and make your descendants as _____ as the stars in the sky and as the _____ on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies,

Acts 10:17 While Peter was wondering about the meaning of the vision, the men sent by Cornelius found out where Simon's house was and stopped at the gate. 18 They called out, asking if Simon who was known as Peter was staying there. 19 While Peter was still thinking about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Simon, three men are looking for you. 20 So get up and go downstairs. Do not hesitate to go with them, for I have sent them." 21 Peter went down and said to the men, "I'm the one you're looking for. Why have you come?" 22 The men replied, "We have come from Cornelius the centurion. He is a righteous and God-fearing man, who is respected by all the Jewish people. A holy angel told him to have you come to his house so that he could hear what you have to say." 23 Then Peter invited the men into the house to be his guests. The next day Peter started out with them, and some of the brothers from Joppa went along

The church has been in existence for about 9 years and to the case of Cornelius, no Gentile has ever received the gospel who was not a proselyte. Nicholas, one of the seven chosen in Acts 6, was a Gentile, but he had become a proselyte as the KJV calls him, or a convert to Judaism as the NIV calls him.

Acts 6:5 This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a _____ to Judaism.

Peter does not yet understand what the message means, even though it had been prophesied to Abraham that the Gentiles would be blessed as well as the Jews.

Gen 12:3 I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be _____ through you."

Peter is not going to forget that God required hospitality of his people. Some today would call it good manners to invite guests to stay the evening, however, it is based upon God's requirement.

Heb 13:2 Do not forget to _____ strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it.

Levi 19:33 "When an alien lives with you in your land, do not mistreat him. 34 The alien living with you must be _____ as one of your native-born. Love him as yourself, for you were _____ in Egypt. I am the LORD your God.

The brothers who went with Peter were Jews as they are referred to as having been circumcised and the number of men is later said to be six.

Acts 10:45 The _____ believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles.

Acts 11:12 The Spirit told me to have no hesitation about going with them. These _____ brothers also _____ with me, and we entered the man's house.

Acts 10:24 The following day he arrived in Caesarea. Cornelius was expecting them and had called together his relatives and close friends.

A characteristic of one who expects to find out something important about their spiritual life is that they will call those who are important to them to hear about what is going on. It is also important to note that the ones who were invited took Cornelius seriously enough that they would come. We need more of both classes in order that the gospel might be spread. Our character needs to be such that others will want to know what we have to say when we tell them

it is important. The Philippian jailer had the same respect for the gospel that Cornelius and his household showed.

Acts 16:30 He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be _____?" 31 They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be _____ --you and your household." 32 Then they _____ the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house.

Acts 10:25 As Peter entered the house, Cornelius met him and fell at his feet in reverence. 26 But Peter made him get up. "Stand up," he said, "I am only a man myself."

Having had a revelation from God that Peter would tell him how to be saved, Cornelius naturally assumes that Peter himself should be worshiped. This is not the case. No one other than deity should be worshiped. We often see this rule disobeyed by those in the Roman Catholic church, where great pomp and ceremony accompany any Papal visit as both high and low bow down before the Pope. This is also true, although perhaps to a lesser extent, among other denominations of men. In the Lord's church, however, there will be no bowing, scraping or falling down before any man as shown by a number of passages in the Scriptures.

Rev 19:10 At this I fell at his feet to _____ him. But he said to me, "Do not do it! I am a fellow _____ with you and with your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. _____ God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

Rev 22:8 I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I had heard and seen them, I fell down to _____ at the feet of the angel who had been showing them to me. 9 But he said to me, "Do not do it! I am a _____ servant with you and with your brothers the prophets and of all who keep the words of this book. _____ God!"

Acts 14:13 The priest of Zeus, whose temple was just outside the city, brought bulls and wreaths to the city gates because he and the crowd wanted to offer _____ to them. 14 But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of this, they tore their clothes and rushed out into the crowd, shouting: 15 "Men, why are you doing this? We too are _____ men, _____ like you. We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made heaven and earth and sea and everything in them.

Those who would keep the pure gospel will not set themselves above others, but seek to serve.

Mt 20:25 Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles _____ it over them, and their high officials exercise _____ over them. 26

Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your _____,

2 Cor 4:5 For we do not _____ ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your _____ for Jesus' sake.

Acts 10:27 Talking with him, Peter went inside and found a large gathering of people. 28 He said to them: "You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with a Gentile or visit him. But God has shown me that I should not call any man impure or unclean.

Jews commonly had no dealings with Gentiles, yet when Gentiles came among them, the law required that they treat them hospitably.

Jn 4:9 The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not _____ with Samaritans.)

At the same time, the Jews had heard the Lord concerning their association with uncircumcised people, and did not want to profane themselves or their houses.

Ezek 44:7 when you brought in _____, uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in My sanctuary to _____ it, even My house, when you offered My food, the fat and the blood; for they made My covenant void — this in addition to all your abominations.

Peter has pondered the question of the sheet and the unclean animals for two days as he has made the journey to Caesarea. During that time he has finally been shown that God has called all men to him through the gospel.

Gal 3:28 There is neither _____ nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all _____ in Christ Jesus.

Eph 3:6 This mystery is that through the _____ the Gentiles are _____ together with Israel, members together of one body, and _____ together in the promise in Christ Jesus.

Acts 10:29 So when I was sent for, I came without raising any objection. May I ask why you sent for me?" 30 Cornelius answered: "Four days ago I was in my house praying at this hour, at three in the afternoon. Suddenly a man in shining clothes stood before me 31 and said, 'Cornelius, God has heard your prayer and remembered your gifts to the poor. 32 Send to Joppa for Simon who is called Peter. He is a guest in the home of Simon the tanner, who lives by the sea.' 33 So I sent for you immediately, and it was good of you to come. Now we are all here in the presence of God to listen to everything the Lord has commanded you to tell us."

Peter has been told that he would not have to plan his sermons ahead of time. Since he does not know the situation until he arrives, it would have been hard to plan. But, it is certainly true that he had a better grip on the subject than we do today since he had been there to witness the things about which he would speak. As we shall see below, there are a number of similarities in the lesson given to Cornelius and the one that Peter preached on the day of Pentecost, as recorded in Acts 2. As we have noted earlier, the message preached is the one that tell us how to be saved. Cornelius was not saved when the Holy Spirit fell on him, but when he was obedient to the message that told him what to do. The coming of the Holy Spirit was a sign to the Jewish brethren who accompanied Peter and not to the household of Cornelius.

Mk 13:11 Whenever you are arrested and brought to trial, do not worry beforehand about _____ to say. Just say whatever is _____ you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit.

Jn 16:13 But when he, the _____ of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will _____ only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.

Rom 1:16 I am not ashamed of the _____, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

Acts 10:34 Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism 35 but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right.

Calvinism teaches the predestination and foreordination of men to salvation. But the Bible teaches that anyone who will fear God and do what is right is accepted of God. Calvinists also teach that this election is unconditional and cannot be refused. There are a number of passages that teach that we have a choice and it is a shame that men will not believe and obey the gospel of Christ. God would not and does not condemn men to hell because they are predestined from before the foundation of the earth to be lost. Man chooses to do what is right or what is wrong and is judged solely on his own decision.

Romans 2:11 For God does not show _____.

Luke 20:21 So the spies questioned him: "Teacher, we know that you speak and teach what is right, and that you do not show _____ but teach the way of God in accordance with the truth.

Mt 7:21 "Not _____ who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who _____ the _____ of my Father who is in heaven.

Acts 10:36 You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, telling the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all.

Peter begins his lesson to the Gentiles who are gathered here with the fact that God first sent the message to Israel

Mt 10:6 Go rather to the lost _____ of Israel.

Luke 24:47 and repentance and _____ of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

Peace is only available through Jesus. Peace brings security and a recognition that one has no guilt and can thus rejoice.

Luke 2:10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be _____. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. 11 Today in the town of David a _____ has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. 12 This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." 13 Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, 14 "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth _____ to men on whom his favor rests."

2 Cor 5:18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of _____: 19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's _____ against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. 20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be _____ to God. 21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Eph 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far _____ have been brought near through the blood of Christ. 14 For he himself is our _____, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, 15 by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to _____ in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, 16 and in this one body to _____ both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death

their hostility. 17 He came and preached _____ to you who were far away and _____ to those who were near. 18 For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.

Col 1:20 and through him to reconcile to _____ all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

"Jesus Christ is Lord" is the watchword of all Christians. There is a reluctance within the church of the Lord to say such things, but that must be changed. We need more Christians saying "Praise the Lord" and "Hallelujah!"

Psalms 110:1 The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a _____ for your feet." 2 The LORD will extend your mighty _____ from Zion; you will rule in the midst of your enemies.

Isaiah 45:21 Declare what is to be, present it-- let them take counsel together. Who foretold this long ago, who declared it from the distant past? Was it not I, the LORD? And there is no God apart from me, a _____ God and a Savior; there is none but me. 22 "Turn to me and be saved, all you ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other. 23 By myself I have sworn, my mouth has _____ in all integrity a word that will not be revoked: Before me every knee will bow; by me every tongue will swear. 24 They will say of me, 'In the LORD alone are _____ and strength.'" All who have raged against him will come to him and be put to shame. 25 But in the LORD all the descendants of Israel will be _____ righteous and will exult.

Micah 5:2 "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be _____ over Israel, whose origins are from of _____, from ancient times."

Acts 10:37 You know what has happened throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached--

Peter tells Cornelius that no one who has lived in Judea during the past few years could help knowing something about the story that he is about to tell. He begins with John the Baptist, who was Jesus' cousin, and who preached a baptism of repentance unto remission of sins. He plainly stated that he was not the messiah nor was he the prophet Elijah. The purpose of John's baptism was not the same as the baptism of Jesus. The Jews were in a covenant relationship with God, but they needed to turn from their sins. John's baptism was "an outward sign of an inward grace" as the Southern Baptists put it about their baptism. Southern Baptists teach that you are baptized because you are saved and in a covenant relationship with God. The Jews of John the Baptist's time were saved and in a covenant relationship with God, but they needed to repent and turn to God and this baptism was a sign of their repentance. Jesus taught baptism for the

remission of sins and not repentance. Repentance is necessary as a prerequisite to the forgiveness of sins which is accomplished by obedience to God and not just by repentance.

Mt 3:1 In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the Desert of Judea 2 and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of _____ is near." 3 This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: "A voice of one calling in the desert, `_____ the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him."

Mk 1:1 The beginning of the _____ about Jesus Christ, the Son of God. 2 It is written in Isaiah the prophet: "I will send my _____ ahead of you, who will prepare your way"-- 3 "a voice of one calling in the desert, `Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'" 4 And so John came, _____ in the desert region and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 5 The whole Judean countryside and all the _____ of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.

Mk 1:14 After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. 15 "The _____ has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. _____ and believe the good news!"

Acts 19:1 While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some _____ 2 and asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They answered, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." 3 So Paul asked, "Then what _____ did you receive?" "John's baptism," they replied. 4 Paul said, "John's baptism was a baptism of _____. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in _____."

Acts 10:38 how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.

Luke 3:22 and the Holy Spirit _____ on him in bodily form like a _____. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well _____."

Luke 4:18 "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has _____ me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the _____ and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed,

Mt 4:23 Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, _____ the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. 24 News about him spread all over Syria, and people brought

to him all who were ill with _____ diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed, and he healed them. 25 Large crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, _____ and the region across the Jordan followed him.

John 3:2 He came to _____ at night and said, "Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the _____ signs you are doing if God were not with him."

Acts 10:39 "We are of witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a tree,

One of the qualifications of an apostle is that he must have been a witness of he risen Lord and Peter tells Cornelius that he was a witness so that there will be no doubt in Cornelius' mind about the truth of his statements.

Acts 1:22 beginning from John's _____ to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a _____ with us of his resurrection."

Acts 3:15 You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are _____ of this.

A common thread of the accounts of Jesus' death was the fact that he was crucified on a tree, which was an abomination under the Law of Moses.

Acts 2:23 This man was handed over to you by God's set _____ and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. 24 But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of _____, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.

Acts 5:30 The God of our fathers raised Jesus from the dead-- whom you had killed by _____ him on a tree.

Gal 3:13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: " _____ is everyone who is hung on a tree."

Acts 10:40 but God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen.

It is often said that the accepted days of Jesus' death and resurrection (Friday and Sunday) are incorrect due to Jesus' prophecy that he would be in the earth 3 days as Jonah was in the belly of the whale for 3 days and 3 nights, making a total of 72 hours. We need to keep in mind that

the Jews counted 3 days as any part of the three. This is clearly shown by that usage in I Kings and Esther.

Mt 12:39 He answered, "A wicked and _____ generation asks for a miraculous sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. 40 For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a _____, so the Son of Man will be three days and three _____ in the heart of the earth.

I K 12:5 _____ answered, "Go away for three days and then come back to me." So the people went away. ... 12 _____ days later Jeroboam and all the people returned to Rehoboam, as the king had said, "Come back to me in three days."

Est 4:16 "Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or _____ for three days, _____ or day. I and my maids will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish." ... 5:1 On the _____ day Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the palace, in front of the king's hall. The king was sitting on his royal throne in the hall, facing the entrance.

This counting is confirmed by the accounts of Jesus' death and burial.

Mt 28:1 After the _____, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

Mt 27:63 "Sir," they said, "we _____ that while he was still alive that deceiver said, 'After three days I will rise again.'

Lk 24:6 He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: 7 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and _____ the _____ day be raised again.'"

Luke 24:21 but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the _____ day since all this took place.

Lk 24:46 He told them, "This is what is written: The _____ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day,

Jesus was brought to trial on Thursday evening, crucified on Friday morning, buried Friday afternoon and raised on Sunday. He was in the grave part of Friday (Day 1), all of Saturday (Day 2) and part of Sunday (Day 3).

<i>Acts 10:41 He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen-- by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.</i>

The apostles were witnesses of the resurrected Lord and Paul recalls the account to prove that he was an apostle.

Acts 1:21 Therefore it is necessary to _____ one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, 22 beginning from John's _____ to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a _____ with us of his resurrection."

I Cor 15:5 and that he appeared to _____, and then to the Twelve. 6 After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the _____ at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. 7 Then he appeared to _____, then to all the apostles, 8 and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally _____.

Acts 10:42 He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead.

Jesus gave the command to go and teach in what is commonly called the "Great Commission." Given by both Matthew and Mark in slightly different forms, Jesus told his disciples to go to all the world (or all nations). The first thing he told them to do was to baptize believers and then they were to teach them everything he had commanded. This means that we also are to receive the command to "go into all the world." If we do not, all of the righteous, devout and charitable people in the world, like Cornelius, will never hear the gospel of Christ.

Mt 28:19 Therefore go and make _____ of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and _____ them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Mark 16:15 He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the _____ to all creation. 16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not _____ will be condemned.

The apostles were witnesses of all these happenings and could testify concerning them. We are not witnesses of these things but we can teach what has been written down for us that others might know the truth.

Luke 24:47 and repentance and _____ of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. 48 You are _____ of these things.

Acts 1:8 But you will receive _____ when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my _____ in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Jn .20:30 Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the _____ of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. 31 But these are _____ that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have _____ in his name.

His word was preached as he had told his disciples to do, to the extent that Paul says that it had been preached throughout the world by the time that he wrote his letter to the Colossians. Paul had been an effective preacher over much of the known world during his evangelistic journeys.

Acts 18:5 When Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia, Paul _____ himself exclusively to preaching, testifying to the Jews that _____ was the Christ.

Col 1:23 if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the _____ that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every _____ under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

One of the messages to be preached is especially emphasized by Peter in this lesson, the judgment. There will come a time when each of us will be judged on what we have done and the Lord will be our judge.

Jn 5:22 Moreover, the Father _____ no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, 23 that all may honor the _____ just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him. 24 "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has _____ life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from _____ to life. 25 I tell you the truth, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live. 26 For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself. 27 And he has given him _____ to judge because he is the Son of Man. 28 "Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice 29 and come out-- those who have done _____ will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be _____.

Mt 25:31 "When the _____ of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. 32 All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. 33 He will put the _____ on his right and the goats on his left. 34 "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the _____ prepared for you since the creation of the world. 35 For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was _____ and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, 36 I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to _____ me.' 37 "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you

hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? 38 When did we see you a _____ and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? 39 When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' 40 "The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the _____ of these brothers of mine, you did for me.' 41 "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. 42 For I was _____ and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, 43 I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.' 44 "They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not _____ you?' 45 "He will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the _____ of these, you did not do for me.' 46 "Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the _____ to eternal life."

Romans 14:9 For this very reason, Christ _____ and returned to life so that he might be the _____ of both the dead and the living. 10 You, then, why do you _____ your brother? Or why do you look down on your brother? For we will all stand before _____ judgment seat.

2 Cor 5:10 For we must all appear before the _____ seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the _____, whether good or bad.

Rev 20:11 Then I saw a great _____ throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and _____ were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were _____ according to what they had done as recorded in the books. 13 The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged _____ to what he had done. 14 Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of _____. The lake of fire is the second death. 15 If anyone's name was not found written in the book of _____, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Acts 10:43 All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

All of the prophets said things which were slightly hidden and the people listening did not understand whether the prophets were talking about themselves or someone else.

Acts 8:34 The eunuch asked Philip, "Tell me, please, who is the _____ talking about, himself or someone _____?"

Lk 24:44 He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: _____ must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the _____ and the Psalms." 45 Then he opened their minds so they could _____ the Scriptures.

Just a few examples of the prophecies made concerning Jesus are given below.

Isaiah 53:11 After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will _____ many, and he will bear their _____.

Jer 31:34 No longer will a man _____ his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' because they will all know me, from the _____ of them to the greatest," declares the LORD. "For I will forgive their _____ and will remember their sins no more."

Daniel 2:44 "In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a _____ that will never be _____, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself _____ forever.

Micah 5:2 "But you, _____ Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be _____ over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times."

Zech 13:1 "On that day a _____ will be opened to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from _____ and impurity.

Mal 3:1 "See, I will send my messenger, who will _____ the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the _____ of the covenant, whom you desire, will come," says the LORD Almighty.

Remission of sin is obtained only through the name (by the authority of) Jesus.

Acts 4:7 They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them: "By what _____ or what _____ did you do this?" ... 12 Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under _____ given to men by which we must be saved."

John 3:14 Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of _____ must be lifted up, 15 that everyone who believes in him may have _____ life. 16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to _____ the world, but to _____ the world through him.

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, "Repent and be _____, every one of you, in the _____ of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the _____ of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 22:16 And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and _____ your sins away, calling on his _____.'

Rev 7:14 I answered, "Sir, you know." And he said, "These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have _____ their robes and made them white in the _____ of the Lamb.

It is in baptism by the authority of Jesus that we come in contact with the precious blood of the lamb and are washed clean of our sins, our souls being made as white as snow.

Acts 10:44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. 45 The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. 46 For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Then Peter said,

Peter had nothing to do with the Gentiles receiving the Holy Spirit or the circumcised believers would have blamed him for this event. They knew that Peter had the ability to impart the power to speak in tongues by laying hands on them.

Acts 8:17 Then Peter and John placed their _____ on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. 18 When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the _____ on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money

Peter explains his mission further in the next chapter by noting that he was to tell them what they needed to know to be saved. There was no need for Peter to go down to Caesarea if the Lord was going to save these Gentiles without Peter speaking to them. And in fact, this is exactly why Peter said he was sent, to preach a message that would provide the information they needed to be saved.

Acts 11:14 He will bring you a _____ through which you and all your household will be saved.'

The astonishment of the circumcised believers shows that they did not believe that Gentiles had a right to salvation nor to being a part of the kingdom of God. It is apparent from this that these Jews would not have believed that Gentiles should be in the kingdom if God had not given them these gifts in the same way that he had given the gifts to the apostles on the day of Pentecost. No one had received these abilities in this manner since the apostles.

Acts 11:15 "As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the _____.

This clearly shows that the only way the gifts had been given in the intervening 9 years was through the laying on of the apostle's hands. The gifts were not then and are not now given by prayer, to everyone that is saved, or through calling on the name of the Lord. The modern day charismatic has no basis in this passage for claims that all believers could speak in tongues or that they have received this ability by praying to the Lord. There is no way that a believer could receive the miraculous gift of speaking in tongues since all of the apostles have died and this was the only way the gifts were given with the exception of the apostles on the day of Pentecost and the household of Cornelius, as recorded here.

Acts 10:47 "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have."

The result of Peter's preaching and the visible demonstration of the Holy Spirit in these Gentiles, along with the dream that Peter had, is the basis for this question. The undeniable result of this question is that the Gentiles have a right to salvation even as did the Jews. The baptism that provides salvation is baptism in water and there is only one baptism which is commanded by the Lord for those who believe in his name. As we have seen above, receiving the Holy Spirit did not save this household.

Eph 4:4 There is one body and one _____ -- just as you were called to one hope when you were called-- 5 one Lord, one faith, one _____; 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

This is the same baptism that Philip wanted the eunuch to undergo.

Acts 8:36 As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is _____. Why shouldn't I be baptized?" 8:37 [And Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."] 38 And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the _____ and Philip baptized him. 39 When they came up out of the _____, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing.

Peter confidently affirms that baptism saves us in the same way that the flood saved Noah – by washing away the sin that was in the world. Noah's life was saved by the ark, but he was saved from sin by the eradication of the sinful world through water, i.e., the flood. We are saved from sin in the same way, i.e., through water. It is not water that saves us, but it is the answer of a good conscience toward God. We cannot have salvation or a good conscience unless we are willing to be baptized.

I Pet 3:20 who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were _____ through water, 21 and this water symbolizes baptism that now _____ you also-- not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good _____ toward God. It _____ you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

We may ask who authorized this baptism, Peter or Jesus? The answer is that all of these things were done by Jesus' authority.

Acts 4:7 They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them: "By what _____ or what _____ did you do this?"

Mt 28:18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All _____ in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

Col 3:17 And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the _____ of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Questions:

1. Who was the first Gentile convert? _____
2. Was Cornelius saved when the angel appeared to him? _____
What verse(s) prove your answer? _____
3. What kind of prayer will God hear? _____
4. What kinds of animals were unclean for the Jews? _____
5. What did Cornelius do when Peter entered the house? _____
6. What did Peter understand the vision to mean? _____
7. Name 5 points made in Peter's sermon.
 - A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____
 - D. _____
 - E. _____
8. Who will be the judge of the living and the dead? _____
9. What baptism saved the household of Cornelius? _____

A Workbook Commentary on the Book of Acts
Chapter 11

Acts 11:1 The apostles and the brothers throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God.

Brethren in the church in the NT were just as quick to jump on the preacher as they are today. Peter had foreseen this problem and he had taken care of it by taking brethren along with him to see Cornelius (Acts 10:23). From the vision that he had seen (Acts 10:10-16) and the appearance of the messengers from Cornelius, Peter knew that something unusual awaited him. However, he had been told not to worry about what might happen, nor what he should say.

The reason for this anguish by the brethren is that they did not understand that the Law of Moses had passed and that they were under a new covenant. The day of Pentecost on which the church was established was about 9 years earlier. This account of the actions of Peter lays the foundation for the later, heated discussion by Paul, which resulted in the return of brethren who had gone to Antioch, to Jerusalem for the debate in Acts 15.

Gal 3:28 There is neither Jew nor _____, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all _____ in Christ Jesus.

Col 1:20 and through him to _____ to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross. 21 Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. 22 But now he has _____ you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation-- 23 if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been _____ to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

To this point, Christian Jews had nothing to do with Gentiles. The only Gentiles in the church were converts to Judaism.

Acts 6:5 This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a _____ to Judaism.

John 4:9 The _____ woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not _____ with Samaritans.)

Acts 11:2 So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him 3 and said, "You went into the house of uncircumcised men and ate with them."

The Jewish Christians, like many today, were not willing to accept what other good and righteous brethren have done, which is in accord with the word of God. To make a change in the order of services is sometimes enough to get a preacher fired, when there is no set pattern. Nevertheless, as servants of God, we must be ready to answer questions put to us by brethren, with all patience and endurance. This would not be the end of this matter as Jewish Christians continued to push their beliefs throughout Paul's ministry.

Acts 15:1 Some men came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the brothers: "Unless you are _____, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved."

Acts 15:5 Then some of the _____ who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and said, "The Gentiles must be circumcised and required to _____ the law of Moses."

Acts 21:20 When they heard this, they praised God. Then they said to Paul: "You see, brother, how many _____ of Jews have believed, and all of them are zealous for the law. 21 They have been informed that you teach all the Jews who live among the Gentiles to turn away from Moses, telling them not to _____ their children or live according to our customs."

Gal 5:1 It is for _____ that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. 2 Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be _____, Christ will be of no value to you at all. 3 Again I declare to every man who lets himself be _____ that he is obligated to obey the whole law.

Acts 11:4 Peter began and explained everything to them precisely as it had happened:

The procedure that Peter takes is that which every gospel preacher should take when confronted by the brethren.

II Cor 8:21 For we are taking _____ to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord but also in the eyes of _____.

Acts 11:5 "I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. I saw something like a large sheet being let down from heaven by its four corners, and it came down to where I was.6 I looked into it and saw four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, reptiles, and birds of the air.7 Then I heard a voice telling me, 'Get up, Peter. Kill and eat.'8 "I replied, 'Surely not, Lord! Nothing impure or unclean has ever entered my mouth.'9 "The voice spoke from heaven a second time, 'Do not call anything impure that God has made clean.' 10 This happened three times, and then it was all pulled up to heaven again."

The Law of Moses clearly established between those things that were unclean and those that could be eaten.

Lev 10:10 You must distinguish between the _____ and the common, between the unclean and the clean,

These distinctions were done away with when Jesus offered his blood to the Father, as an atonement for our sins. We in the Christian age are not bound by the Law of Moses, even in part. Then entire law of Moses, including Sabbath keeping is forever past for both Jew and Gentile.

Romans 14:14 As one who is in the Lord Jesus, I am fully convinced that no food is unclean in itself. But if anyone regards something as _____, then for him it is unclean.

I Tim 4:4 For everything God created is _____, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, 5 because it is _____ by the word of God and prayer.

Heb 9:15 For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new _____, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance--now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins _____ under the first covenant.

Gal 4:10 You are observing _____ days and months and seasons and years! ... 5:3 Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law. 4 You who are trying to be _____ by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from _____.

Acts 11:11 "Right then three men who had been sent to me from Caesarea stopped at the house where I was staying. 12 The Spirit told me to have no hesitation about going with them. These six brothers also went with me, and we entered the man's house.

It is evident that some of the Jewish Christians of that day had no belief in what the Spirit had said to Peter and the apostles, but put their faith in tradition. We must be led by the Spirit and not by the traditions of men.

John 16:13 But when he, the _____ of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will _____ only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.

Mt 15:9 They worship me in _____; their teachings are but rules taught by men."

Acts 11:13 He told us how he had seen an angel appear in his house and say, 'Send to Joppa for Simon who is called Peter. 14 He will bring you a message through which you and all your household will be saved.'

In response to Cornelius' prayer, God has provided a way for Cornelius to learn about the truth and have the opportunity to obey it. God did not save Cornelius because he was a good man or because he feared God. God told Cornelius to send for a preacher. It is only through hearing and believing God's word.

Psalms 19:7 The law of the LORD is _____, reviving the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple. 8 The _____ of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are _____, giving light to the eyes. 9 The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever. The ordinances of the LORD are sure and altogether righteous. 10 They are more _____ than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb. 11 By them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.

John 6:63 The Spirit gives _____; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are _____.

John 6:68 Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of _____ life.

Romans 1:16 I am not _____ of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who _____: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. 17 For in the gospel a righteousness from God is _____, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by _____."

Acts 16:14 One of those listening was a woman named _____, a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message. 15 When she and the _____ of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. "If you consider me a _____ in the Lord," she said, "come and stay at my house." And she persuaded us.

Acts 16:30 He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" 31 They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be _____-- you and your household." 32 Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. 33 At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his family were _____.

I Cor 1:16 (Yes, I also _____ the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I don't remember if I baptized anyone else.)

I Cor 16:15 You know that the _____ of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the _____ of the saints. I urge you, brothers,

Acts 11:15 "As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning.

This was not a common occurrence that Peter reports, but one which was extremely unusual. This kind of appearance had not happened since it occurred to the apostles on the day of Pentecost.

Acts 2:4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit _____ them. ... 6 When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard them speaking in his own _____. 7 Utterly amazed, they asked: "Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? 8 Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native _____?"

Acts 11:16 Then I remembered what the Lord had said: 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.'

Finally, it dawns on Peter what is happening and he recalls that Jesus had promised this. The apostles had been given this gift as promised and they also had the power to give these gifts to others as we saw in Acts 8, however, no one had received this miraculous gift directly from God since the day of Pentecost.

Mt 3:11 "I _____ you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the _____ and with fire.

Joel 2:28 `And afterward, I will pour out my _____ on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions.

Acts 11:17 So if God gave them the same gift as he gave us, who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could oppose God?"

Peter says that this extraordinary occurrence was sufficient to convince him that to deny acceptance of the Gentiles by God would be opposing God. There was sufficient previous experience given in the Old Testament to show that the faithful must not be found opposing God.

This incident is recounted again when the discussion on the Law comes up in Acts 15 and the rejection of God by man as shown by Paul in Rom 15.

Job 9:12 If he snatches away, who can stop him? Who can say to him, 'What are you _____?' 13 God does not restrain his anger; even the cohorts of Rahab cowered at his feet. 14 "How then can I dispute with him? How can I find words to _____ with him?

Daniel 4:35 All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as he pleases with the _____ of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: "What have you _____?"

Acts 15:8 God, who knows the _____, showed that he accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us. 9 He made no _____ between us and them, for he purified their hearts by _____.

Romans 9:20 But who are you, O man, to talk back to _____? "Shall what is formed say to him who formed it, 'Why did you make me like this?'" 21 Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some _____ for noble purposes and some for common use? 22 What if God, choosing to show his wrath and make his power known, bore with great patience the objects of his wrath-- prepared for _____ 23 What if he did this to make the riches of his glory known to the objects of his mercy, whom he prepared in _____ for glory-- 24 even us, whom he also called, not only from the Jews but also from the Gentiles? 25 As he says in Hosea: "I will call them 'my people' who are not my people; and I will call her 'my loved one' who is not my loved one," 26 and, "It will happen that in the very place where it was said to them, 'You are not my people,' they will be called '_____ of the living God.'"

Acts 11:18 When they heard this, they had no further objections and praised God, saying, "So then, God has granted even the Gentiles repentance unto life."

The brethren at Jerusalem, after listening to Peter's explanation, had no objection to receiving the Gentiles into their fellowship. Nevertheless, we shall see that all of the brethren did not leave Judaism, but carried it over into Christianity. This often happens today as new conversions are made of those in the denominational world. It is sometimes easier to teach one who comes from no religious background rather than someone from a denomination. People in the world know they are lost and must leave the world, but people in the denominations often think they are saved and need only to switch denominations without leaving the denominational teaching behind.

This truth had been taught to the Jews in prophecy again and again.

Gen 18:18 _____ will surely become a great and powerful nation, and all nations on earth will be _____ through him.

Gen 26:4 I will make your _____ as numerous as the stars in the sky and will give them all these lands, and through your _____ all nations on earth will be blessed,

Psalms 72:17 May his name endure forever; may it _____ as long as the sun. All _____ will be blessed through him, and they will call him blessed.

Acts 3:24 "Indeed, all the prophets from Samuel on, as many as have _____ have foretold these days. 25 And you are heirs of the prophets and of the _____ God made with your fathers. He said to Abraham, 'Through your _____ all peoples on earth will be blessed.'

Not only had it been taught in prophecy, Peter had used it in an earlier lesson and Paul later shows that this was what the prophets had meant when God said that "all" nations would be blessed.

Acts 3:19 Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be _____ out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, 20 and that he may send the Christ, who has been _____ for you-- even Jesus.

Gal 3:8 The _____ foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: "All nations will be _____ through you."

Acts 11:19 Now those who had been scattered by the persecution in connection with Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, telling the message only to Jews. 20 Some of them, however, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus.

It was always on the mind of the Christians who traveled to preach the word of God. These men were especially bold in their preaching, in that they also went to the Greeks. Preaching the gospel of Christ was foremost on their minds, even as it was the first thing that Paul did upon his conversion. The gospel had always been preached to the Jew, as Jesus had commanded, but now Jesus was preached to the Gentiles.

Acts 8:4 Those who had been scattered _____ the word wherever they went. 5 Philip went down to a city in Samaria and _____ the Christ there.

Acts 9:20 At once he began to _____ in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God.

Mt 10:5 These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Do not go among the _____ or enter any town of the Samaritans. 6 Go rather to the lost sheep of

Israel. 7 As you go, _____ this message: 'The kingdom of _____ is near.'

Cyrene has a prominent place in the history of the Gospel having both many who believe and many who do not.

Matt 27:32 As they were going out, they met a man from Cyrene, named _____, and they forced him to carry the cross.

Acts 2:8 Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own _____ language?
9 Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, 10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near _____; visitors from Rome

Acts 6:9 Opposition arose, however, from members of the _____ of the Freedmen (as it was called)-- Jews of Cyrene and Alexandria as well as the _____ of Cilicia and Asia. These men began to argue with Stephen,

Acts 11:21 The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.

God's word will accomplish his will if we as messengers will take it to the lost. The gospel will change men's lives and the number of disciples will increase. The great problem in our age is that we aren't going to the lost; we have simply taken refuge in our church buildings.

Acts 2:47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being _____.

Acts 4:4 But many who heard the message _____, and the number of men grew to about five thousand.

Acts 5:14 Nevertheless, more and more men and women _____ in the Lord and were added to their number.

Acts 6:7 So the word of God spread. The _____ of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became _____ to the faith.

Acts 9:35 All those who lived in Lydda and Sharon saw him and _____ to the Lord.

Acts 26:17 I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am _____ you to them 18 to open their eyes and turn them from _____ to

light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are _____ by faith in me.'

Acts 11:22 News of this reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. 23 When he arrived and saw the evidence of the grace of God, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts.24 He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and a great number of people were brought to the Lord.

Barnabas had been a great encouragement to the disciples in times of distress. He is now sent to encourage the Gentiles. We need more disciples like Barnabas who will be a source of encouragement to all the disciples.

Acts 4:36 Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called _____ (which means Son of Encouragement), 37 sold a field he owned and brought the _____ and put it at the apostles' feet.

Acts 9:27 But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. He told them how Saul on his _____ had seen the Lord and that the Lord had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had _____ fearlessly in the name of Jesus.

The encouragement we need is the same that Paul and Barnabas gave so many.

1 Cor 15:58 Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give _____ fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in _____.

Acts 11:25 Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, 26 and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.

The way that any church grows is through teaching its members. Unfortunately, too many teachers fail to take the time to put the hay on the wagon so that they can feed the flock. Paul's advice to Timothy is well worth heading for teachers.

II Tim 2:15 Do your best to present yourself to God as one _____, a workman who does not need to be _____ and who correctly handles the word of truth.

Evangelists and pastors are especially deficient in their work today. The evangelists are no longer going to the lost, but have taken up residence within the walls of the building to preach first principle lessons to the saved. While the evangelist has a responsibility to teach the church as well as those who are teachers and pastors, the main function of the pastor (shepherd) is to feed the flock. In this day the pastors (elders) are rarely teaching, allowing the evangelist to do

their job. We need to return to the position of having godly elders teaching the flock while the evangelists mainly direct their efforts to the lost.

Matt 28:19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, _____ them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

Eph 4:11 It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, 12 to prepare God's _____ for works of _____ so that the body of Christ may be built up 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the _____ of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Jer 3:15 Then I will give you _____ after my own heart, who will lead you with knowledge and understanding.

Some have suggested that the name "Christian" was given to the disciples in derision. We know that this is not so since it had been prophesied that a new name would be given.

Isaiah 65:15 You will leave your name to my _____ ones as a curse; the Sovereign LORD will put you to death, but to his servants he will _____ another name.

Isaiah 62:2 The nations will see your _____, and all kings your glory; you will be called by a _____ name that the mouth of the LORD will bestow.

Acts 11:27 During this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. 28 One of them, named Agabus, stood up and through the Spirit predicted that a severe famine would spread over the entire Roman world. (This happened during the reign of Claudius.)

Agabus makes more than one prediction which comes to pass. This occasion is not to be confused with a later problem in Jerusalem for which Paul sought the help of the churches in I Cor 16:1-2, Rom 15:25-28 and II Cor 8 and 9.

Acts 21:10 After we had been there a number of days, a _____ named Agabus came down from Judea.

The line of Caesars who ruled Rome and who are referred to in the Scriptures include Caesar Augustus, 31 BC to AD 14, Tiberius Caesar, AD 14 to AD 37, Claudius Caesar, AD 41-54 and Nero, AD 54-68. Caligula, the second emperor of Rome, who ruled from AD 37 to AD 41 is not mentioned. This mention of Claudius puts the time of this event between AD 41 and 54. As we will learn in the next chapter, the time of the reign of Herod Agrippa I between AD 37 and 44, limits the time of this chapter to AD 41-44.

Luke 2:1 In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a _____ should be taken of the entire Roman world.

Luke 3:1 In the fifteenth year of the reign of _____ Caesar-- when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and Traconitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene-- (AD 58)

Acts 18:2 There he met a Jew named Aquila, a native of _____, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because _____ had ordered all the Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to see them,

Acts 25:11 If, however, I am guilty of doing anything deserving _____, I do not refuse to die. But if the charges brought against me by these Jews are not true, no one has the right to hand me over to them. I appeal to _____!" (Nero, AD 60)

Acts 11:29 The disciples, each according to his ability, decided to provide help for the brothers living in Judea. 30 This they did, sending their gift to the elders by Barnabas and Saul.

The disciples in the NT determined how much they would give to a specific project as well as what project would receive the funds. They were evidently generous in their giving, but they did not take the funds for this project from the general fund required to meet the local needs. As verse 29 shows, every man according to his ability, not the elders nor the evangelist, but every man, decided to send relief and this would include the amount to be given. Verse 30 confirms that the brethren did this, and again we emphasize that each individual made the decision and not some group such as the deacons, the men's business meeting or the elders. This quickly removes the arguments about how much should be sent, since it is no one else's business what another disciple decides to give to a specific need.

The occurrence referred to in Acts 11 was during the reign of Claudius in about AD 43 and is not to be confused with the present occasion of distress in Jerusalem. The first Corinthian epistle was written from Ephesus, near the time of Pentecost in the year AD 57. *1 Cor 16:8 But I will stay on at _____ until Pentecost.* This same practice was followed by the church in securing funds for the problem in Jerusalem.

1 Cor 16:2 On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his _____, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.

2 Cor 8:2 Out of the most severe trial, their _____ joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. 3 For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, 4 they _____ pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints.

1 Pet 4:9 Offer _____ to one another without grumbling. 10 Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. 11 If _____ speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the _____ and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

Acts 4:34 There were no _____ persons among them. For from time to time those who owned lands or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales

Romans 15:25 Now, however, I am on my way to _____ in the service of the saints there. 26 For Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to make a _____ for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem. 27 They were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in the Jews' _____ blessings, they owe it to the Jews to share with them their material blessings.

2 Cor 9:1 There is no need for me to write to you about this _____ to the saints. 2 For I know your eagerness to help, and I have been boasting about it to the Macedonians, telling them that since last year you in Achaia were ready to give; and your _____ has stirred most of them to action.

Gal 2:10 All they asked was that we should continue to _____ the poor, the very thing I was eager to do.

The church has a responsibility to care for its own and we must never forget to have compassion on those who are less fortunate than we. This is especially true of the orphans and widows.

Ja 1:27 Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and _____ is this: to look after orphans and widows in their _____ and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

At the same time, we must not enable those who are irresponsible to avoid working to provide for themselves and their families. This responsibility must be accepted, because it is all too easy to satisfy our consciences by simply giving to someone who says they are in need rather than taking the time to determine the actual need.

II Th 3:6 In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, _____, to keep away from every brother who is idle and does not live according to the _____ you received from us.

I Tim 5:8 If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his _____ family, he has _____ the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

Questions

1. Who criticized Peter? _____
2. What belief did they hold that caused them to criticize Peter? _____
3. With what were the Gentiles baptized? _____
4. What had God granted the Gentiles? _____
5. Where was the message first preached to Gentiles? _____
6. Why was Barnabas sent to Antioch? _____
7. What did Barnabas encourage the brethren to do? _____
8. What name did the Lord give the disciples? _____
9. When did the predicted famine take place? _____
10. How did the brethren decide how much to give to the saints in Jerusalem? _____

A Workbook Commentary on the Book of Acts
Chapter 12

Acts 12:1 It was about this time that King Herod arrested some who belonged to the church, intending to persecute them.

The family to which Herod belonged had been in control of Palestine for a number of years due to the influence of Herod Antipater, the grandfather of the Herod mentioned here, who was an Idumean of Edomite stock, a descendant of Esau. Antipater was appointed procurator of Judea by Julius Caesar, in 47 B.C. He built the Temple in Jerusalem, which, according to John 2:20, took 46 years. Antipater appointed two of his sons to ruling positions. One of these was Herod, known as "Herod the Great," was appointed governor of Judea. The title, Herod the Great, refers to his being the eldest son of Antipater rather than Herod's greatness. He ruled from 37-4 B.C.

Jn 2:20 The Jews replied, "It has taken forty-six years to _____ this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?"

Herod Archelaus reigned from 4 B.C.- A.D. 6 and is mentioned only in Mt 2:22.

Mt 2:22 But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea in place of his father _____, he was afraid to go there. Having been warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee,

Herod Philip I was one of the better rulers, having received the northern half of his father's kingdom.

Lk 3:1 In the fifteenth year of the reign of _____ Caesar--when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and Traconitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene--

Herod Antipas, who reigned from 4 B.C.- A.D. 39, began as tetrarch over Galilee and Perea. He was the ruling Herod during Jesus' life and ministry. Herod Antipas was first married to the daughter of Aretas, an Arabian king of Petrae, however, he took Herodias, the wife of his half-brother, Philip I, both of whom were married at the time, and eloped with her. This affair was condemned by John the Baptist.

*Mt 14:4 for John had been saying to him: "It is not _____ for you to have her."
5 Herod wanted to kill John, but he was afraid of the people, because they _____ him a prophet.*

Mk 6:17 For _____ himself had given orders to have John arrested, and he had him bound and put in prison. He did this because of Herodias, his _____ Philip's wife, whom he had married. 18 For John had been saying to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." 19 So Herodias nursed a grudge against John and wanted to _____ him. But she was not able to,

Lk 3:19 But when John _____ Herod the tetrarch because of Herodias, his brother's wife, and all the other evil things he had done, 20 Herod added this to them all: He _____ John up in prison.

Very little about Agrippa I is recorded in the NT. From the report in this chapter, we know that Agrippa sought to win the favor of his Jewish subjects by opposing the NT church and its leaders. Herod Agrippa I ruled from Ad 37-44.

<i>Acts 12:2 He had James, the brother of John, put to death with the sword.</i>
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James and John formed an inner circle with Peter around the Lord. James and Johns were cousins of Jesus, their mother being Salome who stood at the foot of the cross with Jesus' mother, Mary.

Matt 4:21 Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of _____ and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus _____ them, 22 and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

Mk 10:35 Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him. "Teacher," they said, "we _____ you to do for us whatever we ask." 36 "What do you want me to do for you?" he asked. 37 They replied, "Let _____ of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your _____." 38 "You don't know what you are asking," Jesus said. "Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the _____ I am baptized with?" 39 "We can," they answered. Jesus said to them, "You will drink the cup I drink and be _____ with the baptism I am baptized with,

John 19:25 Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary _____.

Mt 27:56 Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the _____ of Zebedee's sons.

Acts 12:3 When he saw that this pleased the Jews, he proceeded to seize Peter also. This happened during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. 4 After arresting him, he put him in prison, handing him over to be guarded by four squads of four soldiers each. Herod intended to bring him out for public trial after the Passover.

This is one more instance of the prophecy that Jesus gave his disciples concerning the actions of their enemies. We are fortunate to have no such worries in the US about actions, but our brethren in other lands are not so fortunate.

Matt 10:17 "Be on your guard against men; they will hand you over to the _____ councils and flog you in their synagogues. 18 On my account you will be brought before _____ and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles.

The trial would have been delayed due to the reluctance of the Jews to take part during one of their feast days and the fact that Herod was doing this to curry favor with the Jews. This same motivation was in place in the breaking of the thief's legs during the crucifixion of our Lord.

Jn 19:31 Now it was the day of _____ and the next day was to be a special _____. Because the Jews did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down.

In the KJV, the text is incorrectly translated at v. 4 to incorporate a pagan feast day that had been changed into a church holiday. Easter was not a day to be observed by the church nor is the day mentioned in better translations of the Scriptures.

Acts 12:4 And when he had _____ him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him _____ to the people. (KJV)

Acts 12:5 So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him.

Today some Christians doubt divine providence and the power of prayer, but the church did not doubt at this time. One of the things that is emphasized in the scriptures repeatedly is for the children of God to pray without doubting.

1 Thes 5:17 _____ continually;

Ja 5:16 Therefore _____ your sins to each other and _____ for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.

The idea of "sin" in the NIV at Ja 5:16 is better translated as "fault" as in the KJV. We see from the verses following that James is not giving sanction to confession of sin to the church, but seeking help from someone able to advise in this passage.

Acts 12:6 The night before Herod was to bring him to trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries stood guard at the entrance. 7 Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him up. "Quick, get up!" he said, and the chains fell off Peter's wrists. 8 Then the angel said to him, "Put on your clothes and sandals." And Peter did so. "Wrap your cloak around you and follow me," the angel told him. 9 Peter followed him out of the prison, but he had no idea that what the angel was doing was really happening; he thought he was seeing a vision. 10 They passed the first and second guards and came to the iron gate leading to the city. It opened for them by itself, and they went through it. When they had walked the length of one street, suddenly the angel left him. 11 Then Peter came to himself and said, "Now I know without a doubt that the Lord sent his angel and rescued me from Herod's clutches and from everything the Jewish people were anticipating."

Artistic portrayals of angels as winged beings are without basis in the Bible, however, cherubim, seraphim and the living creatures are pictured as having wings.

Ex. 25:20 The _____ are to have their wings spread upward, overshadowing the cover with them. The cherubim are to face each other, looking toward the cover.

Ezek. 1:5 and in the fire was what looked like four living creatures. In appearance their _____ was that of a man, 6 but each of them had four faces and four _____.

Rev. 4:8 Each of the four living _____ had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under his wings. Day and night they never stop saying: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come."

The angels are messengers of the Lord who protect and watch over those for whom the Lord cares, but not necessarily in a physical way, although there is nothing in the Scriptures to indicate that their care, in a physical sense, has ceased. We should remember that no one has ever been able to call an angel to their assistance, rather the Lord sends them as he sees they are needed. The care indicated in Mt 18:10 undoubtedly continues, although we are unable to fathom what this care might entail.

Psalms 34:7 The angel of the LORD _____ around those who fear him, and he delivers them.

Daniel 6:22 My God sent his _____, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, O king."

Mt 18:10 "See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their _____ in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.

Acts 5:19 But during the night an _____ of the Lord opened the doors of the jail and brought them out.

Heb 1:14 Are not all angels _____ spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?

Acts 12:12 When this had dawned on him, he went to the house of Mary the mother of John, also called Mark, where many people had gathered and were praying.

These were members of the church who had gathered. The example of those who love one another coming together to ask that the servant of the Lord might be protected from evil and his life prolonged in service on the earth is well established by this precedent. The apostle Paul requested such.

II Thes 3:1 Finally, brothers, _____ for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it was with you. 2 And _____ that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men, for not everyone has faith.

Acts 12:13 Peter knocked at the outer entrance, and a servant girl named Rhoda came to answer the door. 14 When she recognized Peter's voice, she was so overjoyed she ran back without opening it and exclaimed, "Peter is at the door!" 15 "You're out of your mind," they told her. When she kept insisting that it was so, they said, "It must be his angel." 16 But Peter kept on knocking, and when they opened the door and saw him, they were astonished. 17 Peter motioned with his hand for them to be quiet and described how the Lord had brought him out of prison. "Tell James and the brothers about this," he said, and then he left for another place.

I like this incident and the fact that the Holy Spirit saw fit to put it in the Scripture. It is one indication that the Lord appreciates humor. The excitement always causes us to do things that we look back upon later with laughter. Can you for a moment believe that Rhoda didn't laugh at her own foolishness every time she heard this story read in the assembly.

Again, the idea of an angel as a winged being is shown to be an error of medieval artists. The Christians here thought that the person at the door, who Rhoda knew was Peter, was his angel. Evidently the consensus was that angels looked like ordinary men and probably looked the same in appearance as the person over whom they watched.

Mt 18:10 "See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their _____ in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.

The James of whom Peter speaks would be James the brother of the Lord since James the brother of John has already been executed by Herod.

Acts 12:2 He had James, the _____ of John, put to death with the sword.

Gala 1:19 I saw none of the other apostles--only _____, the Lord's brother.

Acts 12:18 In the morning, there was no small commotion among the soldiers as to what had become of Peter. 19 After Herod had a thorough search made for him and did not find him, he cross-examined the guards and ordered that they be executed. Then Herod went from Judea to Caesarea and stayed there a while.

There have been skeptics that thought that Jesus' body was stolen by his disciples and hidden. Here, we see what happened to soldiers in that time when they did not carry out orders as given. The guards in the case of Jesus had to have the cooperation of the Jews to escape the punishment given to those who disobey orders.

Matt 28:11 While the women were on their way, some of the _____ went into the city and reported to the chief priests everything that had happened. 12 When the chief priests had met with the elders and devised a plan, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money, 13 telling them, "You are to say, 'His disciples came during the night and _____ him away while we were _____.' 14 If this report gets to the governor, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble." 15 So the soldiers took the money and did as they were instructed. And this story has been widely circulated among the Jews to this very day.

Acts 12:20 He had been quarreling with the people of Tyre and Sidon; they now joined together and sought an audience with him. Having secured the support of Blastus, a trusted personal servant of the king, they asked for peace, because they depended on the king's country for their food supply.

The NIV calls Blastus a trusted personal servant of the King. The KJV calls him a chamberlain. The actual Greek word used here indicates that he was the officer over the bed chamber. This would have been a reasonably high position in these treasonous times and surroundings where Herod could have easily lost his life if someone had attacked him in his sleep.

Acts 12:21 On the appointed day Herod, wearing his royal robes, sat on his throne and delivered a public address to the people. 22 They shouted, "This is the voice of a god, not of a man." 23 Immediately, because Herod did not give praise to God, an angel of the Lord struck him down, and he was eaten by worms and died. 24 But the word of God continued to increase and spread.

We sometimes hear of the “death angel” in connection with the last of the plagues sent to Egypt. However, the Scriptures never speak specifically of a “death angel,” although they do speak of a destroying angel.

I Chr 21:15 And God sent an _____ to destroy Jerusalem. But as the angel was doing so, the LORD saw it and was grieved because of the calamity and said to the angel who was destroying the people, "Enough! Withdraw your hand." The _____ of the LORD was then standing at the threshing floor of Araunah.

This episode is also confirmed by the Jewish historian, Josephus, who tells us that the royal robes were a garment made of silver which reflected the sun’s rays. The people were awestruck and addressed Herod as “superior to mortal nature.” Josephus then says that he was stricken with a severe pain in “his belly” and after being carried back to his palace, he died in five days due to the pain. (Antiqu. Jews. XIX, VII, 2). We can also date Herod Agrippa I’s death at AD 44 from Josephus’ writings.

Acts 12:25 When Barnabas and Saul had finished their mission, they returned from Jerusalem, taking with them John, also called Mark.

You will recall that Mark is Barnabas’ cousin, which may have played a role in the coming events concerning Saul, Barnabas and Mark.

Col 4:10 My fellow prisoner Aristarchus sends you his greetings, as does Mark, the cousin of _____. (You have received instructions about him; if he comes to you, welcome him.)

The mission which Barnabas and Saul had just finished was the carrying of the funds contributed by the church at Antioch for the poor in Jerusalem.

Acts 11: 29 The disciples, each according to his _____, decided to provide help for the brothers living in Judea. 30 This they did, sending their _____ to the elders by Barnabas and Saul.

Questions:

1. Which of the Herod's is being spoken of in this chapter? _____
2. Whom did Herod put to death? _____
3. Why did Herod seize Peter? _____
4. What is the correct translation of the word Easter in the KJV? _____
5. How many wings do angels have? _____
6. What happened to Peter's guards and why did it happen? _____
7. What kind of royal garments did Herod wear in his public address? _____
8. Why did Barnabas and Saul go to Jerusalem? _____
9. Who did Barnabas and Saul take with them? _____

A Workbook Commentary on the Book of Acts
Chapter 13

Acts 13:1 In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul.

Antioch was not a church that was inactive or untaught. We find that there are 5 full or part time teachers. Such a church is bound to be converting the lost to the Lord and growing in strength and number. This was certainly the case in the persecution which spread the brethren from Jerusalem.

Acts 8:4 Those who had been scattered _____ the word wherever they went.

The result was a great growth in the church.

Acts 8:12 But when they believed Philip as he _____ the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were _____, both men and women.

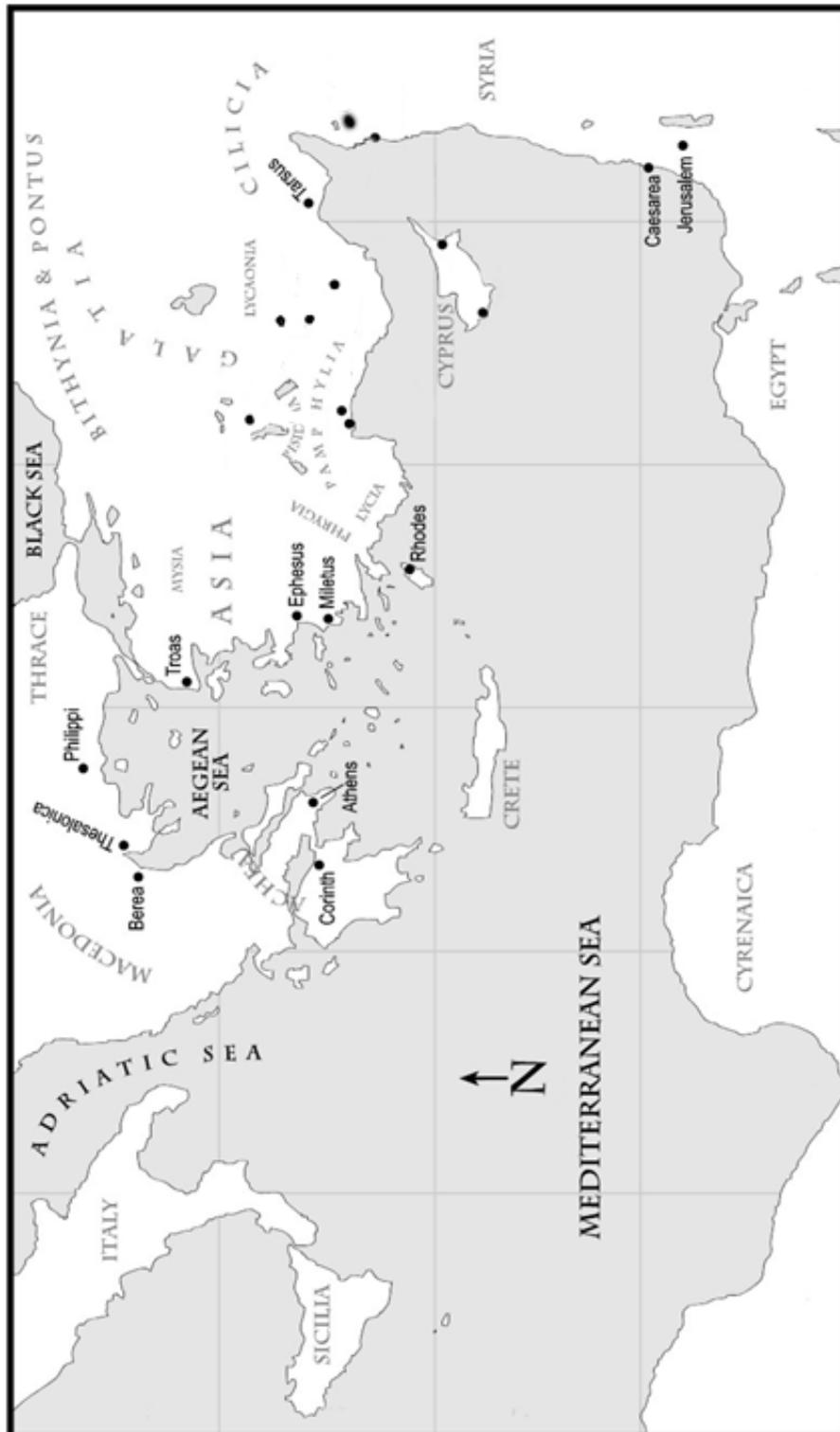
This growth resulted in the willingness of the church and the Holy Spirit, to select two of the teachers to send on a missionary journey. The influence of the church in Antioch spread over the known world through their willingness to "send" Saul and Barnabas. The idea of the word "send" includes more than just wishing the fellows a happy trip. It would no doubt include the financing of the journey. This was not a group that drew back when called on for financial help. We have previously seen this dedicated attitude in Acts 11:27-30.

Acts 11:27 During this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to _____. 28 One of them, named Agabus, stood up and through the Spirit predicted that a severe _____ would spread over the entire Roman world. (This happened during the reign of Claudius.) 29 The disciples, _____ according to his ability, decided to provide help for the brothers living in Judea. 30 This _____ did, sending their gift to the elders by Barnabas and Saul.

A map is provided on the next page for you to familiarize yourself with the general area of Palestine during Biblical times. Locate Antioch, Caesarea, Caesarea-Philippi, Cilicia, Cyprus, Damascus, Dead Sea, Gaza, Jerusalem, Joppa, Jordan River, Nile, Ptolemais, Sea of Galilee, Seleucia, Sidon, Syria, Tarsus, and Tyre. Trace the route of Saul as he went into Arabia and returned, Barnabas mission from Jerusalem and his journey to get Saul.

The Missionary Journey of Saul and Barnabas

Locate Antioch, Antioch-Pisidia, Attalia, Cilicia, Crete, Cyprus, Damascus, Derbe, Iconium, Jerusalem, Jordan River, Laodicea, Lystra, Paphos, Perga, Patara, Ptolemais, Salamis, Sardis, Sea of Galilee, Seleucia, Sidon, Smyrna, Syria,.



Acts 13:2 While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." 3 So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

Fasting in the Bible had two purposes, showing distress and seeking favor. It is not necessarily included in our worship today, although we find it being done often by the NT church when there were occasions of special importance. It was generally done in the OT to show mourning and grief or in seeking divine favor. It was also usually associated with prayer.

Neh 1:4 When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and _____ and prayed before the God of heaven.

Esth 4:3 In every province to which the edict and order of the king came, there was great _____ among the Jews, with fasting, weeping and wailing. Many lay in _____ and ashes.

David fasted at a time of seeking God's favor in the matter of the child born of his adulterous relationship with Bathsheba.

2 Sam 12:16 David pleaded with God for the child. He _____ and went into his house and spent the nights lying on the ground. ... 21 His servants asked him, "Why are you acting this way? While the child was alive, you _____ and wept, but now that the child is dead, you get up and eat!"

Fasts in the Bible consisted of various time periods from one to forty days. The fast may have included both food and water or food alone. It may have been during daylight hours only and it may have consisted of abstaining from only certain types of food.

Judg 20:26 Then the Israelites, all the people, went up to Bethel, and there they sat _____ before the LORD. They fasted that day until evening and presented burnt offerings and _____ offerings to the LORD.

Exod 34:28 Moses was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights without eating _____ or drinking water. And he wrote on the tablets the words of the _____ --the Ten Commandments.

1 Sam 14:24 Now the men of Israel were in _____ that day, because Saul had bound the people under an oath, saying, "Cursed be any man who eats _____ before evening comes, before I have avenged myself on my enemies!" So none of the troops tasted food.

Dan 10:3 I ate no _____ food; no meat or wine touched my lips; and I used no lotions at all until the three weeks were over.

Jesus was led to fast by the Holy Spirit, evidently to put him to the severest test of physical demands on his body that his character might be sorely tested.

Matt 4:2 After _____ forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.

Fasting was not to be done to be seen by men since that would promote a man's pride rather than be offered as a sacrifice to God.

Matt 6:16 "When you fast, do not look _____ as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. 17 But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, 18 so that it will not be _____ to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Fasting will not make one holy, especially if the attitude is not right as the fast is carried out.

Luke 18:11 The Pharisee stood up and _____ about himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men--robbers, evildoers, adulterers--or even like this tax collector. 12 I _____ twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.'

Jesus' disciples did not fast, as opposed to the Jews of the NT era. The Pharisees asked Jesus why disciples did not fast.

Matt 9:14 Then John's _____ came and asked him, "How is it that we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not _____?" 15 Jesus answered, "How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will _____. 16 "No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch will pull away from the garment, making the tear worse. 17 Neither do men pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst, the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved."

We do not fast when the Lord is with us! This passage would mean that fasting would not be required for the Christian since our Lord is ever with us. He did leave during the time he was in the tomb, but we can be certain that he is with us now as we proclaim his death till he comes again.

Mt 26:29 I tell you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it _____ with you in my Father's kingdom."

Fasting was also used in the NT church or by Christians when marking a significant event.

Acts 14:23 Paul and Barnabas appointed _____ for them in each church and, with _____ and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust.

The KJV text includes a number of places where the Greek word, *nesteuo* which is translated fasting, is inserted without basis in the older texts to indicate fasting, usually as accompaniment for prayer, e.g. Mk 9:29, Acts 10:30 and I Cor 7:5, whereas Mt 17:21 is missing in all of the older texts. This would indicate that at some point a copyist thought that fasting should be included with prayer and simply wrote the word into the text.

The Holy Spirit does not reveal in Luke's text who the ones were who laid hands on Barnabas and Saul, however, it is most likely that this refers to the whole church at Antioch. The laying on of hands was an old practice signifying approval. The apostles used this sign to signify the approval of God in providing miraculous gifts. Since Paul was not behind the very foremost of the apostles (II Cor 11:5), he did not receive his abilities from Ananias as some supposed from the difficult KJV translation of Acts 9:17. However this is explained further in Acts 9:12 and Acts 22:13 to show that Paul received his sight by the hands of Ananias and the Holy Spirit directly from God.

II Cor 11:5 But I do not think I am in the least _____ to those "super-apostles."

Acts 9:17 Then Ananias went to the house and _____ it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord--Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here--has sent me so that you may _____ again and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

Acts 9:12 In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to _____ his sight."

Acts 22:13 He stood beside me and said, 'Brother Saul, _____ your sight!' And at that very moment I was able to see him.

In the OT, there are a number of passages that involve the laying on of hands. The high priest was to lay hands on the scapegoat.

Lev 16:21 He is to lay both _____ on the head of the live goat and confess over it all the wickedness and rebellion of the Israelites--all their sins--and put them on the goat's head. He shall send the goat away into the _____ in the care of a man appointed for the task.

The patriarchs used the laying on of hands as a sign of approval.

Gen 48:18 Joseph said to him, "No, my father, this one is the _____; put your right hand on his head."

Deut 34:9 Now Joshua son of Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom because Moses had _____ his hands on him. So the _____ listened to him and did what the LORD had commanded Moses.

All the people were to lay hands on the Israelites and it may be in this sense, that the whole church laid hands on Barnabas and Saul.

Num 8:10 You are to bring the _____ before the LORD, and the Israelites are to lay their hands on them.

Jesus used this sign to give blessing to the children.

Matt 19:13 Then little children were _____ to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and _____ for them. But the disciples rebuked those who brought them. 14 Jesus said, "Let the _____ children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." 15 When he had placed his hands on them, he went on from there.

The NT church, both here, in Acts 6 and of Timothy, used this sign at the appointment of those chosen to do God's work.

Acts 6:6 They presented these men to the apostles, who _____ and laid their hands on them.

1Tim 4:14 Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a _____ message when the body of elders laid their hands on you.

2Tim 1:6 For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the _____ on of my hands.

Paul gave the Holy Spirit to Timothy, while the elders laid their hands on in approval.

Acts 13:4 The two of them, sent on their way by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia and sailed from there to Cyprus.

Seleucia is a town on the eastern edge of the Mediterranean Sea near Antioch. Cyprus is about 60 miles from the Syrian coast and 41 miles south of the coast of Cilicia (modern Turkey).

The principle of "agency" is used here as the Holy Spirit is said to have sent them, while in v. 3, the church at Antioch is said to have sent them. We recognize that when we send a child to the store to buy bread that someone may correctly say that either we or the child "bought the

bread." In fact, the child was the agent since the parent gave the direction and the funds to "buy the bread." Usage of this type of agency is seen often in the NT and delivers us from many difficult verses.

Eph 2:17 _____ came and preached peace to _____ who were far away and peace to those who were near.

I Jn 4:1 Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the _____ to see whether they are from _____, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

I Pet 3:18 For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to _____ in the body but made alive by the Spirit, 19 through whom also he went and preached to the _____ in prison 20 who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of _____ while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved _____ water, 21 and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also--not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the _____ of Jesus Christ,

Noah was the agent in the last passage above, preaching to a generation who are now in prison awaiting the day of judgment. Jesus did not go in person while he was in hades, thus giving the spirits a second chance, but rather Noah preached as the agent of God, while he was preparing the ark.

Acts 13:5 When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the Jewish synagogues. John was with them as their helper.

Salamis is the largest city of Cyprus, located on the eastern edge of the island.

It is always wise to go to a place where there are religious people gathered to preach the gospel. They also went to the Jews first as Jesus had directed them to do.

Rom 1:16 I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the _____ of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

The John spoken of here is John Mark, Barnabas cousin.

Acts 12:12 When this had dawned on him, he went to the house of Mary the _____ of John, also called Mark, where many people had gathered and were praying.

Col 4:10 My fellow _____ Aristarchus sends you his greetings, as does Mark, the cousin of Barnabas. (You have _____ instructions about him; if he comes to you, welcome him.)

Acts 13:6 They traveled through the whole island until they came to Paphos. There they met a Jewish sorcerer and false prophet named Bar-Jesus, 7 who was an attendant of the proconsul, Sergius Paulus. The proconsul, an intelligent man, sent for Barnabas and Saul because he wanted to hear the word of God.

Paphos is on the western end of the island of Cyprus.

It is unusual for one who has great standing in the affairs of this world to be willing to listen to the word of God. Besides the proconsul, we know of Joseph of Arimathea, Saul, Erastus, Dionysus and Nicodemus and this would be precious few when we consider that the church in Jerusalem had over 5000 men.

I Cor 1:26 Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by _____ standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. 27 But God chose the _____ things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.

Lk 23:50 Now there was a man named Joseph, a _____ of the Council, a good and upright man, 51 who had not consented to their _____ and action. He came from the Judean town of Arimathea and he was waiting for the kingdom of God.

Jn 3:1 Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a _____ of the Jewish ruling council. 2 He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the _____ signs you are doing if God were not with him."

Acts 17:34 A few men became followers of Paul and believed. Among them was _____, a member of the Areopagus, also a woman named Damaris, and a number of others.

Rom 16:23 Gaius, whose hospitality I and the whole church here enjoy, sends you his greetings. Erastus, who is the city's _____ of public works, and our brother Quartus send you their greetings.

The proconsul was appointed either by the Roman senate or by the Emperor, depending on whether the province was a senatorial or imperial province, and was the governor of the province.

Acts 13:8 But Elymas the sorcerer (for that is what his name means) opposed them and tried to turn the proconsul from the faith. 9 Then Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked straight at Elymas and said, 10 "You are a child of the devil and an enemy of everything that is right! You are full of all kinds of deceit and trickery. Will you never stop perverting the right ways of the Lord? 11 Now the hand of the Lord is against you. You are going to be blind, and for a time you will be unable to see the light of the sun." Immediately mist and darkness came over him, and he groped about, seeking someone to lead him by the hand.

We note that after Saul performs this miracle, Luke, inspired by the Holy Spirit, no longer calls him Saul, but Paul and that the team becomes Paul and Barnabas rather than Barnabas and Saul. Apparently at this point, Saul becomes Paul, the chosen vessel and apostle of Jesus Christ as signified by this notable miracle.

It is commonly supposed by those who believe in miraculous gifts today, that we do not see the miracles immediately, but must "wait on the Lord." Nothing could be further from the truth. Elymas was struck blind immediately. I have often suggested that these charismatics strike me blind if I, like Elymas, am perverting the right ways of the Lord. They have invariably refused and I still see, unlike Elymas. We must remember that these miraculous gifts were given by the Lord only to the apostles, of whom Saul was one, and the household of Cornelius to show that the Gentiles were acceptable to God.

Acts 8:18 When Simon saw that the _____ was given at the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money

Saul did not receive his gift by the laying on of another apostle's hands since it would have put him on a different level from the other apostles who received the gift directly from God. As we studied earlier, Ananias came to give him his sight and God gave him the Holy Spirit in miraculous measure.

II Cor 12:11 I have made a fool of myself, but you _____ me to it. I ought to have been commended by you, for I am not in the _____ inferior to the "super-apostles," even though I am nothing.

Gal 1:16 to reveal his _____ in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not _____ any man,

Acts 22:13 He stood beside me and said, 'Brother _____, _____ your sight!' And at that very moment I was able to see him.

Acts 13:12 When the proconsul saw what had happened, he believed, for he was amazed at the teaching about the Lord.

The gospel of Jesus was a truly revolutionary doctrine. It told of God coming to earth in human form and then after being crucified, raised from the dead. It promised that we too could through our belief and obedience obtain eternal life as sons of God.

I Cor 15:1 Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you _____ and on which you have taken your stand. 2 By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. 3 For what I _____ I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the _____, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,

Acts 13:13 From Paphos, Paul and his companions sailed to Perga in Pamphylia, where John left them to return to Jerusalem.

Perga is northwest of Paphos, in what is now Turkey.

As we have already noted, John Mark was Barnabas' cousin. John will later become a point of contention between Paul and Barnabas, to the extent that they go their separate ways in preaching the gospel. This personal difference did not lead to a break in fellowship or even in the steps set out by Jesus for reconciliation with a brother in Mt 18:15-17, but to the decision that it would be best if they separate. Later John Mark is reconciled to Paul, evidently from his dedication to the cause of the Lord.

Acts 15:37 Barnabas wanted to take John, also _____ Mark, with them, 38 but Paul did not think it wise to take him, because he had _____ them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in the work. 39 They had such a _____ disagreement that they parted company. Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus, 40 but Paul chose Silas and left, commended by the brothers to the grace of the Lord.

II Tim 4:11 Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, because he is _____ to me in my ministry.

Acts 13:14 From Perga they went on to Pisidian Antioch. On the Sabbath they entered the synagogue and sat down. 15 After the reading from the Law and the Prophets, the synagogue rulers sent word to them, saying, "Brothers, if you have a message of encouragement for the people, please speak."

Pisidian Antioch is about 100 miles north of Perga.

The openness of the Jews to the message that Saul and Barnabas bring is not one that will be repeated once the Jews see that large crowds of people are attracted to the lesson. Just as the Jews are motivated by envy and jealousy, so we are motivated in the same way and must be careful to put it aside.

Eph 4:31 Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and _____ along with every form of malice. 32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Acts 13:16 Standing up, Paul motioned with his hand and said: "Men of Israel and you Gentiles who worship God, listen to me! 17 The God of the people of Israel chose our fathers; he made the people prosper during their stay in Egypt, with mighty power he led them out of that country, 18 he endured their conduct about forty years in the desert,

The sermon that Paul preaches here bears a great resemblance to that of Peter in Acts 2 and 10 and of Stephen in Acts 7. Paul uses the things that his listeners would be familiar with in order to lead them to believe that Jesus is the Christ.

The conduct of the Israelites required that God "endure it." I have often wondered how the Israelites could be so stupid and then I look at the record of God's people today and I understand that we are no different.

Acts 7:36 He led them out of Egypt and did wonders and miraculous signs in Egypt, at the Red Sea and for _____ years in the desert. 37 "This is that Moses who told the Israelites, 'God will send you a prophet like me from your own people.' 38 He was in the assembly in the desert, with the _____ who spoke to him on Mount Sinai, and with our fathers; and he received living words to pass on to us. 39 "But our fathers refused to obey him. Instead, they rejected him and in their hearts turned back to Egypt. 40 They told Aaron, 'Make us gods who will go _____ us. As for this fellow Moses who led us out of Egypt--we don't know what has happened to him!' 41 That was the time they made an idol in the form of a calf. They brought _____ to it and held a celebration in honor of what their hands had made. 42 But God turned away and gave them over to the worship of the heavenly bodies. This agrees with what is written in the book of the prophets: "'Did you bring me sacrifices and offerings forty years in the _____, O house of Israel? 43 You have lifted up the shrine of Molech and the star of your god Rephan, the idols you made to worship. Therefore I will send you into exile' beyond Babylon. 44 "Our forefathers had the tabernacle of the Testimony with them in the _____. It had been made as God directed Moses, according to the pattern he had seen.

Acts 13:19 he overthrew seven nations in Canaan and gave their land to his people as their inheritance. 20 All this took about 450 years. "After this, God gave them judges until the time of Samuel the prophet. 21 Then the people asked for a king, and he gave them Saul son of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin, who ruled forty years. 22 After removing Saul, he made David their king. He testified concerning him: 'I have found David son of Jesse a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.'

The 450 years which Paul uses is an approximation as the word "about" indicates. In I K 6:1, we find the period of 480 years, which starts at the time of entry into Canaan and not the time at which the Jews left Egypt. We then estimate the destruction of the nations of Canaan by Joshua as about 25-30 years to obtain the figure that Paul uses.

The phrase after this must refer to the giving of the land as inheritance, which the KJV says "he divided their land to them by lot" which occurred when the Israelites went into the Land, even though the land was not fully theirs, since the judges, and the reigns of both Saul and David are included in the 450 years.

I Kings 6:1 In the four _____ and eightieth year after the Israelites had come out of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, the second month, he began to build the _____ of the LORD.

There is no place in the OT that gives the time of Saul's reign and it is not known how Paul knew this, but his listeners must have agreed with the figure, given the crowd that comes for his next sermon.

Acts 13:23 "From this man's descendants God has brought to Israel the Savior Jesus, as he promised.

The accounts of the genealogy of Jesus through both his father and mother given respectively in Mt 1:1-17 and Lk 3:23-33, both show that Jesus was a descendant of David.

Mt 1:1 A record of the _____ of Jesus Christ the son of David, the son of Abraham:

Lk 3:23 Now Jesus himself was about _____ years old when he began his ministry. He was the son, so it was thought, of _____, the son of Heli, ... 31 the son of Melea, the son of Menna, the son of Mattatha, the son of _____, the son of David,

Acts 13:24 Before the coming of Jesus, John preached repentance and baptism to all the people of Israel. 25 As John was completing his work, he said: 'Who do you think I am? I am not that one. No, but he is coming after me, whose sandals I am not worthy to untie.'

The mission of John the Baptist was to prepare the way.

Mt 3:1 In those days John the _____ came, preaching in the Desert of Judea 2 and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is _____." 3 This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: "A voice of one calling in the desert, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make _____ paths for him.'"

We do not have an exact quote of this passage in the gospels, yet there is no reason to doubt that John indeed said these very words, since his message was repeated often and would have taken many similar forms. We can regard this as merely another quotation of John, no less important than those in the gospel accounts where Jesus testified about John.

Mt 11:7 As John's disciples were leaving, _____ began to speak to the crowd about John: "What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind? 8 If not, what did you go out to see? A man _____ in fine clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes are in kings' palaces. 9 Then what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. 10 This is the one about whom it is written: "'I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will _____ your way before you.' 11 I tell you the truth: Among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet he who is least in the kingdom of _____ is greater than he.

Acts 13:26 "Brothers, children of Abraham, and you God-fearing Gentiles, it is to us that this message of salvation has been sent. 27 The people of Jerusalem and their rulers did not recognize Jesus, yet in condemning him they fulfilled the words of the prophets that are read every Sabbath.

There is no basis for the word Gentiles in the Greek texts. It would appear that this is an inference by the translators as they translate the phrase "those among you that fear God" which is in the KJV. It would be most unlikely that Paul speaks to the Gentiles here since Paul and Barnabas had come to the synagogue (v. 14). The same phraseology is seen in v. 16. It would be more likely that these were proselytes, just as Nicolas was. Although not a brother or a child of Abraham by birth, their inclusion in the worship by the Jews was not seen as the worship of a Gentile, but of a convert.

Acts 6:5 This proposal _____ the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a _____ to Judaism.

Even as Paul told the Jews here, they had read the prophecies concerning Jesus in their assemblies on a regular basis and still fulfilled them by killing Jesus.

Isa 53:3 He was _____ and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. 4 Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him _____ by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. 5 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. 6 We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. 7 He was _____ and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is

silent, so he did not open his mouth. 8 By _____ and judgment he was taken away. And who can speak of his descendants? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was _____. 9 He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his _____, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth. 10 Yet it was the LORD'S will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand.

Acts 13:28 Though they found no proper ground for a death sentence, they asked Pilate to have him executed.

Both Paul and Peter in their sermons repeat this incident. We do not expect that all of the words that Paul had to say are recorded here, but we suspect that we read a shortened version which leaves out many of the passages of scripture that might be quoted to demonstrate that the things that Paul says are true.

Mt 27:22 "What shall I do, then, with Jesus who is called _____?" Pilate asked. They all answered, "Crucify him!" 23 "Why? What crime has he _____ asked Pilate. But they shouted all the louder, "Crucify him!" 24 When Pilate saw that he was getting nowhere, but that instead an uproar was starting, he took _____ and washed his hands in front of the crowd. "I am _____ of this man's blood," he said. "It is your responsibility!"

Lk 23:14 and said to them, "You brought me this man as one who was _____ the people to rebellion. I have examined him in your presence and have found no _____ for your charges against him. 15 Neither has Herod, for he sent him back to us; as you can see, he has done nothing to deserve _____.

Acts 3:13 The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus. You handed him over to be _____, and you disowned him before _____, though he had decided to let him go. 14 You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you. 15 You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the _____. We are witnesses of this.

Acts 13:29 When they had carried out all that was written about him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a tomb. 30 But God raised him from the dead, 31 and for many days he was seen by those who had traveled with him from Galilee to Jerusalem. They are now his witnesses to our people.

Paul makes no mention of himself here, however, he tells the Corinthian brethren that he was the last to see the Lord. Today people claim to have seen the Lord, but would not have the foggiest notion of what Jesus even looked like. We have no pictures or descriptions of him that

would allow us to separate Jesus from most other men of his day. We should not be impressed by those that tell us they have seen God, or that he speaks directly to them.

Lk 24:44 He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be _____ that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms." 45 Then he opened their minds so they could _____ the Scriptures.

I Cor 15:1 Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the _____ I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. 2 By this gospel you are saved, if you hold _____ to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. 3 For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins _____ to the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day _____ to the Scriptures, 5 and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. 6 After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still _____, though some have fallen asleep. 7 Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, 8 and last of all he _____ to me also, as to one abnormally born.

Acts 13:32 "We tell you the good news: What God promised our fathers 33 he has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising up Jesus. As it is written in the second Psalm: "You are my Son; today I have become your Father. 34 The fact that God raised him from the dead, never to decay, is stated in these words: "'I will give you the holy and sure blessings promised to David.' 35 So it is stated elsewhere: "'You will not let your Holy One see decay.' 36 "For when David had served God's purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep; he was buried with his fathers and his body decayed. 37 But the one whom God raised from the dead did not see decay.

Paul uses logic to show that Jesus must be the Christ and this is the same reasoning that he must have used immediately after his conversion. We need to remember that we too must not be ashamed of the gospel and proclaim it wherever and whenever possible.

Acts 9:20 At once he began to _____ in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God. 21 All those who heard him were astonished and asked, "Isn't he the man who raised havoc in Jerusalem among those who _____ on this name? And hasn't he come here to take them as prisoners to the chief priests?" 22 Yet Saul grew more and more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by _____ that Jesus is the Christ.

Rom 1:16 I am not _____ of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

Acts 2:29 "Brothers, I can tell you _____ that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. 30 But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his _____ on his throne. 31 Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the _____ of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay. 32 God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all _____ of the fact.

Acts 13:38 "Therefore, my brothers, I want you to know that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. 39 Through him everyone who believes is justified from everything you could not be justified from by the law of Moses. 40 Take care that what the prophets have said does not happen to you: 41 "Look, you scoffers, wonder and perish, for I am going to do something in your days that you would never believe, even if someone told you."

Salvation the result of having been forgiven of our sins. Salvation is used in two ways in the Scriptures: salvation from past sins and eternal salvation. Both are achieved through obedience to Jesus.

Rom 5:8 But God _____ his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Heb 10:1 The law is only a _____ of the good things that are coming--not the realities themselves. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make _____ those who draw near to worship. ... 4 because it is _____ for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

Acts 13:42 As Paul and Barnabas were leaving the synagogue, the people invited them to speak further about these things on the next Sabbath. 43 When the congregation was dismissed, many of the Jews and devout converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas, who talked with them and urged them to continue in the grace of God.

Again, the hearers are said to be Jews and proselytes (converts), the Gentiles not being brought into the synagogues. Paul is about to be forced to bring in the Gentiles because of the evil of the Jews and their unbelief.

Acts 13:44 On the next Sabbath almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord. 45 When the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and talked abusively against what Paul was saying. 46 Then Paul and Barnabas answered them boldly: "We had to speak the word of God to you first. Since you reject it and do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, we now turn to the Gentiles. 47 For this is what the Lord has commanded us: "I have made you light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.'

Again, it should be noted that the "whole city" is that of the Jews as Paul then turns to the Gentiles because the Jews did not accept what Paul was saying. Paul, at the command of our Lord, had always gone to the Jews first.

Isa 55:3 Give ear and come to me; hear me, that your soul may live. I will make an _____ covenant with you, my faithful love promised to David. 4 See, I have made him a _____ to the peoples, a leader and commander of the peoples. 5 Surely you will summon _____ you know not, and nations that do not know you will hasten to you, because of the _____ your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has endowed you with splendor."

Acts 1:8 But you will receive _____ 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."

Acts 18:6 But when the Jews _____ Paul and became abusive, he shook out his clothes in protest and said to them, "Your _____ be on your own heads! I am clear of my responsibility. From now on I will go to the _____."

Rom 11:13 I am talking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch as I am the _____ to the Gentiles, I make much of my ministry ... 17 If some of the _____ have been broken off, and you, though a wild olive shoot, have been _____ in among the others and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root, 18 do not boast over those branches. If you do, consider this: You do not support the root, but the _____ supports you. 19 You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I could be grafted in." 20 Granted. But they were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be _____, but be afraid. 21 For if God did not spare the natural branches, he will not spare you either.

Acts 13:48 When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed.

Those who are appointed to eternal life are not chose of God before the foundation of the world since Jn 3:16 tells us "whoever" may come. But, we find that those who are appointed are self appointed in that they hunger and thirst.

Jn 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever _____ in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Mt 5:6 _____ are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Rom 8:28 And we know that in all _____ God works for the good of those who love him, who have been _____ according to his purpose.

II Thes 2:14 He called you to this through our _____, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Sin does not work to our good, but all things done in keeping with God's will.

Rom 6:1 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on _____ so that grace may increase? 2 By no means! We died to sin; how can we _____ in it any longer?

God knew that there would be those who would choose to follow him just as he knew that Job would continue in his righteousness, regardless of what Satan did to him.

I Pet 1:2 who have been _____ according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for _____ to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance.

Job 1:8 Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you _____ my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil." 9 "Does Job _____ God for nothing?" Satan replied. 10 "Have you not put a _____ around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land. 11 But _____ out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely _____ you to your face." 12 The LORD said to Satan, "Very well, then, everything he has is in your hands, but on the man himself do not lay a finger." Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

We must not only hear the call of the gospel, but we must respond in order to obtain salvation from our past sins. Once we have set our mind on the course, we must not fail to keep our eye on the goal, thus ensuring our eternal salvation.

II Pet 1:10 Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and _____ sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall, 11 and you will receive a rich welcome into the _____ kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Rev 17:14 They will make war against the _____, but the Lamb will overcome them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings--and with him will be his _____, chosen and faithful followers."

Acts 13:49 The word of the Lord spread through the whole region. 50 But the Jews incited the God-fearing women of high standing and the leading men of the city. They stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them from their region.

Again, we notice that not many who have high station in this life will be obedient to the gospel. These are the ones who immediately attempt to run Paul and Barnabas out of town.

Acts 13:51 So they shook the dust from their feet in protest against them and went to Iconium. 52 And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

When people are not inclined to obey the Lord, we need not worry about staying in the area for a long time in fond hope that they will change their minds. Once the gospel has been preached and people begin to work against it, it is time to move on. At this point they travel to Iconium which is 60 miles east of Antioch.

Questions

1. Name three of the prophets and teachers in Antioch. _____

2. Who sent Saul and Barnabas on the journey? _____

3. Name the cities in order, that Saul and Barnabas visited on this trip. _____

4. Who was Elymas? _____

5. Where did the transition of Saul to Paul occur and why? _____

6. Where did John Mark leave Saul and Barnabas? _____

7. Give three points in Paul's lesson in Antioch.

8. Quote Acts 13:39

9. Why did the Jews run Paul and Barnabas out of town? _____

A Workbook Commentary on the Book of Acts
Chapter 14

Acts 14:1 At Iconium Paul and Barnabas went as usual into the Jewish synagogue. There they spoke so effectively that a great number of Jews and Gentiles believed. 2 But the Jews who refused to believe stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brothers.

Paul and Barnabas continue to go to those who are most familiar with their message.

Acts 9:20 At once he began to _____ in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God.

Acts 13:46 Then Paul and Barnabas answered them boldly: "We had to speak the word of God to you first. Since you _____ it and do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, we now turn to the Gentiles.

The Jews would know the Scriptures on which the proof that Jesus is the son of God is based. These Jews would have been looking for the fulfillment of the prophecy in Daniel concerning the coming king and his kingdom.

Dan 2:37 You, O king, are the king of kings. The God of heaven has given you dominion and power and might and glory; 38 in your _____ he has placed mankind and the beasts of the field and the birds of the air. Wherever they live, he has made you ruler over them all. You are that head of gold. 39 "After you, another _____ will rise, inferior to yours. Next, a third kingdom, one of bronze, will rule over the whole earth. 40 _____, there will be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron--for iron breaks and smashes everything--and as iron breaks things to pieces, so it will crush and break all the others. 41 Just as you saw that the feet and toes were partly of baked clay and partly of iron, so this will be a _____ kingdom; yet it will have some of the strength of iron in it, even as you saw iron mixed with clay. 42 As the toes were partly iron and partly clay, so this kingdom will be partly strong and partly brittle. 43 And just as you saw the iron mixed with baked clay, so the people will be a mixture and will not remain _____, any more than iron mixes with clay. 44 "In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a _____ that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those _____ and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever.

The Babylonian kingdom was the first civilization to extend over the known world. It was succeeded by the Medo-Persian empire. Following this, Alexander the Great united the world in the Greek empire. The fourth world kingdom was the Roman empire. Thus, the Jews were looking forward expectantly to the promised kingdom.

Today, many try to poison the minds of those that would believe by calling the church of our Lord a cult, or by affixing some name to disparage us. When talking to others about the cause of the Lord, we need to meet these aspersions head on since they can often poison the minds of those who would believe.

Acts 13:45 When the _____ saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and talked abusively against what Paul was saying.

Acts 13:50 But the _____ incited the God-fearing women of high standing and the leading men of the city. They stirred up _____ against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them from their region.

Acts 14:3 So Paul and Barnabas spent considerable time there, speaking boldly for the Lord, who confirmed the message of his grace by enabling them to do miraculous signs and wonders.

The only effective response to discouragement by others is to return to the Scriptures for encouragement.

Heb 10:24 And let us consider how we may spur one _____ on toward love and good deeds. *25* Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us _____ one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Paul was always willing to speak boldly in the cause of Christ even as he asked the Corinthians to pray for him to speak boldly.

Eph 6:18 And _____ in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on _____ for all the saints. *19* Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, *20* for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it _____, as I should.

Acts 20:20 You know that I have not hesitated to _____ anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you _____ and from house to house.

I Thess 2:2 We had previously _____ and been insulted in Philippi, as you know, but with the help of our God we dared to tell you his gospel in spite of strong opposition.

The message of his grace is the word that is able to save us.

Acts 20:24 However, I consider my life _____ nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me--the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace. ... 32 "Now I commit you to God and to the _____ of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are _____.

Rom 1:16 I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the _____ of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

The words that were spoken were confirmed by the miracles that they were able to perform.

Mk 16:20 Then the _____ went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his _____ by the signs that accompanied it.

Acts 4:29 Now, Lord, consider their _____ and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. 30 _____ out your hand to heal and perform miraculous signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus."

Acts 5:12 The apostles performed many miraculous _____ and wonders among the people. And all the believers used to meet together in Solomon's Colonnade. 13 No one else dared join them, even though they were _____ regarded by the people. 14 Nevertheless, more and more men and women _____ in the Lord and were added to their number.

Barnabas and Paul were performing miracles. Paul received his ability directly from the Lord while Barnabas received his ability from the laying on of an apostle's hands. Neither of these facts are stated directly in the Scriptures, but must be inferred from what appears.

Gal 1:15 But when God, who set me apart from _____ and called me by his grace, was pleased 16 to reveal his Son in me so that I might _____ him among the Gentiles, I did not consult any man, 17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before I was, but I went immediately into _____ and later returned to Damascus.

II Cor 11:5 But I do not think I am in the least _____ to those "super-apostles."

Acts 8:18 When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the _____ on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money 19 and said, "Give me also this ability so that _____ on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit."

Acts 19:6 When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they _____ in tongues and prophesied.

II Cor 12:12 The things that _____ an apostle--signs, wonders and miracles--were done among you with _____ perseverance.

Acts 14:4 The people of the city were divided; some sided with the Jews, others with the apostles. 5 There was a plot afoot among the Gentiles and Jews, together with their leaders, to mistreat them and stone them. 6 But they found out about it and fled to the Lycaonian cities of Lystra and Derbe and to the surrounding country, 7 where they continued to preach the good news.

Paul refers to this occasion more than once in his effort to please God.

II Tim 3:10 You, however, know all about my _____, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, 11 _____, sufferings--what kinds of things happened to me in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, the persecutions I endured. Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them. 12 In fact, everyone who wants to _____ a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,

II Cor 11:25 Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, _____ times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, 26 I have been _____ on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the _____, in danger at sea; and in danger from false brothers.

Paul's example was one which exemplified Jesus' admonition to treat others with love which is best exemplified by teaching the gospel of Jesus.

Mt 5:44 But I _____ you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 that you may be sons of your _____ in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

II Tim 4:2 Preach the Word; be _____ in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage--with great _____ and careful instruction.

Acts 14:8 In Lystra there sat a man crippled in his feet, who was lame from birth and had never walked. 9 He listened to Paul as he was speaking. Paul looked directly at him, saw that he had faith to be healed 10 and called out, "Stand up on your feet!" At that, the man jumped up and began to walk.

Miracles performed by the apostles and those on whom they had laid their hands were always immediate. They never had to "wait on the Lord" as some charismatics today say. This is like the example of Peter and John in Acts 3, where the lame man had no faith or knowledge and had to be picked up in order to stand.

Acts 3:5 So the man gave them his _____, expecting to get something from them. 6 Then Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." 7 Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man's feet and ankles became _____. 8 He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and _____ God.

The faith that healed the person in the case of the apostles was in the apostles and not the believers. Jesus had the power to heal those who even touched him based on their belief in him. But when failure came, it was always because of a lack of faith in the one doing the healing. When Jesus healed the blind men, it was not their faith that healed them, but Jesus. When the woman who was bleeding was healed, Jesus told her it her faith, but it was Jesus' power that healed the woman.

Mt 8:9 For I _____ am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." 10 When _____ heard this, he was astonished and said to those following him, "I tell you the _____, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith.

Mt 9:20 Just then a woman who had been _____ to bleeding for twelve years came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak. 21 She said to _____ "If I only touch his cloak, I will be healed." 22 Jesus turned and saw her. "Take _____, daughter," he said, "your faith has healed you." And the woman was healed from that moment.

Mt 9:27 As Jesus went on from there, two _____ men followed him, calling out, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!" 28 When he had gone indoors, the blind men came to him, and he asked them, "Do you believe that I am _____ to do this?" "Yes, Lord," they replied. 29 Then he touched their eyes and said, "According to your faith will it be done to you"; 30 and their _____ was restored. Jesus warned them sternly, "See that no one knows about this."

Mt 13:57 And they took _____ at him. But Jesus said to them, "Only in his hometown and in his own house is a prophet without honor." 58 And he did not do many _____ there because of their lack of faith.

This last quote has been used to say that Jesus could not heal them because of their lack of faith, but since Jesus is God Almighty, this could not be so. Rather, it must be that Jesus chose not to do the miracles since these were as hardened as Pharaoh when God brought the plagues on Egypt.

Acts 14:11 When the crowd saw what Paul had done, they shouted in the Lycaonian language, "The gods have come down to us in human form!" 12 Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul they called Hermes because he was the chief speaker.

People everywhere always want to claim that they have seen a supernatural power. When these people saw it they refused to accept the explanation Paul gives and want to move Paul and Barnabas up to the position of Gods. Today, as we look at the magazines along the grocery store check-out counters, we see the same kind of gullibility on the part of those who buy such trash. It is apparent from the Scriptures that this was not the only time such suppositions were made.

Acts 8:10 and all the _____, both high and low, gave him their attention and exclaimed, "This man is the _____ power known as the Great Power."

Acts 12:21 On the appointed day _____, wearing his royal robes, sat on his throne and delivered a public _____ to the people. 22 They shouted, "This is the voice of a god, not of a man."

Acts 28:3 Paul gathered a pile of brushwood and, as he put it on the fire, a _____, driven out by the heat, fastened itself on his hand. 4 When the islanders saw the snake _____ from his hand, they said to each other, "This man must be a murderer; for though he escaped from the sea, Justice has not allowed him to live." 5 But Paul shook the _____ off into the fire and suffered no ill effects. 6 The people expected him to swell up or suddenly fall dead, but after waiting a long time and seeing nothing unusual happen to him, they changed their minds and said he was a _____.

The KJV used the Roman names Jupiter and Mercurius for the names of these Gods, which the Greeks called Zeus and Hermes. The actual Greek words used are *Dia* and *Hermeen*.

Acts 14:13 The priest of Zeus, whose temple was just outside the city, brought bulls and wreaths to the city gates because he and the crowd wanted to offer sacrifices to them. 14 But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of this, they tore their clothes and rushed out into the crowd, shouting: 15 "Men, why are you doing this? We too are only men, human like you. We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made heaven and earth and sea and everything in them.

The pagan religions have always glorified man and his image. The child of God does not worship angels or idols, but the living God.

Rom 1:21 For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave _____ to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for _____ made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles. 24 Therefore God gave them over in the _____ desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another.

Acts 10:25 As Peter entered the house, Cornelius met him and fell at his feet in _____. 26 *But Peter made him get up. "Stand up," he said, "I am only a man myself."*

Rev 19:9 Then the angel said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are invited to the _____ supper of the Lamb!'" And he added, "These are the true words of God."
10 *At this I _____ at his feet to _____ him. But he said to me, "Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your _____ who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."*

Rev 22:8 I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I had heard and seen them, I fell down to _____ at the feet of the _____ who had been showing them to me. 9 *But he said to me, "Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your _____ the prophets and of all who keep the words of this book. Worship God!"*

Acts 14:16 In the past, he let all nations go their own way. 17 Yet he has not left himself without testimony: He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy."

This passage is a recurring theme in Paul's message. Although we receive good things from God, whether we are good or bad, God now holds us accountable for our actions and has provided a way of escape. There is no room for excuse since God is seen in his creation.

Acts 17:29 "Therefore since we are God's _____, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone--an image made by man's design and skill. 30 In the past God _____ such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. 31 For he has set a day when he will _____ the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead."

Ps 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies _____ the work of his hands. 2 Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. 3 There is no speech or _____ where their voice is not heard. 4 Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world. In the heavens he has pitched a tent for the sun,

Rom 1:19 since what may be _____ about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. 20 For since the _____ of the world God's invisible qualities--his eternal power and divine nature--have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that _____ are without excuse.

Acts 14:18 Even with these words, they had difficulty keeping the crowd from sacrificing to them.

People rarely listen and then they only retain 10% of what they hear and that for less than a week. It should be no wonder to you that it requires diligent study in order to retain the word of God and understand it. These people were no different than most listeners to a sermon today. They have a preconceived notion of what they are going to hear and it is difficult to change their minds with the facts. We see this on a weekly radio program where people will strive mightily to change the clear commands of God. Most religions today are based on just such difficulties in getting people to listen to the word of God and obey.

Rev 1:3 Blessed is the one who _____ the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is _____ in it, because the time is near.

Acts 14:19 Then some Jews came from Antioch and Iconium and won the crowd over. They stoned Paul and dragged him outside the city, thinking he was dead. 20 But after the disciples had gathered around him, he got up and went back into the city. The next day he and Barnabas left for Derbe.

We can only speculate about the things that went through Paul's mind as the crowd takes him out to stone him, however, he must have recalled what he did as a similar crowd stoned Stephen and what the Lord had said concerning his suffering. Paul talks about this later as he preaches and when he lists his tribulations in serving the Lord.

Acts 7:58 dragged him out of the city and began to _____ him. Meanwhile, the witnesses laid their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul.

Acts 9:16 I will show him how much he must _____ for my name."

Acts 22:20 And when the blood of your _____ Stephen was shed, I stood there giving my approval and guarding the clothes of those who were _____ him.'

II Cor 11:25 Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was _____, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea,

II Tim 3:10 You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, _____, 11 persecutions, sufferings--what kinds of things happened to me in Antioch, _____ and Lystra, the _____ I endured. Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them.

Acts 14:21 They preached the good news in that city and won a large number of disciples. Then they returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, 22 strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. "We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God," they said.

There must have been great concern on the part of the disciples in these cities as they had seen the results of the envy of the Jews towards Paul and Barnabas. It took a great deal of courage to return to these cities to encourage the brethren. We need to remember that young Christians need a great deal of encouragement as tribulations affect them greatly.

The kingdom of God and the church are seen not to be synonymous here. Those who were strengthened were disciples who were in the faith and thus members of the Lord's body. However, Paul and Barnabas were encouraging the members to remain faithful in order to enter the kingdom. The kingdom includes all of those who have submitted to God's sovereign rule. The church consists of those who are in either the local assembly of the saints or who are numbered among all of those on the earth who are disciples. The kingdom consists of all these in addition to those righteous dead who have gone on before.

Acts 14:23 Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust.

The appointment or ordination as the KJV puts it has no ceremony to accompany it although many have tried to make up such a ceremony. Both Timothy and Titus were told to appoint elders and from this we learn that this is one of the evangelist's jobs. The reason that the evangelist is to do this is that he is the one who comes to a new town, teaches the word to those living there and upon leaving must hand over the responsibility to someone qualified to continue to teach the church. We do not find an example of the elders or the evangelist "ruling over" the church as occurs in many churches today.

Mt 20:25 Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the _____ of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. 26 Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become _____ among you must be your servant, 27 and whoever wants to be first must be your slave-- 28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a _____ for many."

The work of the elder in the church today is often taken up making decisions concerning the color of the paint, the time meeting and settling problems among the members who are irritated at the elders and the preacher for not doing things their way. I have even seen members who want all the elders to come to a meeting to settle some problem they have with the way things are handled in the church or with some other member. The work of the elder as given by God is far more important than these things and should not be allowed to be replaced by such petty disputes. The work of the elders is described in prophecy as well as in the qualifications

given by Paul to Timothy and Titus. It is clearly restricted to teaching and preaching God's word to the local congregation.

Jer 3:14 "Return, faithless people," declares the LORD, "for I am your husband. I will choose you--one from a town and two from a clan--and bring you to Zion. 15 Then I will give you _____ after my own heart, who will lead you with knowledge and _____.

I Tim 3:1 Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a _____ task. 2 Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, _____ to teach, 3 not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. 4 He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with _____ respect. 5 (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) 6 He must not be a recent _____, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. 7 He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into _____ and into the devil's trap.

Tit 1:5 The _____ I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint _____ in every town, as I directed you. 6 An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. 7 Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless--not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. 8 Rather he must be _____, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. 9 He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can _____ others by sound doctrine and _____ those who oppose it. 10 _____ there are many _____ people, mere _____ and _____, especially those of the circumcision group. 11 They must be _____ because they are ruining whole households by teaching things they ought not to teach--and that for the sake of dishonest gain.

Acts 20:17 From Miletus, Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders of the church. ... 28 Keep watch over _____ and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be _____ of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. 29 I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. 30 Even from your own _____ men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. 31 So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped _____ each of you night and day with tears.

We have "lead you with knowledge and understanding," "able to teach," "encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it," "men will arise and distort the truth," showing us that the work of the elders is clearly in teaching. From Acts 20, we learn that the

elders are overseers, that is, ones who watch and care for, not manage and make decisions for. And that they are to shepherd the church, from the Greek verb *poimen*, also translated as the noun in Eph 4:11 as pastor.

Eph 4:11 It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be _____ and teachers, 12 to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the _____ of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of _____.

The appointment of elders occurs within a two year time span at most. The elders may have all had spiritual gifts in order to prepare them for their work, but it seems more likely that they received information as it was given to the apostles and then transmitted by preaching or letters. The work of the elders was to teach the local church. Their work differs from that of the evangelist in that the evangelist is not associated with the local church over a long period of time in the NT.

Mk 3:14 He appointed twelve--designating them _____--that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach 15 and to have _____ to drive out demons.

I Th 3:2 We sent Timothy, who is our brother and God's _____ worker in spreading the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you in your faith, 3 so that no one would be unsettled by these trials. You know quite well that we were _____ for them. 4 In fact, when we were with you, we kept telling you that we would be _____. And it turned out that way, as you well know.

I Pet 5:10 And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have _____ a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and _____.

Acts 14:24 After going through Pisidia, they came into Pamphylia, 25 and when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia. 26 From Attalia they sailed back to Antioch, where they had been committed to the grace of God for the work they had now completed. 27 On arriving there, they gathered the church together and reported all that God had done through them and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. 28 And they stayed there a long time with the disciples.

The first thing that an evangelist returning from a trip should do is to report on the work that has been done. This not only provides an accounting of the funds spent, but serves to inspire the group which supported the work to further effort in the service of God.

II Cor 8:20 Avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is _____ by us: 21 Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the _____ of men.

Phil 4:15 Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church _____ with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. 16 For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. 17 Not because I desire a _____: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.

The door of faith to the Gentiles becomes the problem in the very next chapter as the Jews, not believing the report of Peter, now want the Gentiles to become Jews in order to be saved.

Questions:

1. How did God confirm his message?

2. What miracle did Paul do in Lystra?

3. What did the people call Paul and Barnabas?

4. What did God allow in the nations in the past?

5. What did the people do to Paul after he had restrained them from sacrifice?

6. What message did Paul and Barnabas give to encourage the brethren?

7. Why were elders appointed?

8. What is the elder's responsibility?

9. What did Paul and Barnabas do on returning to Antioch?

A Workbook Commentary on the Book of Acts
Chapter 15

Acts 15:1 Some men came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the brothers: "Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved."

Although it is called a custom, circumcision was required of every male Jew as a token of the covenant the Jews had with God.

Gen 17:14 Any _____ male, who has not been circumcised in the flesh, will be cut off from his people; he has _____ my covenant."

Ex 12:48 "An alien living among you who wants to _____ the LORD'S Passover must have all the males in his household _____; then he may take part like one born in the land. No uncircumcised male may eat of it.

Ex 4:24 At a lodging place on the way, the LORD met Moses and was about to _____ him. 25 But Zipporah took a flint knife, cut off her son's foreskin and touched Moses' feet with it. "Surely you are a bridegroom of _____ to me," she said.

The Holy Spirit reveals (Acts 15:28) at this point that the Gentiles are not required to obey the Law of Moses, but the church continues to observe the Law and the revelation of Jesus as far as it is revealed at this time (about AD 47-48 from Gal 2:1)

Gal 2:1 Fourteen years later I went up again to _____, this time with _____, I took Titus along also. 2 I went in response to a revelation and set before them the gospel that I preach among the Gentiles. But I did this _____ to those who seemed to be leaders, for fear that I was running or had run my race in vain.

The church to this point, having only recently admitted Gentiles, was continuing to follow the Law of Moses. While some have speculated that Paul and Barnabas had gone into the synagogues only teach the Gentiles, even at Acts 21 (about AD 57) the church in Jerusalem still kept the Law of Moses.

Acts 21:20 When they heard this, they praised God. Then they said to Paul: "You see, brother, how many thousands of _____ have _____, and all of them are zealous for the law. 21 They have been informed that you teach all the Jews who live among the Gentiles to turn away from Moses, telling them not to _____ their children or live according to our customs. ... 24 Take these men, join in their purification rites and pay their expenses, so that they can have their heads shaved. Then everybody will know

there is no truth in these reports about you, but that you yourself are living in _____ to the law.

The Holy Spirit continues to reveal God's will and when Paul writes the letter to the Galatians and clearly shows the Law of Moses has been abolished.

Gal 3:23 Before this _____ came, we were held prisoners by the law, locked up until faith should be revealed. 24 So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. 25 Now that _____ has come, we are no longer under the _____ of the law. 26 You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, 27 for all of you who were _____ into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

These Jews were binding the Law of Moses on the newly converted Gentiles. It is evident that until the time that Cornelius was brought into the church, the Jews thought that this was just another sect of the Jews, although many thought it was blasphemous and should be wiped out.

Acts 8:1 And Saul was there, giving _____ to his death. On that day a great persecution broke out against the church at _____, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria.

There are some religions today who hold the same view on a different matter, the Sabbath. The Seventh Day Adventists and the Seventh Day Baptists believe in keeping the Sabbath and thus meet on Saturday. Among a number of Protestant denominations, a common belief is that they meet on the "Christian Sabbath." Neither of these beliefs is in agreement with the Scriptures. The Law of Moses included the Sabbath and the Scriptures do not mention a "Christian Sabbath" anywhere.

Deut 5:1 Moses summoned all _____ and said: Hear, O Israel, the decrees and laws I declare in your hearing today. Learn them and be sure to follow them. 2 The LORD our God made a _____ with us at Horeb. 3 It was not with our fathers that the LORD made this covenant, but with us, with all of us who are alive here today. ... 12 "Observe the _____ day by keeping it holy, as the LORD your God has commanded you.

Neh 9:13 "You came down on Mount Sinai; you spoke to them from heaven. You gave them _____ and laws that are just and right, and decrees and commands that are good. 14 You made known to them your holy _____ and gave them commands, decrees and laws through your servant Moses.

As we go through this chapter, we will learn how questions are to be settled by the church today. This is the first question of what a church should do when there is a doctrinal question to

be settled which did not arise where the 12 apostles were located. It also shows that even at this time, many of the disciples did not believe that Paul was an apostle of Jesus.

Acts 15:2 This brought Paul and Barnabas into sharp dispute and debate with them. So Paul and Barnabas were appointed, along with some other believers, to go up to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders about this question.

Paul and Barnabas had already been on the first missionary journey and had converted many Gentiles while receiving rejection from the Jews. In addition, Paul's doctrine came from God and not men and would have been a driving force in the dispute.

Acts 14:27 On arriving there, they _____ the church together and reported all that God had done _____ them and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.

Gal 1:15 But when God, who set me apart from birth and called me by his grace, was _____ 16 to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the _____, I did not consult any man, 17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to see those who were _____ before I was, but I went immediately into Arabia and later returned to Damascus. 18 Then after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to get acquainted with _____ and stayed with him fifteen days.

Gal 2:1 _____ years later I went up again to Jerusalem, this time with Barnabas. I took Titus along also. 2 I went in response to a revelation and set before them the gospel that I preach among the _____. But I did this _____ to those who seemed to be leaders, for fear that I was running or had run my race in vain.

In the Galatian letter, we find further that the reason for the sharp dispute was a revelation that God had given to Paul, although the contents are not specified. Paul was extremely concerned that the twelve agree with the doctrine that he was preaching and that his revelation of God was not something false.

This passage also sets the date of Acts 15 at more than 17 years after Saul's conversion. The discrepancy is the length of time that Paul was in Arabia.

Acts 15:3 The church sent them on their way, and as they traveled through Phoenicia and Samaria, they told how the Gentiles had been converted. This news made all the brothers very glad.

The church in Phoenecia and Samaria received the news of the Gentile's conversion in a much different light than that of the brethren from Judea. Their proximity to Joppa and Caesarea would have caused them to hear of Peter's conversion of the Gentiles, Cornelius and his household.

Acts 15:4 When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and elders, to whom they reported everything God had done through them.

This report appears to be the same as that given to the church at Antioch without reference to the dispute between the brethren from Judea and Paul and Barnabas. This meeting was also the private meeting that Paul made reference to in Gal 2:2.

Gal 2:2 I went in response to a revelation and set before them the _____ that I preach among the Gentiles. But I did this privately to those who seemed to be _____, for fear that I was running or had run my race in vain.

Paul says that he explained his revelations to those "of reputation" and not those who could rule without debate. It would appear from Paul's account and Luke's comments here that the leaders of the church in Jerusalem had no problems with his doctrine. This did not settle the matter, however, for it remained for the church to hear the discussion and be persuaded that it was from God. Today, a preacher or teacher or even the elders may be fully convinced of the truth of some matter, but it still requires that the church be taught properly that they might come to the unity of the faith with their leaders.

Eph 4:11 It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be _____ and teachers, 12 to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13 until we all reach _____ in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become _____, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Acts 15:5 Then some of the believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and said, "The Gentiles must be circumcised and required to obey the law of Moses."

The job of the elders, even as the apostles, is to convict the gainsayer or as the NIV puts it "refute those who oppose it."

Tit 1:9 He must hold firmly to the trustworthy _____ as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and _____ those who oppose it.

Acts 6:3 Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are _____ to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this _____ over to them 4 and will give our attention to prayer and the _____ of the word."

Acts 15:6 The apostles and elders met to consider this question.

We find that even though the leaders, which must surely include the apostles and elders, had already met privately with Paul. Paul indicates that he received no dissension from them and yet they meet once again to be certain that the decision they made is a correct one. This time the meeting is not private, but we find the church is present from verse 12.

Acts 15:7 After much discussion, Peter got up and addressed them: "Brothers, you know that some time ago God made a choice among you that the Gentiles might hear from my lips the message of the gospel and believe. 8 God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us. 9 He made no distinction between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith. 10 Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of the disciples a yoke that neither we nor our fathers have been able to bear?"

The result of much discussion by both parties in the dispute would have been to allow every person in the dispute to be heard. Finally, since discussion does not settle any question, Peter stands and reports to them **an approved apostolic example**. Peter refers to the household of Cornelius which is recorded in Acts 10 and 11. Peter took six Jewish brethren with him to be certain of his actions. Even though these men were apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ, they still took care that their actions were not questionable.

Acts 10:45 The _____ believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. 46 For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Then Peter said, 47 "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with _____? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have." 48 So he ordered that they be _____ in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days.

Acts 11:2 So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the _____ believers criticized him 3 and said, "You went into the house of _____ men and ate with them." 4 Peter began and _____ everything to them precisely as it had happened:

The brethren in Jerusalem had heard this story before and they knew that the Gentiles were to be accepted. That they held to their beliefs regardless of the truth of the gospel is not unusual for we have many today who do the same thing. Sometimes we only hear the word and fail to be obedient to it.

Ja 1:22 Do not merely _____ to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. 23 Anyone who _____ to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a _____ 24 and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. 25 But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and _____ to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it--he will be blessed in what he does.

Rev 1:3 Blessed is the one who _____ the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who _____ it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.

An approved (of God), apostolic (one who is approved of God), example (an actual occurrence) is the corner stone of any belief that we may hold concerning God and his word.

Acts 15:11 No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are."

Peter affirms that we are saved by grace. But we find that the persons in question, the household of Cornelius, were baptized in water and no man could forbid it. Even though we have been blessed with the avenue of our salvation, we must still take the steps necessary to bring that salvation upon us. Having done this, there is no difference in Jew and Gentile.

Eph 2:8 For it is by _____ you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-- 9 not by _____, so that no one can boast.

Rom 5:8 But God _____ his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath _____ him! 10 For if, when we were God's enemies, we were _____ to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be _____ through his life!

Rom 6:3 Or don't you know that all of us who were _____ into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4 We were therefore buried with him through baptism into _____ in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a _____ life. 5 If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be _____ with him in his resurrection.

Gal 3:27 for all of you who were baptized into _____ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor _____, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all _____ in Christ Jesus.

Acts 15:12 The whole assembly became silent as they listened to Barnabas and Paul telling about the miraculous signs and wonders God had done among the Gentiles through them.

Luke, due to the brevity of his account, skips a great deal of the discussion by Paul and Barnabas, having recounted much of it earlier in his history.

Acts 15:13 When they finished, James spoke up: "Brothers, listen to me. 14 Simon has described to us how God at first showed his concern by taking from the Gentiles a people for himself.

With both Peter and Paul and Barnabas describing the miracles and how the Lord had called the Gentiles to him, the entire church, which evidently had been discussing the subject among themselves, even as the apostles, elders and disputants in the debate discussed these things from some place apart from where the church was sitting. James, the brother of Jesus and a leader in the church in Jerusalem, now takes up the speaking with a Scriptural basis for the occurrences that Peter, Barnabas and Paul had discussed.

Gal 1:19 I saw _____ of the other apostles--only James, the Lord's _____.

Acts 15:15 The words of the prophets are in agreement with this, as it is written: 16 "After this I will return and rebuild David's fallen tent. Its ruins I will rebuild, and I will restore it, 17 that the remnant of men may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who bear my name, says the Lord, who does these things' 18 that have been known for ages.

The second basis for establishing doctrine is **a command of God**. James clearly lays the basis for the admission of the Gentiles to the church with his quote of Amos 9:11-12. We are given a second method for establishing doctrine, which is no less important than the first, and which will be in complete accord with the first, should such an example exist. There are a number of other passages which could have been used by James and it is by no means certain that additional quotes were not given since we have already seen that Luke's account of long hours of discussion has been shortened to these few verses.

Acts 15:19 "It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God.

Finally, James turns to the use of a **necessary inference** based on the apostolic example and the direct command. A necessary inference is always based upon either a command or an example and thus does not stand alone as a method for determining what is approved of God. James' judgment is based upon a conclusion that is inescapable. No other conclusion can be drawn from the example and command. The example alone would have been sufficient as well as the command alone. God does not require that something be said more than once or done more than once to show that it is his will.

Acts 15:20 Instead we should write to them, telling them to abstain from food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from the meat of strangled animals and from blood. 21 For Moses has been preached in every city from the earliest times and is read in the synagogues on every Sabbath."

James' reasoning on this is that they should do these things not because it is the command of God, but because the Gentiles would offend the Jews if they did these things. The eating of meats is the subject of continued controversy and Paul tells us that it is not wrong, yet if it would offend a brother, we should refrain from such.

Rom 14:20 Do not _____ the work of God for the sake of food. All food is clean, but it is wrong for a man to eat _____ that causes someone else to stumble. 21 It is better not to eat _____ or drink _____ or to do anything else that will cause your brother to fall.

I Cor 8:4 So then, about eating food _____ to idols: We know that an idol is nothing at all in the world and that there is no God but one. ... 7 But not everyone knows this. Some people are still so _____ to idols that when they eat such food they think of it as having been sacrificed to an idol, and since their conscience is weak, it is defiled. ... 13 Therefore, if what I eat causes my _____ to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause him to fall.

At the same time, sexual immorality is condemned of itself on numerous occasions. Some may wonder about the Holy Spirit's participation in this from v. 28, but Paul was guided by the Holy Spirit and there is no disagreement here. The Holy Spirit in both this text and in Paul's writings said that the Christian should not offend his brother, whether Jew or Gentile, by doing these things.

Acts 15:22 Then the apostles and elders, with the whole church, decided to choose some of their own men and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They chose Judas (called Barsabbas) and Silas, two men who were leaders among the brothers.

The word translated "leaders" in the NIV is translated "chief men" by the KJV and comes from the Greek word *hegaomai*. The same word is used in Heb 13:7, 17 and 24 to describe those who teach the word of God. It would include the apostles and elders in Heb 13, but is used here to describe those who lead the disciples in the word of God. It does not refer to a position of honor bestowed but of responsibility accepted. We also learn that Hebrews 13 does not refer solely to the elders but to men who lead us in the paths of righteousness.

Mt 20:25 Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles _____ it over them, and their high officials exercise _____ over them. 26

Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become _____ among you must be your servant, 27 and whoever wants to be first must be your slave--

Heb 13:7 Remember your _____, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and _____ their faith.

Heb 13:17 Obey your _____ and submit to their _____. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. _____ them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.

Heb 13:24 Greet all your _____ and all God's people. Those from Italy send you their greetings.

I Cor 16:15 You know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the _____ of the saints. I urge you, brothers, 16 to _____ to such as these and to everyone who _____ in the work, and labors at it.

The whole church has been included in this decision just as the whole church listened to the discussion between the disputants, the apostles and the elders. This provides a framework for us today. There is no way that men can meet in a corner somewhere and make a decision for the whole church. If the reasoning and scripture leading to the decision are not explained and accepted by the brethren, there can be no unity in the church and there will be grumbling.

Acts 15:23 With them they sent the following letter: The apostles and elders, your brothers, To the Gentile believers in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia: Greetings. 24 We have heard that some went out from us without our authorization and disturbed you, troubling your minds by what they said.

Not wishing to have the brethren in Antioch and elsewhere relying on those who were involved in the dispute, the apostles and the elders send out their decision on this matter. These men did not make the decision, but based their words on the actions and commands of God. In that sense, they served as agents of God, otherwise they have given only the commands of men.

Mt 15:9 They _____ me in vain; their teachings are but _____ taught by men."

The reason for their lack of authorization is that they had no authority from God to give such doctrine. All authority resides in Jesus and no man, whether apostle, elder or teacher has the right to differ from the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Mt 28:18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All _____ in heaven and on earth has been _____ to me.

I Cor 14:37 If anybody _____ he is a prophet or spiritually gifted, let him acknowledge that what I am _____ to you is the Lord's command.

II Pet 3:15 Bear in mind that our Lord's _____ means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also _____ you with the wisdom that God gave him. 16 He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other _____, to their own destruction.

Acts 15:25 So we all agreed to choose some men and send them to you with our dear friends Barnabas and Paul-- 26 men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The decision was not that of the apostles and elders alone, but it met with the approval of the approval of the whole church, v. 22. The commendation given to Barnabas and Paul was high, noting that they had risked their lives, as Paul had been stoned at Lystra.

Acts 14:19 Then some Jews came from Antioch and Iconium and won the crowd over. They _____ Paul and _____ him outside the city, thinking he was dead.

Acts 15:27 Therefore we are sending Judas and Silas to confirm by word of mouth what we are writing.

This is a double confirmation in both oral and written form and the word is given to those who are leaders in the church in Jerusalem so that those involved in the dispute are not the only ones giving the answer arrived at to brethren elsewhere. Care is taken to assure the disciples that this was indeed the word of God.

Acts 15:28 It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements: 29 You are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality. You will do well to avoid these things. Farewell.

The Holy Spirit is represented here by the approved apostolic example and the direct command of God, both of which are confirmed by logical reasoning to a necessary conclusion. We can use the force of the Holy Spirit in our arguments today by calling upon the same things.

Acts 15:30 The men were sent off and went down to Antioch, where they gathered the church together and delivered the letter.

True to their charge from the church at Antioch, Paul, Barnabas, Judas and Silas return with the decision of the apostles and elders at Jerusalem. This does not establish the right of some council of the church to determine what the church shall believe and teach, but rather it shows us the correct way to go to the word of God and being led by those who have a deep knowledge of the word of God, we are led to God's will and not man's.

Acts 15:31 The people read it and were glad for its encouraging message. 32 Judas and Silas, who themselves were prophets, said much to encourage and strengthen the brothers.

The brethren at Antioch were glad that they had remained within the confines of God's will when they sent out Barnabas and Saul on their missionary journey to the Gentiles. They had heard of the door God had opened to the Gentiles and this message from those who were in the church from the beginning confirmed that this was God's will. We gain encouragement today from reading and studying God's will to confirm that our actions are pleasing to him.

Acts 13:1 In the _____ at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. 2 While they were _____ the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the _____ to which I have called them." 3 So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their _____ on them and sent them off.

II Jn 1:5 And now, dear lady, I am not writing you a new _____ but one we have had from the beginning. I ask that we love one another. 6 And this is love: that we walk in _____ to his commands. As you have heard from the beginning, his command is that you _____ in love.

Acts 15:33 After spending some time there, they were sent off by the brothers with the blessing of peace to return to those who had sent them. 34 But it seemed good to Silas to remain there. 35 But Paul and Barnabas remained in Antioch, where they and many others taught and preached the word of the Lord.

Even at this point, Paul has not directed his full efforts to preaching the gospel as we learn that this occurs at Acts 18. Nevertheless, the responsibility of the child of God, regardless of whether he can spend full time in the word of God is to grow in the knowledge of God and his truth and teach it to others. We have come to believe that having one evangelist in a local church will allow the church to grow, however, we find that it was the custom of the early church to have two or more working together to preach the word of the Lord.

II Tim 2:2 And the _____ you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be _____ to teach others.

Heb 5:12 In fact, though by this time you ought to be _____, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! 13 Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not _____ with the teaching about righteousness. 14 But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have _____ themselves to distinguish good from evil.

Acts 15:36 Some time later Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us go back and visit the brothers in all the towns where we preached the word of the Lord and see how they are doing."

The reason for this is a recognition that disciples can fall away due to subversion within or tribulation without. Encouragement is always needed and it comes best from those who have taught us the word of God in the first place. Those who teach others the way to Christ always hold a special place in the heart of the converted because of the kindness given them.

I Cor 10:13 No _____ has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted _____ what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also _____ a way out so that you can stand up under it.

Gal 5:4 You who are trying to be _____ by law have been alienated from Christ; you have _____ away from grace.

Acts 14:22 strengthening the disciples and _____ them to remain true to the faith. "We must go through many _____ to enter the kingdom of God," they said.

Acts 15:37 Barnabas wanted to take John, also called Mark, with them, 38 but Paul did not think it wise to take him, because he had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in the work.

John Mark, Barnabas' cousin, had left the first missionary journey and we are never given the reason for his departure.

Col 4:10 My fellow _____ Aristarchus sends you his greetings, as does Mark, the _____ of Barnabas. (You have received instructions about him; if he comes to you, welcome him.)

Acts 13:13 From Paphos, Paul and his _____ sailed to Perga in Pamphylia, where _____ left them to return to Jerusalem.

Acts 15:39 They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company. Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus,

It is unfortunate when those who have served together find it necessary to part over a matter of opinion. We are convinced that the strain of such decisions should not allow anger to enter in. We find the same Greek word, *paroxumos*, used in Heb 10:24 where it is translated "spur" to indicate the stimulation necessary to get the most out of God's children.

Heb 10:24 And let us consider how we may spur one _____ on toward love and _____ deeds.

Acts 15:40 but Paul chose Silas and left, commended by the brothers to the grace of the Lord. 41 He went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

Paul and Silas will leave their mark on the world as proclaimers of the word of God. An apostle and a prophet going on journeys that would fulfill the prophecy concerning the hardships that Paul would face while spreading the word of God throughout the known world by the time of the letter to the Colossians.

Acts 9:15 But the Lord said to Ananias, "Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my _____ before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel. 16 I will show him how much he must _____ for my name."

Acts 22:15 You will be his _____ to all men of what you have seen and heard.

The travel around Antioch would keep them in the region of Syria and then moving as far as Tarsus, Paul's home town would take them to the region of Cilicia.

1. What was the false teacher's doctrine? _____
2. What was Paul and Barnabas' response to the doctrine? _____
3. To whom did Paul first report his journey? _____
4. What did the apostles and elders do in response to the Pharisees comment? _____
5. What was Peter's response to the doctrine? _____
6. What three things are used in establishing doctrine?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
7. Who gave the conclusion? _____

8. What were the restrictions placed on the Gentiles?

a. _____

b. _____ c. _____

d. _____

9. Who approved of the statement? _____

10. What were Judas and Silas? _____

11. Why did Paul and Barnabas disagree? _____

A Workbook Commentary on the Book of Acts
Chapter 16

Acts 16:1 He came to Derbe and then to Lystra, where a disciple named Timothy lived, whose mother was a Jewess and a believer, but whose father was a Greek. 2 The brothers at Lystra and Iconium spoke well of him. 3 Paul wanted to take him along on the journey, so he circumcised him because of the Jews who lived in that area, for they all knew that his father was a Greek.

We begin the second missionary journey in the last few verses of the previous chapter.

Acts 15:40 but Paul chose _____ and left, commended by the brothers to the grace of the Lord. 41 He went through _____ and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

We do not know whether Paul converted Timothy, but he certainly converted Timothy's mother and grandmother during his first missionary journey.

Acts 14:6 But they found out about it and fled to the Lycaonian cities of Lystra and _____ and to the surrounding country, 7 where they continued to _____ the good news.

II Tim 1:5 I have been reminded of your sincere _____, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now _____ in you also.

II Tim 3:15 and how from infancy you have known the _____ Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through _____ in Christ Jesus.

I Tim 1:2 To Timothy, my dear son: Grace, mercy and _____ from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

II Tim 2:1 You then, my son, be _____ in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

The reason for the circumcision of Timothy had its basis in the same decisions that we read about in the next verse; the determination to not insult the Jews. Those Jews who knew that Timothy did not observe the customs would have been offended. The act of circumcision was not necessary for their salvation and would not have been expected of the Greeks, but would have been expected of a Jew.

Gal 5:2 Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be _____, Christ will be of no value to you at all. 3 Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is _____ to obey the whole

law. 4 You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have _____ away from grace.

Gal 2:1 Fourteen years later I went up again to Jerusalem, this time with Barnabas. I took Titus along also. 2 I went in response to a _____ and set before them the gospel that I preach among the Gentiles. But I did this _____ to those who seemed to be leaders, for fear that I was running or had run my race in _____. 3 Yet not even Titus, who was with me, was compelled to be _____, even though he was a Greek.

We do not know when Paul laid his hands on the young Timothy, but it was at some point at which the elders were also present.

II Tim 1:6 For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the _____ of God, which is in you through the _____ on of my hands.

I Tim 4:14 Do not _____ your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of _____ laid their hands on you.

Acts 16:4 As they traveled from town to town, they delivered the decisions reached by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem for the people to obey.

This is the only time that a decision has been made by the elders in the NT. We should keep this incident and the basis on which the elders made this decision in mind at all times. This decision was based on **an approved apostolic example** (Acts 15:7), **a command of God** (Acts 15:15) and a **necessary inference** (Acts 15:19).

Acts 15:7 After much discussion, Peter got up and addressed them: "Brothers, you know that some time ago God made a _____ among you that the Gentiles might hear from my lips the message of the _____ and believe.

Acts 15:15 The words of the _____ are in agreement with this, as it is written:

Acts 15:19 "It is my _____, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God.

The doctrine established and published here is for the protection of the Jews and their sensitivity to their previous beliefs under the law of Moses. It is to prevent dissension between Jew and Gentile that the admonition to abstain from things sacrificed to idols is given since Paul later goes on to say that the eating of such things is nothing.

I Cor 10:23 "Everything is permissible"--but not _____ is beneficial. "Everything is permissible"--but not everything is constructive. 24 Nobody should seek

his own good, but the good of others. 25 Eat anything sold in the _____ market without raising questions of conscience, 26 for, "The earth is the Lord's, and _____ in it." 27 If some unbeliever invites you to a meal and you want to go, eat whatever is put before you without raising questions of _____. 28 But if anyone says to you, "This has been offered in sacrifice," then do not _____ it, both for the sake of the man who told you and for conscience' sake-- 29 the other man's conscience, I mean, not yours. For why should my freedom be judged by another's _____? 30 If I take part in the meal with thankfulness, why am I denounced because of something I thank God for? 31 So whether you eat or _____ or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.

Acts 16:5 So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers.

We find that the church always grows when brethren are in one accord basing their practice on the word of God.

Rom 16:25 Now to him who is able to _____ you by my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the _____ of the mystery hidden for long ages past, 26 but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the _____ God, so that all nations might believe and obey him-- 27 to the only wise God be _____ forever through Jesus Christ! Amen.

Acts 16:6 Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. 7 When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to.

At this point the journey swings east from what had been a due north direction. Major regions of Asia Minor are not visited although they do receive the word of the Lord as we learn from Peter's epistle to the Jews who lived in those lands.

I Pet 1:1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To God's elect, strangers in the world, scattered _____ Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia,

Acts 16:8 So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas. 9 During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." 10 After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

We sometimes seek to enjoy the comforts of home and family rather than go to places of some danger and risk to ourselves to preach the gospel. This is especially true of regions of the

US in which the Lord's church is strong and the unwillingness of evangelists working there to go elsewhere to preach. We do not have many evangelists who are willing to suffer hardship to preach the gospel, but rather we have established a "pastor" system in which an evangelist preaches the "good news" to the local congregation of God. Nowhere in the NT do we have a record of the gospel being taught to believers, rather it is taught by evangelists to unbelievers, while the believers are taught how to live with one another in the house of God.

I Tim 3:14 Although I hope to come to you soon, I am writing you these instructions so that, 15 if I am _____, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the _____ of the living God, the pillar and _____ of the truth.

At this point, Luke is converted and determines that he will accompany Paul and his group. Luke is a Greek name and it is most probable that he was not a Grecian Jew, but a Gentile.

Acts 16:11 From Troas we put out to sea and sailed straight for Samothrace, and the next day on to Neapolis. 12 From there we traveled to Philippi, a Roman colony and the leading city of that district of Macedonia. And we stayed there several days.

Samothrace is a small island in the Aegean Sea about halfway between Troas and Neapolis

The battle of Philippi was fought in B.C. 42 between the Second Triumvirate, Octavius, Antonius and Lepidus and Brutus and Cassius. In memory of the victory, Octavius made it a colony. The status of Phillipi as a Roman colony puts it above most of the cities of the Roman empire, giving its citizens civil rights not enjoyed by other cities in the empire. Among these were freedom from scourging, freedom from arrest except in extreme cases and the right of appeal to the emperor.

Acts 16:13 On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the river, where we expected to find a place of prayer. We sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered there.

The river Gangites was one mile west of the town. Paul did not go to the river to worship but to find listeners who are interested in religion so that he might teach them. We know this by what occurred next. He goes to a place where such people would be gathered in order to make the best use of his time and not to "cast pearls before swine." The Sabbath was to be observed by the Jews. Going back to the decisions of 16:4, we note that they did not include the observance of the Sabbath (Acts 15:28-29)

Acts 15:28 It seemed good to the Holy _____ and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements: 29 You are to _____ from food

sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from _____ immorality. You will do well to avoid these things. Farewell.

Acts 16:14 One of those listening was a woman named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message.

How did the Lord open her heart? Was it by some small voice or some act of the Holy Spirit due to her prayer? We find that this verse says that she listens to Paul's message and is thus brought to obey the Lord.

Acts 11:14 He will bring you a _____ through which you and all your household will be saved.'

Rom 1:16 I am not ashamed of the _____, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

II Th 2:14 He called you to this through our _____, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Acts 16:15 When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. "If you consider me a believer in the Lord," she said, "come and stay at my house." And she persuaded us.

The question of infant baptism arises at this point. Those who assume that infants are present in this passage must make a number of assumptions, about which the Scriptures are silent, including: 1) Lydia is of childbearing age; 2) Lydia is married; 3) Lydia is not widowed; 4) Lydia has children; 5) Lydia has infant children; 6) Lydia's infant children are with her in Philippi rather than home in Thyatira. A rather long string of occurrences on which to base the doctrine of infant baptism. Especially in light of plain passages that teach us that we must believe if we want to be baptized.

Mk 16:16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be _____, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

Acts 16:31 They replied, " _____ in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved--you and your household." 32 Then they spoke the _____ of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. 33 At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his family were _____.

With this conversion, a new era has dawned for Europe with the coming of the gospel of Jesus Christ which is to change the complete direction of this section of the world.

Acts 16:16 Once when we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit by which she predicted the future. She earned a great deal of money for her owners by fortune-telling. 17 This girl followed Paul and the rest of us, shouting, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved."

During the time of the NT, spirits were allowed to possess people, but we find that these spirits were bound and that we are now assured that such possessions result only due to the willingness of the person controlled by Satan to allow themselves to be used by Satan. We also find that the ability of Satan to do these wonders has been limited in this Gospel age.

I Cor 10:13 No temptation has seized you except what is _____ to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are _____, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

Rev 20:1 And I saw an _____ coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. 2 He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and _____ him for a thousand years. 3 He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and _____ it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the _____ years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time.

Lk 10:18 He replied, "I saw _____ fall like lightning from heaven. 19 I have given you authority to trample on snakes and _____ and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you.

Act 26:18 to open their eyes and turn them from _____ to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive _____ of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'

Acts 16:18 She kept this up for many days. Finally Paul became so troubled that he turned around and said to the spirit, "In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!" At that moment the spirit left her.

Just as the spirits were subject to the twelve, they were subject to Paul.

Lk 10:17 The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the _____ submit to us in your name."

Acts 16:19 When the owners of the slave girl realized that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to face the authorities. 20 They brought them before the magistrates and said, "These men are Jews, and are throwing our city into an uproar 21 by advocating customs unlawful for us Romans to accept or practice."

When a man's livelihood is threatened, he usually reacts swiftly and with anger. This will occur other times in Paul's efforts. The reason given is not the one which prompted the actions, but when men are angered they will seize any pretext to afflict their tormentors.

Acts 16:22 The crowd joined in the attack against Paul and Silas, and the magistrates ordered them to be stripped and beaten. 23 After they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully. 24 Upon receiving such orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

The jailer would have been putting his life on the line for if the prisoners escaped, he would forfeit his life. Stocks were usually wooden walls with moveable boards, in which two of the boards had holes into which the legs could be placed and from which they could not be withdrawn due to the larger length of the ankle to heel distance as opposed to the diameter of the leg. The holes in Roman stocks allowed the jailer to spread the legs very widely, thus causing great pain. At the least, this would have provided a very uncomfortable sitting position and even worse for sleeping. Stocks were used as a form of punishment up to the last century in the US.

Paul refers to this event in recounting the trials he went through to preach.

II Cor 11:25 Three times I was _____ with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the _____ sea,

Acts 16:25 About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them.

Rather than complaining about the pain, Paul and Silas turn to God in prayer and song. This should help us in time of trial to try the same remedy. The other prisoners rather than yelling for silence in order that they might sleep apparently listened to the message and the soothing words of the hymns Paul and Silas sang.

Col 3:16 Let the _____ of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you _____ psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.

Eph 5:19 Speak to one another with psalms, _____ and _____ songs. Sing and make music in your _____ to the Lord,

Acts 16:26 Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everybody's chains came loose. 27 The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped. 28 But Paul shouted, "Don't harm yourself! We are all here!" 29 The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas.

Although the Scriptures do not say that this was a miracle, we recognize the divine providence of God at work. God often does such things in ways that provide the expected relief but which cannot be directly attributed to a miraculous intervention on the part of God. This jailer was going to escape the slow death that would have been given if he had allowed the prisoners to escape by suicide. Paul immediately calls to him to prevent the suicide. The jailer immediately assumed that the God to whom Paul and Silas had been praying was responsible for setting Paul and Silas free.

Acts 16:30 He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

We do not know how the jailer learned that these men would be able to save him since there is no mention of the exact reason for their being put in jail. It is possible that in the songs that Paul and Silas sang, there was praise to God for salvation from their sins. It is also possible that the jailer had heard of these men before they were put in prison since they had been going about for some time with the young slave girl following them. Nevertheless, recognizing Paul and Silas as the recipients of this earthquake, the jailer is immediately ready to acknowledge that their God offers salvation.

Acts 16:31 They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved--you and your household." 32 Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house.

It is not possible for someone to believe in one of whom they have not heard. It was necessary that Paul and Silas tell the jailer and his household about Jesus and the salvation that he offers to all who have an obedient faith. The jailer had such a faith as we see in the next verse.

Acts 11:14 He will bring you a _____ through which you and all your household will be saved.'

Rom 10:13 for, "Everyone who calls on the _____ of the Lord will be saved." 14 How, then, can they call on the one they have not _____ in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they _____ without

someone preaching to them? 15 And how can they _____ unless they are sent?
As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring _____ news!"

Acts 16:33 At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his family were baptized.

These who believed were immediately baptized. Thus the "word of the Lord" includes baptism. Those who say that we should "Preach the man and not the plan" do not understand that Jesus cannot be preached without the plan of salvation, which includes baptism being preached.

Acts 8:12 But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the _____ of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

Acts 8:35 Then Philip began with that very _____ of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus. 36 As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is _____. Why shouldn't I be baptized?"

To those who wonder where they would get a pool of water of sufficient size to immerse this family, we would point out that there would have been a basin in the court for collecting the rain or perhaps in a Roman bath within the jailer's house, which would have been located adjacent to the jail.

Acts 16:34 The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God--he and his whole family.

Since the jailer's family was baptized, some have said that this provides authority for infant baptism. This cannot be so since, as this verse explains, he and his whole family had come to believe in God and an infant cannot believe, just as an infant cannot understand the message preached. The same is true of other families in the NT, as we have previously explained in the case of Lydia (v. 15). We also note in the household of Stephanas, that they devoted themselves to the service of the saints and such would not be possible in the case of an infant.

I Cor 1:16 (Yes, I also baptized the household of _____: beyond that, I don't remember if I baptized anyone else.)

I Cor 16:15 You know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and they have _____ themselves to the _____ of the saints. I urge you, brothers, 16 to submit to such as these and to everyone who joins in the work, and _____ at it.

Acts 16:35 When it was daylight, the magistrates sent their officers to the jailer with the order: "Release those men." 36 The jailer told Paul, "The magistrates have ordered that you and Silas be released. Now you can leave. Go in peace." 37 But Paul said to the officers: "They beat us publicly without a trial, even though we are Roman citizens, and threw us into prison. And now do they want to get rid of us quietly? No! Let them come themselves and escort us out."

The Lex Valeria (B.C. 509) and the Lex Poscia (B.C. 208) made it a crime to inflict blows on a Roman citizen. The emperor Claudius deprived the city of Rhodes of its freedom for having crucified a citizen of Rome, thus it was no small matter for Paul and Silas to have been beaten, the matter of no trial being added to the illegal acts of the magistrates.

Acts 16:38 The officers reported this to the magistrates, and when they heard that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens, they were alarmed. 39 They came to appease them and escorted them from the prison, requesting them to leave the city.

The act that the officers had committed was sufficient that their own lives would be taken if Paul and Silas pressed the matter. The request to leave the city would have been out of fear that the citizens would have turned against the officers and killed them in order to save the city from the wrath of the Roman emperor.

Acts 16:40 After Paul and Silas came out of the prison, they went to Lydia's house, where they met with the brothers and encouraged them. Then they left.

We note that Paul and Silas left, but Luke and Timothy stayed as we observe the change in the pronouns used by Luke in recording v. 40 vs. v. 17. One of the things that Paul always did for the brethren was to encourage them. We need to bear this in mind. There are lots of folks outside the church who Satan has in his hand who will discourage the brethren more than they need. We as children of God need to encourage one another.

Acts 14:22 _____ the disciples and _____ them to remain true to the faith. "We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God," they said.

Acts 15:32 Judas and Silas, who themselves were prophets, said much to encourage and _____ the brothers.

Col 4:8 I am sending him to you for the _____ purpose that you may know about our circumstances and that he may _____ your hearts.

Questions:

1. What decision did Paul deliver from town to town? _____
2. What vision did Paul have that changed their journey? _____
3. Where did Paul meet Lydia (town and place)? _____
4. Why was Lydia in town? _____
5. What did the slave girl shout? _____
6. What did the magistrates order done to Paul and Silas? _____
7. What were Paul and Silas doing in prison? _____
8. Why was the jailer about to kill himself? _____
9. Were there infants in the jailer's household? _____
10. Why did it matter that Paul was a Roman citizen? _____

A Workbook Commentary on the Book of Acts
Chapter 17

Acts 17:1 When they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a Jewish synagogue. 2 As his custom was, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, 3 explaining and proving that the Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead. "This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Christ," he said.

Amphipolis was a large city about 32 miles from Philippi and 3 miles from the sea. Apollonia, another large city was about 32 miles from Amphipolis. Both of these cities were located on a Roman road called the Via Egnatian. No reason is given for not mentioning anything occurring in these cities, but in Thessalonica, Paul had reached a thriving city which had visitors from many parts of the world due to the commerce carried out there. Thessalonica was the capital of the Roman province of Macedonia. Today, the city is called Salonika.

We see that it was Paul's custom to go into the synagogue on the Sabbath. He did not go there to worship but rather to teach the Jews about Jesus and the kingdom. Paul did not keep the Sabbath as he recognized the difference in the Law of Moses and the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Gal 4:10 You are observing _____ days and months and seasons and years! 11 I fear for you, that somehow I have _____ my efforts on you.

Gal 5:4 You who are trying to be _____ by law have been alienated from Christ; you have _____ away from grace.

Paul "reasoned" with them, thus "proving" that Jesus was the Christ. The Jews had long expected the "Messiah" but they had not recognized him when he came. Jesus fulfilled all of the OT prophecies concerning the "Messiah".

Lk 24:44 He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be _____ that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms." 45 Then he opened their minds so they could _____ the Scriptures.

Mt 5:17 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to _____ them but to fulfill them. 18 I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until _____ is accomplished.

Jesus reasoned with the disciples in the same way that Paul reasoned with the Jews. The same Greek word is translated "opened" in the following passages as the word "explaining" in this translation.

Lk 24:32 They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the _____ to us?"

Lk 24:45 Then he opened their minds so they could _____ the Scriptures.

Some Christians today will not try to convert an atheist or an agnostic because they do not believe that it is possible to teach someone who doesn't believe that Jesus is the Christ. Paul didn't think that way as he taught pagans and Jews alike, using the Scriptures to prove that Jesus was the Christ.

Acts 9:20 At once he began to _____ in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God. 21 All those who heard him were astonished and asked, "Isn't he the man who raised havoc in Jerusalem among those who _____ on this name? And hasn't he come here to take them as prisoners to the chief priests?" 22 Yet Saul grew more and more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by _____ that Jesus is the Christ.

The reasoning that Paul did here is the same as the "speaking" to the church in Acts 20:7. We point out that this includes an interchange of ideas between the speaker and the audience. A question and answer period would be in keeping with the idea of the Greek word "*dialogomai*" (our word dialogue) used in both of these passages.

Acts 20:7 On the first day of the week we came _____ to break bread. Paul spoke to the people and, because he intended to leave the next day, kept on _____ until midnight.

Acts 17:4 Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a large number of God-fearing Greeks and not a few prominent women. 5 But the Jews were jealous; so they rounded up some bad characters from the marketplace, formed a mob and started a riot in the city. They rushed to Jason's house in search of Paul and Silas in order to bring them out to the crowd.

The God-fearing Greeks would not have been proselytes as they were counted as Jews (See remarks on Acts 6:5). They also would not have the same fear of isolation from their brethren if they accepted this new doctrine. Thus while some religious people of honest heart will turn to the Lord in the face of opposition from family and friends, a greater number of those who were far removed from God immediately turned to Him. We are reminded that those who are deepest in sin are those who will turn to the Lord with greatest appreciation.

Lk 7:47 Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been _____ --for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven _____ loves little."

The bad fellows are the "bums" that would hang around the parking lot, the local pool hall, or the corner bar today. People with nothing to do and always ready for trouble. Jason was

evidently Paul's host and the people either knew it or were told that they might find Paul and Silas there.

Acts 17:6 But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some other brothers before the city officials, shouting: "These men who have caused trouble all over the world have now come here, 7 and Jason has welcomed them into his house. They are all defying Caesar's decrees, saying that there is another king, one called Jesus." 8 When they heard this, the crowd and the city officials were thrown into turmoil. 9 Then they made Jason and the others post bond and let them go.

The city officials were "politarchas". This Greek word, never used in ancient Greek literature, was thought to be a mistake of Luke's. However, it has been found in a number of inscriptions from Thessalonica and correctly points out that these men were officer of a "free" city. The word "world" is used here of the Roman empire and is used this way a number of places in the Scriptures. Among these are Lk 2:1, where the NIV adds the word "Roman," which is not in the Greek text or the KJV, but is clearly understood from the context.

Lk 2:1 In those days Caesar Augustus issued a _____ that a census should be taken of the entire Roman _____.

This incident was evidently not the end of problems in Thessalonica as Paul refers to the persecution of the brethren in both of his epistles to them.

I Th 2:14 For you, brothers, became _____ of God's churches in Judea, which are in Christ Jesus: You suffered from your own countrymen the same things those churches _____ from the Jews,

I Th 3:2 We sent Timothy, who is our brother and God's fellow worker in spreading the _____ of Christ, to strengthen and _____ you in your faith, 3 so that no one would be unsettled by these trials. You know quite well that we were destined for them. 4 In fact, when we were with you, we kept telling you that we would be _____. And it turned out that way, as you well know.

II Th 1:6 God is just: He will pay back _____ to those who trouble you

Acts 17:10 As soon as it was night, the brothers sent Paul and Silas away to Berea. On arriving there, they went to the Jewish synagogue. 11 Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.

Berea is about 50 miles southwest of Thessalonica. These Jews were ready to study and they had their "Bible" open. Today some religious people immediately want to get the "book" to

see whether the things taught are so. Others are content to believe whatever one may say to them. The latter are always the first to turn away to new doctrines or refuse to leave one that is not taught in the Scriptures because they have no firm grounding in the Scriptures. They were not about to accept the opinion of any man concerning their religious beliefs. The Scriptures that they searched would have been what we call the Old Testament. It consisted of three parts for the Jews; the law, the prophets and the psalms.

II Tim 2:15 Do your best to present yourself to God as one _____, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who _____ handles the word of truth.

Jn 17:17 Sanctify them by the _____; your word is truth.

Jn 8:32 Then you will know the _____, and the truth will set you free."

Rom 15:4 For everything that was written in the _____ was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the _____ we might have hope.

Gal 3:24 So the law was put in charge to lead us to _____ that we might be justified by faith.

Lk 24:44 He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the _____ of Moses, the _____, and the _____."

Acts 17:12 Many of the Jews believed, as did also a number of prominent Greek women and many Greek men. 13 When the Jews in Thessalonica learned that Paul was preaching the word of God at Berea, they went there too, agitating the crowds and stirring them up. 14 The brothers immediately sent Paul to the coast, but Silas and Timothy stayed at Berea.

The result of teaching from the word of God is obedience to God. Paul demonstrated to them that the things he was teaching had been foretold in the OT by God and fulfilled in the coming of Jesus and the events that occurred during his life and death.

Lk 8:11 "This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the _____ of God. 12 Those along the path are the ones who hear, and then the _____ comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. 13 Those on the rock are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of _____ they fall away. 14 The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life's worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not _____. 15

But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by _____ produce a crop.

Their belief was a rational, reasoned faith and not a blind acceptance of what some man had said. We need to guard against the same thing today since we are on unsure footing if we place our faith in some man rather than in God's word. This also teaches us that we should have a firm acquaintance with the word of God and with logical reasoning in order to establish our faith.

Paul would have been reluctant to leave because of the number of souls won for Christ in Macedonia. Nevertheless, the safety of the brethren would have convinced him to leave regardless of his own safety.

I Th 1:7 And so you became a _____ to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia.

Acts 17:15 The men who escorted Paul brought him to Athens and then left with instructions for Silas and Timothy to join him as soon as possible. 16 While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols.

Although Silas and Timothy were to join Paul, Silas was sent away and Timothy was asked to return to Thessalonica.

I Th 3:1 So when we could stand it no longer, we thought it best to be left by _____ in Athens. 2 We sent Timothy, who is our brother and God's _____ worker in spreading the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and _____ you in your faith,

I Th 3:6 But Timothy has just now come to us from you and has _____ good news about your faith and love. He has told us that you always have _____ memories of us and that you _____ to see us, just as we also long to see you.

Athens at AD 50 was a center of culture and learning. Such Greek philosophers as Pericles, Demosthenes, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Sophocles and Euripides were from Athens. The marketplace, known as the agora, was a meeting place for all the scholars and philosophers of the city who talked about philosophy, poetry, religion and politics. They were evidently rich enough to have been well educated and then proceed to spend their time in learning.

The Greeks were well known for their paganism. Pliny says that about this time, Athens had more than 30,000 public statues.

Acts 17:17 So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there. 18 A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to dispute with him. Some of them asked, "What is this babbler trying to say?" Others remarked, "He seems to be advocating foreign gods." They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection.

The Epicureans were practical atheists, denying an eternal life and claimed that pleasure was the chief thing to be obtained from life. They believed that the Gods, if they existed, did not concern themselves with the affairs of man. They said, "Eat and drink for tomorrow we die."

The Stoics believed and practiced self-mastery and severity which caused a great deal of pride in intellect when successful and to suicide when unsuccessful. Their life was selfish and unloving and their view of deity was pantheistic (believing that God was everywhere in the world around them).

The Epicureans would have been the ones who called Paul a "babbling" while the Stoics would have wondered at the strange God that Paul was proclaiming. They had room for Paul's God in their pantheistic thinking, but felt that they simply didn't know the "God" about whom Paul spoke.

Paul's philosophy is plainly set forth in Jesus and the resurrection.

Col 1:12 giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to _____ in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light. 13 For he has _____ us from the _____ of darkness and brought us into the _____ of the Son he loves, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. 15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For by _____ all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether _____ or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. 17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. 18 And he is the head of the _____, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in _____ he might have the supremacy. 19 For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, 20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on _____ or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

Acts 17:19 Then they took him and brought him to a meeting of the Areopagus, where they said to him, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? 20 You are bringing some strange ideas to our ears, and we want to know what they mean." 21 (All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas.)

The Jews had driven Paul away but the philosophers in Athens are extremely polite as they inquire about the teaching Paul is doing. This teaching would then have been the subject of great discussion and debate.

Acts 17:22 Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: "Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. 23 For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you.

Paul was in the midst of a large group of men who had no knowledge of the Scriptures and so he does not appeal to them on this basis, as he would have for the Jews. Rather, seizing on the objects at hand, he begins to appeal to their sense of reason and to their surroundings, whose presence could not be denied.

His statement points out that God was both old and new, as they already worshiped God and that Paul knows who He is.

Acts 17:24 "The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands. 25 And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else.

Paul speaks of one God that created the world, not the 30,000 of the Athenians. The Epicureans taught that the world was eternal. Today, cosmologists have shown that the universe is not in a "steady state" as scientists thought earlier, but began with a "big bang."

Gen 1:1 In the _____ God created the heavens and the earth.

Neh 9:6 You alone are the LORD. You made the _____, even the highest heavens, and all their starry host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You give life to everything, and the multitudes of heaven _____ you.

Ps 8:3 When I consider your heavens, the work of your _____, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, 4 what is man that you are _____ of him, the son of man that you care for him?

Rom 1:20 For since the _____ of the world God's invisible qualities--his eternal power and divine nature--have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without _____. 21 For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Although they claimed to be _____, they became fools 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like _____ man and birds and animals and reptiles.

Ps 19:1 The heavens _____ the glory of God; the skies proclaim the _____ of his hands.

Paul could have pointed to the Parthenon, the home of the goddess Athena and one of the ancient wonders that stood nearby, as he made reference to the temples. They would have noted the offerings which they thought that their Gods demanded as their service by men. God is the one who gives, not man. Even in the tithe, Jacob was only giving back what God had given him.

Mt 5:45 that you may be sons of your _____ in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the _____ and the unrighteous.

Gen 28:22 and this stone that I have set up as a _____ will be God's house, and of all that you give me I will give you a _____."

Acts 17:26 From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live.

The Greeks held that all other men were barbarians just as the Jews thought that all other men were pagans and heathens. The Athenians thought that they were a special creation. Throughout the monarchies that have ruled the nations of the world it has been thought that some men were superior to others because of their station in life. Some even thought that the blood of the royalty was "blue" as opposed to the red blood of common men. Until the present century and the scientific evidence that showed this statement to be true, men thought that the blood of different races, such as black or yellow, was incompatible with that of others, such as white. Paul's statement is nearly 2000 years ahead of time.

Paul does not speak of the seasons as the KJV might indicate, but rather God's control of history and the rulers of mankind.

Rom 13:1 Everyone must submit himself to the _____ authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The _____ that exist have been established by God.

The bounds of man's habitation as the KJV puts it (exact places where they should live), are not necessarily the earth. At one time, many thought that man could not go to the moon because that was beyond the "bounds" of his habitation. If God had set that boundary, man would not have gone to the moon; but he has. This is an indication that we do not know what these places are, but God does and we should leave it at that. This last phrase also indicates that it is God's providence that rules in the lives of his children and sometimes in the evil, who remind His children of their place in life.

Acts 17:27 God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. 28 'For in him we live and move and have our being.' As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.'

Paul used the topics familiar to his listeners to illustrate his truths just as Jesus did.

Lk 13:1 Now there were some present at that time who told Jesus about the _____ whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. 2 Jesus answered, "Do you think that these Galileans were _____ sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way? 3 I tell you, no! But unless you _____, you too will all perish. 4 Or those eighteen who died when the _____ in Siloam fell on them--do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem? 5 I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all _____."

Acts 17:29 "Therefore since we are God's offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone--an image made by man's design and skill."

Again, Paul makes reference to the 30,000 images of Athens and especially the altar to the unknown God. Paul uses the same thinking in writing to the church at Rome.

Rom 1:20 For since the creation of the world God's _____ qualities--his eternal power and divine nature--have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. 21 For although they knew God, they neither _____ him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their _____ hearts were darkened.

Col 2:9 For in Christ all the _____ of the Deity lives in bodily form,

Acts 17:30 In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent.

Paul talks of a time when God had not revealed himself through his son. God does not "wink at" in the sense of condoning the behavior of sinful men, but rather the idea is to neglect to take appropriate action, i.e., overlook. But now, things have changed and there is a way for all men to escape the consequences of sin.

To repent is to change one's mind and go in another direction. Men had been in sin, but they were to change their direction and their lives as a result of changing their minds.

Acts 3:19 Repent, then, and turn to _____, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of _____ may come from the Lord,

Lk 3:8 Produce _____ in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have _____ as our father.' For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up _____ for Abraham.

Repentance is often overlooked by those who sin. They may change their lives, but the question of attitude remains. Why did they change their lives? Was it sorrow for sin?

II Cor 7:10 Godly _____ brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly _____ brings death.

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, "Repent and be _____, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will _____ the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Without repentance, baptism is no more than getting wet. Peter plainly states that baptism is a symbol. It is an absolutely necessary symbol, but no more than a token to establish the covenant that we have with God.

I Pet 3:20 who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, 21 and this _____ symbolizes baptism that now _____ you also--not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good _____ toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

We are saved by water in the same way as was Noah; we are saved from the sin that is in our lives by baptism in water. The ark saved Noah from drowning in the water, but the water saved Noah from the sin that was in the world. Today, baptism in water saves us from our past sins. It is a token of the covenant, just as circumcision was a token of the covenant God made at Sinai.

Col 2:11 In him you were also _____, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the _____ done by Christ, 12 having been buried with him in _____ and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the _____. 13 When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you _____ with Christ. He _____ us all our sins,

Baptism requires that our conscience be right, the consequence of Godly sorrow which brings about repentance.

Acts 17:31 For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead."

The question of when the day will come and whether it really will come are questions that bother unprincipled men who are doubtful of God's existence.

Heb 9:27 Just as man is destined to die _____, and after that to face _____,

II Pet 3:4 They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the _____ of creation." 5 But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens _____ and the earth was formed out of water and by water. 6 By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. 7 By the same word the present heavens and _____ are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and _____ of ungodly men. 8 But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a _____ years, and a thousand years are like a day. 9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his _____, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to _____, but everyone to come to repentance. 10 But the day of the Lord will come like a _____. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be _____ by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.

II Cor 5:10 For we must all _____ before the _____ seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things _____ while in the body, whether good or bad.

The man he has appointed is Jesus. By his living a righteous life, we are justly condemned. He has set the standard which no man can match, thus placing all men at a distance from God which only the blood of Jesus can remove.

Isa 2:4 He will _____ between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.

Jn 5:26 For as the _____ has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself. 27 And he has given him _____ to judge because he is the Son of Man. 28 "Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice 29 and come out--those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be _____.

Rom 3:5 But if our unrighteousness brings out God's _____ more clearly, what shall we say? That God is unjust in bringing his wrath on us? (I am using a human argument.) 6 Certainly not! If that were so, how could God _____ the world?

Rom 14:10 You, then, why do you _____ your brother? Or why do you look down on your brother? For we will all stand _____ God's judgment seat.

I Cor 5:13 God will _____ those outside. "Expel the wicked man from among you."

Jude 14 Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men: "See, the _____ is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones 15 to _____ everyone,

and to convict all the ungodly of all the ungodly acts they have done in the ungodly way, and of all the harsh words ungodly sinners have spoken against him."

Acts 17:32 When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, "We want to hear you again on this subject." 33 At that, Paul left the Council.

The Epicureans did not believe in the resurrection of the body and at this point, it is evidently they who mocked. Others, being more polite wanted an additional audience at a different time and place. It would have been these who are named in the next verse who investigated further. This shows preachers that even the greatest of sermons by the greatest of preachers sometimes come to no avail.

Acts 17:34 A few men became followers of Paul and believed. Among them was Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus, also a woman named Damaris, and a number of others.

The gospel had been planted and a few who were advanced in the world were obedient, but this is the exception.

I Cor 1:26 Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. 27 But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. 28 He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things--and the things that are not--to nullify the things that are, 29 so that no one may boast before him.

Questions

1. What did Paul prove from the Scriptures? _____
2. Why did the Jews take Jason to the city officials? _____
3. Where did Paul go on leaving Thessalonica? _____
4. What distinguished the people in this town? (Q. 3) _____
5. What distinguished Athens in Paul's mind? _____
6. What two philosophical groups lived in Athens? _____
7. What altar did Paul notice in Athens? _____
8. Give two points Paul made in his speech on the Areopagus. _____

9. What were Paul conclusions from the speech? _____

10. What well educated man became a disciple in Athens? _____

A Workbook Commentary on the Book of Acts
Chapter 18

Acts 18:1 After this, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. 2 There he met a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had ordered all the Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to see them, 3 and because he was a tentmaker as they were, he stayed and worked with them.

Corinth was capital of the province of Achaia as well as the chief city of commerce in Greece. The temple of Aphrodite was located here and had 1,000 prostitutes for worship. It is no wonder that to call someone a "Corinthian" was to call them the most depraved person imaginable.

The tentmakers guild was the probable method of this meeting. The time of the requirement for leaving Rome was about A.D. 49.

The tents would have been made of leather or of a cloth made from goat's hair. As a center of travel and commerce, there would have been a constant stream of caravans coming through Corinth, providing a steady business of repair and sales. The trade must have been one in which the members could accumulate considerable wealth as Paul was able to support a number of brethren traveling with him and Aquila and Priscilla evidently were wealthy also.

Acts 20:4 He was accompanied by Sopater son of Pyrrhus from Berea, Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica, Gaius from Derbe, _____ also, and Tychicus and _____ from the province of Asia. 5 These men went on ahead and waited for us at Troas. ... 34 You yourselves know that these _____ of mine have supplied my own _____ and the needs of my companions. 35 In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of _____ work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to _____ than to receive.'"

I Cor 16:19 The churches in the province of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and _____ greet you warmly in the Lord, and so does the _____ that meets at their house.

Acts 18:4 Every Sabbath he reasoned in the synagogue, trying to persuade Jews and Greeks. 5 When Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself exclusively to preaching, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ.

The Scriptures do not say that Paul observed the Sabbath, but that he used this day when the religious Jews would be gathered to have a dialogue with them. The reasoning that he did is the same that he used with the brethren when they came together on the first day of the week.

Acts 20:7 On the _____ day of the week we came together to break bread. Paul spoke to the people and, because he intended to leave the _____ day, kept on talking until midnight.

The Greeks would have been those who had not become proselytes, but who believed in the God that the Jews worshiped.

There is a significant difference in the texts at this point with the KJV inserting the words Paul "was pressed in the spirit." The basis for this revision is the finding that none of the Greek Uncials contain this phrase and only a few minuscules, the earliest dating in the tenth century.

Paul was a witness of the risen Lord and thus qualified as an eyewitness of the indisputable fact that Jesus was the Christ.

Acts 1:22 beginning from John's baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a _____ with us of his resurrection."

I Cor 15:8 and last of all he _____ to me also, as to one abnormally born.

Acts 18:6 But when the Jews opposed Paul and became abusive, he shook out his clothes in protest and said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads! I am clear of my responsibility. From now on I will go to the Gentiles." 7 Then Paul left the synagogue and went next door to the house of Titius Justus, a worshiper of God.

To those who will not proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ when given the opportunity, Paul clearly states that they are not free from the blood of all men as Paul declared himself to be. Paul was concerned about his responsibility to preach the gospel wherever he went.

Acts 20:26 Therefore, I declare to you today that I am innocent of the blood of all men. 27 For I have not hesitated to _____ to you the whole will of God.

II Cor 5:11 Since, then, we know what it is to _____ the Lord, we try to persuade men. What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience. ... 14 For Christ's love _____ us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. 15 And he _____ for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who _____ for them and was raised again.

Paul continued to convert Jews, but he did not make them his prime objective.

Acts 19:8 Paul entered the _____ and spoke boldly there for three months, arguing persuasively about the kingdom of God. 9 But some of them became _____; they refused to believe and publicly maligned the Way. So Paul left them. He took the disciples with him and had discussions _____ in the lecture hall of Tyrannus.

Acts 28:17 Three days later he called together the leaders of the Jews. When they had assembled, Paul said to them: "My brothers, although I have done nothing against our people or against the _____ of our ancestors, I was arrested in Jerusalem and handed over to the Romans. ... 23 They arranged to meet Paul on a certain day, and came in even larger numbers to the place where he was staying. From morning till evening he explained and declared to them the kingdom of God and tried to _____ them about Jesus from the _____ of Moses and from the Prophets.

Acts 18:8 Crispus, the synagogue ruler, and his entire household believed in the Lord; and many of the Corinthians who heard him believed and were baptized.

Crispus is a Latin name, but the man was a Jew. As opposed to those rulers in Jn 12 who derived their living from the Jewish religion, he was willing to change, along with his entire household.

Jn 12:42 Yet at the same time many even among the leaders believed in him. But because of the _____ they would not confess their faith for fear they would be put out of the synagogue; 43 for they _____ praise from men more than praise from God.

As always, those who believed were baptized. There is no question that the baptism was an immersion in water for the forgiveness of sins. There is no basis for believing that the household contained any infants because the record tells us that the entire household believed, which an infant could not do.

Acts 10:47 "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with _____ ? They have _____ the Holy Spirit just as we have."

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus _____ for the _____ of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Eph 4:5 one Lord, one faith, one _____;

I Pet 3:20 who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were _____ through water, 21 and this _____ symbolizes baptism that now saves you also--not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the _____ of Jesus Christ,

Acts 18:9 One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: "Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. 10 For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city." 11 So Paul stayed for a year and a half, teaching them the word of God.

We sometimes wonder if Paul ever had any doubts in the face of the opposition that he encountered. Evidently there was, because the Lord thought it wise to encourage him with the knowledge that he would have many disciples in Corinth if Paul continued to preach there. Nearly every preacher or teacher of the gospel has wondered if he was doing the right thing, thus we need the prayers of those who care.

II Th 3:2 And _____ that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men, for not everyone has _____.

Based on the time of the expulsion of the Jews and the months of travel for Aquila and Priscilla to come to Corinth, Paul would have stayed in Corinth until some time in A.D. 52. This passage certainly gives an evangelist the right to locate in one place and continue to preach the gospel there for an extended period of time. The Greek indicates that the period of the year half is looking forward from this point, with no certainty of the length of time already spent in Corinth.

Acts 18:12 While Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews made a united attack on Paul and brought him into court. 13 "This man," they charged, "is persuading the people to worship God in ways contrary to the law."

A limestone inscription names Gallio as proconsul of Achaia, thus confirming the account of Luke. The Jews did not accuse Paul of treason as had happened at Thessalonica, but instead accuse him of disrupting their worship. This dates the time at shortly after July 1, A.D. 51 when Gallio took office.

Acts 18:14 Just as Paul was about to speak, Gallio said to the Jews, "If you Jews were making a complaint about some misdemeanor or serious crime, it would be reasonable for me to listen to you. 15 But since it involves questions about words and names and your own law--settle the matter yourselves. I will not be a judge of such things." 16 So he had them ejected from the court.

Gallio clearly recognizes no crime had been done and there was no reason for a Roman court of law to hear the case.

Acts 18:17 Then they all turned on Sosthenes the synagogue ruler and beat him in front of the court. But Gallio showed no concern whatever.

People always want someone to blame when they have not accomplished their goals, so the Jews turn on their own leader and give him a beating. This beating clearly pointed out to Sosthenes that his own people were not worthy of trust and evidently listened to Paul further as he is later said to be a Christian. Paul gives him special recognition when writing to Corinth as the brethren there would have known him well.

1 Cor 1:1 Paul, called to be an _____ of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and our brother Sosthenes, 2 To the church of God in Corinth, to those _____ in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with all those everywhere who _____ on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ--their Lord and ours:

Acts 18:18 Paul stayed on in Corinth for some time. Then he left the brothers and sailed for Syria, accompanied by Priscilla and Aquila. Before he sailed, he had his hair cut off at Cenchrea because of a vow he had taken. 19 They arrived at Ephesus, where Paul left Priscilla and Aquila. He himself went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews.

That Priscilla and Aquila could pull up stakes and go with Paul addresses the question of their wealth and the prosperity accompanying tentmaking.

The reason for Paul's haircut is unknown as is the vow and the reason for combining the two. We know that Paul continued to observe the customs of the Jews, even though he clearly taught that the Gentiles were not required to do so. There is no reference in the Law of Moses to cutting the hair for a vow and so we presume that this was a custom that the Jews had adopted at some point. The vow of the Nazarite, in which the hair must not be cut, is given in Num 6:1-21.

Gal 2:9 James, Peter and John, those reputed to be pillars, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of _____ when they recognized the grace given to me. They agreed that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the Jews. 10 All they asked was that we should continue to remember the _____, the very thing I was eager to do. 11 When Peter came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he was clearly in the _____ 12 Before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they _____, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group. 13 The other Jews joined him in his hypocrisy, so that by their hypocrisy even _____ was led astray. 14 When I saw that they were not acting in line with the _____ of the gospel, I said to Peter in front of them all, "You are a Jew, yet you live like a Gentile and not like a Jew. How is it, then, that you _____ Gentiles to follow Jewish customs?"

Cenchreae was the port serving Corinth and was about 7 miles east of Corinth. We find that there was a church here, which Phoebe served in some capacity.

Rom 16:1 I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a _____ of the church in Cenchrea.

Acts 18:20 When they asked him to spend more time with them, he declined. 21 But as he left, he promised, "I will come back if it is God's will." Then he set sail from Ephesus.

There is a difference in the reading of those versions based on ancient Greek manuscripts and the KJV. The KJV at v. 20 includes the phrase "I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem." Paul was keeping the feast days of the Jews since at this point God has not clearly revealed that the Law of Moses was not binding on the Jews. At Acts 15, the church showed through study of the Scripture and God's approval of Peter's actions in converting the Gentiles that the Gentiles were not bound to keep the Law of Moses.

The Holy Spirit later (about AD 65-68) reveals to Paul that those in the Galatian churches who continued to obey any part of the Law of Moses had been severed from Christ, including the observance of days commanded by the Law of Moses.

Gal 4:9 But now that you know God--or rather are known by God--how is it that you are turning back to those weak and miserable principles? Do you wish to be _____ by them all over again? 10 You are observing _____ days and months and seasons and years! 11 I fear for you, that somehow I have wasted my _____ on you. 12 I plead with you, brothers, become like me, for I became like you. You have done me no wrong.

Gal 5:2 Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be _____, Christ will be of no value to you at all. 3 Again I declare to every man who lets himself be _____ that he is obligated to obey the _____ law. 4 You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen _____ from grace.

Ephesus is the best seaport in Asia and was an important trade center. The city had a population of 300,000 and was the home of one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, the temple of Artemis (Roman name Diana). The temple was supported by 127 columns, each of which was 197 feet tall.

Acts 18:22 When he landed at Caesarea, he went up and greeted the church and then went down to Antioch. 23 After spending some time in Antioch, Paul set out from there and traveled from place to place throughout the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.

There are some who believe that Paul went up to Jerusalem, which would have allowed him to come down (in altitude) to Antioch. Jerusalem is up from everywhere in Jerusalem but Hebron.

Paul's second missionary journey comes to a close some 3-4 years after it began. He has planted the church throughout Asia Minor and throughout Greece. It is of interest that the only extended period of working with one church was in Ephesus. The amount of time spent with the other churches ranged from days to perhaps months. The modern theory that some have of going and spending years in establishing the church appears to differ from Paul's efforts. We do find that others were ministers to churches where Paul never goes, as Epaphras is the minister to the Colossians with whom Paul comes in contact in Rome. Those in the church who believe that it is necessary to go for extended periods of time fail to trust in the word of God to convert the hearers to a belief sufficient to withstand the test of time.

2 Tim 3:15 and how from _____ you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through _____ in Christ Jesus.

After a short time, Paul begins his third missionary journey. The specific sites of Paul's visit are unknown as are the churches which might have been present in Asia Minor. John mentions seven churches in Asia, but we are aware of others, such as Hieropolis and Colossae. The need to strengthen the disciples, then as now, remains one of the foremost duties of the evangelist.

Acts 14:22 strengthening the disciples and _____ them to remain true to the faith. "We must go through many hardships to enter the _____ of God," they said.

Acts 18:24 Meanwhile a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was a learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. 25 He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke with great fervor and taught about Jesus accurately, though he knew only the baptism of John.

Apollos becomes a steadfast coworker of the apostle Paul and one who preached mightily due to his great education (eloquence - KJV). The thorough knowledge of the Scriptures was literally a "powerhouse" or as the KJV says "mighty".

Acts 18:26 He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately.

The manner of his speech was "with fervor". We find that the evangelist Titus was instructed to preach in the same manner. The style of Apollos' preaching was as one who was "boiling".

Tit 2:15 These, then, are the things you should teach. _____ and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you.

Even though Apollos taught boldly, he was willing to listen to others and evidently Priscilla took the lead, joined by her husband, in taking Apollos aside to teach him. The KJV reverses the order of these names, but manuscripts other than the KJV do not contain this word order. It is possible that the Western reviser changed the manuscript to fit his idea of the subordination of women, however, there is no need for a woman to be absolutely silent, but rather to be certain that her manner and place of teaching do not give her "dominion" over the man. Superior knowledge is not dominion which consists of attitude toward others. The silence of I Tim 2:12 is not absolute, but rather as v. 11 instructs, is an attitude of quietness.

I Tim 2:11 A woman should learn in quietness and full _____. 12 I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be _____.

The instruction of Priscilla and Aquila must have resulted in the baptism of Apollos in "the name of Jesus" as we find Paul doing for the brethren in Acts 19. This is not specifically stated, however, we dare not doubt that Paul and Priscilla and Aquila were teaching the same doctrine.

Acts 19:1 While _____ was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples 2 and asked them, "Did you _____ the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They answered, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." 3 So Paul asked, "Then what baptism did you receive?" "John's _____," they replied. 4 Paul said, "John's baptism was a baptism of _____. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus." 5 On hearing this, they were _____ into the name of the Lord Jesus.

Acts 18:27 When Apollos wanted to go to Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples there to welcome him. On arriving, he was a great help to those who by grace had believed. 28 For he vigorously refuted the Jews in public debate, proving from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.

Apollos having become a convert and a knowledgeable one at that is immediately encouraged to preach Jesus. Just as Paul debated the Jews, Apollos joins the battle against error at once.

Acts 9:20 At once he began to preach in the _____ that Jesus is the Son of God. 21 All those who heard him were astonished and asked, "Isn't he the man who raised _____ in Jerusalem among those who call on this name? And hasn't he come here to take them as _____ to the chief priests?" 22 Yet Saul grew more and

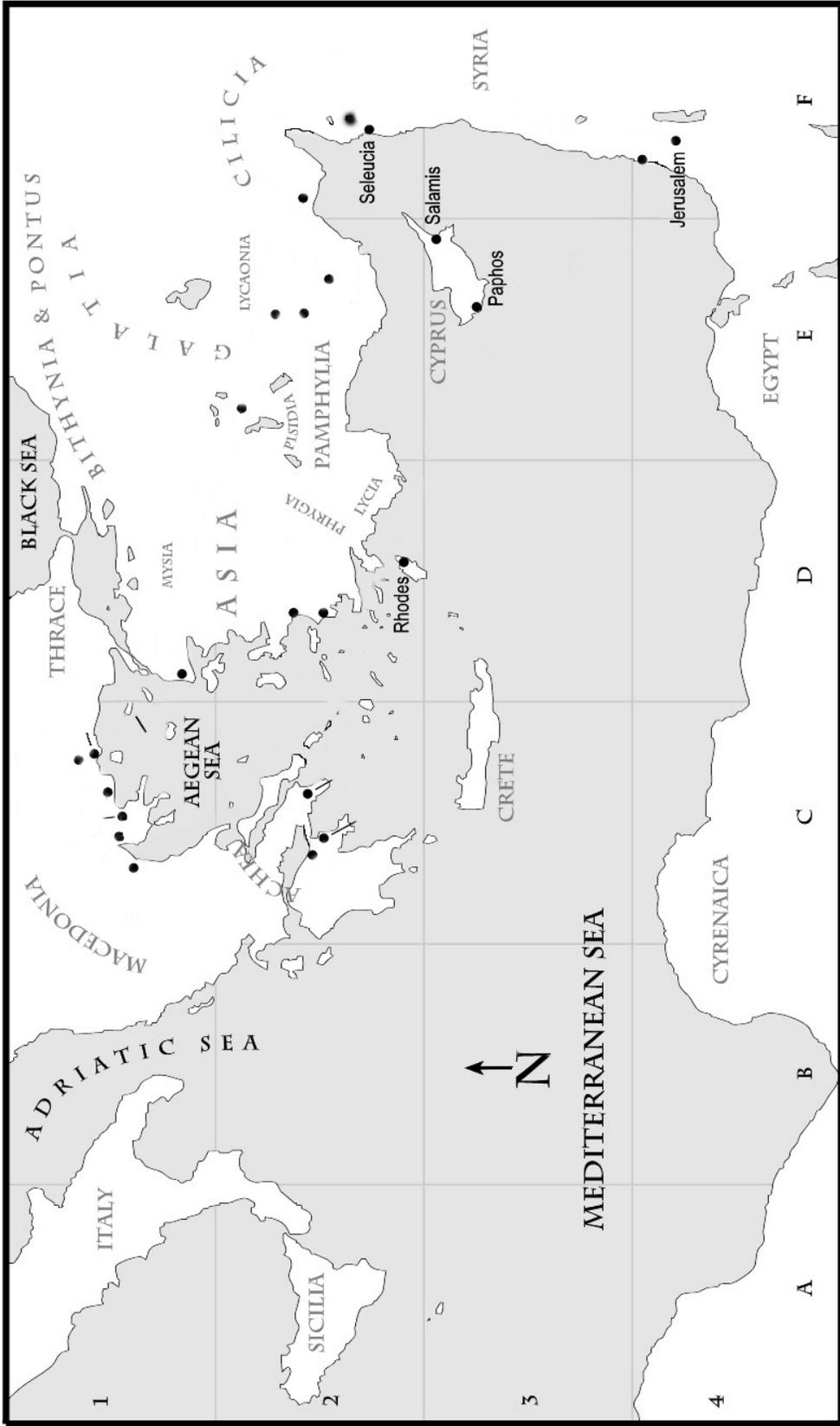
more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by _____ that Jesus is the Christ.

We must develop a knowledge of the Scriptures that will allow us to change the minds of unbelievers and those in error in order to be a "great help to those who by grace had believed."

Questions:

1. What was Paul's profession? _____
2. With whom did Paul stay in Corinth? _____
3. When did Paul go into the full time ministry? _____
4. What caused Paul to quit preaching to the Jews in Corinth? _____
5. Who was Crispus? _____
6. How long did Paul stay in Corinth? _____
7. Who was Gallio? _____
8. Who was Sosthenes? _____
9. Why did Paul have his hair cut in Cenchrea? _____
10. Who was Apollos? _____
11. Into what had Apollos been baptized? _____
12. Who taught Apollos? _____

On the following page, you will find a map of the area of Paul's second missionary journey. Trace Paul's route on this journey, naming all the cities and areas mentioned where Paul visited.



A Workbook Commentary on the Book of Acts
Chapter 19

Acts 19:1 While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples

The ministry of Apollos and Paul at Corinth was the basis of division later. "Preacheritus", as it is sometimes called, has no place within the church. It is not the preacher's church. I heard one preacher say, "I have a number of children in that church." Nothing could be further from the truth if the church in that place belongs to Christ. The Christians who meet there are sons of God and joint heirs with Christ, but they belong to no man on this earth.

I Cor 1:10 I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you _____ with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly _____ in mind and thought. 11 My brothers, some from Chloe's household have informed me that there are quarrels among you. 12 What I mean is this: One of you says, "I follow Paul"; another, "I follow Apollos"; another, "I follow Cephas"; still another, "I follow Christ." 13 Is Christ _____? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized into the name of Paul?

I Cor 3:5 What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only _____, through whom you came to believe--as the Lord has assigned to each his task. 6 I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it _____. 7 So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.

Rom 8:17 Now if we are children, then we are _____--_____ of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we _____ in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

Gal 4:7 So you are no longer a _____, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.

Paul called Timothy his "son in the faith," however, we do not follow any earthly man, but Jesus Christ.

I Tim 1:2 To Timothy my true _____ in the faith: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

I Cor 11:1 Follow my _____, as I follow the example of Christ.

Acts 19:2 and asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They answered, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit."

During the earthly ministry of Jesus, it was necessary for Jesus to be glorified before the Holy Spirit was given.

Jn 7:38 Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of _____ water will flow from within him." 39 By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been _____.

These disciples of John the Baptist, like Apollos, did not comprehend John's message concerning the one to follow nor had they heard of Jesus, the Christ. They are not unlike a lot of folks in the church today who only hear half the message and then go off half informed about what the man had to say.

Acts 19:3 So Paul asked, "Then what baptism did you receive?" "John's baptism," they replied. 4 Paul said, "John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus."

This clearly shows that one must know the reason for their baptism. Many today are baptized for the wrong reason. Among these reasons are: to get into the church; to please parents; their parents had them baptized as infants; and so on. When one has not been baptized correctly, including both the reason and method, the baptism is not valid and they must be baptized correctly. John's baptism was not commanded in the Law of Moses, and thus was not necessary for a Jew to be saved. John's baptism was a call to repentance or "the outward sign of an inward grace." John's baptism signified their repentance. It was given only to the Jews, who were already in a covenant relation with God and was thus vastly inferior to the baptism of Jesus in the new covenant. Robertson tells us the language of this statement "describes the baptism as marked by (case of species or genus), not as conveying, repentance." Thus, in the truest sense, John practiced the baptism that the Baptist church preaches today. He and they preach that one must be baptized to show that their sins have been forgiven. This is entirely different from the baptism which Paul now preaches to these disciples.

Mk 1:4 And so John came, _____ in the desert region and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 5 The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. _____ their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. ... 7 And this was his message: "After me will come one more powerful than I, the thongs of whose sandals I am not _____ to stoop down and untie. 8 I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the _____."

Mt 3:11 "I baptize you with water for _____. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the _____ and with fire."

Acts 19:5 On hearing this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.

Jesus' baptism was for the remission of sins. Paul later describes it as a token of the covenant. Without the token, baptism, one is not in a covenant relation with God, just as a Jew who was uncircumcised was not in a covenant relation with God. One cannot be saved without baptism any more than one could be a Jew without circumcision.

Col 2:10 and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and _____. 11 In him you were also _____, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the _____ of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, 12 having been buried with him in _____ and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. 13 When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you _____ with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, 14 having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood _____ to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross.

Ex 12:48 "An alien living among you who wants to celebrate the LORD'S Passover must have all the males in his household _____; then he may take part like one born in the land. No uncircumcised male may _____ of it.

Gen 17:14 Any uncircumcised male, who has not been _____ in the flesh, will be cut off from his people; he has _____ my covenant."

Ex 4:20 So _____ took his wife and sons, put them on a donkey and started back to Egypt. And he took the staff of God in his hand. ... 24 At a lodging place on the way, the LORD met _____ and was about to _____ him. 25 But Zipporah took a flint knife, _____ off her son's foreskin and touched Moses' feet with it. "Surely you are a bridegroom of blood to me," she said. 26 So the LORD let him alone. (At that time she said "bridegroom of blood," referring to _____).

Jesus had commanded the apostles to baptize the disciples they taught about Jesus. Jesus had commanded baptism as way of washing away sins for Saul who had been praying for 3 days. God said there was only one baptism and the baptism the apostle Peter wanted to administer was baptism in water. Peter later tells us that just as Noah, his sons and their wives were saved by water, so were we saved by baptism in water, with obvious reference to salvation from sin.

Mt 28:19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, _____ them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

Acts 22:16 And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and _____ your sins _____, calling on his name.'

Eph 4:5 one Lord, one faith, _____ baptism;

Acts 10:47 "Can anyone keep these people from being _____ with _____? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have." 48 So he ordered that they be _____ in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days.

Thus, we learn that baptism in the name of Jesus Christ requires a believer who has been taught about Jesus being immersed in water for the remission of sins. To do otherwise is to fall short of baptizing someone by the authority (in the name of) Jesus. Such a baptism puts one into Christ.

Rom 6:3 Or don't you know that all of us who were _____ into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4 We were therefore _____ with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a _____ life.

Gal 3:27 for all of you who were baptized _____ Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

Acts 19:6 When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. 7 There were about twelve men in all.

As in the case of the Samaritans of Acts 8, it was necessary for an apostle to lay his hands on the person who was to receive this miraculous gift. (See remarks on Acts 8:12-20.)

Acts 19:8 Paul entered the synagogue and spoke boldly there for three months, arguing persuasively about the kingdom of God. 9 But some of them became obstinate; they refused to believe and publicly maligned the Way. So Paul left them. He took the disciples with him and had discussions daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus.

The kingdom of God consists of all those who are obedient to the sovereign rule of Jesus. We find that the kingdom was prophesied in Dan 2:44 as an eternal kingdom which would be eternal in its duration.

Dan 2:44 "In the _____ of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will _____ all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself _____ forever.

The time of the kingdom's establishment is also clearly set in the above passage and when this prophecy is combined with that of Daniel 7 and 8, we find that the time must be that of the Roman Empire.

Dan 7:17 'The four great beasts are four _____ that will rise from the earth. 18 But the saints of the Most High will receive the _____ and will possess it forever--yes, for ever and ever.' ... 8:20 The two-horned ram that you saw represents the kings of _____ and _____. 21 The shaggy goat is the king of _____, and the large horn between his eyes is the first king. 22 The four horns that replaced the one that was broken off represent four kingdoms that will emerge from his nation but will not have the same power.

The Babylonian empire was the first world empire as Daniel tells us in chapter 2. The Medo-Persian empire replaced the Babylonian from 605 to 552 B.C. The Medo-Persian empire began with Cyrus in 549 B.C. The Greeks under Alexander conquered the Medo-Persian empire in 330 B.C. All of these events are forecast by Daniel's prophecy. Shortly after the death of Alexander, the Roman empire, which reached its greatest height from 100-175 A.D., ruled the world. During the days of the Roman empire is the setting for the appearance of God's kingdom.

We find that Jesus was given all authority and placed on the throne immediately after his ascension into heaven.

Mt 28:18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All _____ in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

Acts 2:29 "Brothers, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was _____, and his tomb is here to this day. 30 But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his _____. 31 Seeing what was ahead, he _____ of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay. 32 God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. 33 Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the _____ Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. 34 For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, "The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at my _____ _____. 35 until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet." 36 "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this _____, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."

This confirms what Jesus himself said.

Mk 9:1 And he said to them, "I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the _____ of God _____ with power."

After this point, the kingdom is spoken of as being in existence. Both Paul and the brethren at Colossae were in the kingdom by the time of Paul's letter to Colossae in 57-62 A.D.

Col 1:13 For he has rescued us from the _____ of darkness and brought us into the _____ of the Son he loves,

This kingdom was not one of this world, but rather a spiritual kingdom, eternal in its nature.

Jn 18:36 Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this _____. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place."

Lk 17:20 Once, having been asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, "The kingdom of God does not come with your careful _____, 21 nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the kingdom of God is _____ you."

Acts 19:10 This went on for two years, so that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord. 11 God did extraordinary miracles through Paul,

Paul tells the Ephesian elders in Acts 20:31, that he labored with them for "three years" so that the entire time he was with them is accounted for is in the three months in the synagogue and the remainder the time spoken of as "for a while".

Act 20:31 So be on your guard! Remember that for _____ years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears.

Acts 19:8 Paul entered the synagogue and spoke boldly there for _____ months, arguing persuasively about the kingdom of God.

Acts 19:22 He sent two of his helpers, Timothy and Erastus, to Macedonia, while he stayed in the province of Asia a little _____.

Acts 19:12 so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them.

The common practice of the Catholic church in believing in the usefulness of relics for healing powers no doubt comes from this verse. We do find that even Jesus had those who sought to touch the hem of his garment in order to be healed. We have no reason to doubt that such powers were given by God.

Lk 8:44 She came up behind him and touched the _____ of his cloak, and immediately her bleeding stopped. 45 "Who _____ me?" Jesus asked. When they all denied it, Peter said, "Master, the people are crowding and pressing against you." 46 But Jesus said, "Someone touched me; I know that _____ has gone out from me."

Mt 14:36 and begged him to let the sick just touch the edge of his _____ and all who touched him were _____.

Acts 19:13 Some Jews who went around driving out evil spirits tried to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who were demon-possessed. They would say, "In the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches, I command you to come out."

There are many today who try the same thing that these fakers did and with the same results. We need to remember that the age of miracles has ceased (see remarks on Acts 8:13-20). Jesus used these fakers to demonstrate that he cast out demons by the power of God. This passage in the KJV uses the term "exorcists" to describe those who would cast out demons. Modern day "exorcists" are the same fakers that these Jews were in the first century.

Lk 11:19 Now if I drive out _____ by Beelzebub, by whom do your followers drive them out? So then, they will be your _____.

Acts 19:14 Seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this. 15 One day the evil spirit answered them, "Jesus I know, and I know about Paul, but who are you?" 16 Then the man who had the evil spirit jumped on them and overpowered them all. He gave them such a beating that they ran out of the house naked and bleeding.

We are fortunate that Satan has been chained in the gospel age and that we can no longer be controlled by evil spirits without our willingness to be controlled.

I Cor 10:13 No _____ has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also _____ a way out so that you can stand up under it.

Rev 20:3 He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and _____ it over him, to keep him from _____ the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time.

Acts 19:17 When this became known to the Jews and Greeks living in Ephesus, they were all seized with fear, and the name of the Lord Jesus was held in high honor. 18 Many of those who believed now came and openly confessed their evil deeds. 19 A number who had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly. When they calculated the value of the scrolls, the total came to fifty thousand drachmas.

We find that among the newly converted believers that there were many who had been involved in the business of casting out demons or at the very least in the use of the name of Jesus as some sort of talisman to bring good luck. Sometimes Christians today have the idea that the

Lord's Supper or prayers will protect us from all harm. We need to be aware that God will give his children good gifts, yet Satan still has the power to tempt us by placing burdens upon us. With the help of God we can overcome Satan, but there may still be a great deal of evil befall us.

Job 1:9 "Does Job _____ God for nothing?" Satan replied. 10 "Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land. 11 But stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely _____ you to your face." 12 The LORD said to Satan, "Very well, then, everything he has is in your hands, but on the man himself do not lay a finger." Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD. 13 One day when Job's _____ and _____ were feasting and drinking wine at the oldest brother's house, 14 a messenger came to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys were grazing nearby, 15 and the _____ attacked and carried them off. They put the servants to the sword, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you!" 16 While he was still speaking, another messenger came and said, "The fire of God fell from the sky and burned up the sheep and the servants, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you!" 17 While he was still speaking, another _____ came and said, "The _____ formed three raiding parties and swept down on your camels and carried them off. They put the servants to the sword, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you!" 18 While he was still speaking, yet another messenger came and said, "Your sons and daughters were feasting and drinking wine at the oldest brother's house, 19 when suddenly a mighty wind swept in from the desert and _____ the four corners of the house. It collapsed on them and they are dead, and I am the only one who has _____ to tell you!" 20 At this, Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. Then he fell to the ground in worship

The value of the drachma (piece of silver) was a day's wages making the value of these books (if a laborer in a vineyard today would make \$6.00/hr), \$2.4 million. That is a great deal of money but we need to place it in perspective with the knowledge that Americans spent nearly \$50 billion in 1990 on tobacco products, which when broken down to a city the size of Ephesus would be \$6 million annually.

Acts 19:20 In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power.

The use of miraculous gifts was always given to confirm the word of the Lord. This event is simply one more confirmation of that use.

Mk 16:20 Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and _____ his word by the signs that accompanied it.

It is unfortunate that the city of Ephesus, visited not only by Paul but Timothy and by historical accounts, John to be followed later by Polycarp, who studied with John, and Irenaeus, who studied with Polycarp, no longer contains vast numbers of Christians but is filled with

Muslims. This should remind us of the preciousness of our faith and the responsibility we have to give it to our children.

Acts 19:21 After all this had happened, Paul decided to go to Jerusalem, passing through Macedonia and Achaia. "After I have been there," he said, "I must visit Rome also." 22 He sent two of his helpers, Timothy and Erastus, to Macedonia, while he stayed in the province of Asia a little longer.

Paul's plans for preaching the gospel did not always go exactly as planned. Rather Paul stayed where he could do the most good.

I Cor 16:5 After I go through Macedonia, I will come to you--for I will be going through Macedonia. 6 _____ I will stay with you awhile, or even spend the winter, so that you can help me on my journey, wherever I go. 7 I do not want to see you now and make only a passing visit; I hope to spend some time with you, if the Lord _____. 8 But I will stay on at Ephesus until Pentecost, 9 because a great door for effective work has _____ to me, and there are many who oppose me.

II Cor 1:15 Because I was _____ of this, I planned to visit you first so that you might benefit twice. 16 I planned to visit you on my way to _____ and to come back to you from Macedonia, and then to have you send me on my way to _____.

Paul also speaks to Romans concerning his desire to come and visit them. No doubt Paul felt that the gospel would be spread effectively from the seat of the Roman empire where visitors from every corner of the empire visited.

Rom 1:9 God, whom I serve with my whole heart in _____ the gospel of his Son, is my witness how constantly I remember you 10 in my _____ at all times; and I pray that now at last by God's will the way may be opened for me to come to you. ... 13 I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that I planned many times to come to you (but have been prevented from doing so until now) in order that I might have a _____ among you, just as I have had among the other Gentiles. ... 15 That is why I am so eager to preach the gospel also to you who are at _____.

The Corinthians were urged to receive Timothy in kindness and then to help him return to Paul, evidently before Paul leaves Ephesus.

I Co 4:17 For this reason I am sending to you _____, my son whom I love, who is faithful in the Lord. He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach _____ in every church.

I Co 16:10 If Timothy comes, see to it that he has nothing to fear while he is with you, for he is carrying on the _____ of the Lord, just as I am. 11 No one, then, should

refuse to accept him. Send him on his way in _____ so that he may return to me. I am _____ him along with the brothers.

Acts 19:23 About that time there arose a great disturbance about the Way.

The name of the church has received much discussion, but evidently the disciples were known as followers of "the Way" based upon Jesus own statement.

Jn 14:6 Jesus answered, "I am the _____ and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father _____ through me.

Acts 9:2 and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the _____, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to _____.

Acts 19:9 But some of them became _____; they refused to believe and publicly maligned the _____. So Paul left them. He took the _____ with him and had discussions daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus.

Acts 24:22 Then Felix, who was well acquainted with the _____, adjourned the proceedings. "When Lysias the commander comes," he said, "I will decide your case."

At some time previous to this, Paul notes that there was also a disturbance at Ephesus.

I Co 15:32 If I fought wild _____ in Ephesus for merely human reasons, what have I gained? If the _____ are not raised, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die."

Acts 19:24 A silversmith named Demetrius, who made silver shrines of Artemis, brought in no little business for the craftsmen. 25 He called them together, along with the workmen in related trades, and said: "Men, you know we receive a good income from this business. 26 And you see and hear how this fellow Paul has convinced and led astray large numbers of people here in Ephesus and in practically the whole province of Asia. He says that man-made gods are no gods at all.

Demetrius was a common name and may not be the same man by that name who is later mentioned as a faithful disciple.

III Jn 1:12 Demetrius is well spoken of by everyone--and even by the truth itself. We also speak well of him, and you know that our _____ is true.

The temple of Artemis was built in the 6th century B.C., burned in 356 B.C. and then restored to be included as one of the "seven wonders of the ancient world". Artemis was the goddess of fertility and the terra cotta shrines that remain, the silver shrines having probably been turned into coin or other jewelry, were models of the temple with the statue of Artemis inside. The priests in the temple were eunuchs and the priestesses were prostitutes who engaged in sexual immorality with the people worshipping the goddess.

Paul speaks often of the fact that idols are not gods.

Acts 17:29 "Therefore since we are God's _____, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone--an image made by man's design and skill.

Rom 1:21 For although they knew God, they neither _____ him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools 23 and _____ the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and _____ and reptiles.

Acts 19:27 There is danger not only that our trade will lose its good name, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be discredited, and the goddess herself, who is worshiped throughout the province of Asia and the world, will be robbed of her divine majesty." 28 When they heard this, they were furious and began shouting: "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"

When touched in the pocketbook, men immediately respond to try to prevent, by nearly any means, the loss of income. With the approaching festival, Demetrius and his fellow workmen stood to make a great deal of money or lose it if Paul wasn't stopped.

Acts 19:10 This went on for _____ years, so that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the _____ of Asia heard the word of the Lord.

Demetrius' concern for the world simply confirms what archaeologists have found as temples of Artemis have been found as far away as Spain and France.

Acts 19:29 Soon the whole city was in an uproar. The people seized Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul's traveling companions from Macedonia, and rushed as one man into the theater. 30 Paul wanted to appear before the crowd, but the disciples would not let him. 31 Even some of the officials of the province, friends of Paul, sent him a message begging him not to venture into the theater.

The ruins of the theater in Ephesus still exist and the theater itself held 56,000 people and would have accommodated the large crowd.

There is no mention of how the mob is able to get Gaius and Aristarchus, who are identified here and elsewhere as Paul's traveling companions.

Acts 20:4 He was accompanied by _____ son of Pyrrhus from Berea, Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica, Gaius from _____, Timothy also, and Tychicus and Trophimus from the province of _____.

Although Paul did not want to leave his friends to the hands of the mob, the disciples and others wanted Paul to stay away. Priscilla and Aquila helped Paul to the extent of risking their own lives and it may have been at this point that they did so.

Rom 16:3 Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my _____ workers in Christ Jesus. 4 They risked their lives for me. Not only I but all the _____ of the Gentiles are grateful to them.

Acts 19:32 The assembly was in confusion: Some were shouting one thing, some another. Most of the people did not even know why they were there. 33 The Jews pushed Alexander to the front, and some of the crowd shouted instructions to him. He motioned for silence in order to make a defense before the people. 34 But when they realized he was a Jew, they all shouted in unison for about two hours: "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" 35 The city clerk quieted the crowd and said: "Men of Ephesus, doesn't all the world know that the city of Ephesus is the guardian of the temple of the great Artemis and of her image, which fell from heaven? 36 Therefore, since these facts are undeniable, you ought to be quiet and not do anything rash. 37 You have brought these men here, though they have neither robbed temples nor blasphemed our goddess. 38 If, then, Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen have a grievance against anybody, the courts are open and there are proconsuls. They can press charges. 39 If there is anything further you want to bring up, it must be settled in a legal assembly. 40 As it is, we are in danger of being charged with rioting because of today's events. In that case we would not be able to account for this commotion, since there is no reason for it." 41 After he had said this, he dismissed the assembly.

The word translated "assembly" in v. 32, 39 and 41 is the Greek word *ekklesia* which is commonly translated "church". It is translated "number" in the NIV in Acts 2:47 where other versions render it "church". We find from this passage that there was no religious significance to the Greek term. This brings to mind several problems with terminology among brethren and the denominations.

The first is the use of the term "church" to mean the building in which the saints meet. Statements such as "I'm going to church" or "I'll meet you at the church" are inconsistent with the meaning of the word unless we mean the "assembly". The word church is based on the Greek *kuriakos* meaning belonging or related to the Lord, from which the German "kirche" is derived and the English church. Luther in his translation of the Scriptures in German translates the term *ekklesia* as "Gemeinde" or assembly every time *ekklesia* appears in the text.

Second, there is a problem in talking about "congregations of the Churches of Christ" where men have made the church of Christ a denomination. A congregation is a gathering of people or a synonym for assembly, while church is an assembly. Thus you have "an assembly of the assemblies of Christ". In the Scriptures, there is one universal assembly of the saints while there are local assemblies in each town. The name "church of Christ" in the Scriptures indicates that group which belongs to Christ.

Mt 16:18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my _____, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

Acts 2:47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the _____ added to their number daily those who were being saved.

I Tim 3:15 if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's _____, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the _____.

Rom 16:16 Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the _____ of Christ send greetings.

Another problem that brethren have encountered is the inability of distinguishing between the actions of the assembly and that of the individual. Here, Demetrius, an individual was causing a disturbance which caused the assembly. He was not the assembly. When members of the church engage in some action, they may do it individually or collectively, but the two are not the same. This is clearly pointed out in I Tim 5:16.

I Tim 5:16 If any woman who is a believer has widows in her family, _____ should help them and not let the _____ be burdened with them, so that the church can help those widows who are really in need.

A great number of brethren are unable to distinguish between the church and the individual Christian. One writer in defending certain practices by the church uses Ja 1:27 and Gal 6:10 but an examination of the two shows that the individual Christian is under consideration. The person under consideration does not switch at the end of the paragraph to the church.

Gal 6:1 Brothers, if _____ is caught in a sin, _____ who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. ... 10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let _____ do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the _____ of believers.

Ja 1:26 If anyone considers himself _____ and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is _____. 27 Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep _____ from being polluted by the world.

When searching the Scriptures, we must always be sure who is doing the talking, who the writer is talking to and what the subject under consideration really is. Only by doing this can we be certain to correctly divide the word of truth.

Alexander quiets the crowd by agreeing with them and then noting that Gaius and Aristarchus have done nothing illegal.

Questions:

1. What was John's baptism for? _____
2. How did these disciples receive the Holy Spirit? _____
3. What did Paul speak about in the synagogue? _____
4. Where did Paul have lectures and for how long? _____
5. What kind of miracles did Paul do in Ephesus? _____
6. Who were trying to cast out demons in Ephesus? _____
7. What happened to the exorcists? _____
8. What was the value of the sorcery scrolls burned? _____
9. Who did Paul sent on to Macedonia? _____
10. What does the Greek word *ekklesia* mean? _____
11. How is *ekklesia* translated in Acts 19 and Acts 2? _____
12. From what Greek root do we get the word church? _____

A Workbook Commentary on the Book of Acts
Chapter 20

Acts 20:1 When the uproar had ended, Paul sent for the disciples and, after encouraging them, said good-by and set out for Macedonia. 2 He traveled through that area, speaking many words of encouragement to the people, and finally arrived in Greece,

It is now about the summer of 57 A.D. and Paul leaves Ephesus to go to Macedonia and from there down the peninsula to Corinth. He had sent Timothy and Erastus to Macedonia some months earlier and Apollos had been at Corinth for some time.

Acts 19:22 He sent two of his helpers, Timothy and Erastus, to Macedonia, while he stayed in the _____ of Asia a little longer.

Acts 19:1 While Apollos was at _____, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples

Macedonia is the northern region of what we currently identify as Greece. When Paul comes to Greece, he has come to the southern part of the peninsula where Corinth is located. Paul continually encouraged the brethren wherever he went. It should be a part of our message today.

Acts 14:22 strengthening the disciples and _____ them to remain true to the faith. "We must go through many hardships to enter the _____ of God," they said.

Acts 20:3 where he stayed three months. Because the Jews made a plot against him just as he was about to sail for Syria, he decided to go back through Macedonia.

The most direct route for Paul to return to Antioch would have been by ship east across the Mediterranean. Due to continued persecution by the Jews, Paul retraces his steps from Corinth; going back to the north, through Macedonia.

Acts 20:4 He was accompanied by Sopater son of Pyrrhus from Berea, Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica, Gaius from Derbe, Timothy also, and Tychicus and Trophimus from the province of Asia. 5 These men went on ahead and waited for us at Troas.

A substantial number of teachers, seven at this time, accompany Paul. There is comfort in the company of brethren of like kindred faith, as well as an abundance of teachers for those with whom they came in contact with on the journey. One teacher finds it especially hard to teach a sufficient number for the church to experience rapid growth. Evidently these men

accompanied Paul while he was in Macedonia and then just before his departure from Macedonia to Troas, they went ahead of Paul as he concluded his studies in Philippi.

Acts 20:6 But we sailed from Philippi after the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and five days later joined the others at Troas, where we stayed seven days.

This brings us to the spring of 58 A.D. where Paul and Luke sail just after Passover. They would have arrived in Troas on Monday and leaving on the following Monday.

Acts 20:7 On the first day of the week we came together to break bread. Paul spoke to the people and, because he intended to leave the next day, kept on talking until midnight.

Nothing is said of the events of the previous week when we come to the assembly of the Saints in Troas. The reason for their coming together was to partake of the Lord's Supper. Some have questioned whether this is a common meal or whether it is the Lord's Supper. We find that the disciples came together for the purpose of commemorating the Lord's death until he comes again.

*I Cor 11:20 When you _____ together, it is _____ the Lord's Supper you eat, ...
26 For _____ you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.*

We also find that it was their custom to come together on the first day of the week when Paul tells the church at Corinth to gather the funds on at that time. This is done so that there would not be any collections taken when he got to Corinth, but rather that all of the money would have already been collected. The NIV doesn't make this as easily understood until we realize that if the people had saved the money individually at home, they would have had to collect it when Paul got there, the exact opposite of what Paul wanted them to do.

I Cor 16:1 Now about the collection for God's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. 2 On the _____ day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his _____, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.

Thus we can conclude that it was the custom of the churches to come together on the first day of the week to partake of the Lord's Supper, proclaiming his death until he comes again. This was also the purpose of the meeting in Troas. There must have been several teaching sessions prior to this one as Paul and the large number of teachers with him would not have been sitting idle. Shortly we will come to Miletus, where Paul tells the elders from Ephesus that he was not idle but had set them an example.

Acts 20:20 You know that I have not _____ to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to house. ... 24 However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may _____ the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me--the _____ of testifying to the gospel of God's grace.

Since this is the only example we have of the time that the disciples met to obey the Lord's command concerning the remembrance of his death, we must follow that example. Thus, loyal Christians will meet on the first day of the week for the Lord's Supper and not on an annual, semi-annual or quarterly observance of this memorial feast.

Having come together for that reason, the disciples would have celebrated the supper first and then Paul would have had his discussion. This settles the question of Paul's next statement concerning their eating in v. 11, where the meal is a common one in keeping with what we call breakfast.

There also arises a question in the minds of some about the time in the passage; specifically whether it be Roman or Jewish. This makes a difference in that the Jews counted time from sundown to sundown and according to our modern method of measuring time, it would have been on Saturday evening that the disciples gathered and on Sunday morning when the message was over. This is not the case, however, since Paul intended to depart on the next day. If it had been Jewish time, Paul would be meeting with the brethren on their first day, but our Saturday. If that were true, the next morning when Paul left, the Jewish day would have still been **the same day** and we would currently call that day Sunday, here Sunday morning. Thus, we find that to fit the circumstances, the gathering had to take place on Sunday evening, that is on Roman time. After the Lord's Supper, Paul would have talked with the brethren until midnight, at which time Eutychus falls out of the window and kills himself. Paul then heals him, eats breakfast and at daybreak **the next day** or Monday, leaves for Miletus.

A diagram of the days may help you in understanding this scenario. The days given are in time as we now keep it, i.e., Roman time.

Roman Time	Friday	><	7th day (Sat)		><	1st day (Sunday)		><	2nd day		
(Mon)											
	Events Roman Time						1	2	3,4,5		
	6pm	12 am	6 am	12pm	6pm	12 am	6 am	12pm	6pm	12am	6 am
Jewish Time	><	7th day (Sat)		><	1st day					><	2nd
day (Mon)											
	Events Jewish Time						1	2	3,4,5		
Events	1. Disciples come together to break bread						20:7				
	2. Eutychus falls about midnight						20:7				
	3. Paul speaks till daylight						20:11				
	4. Paul eats breakfast						20:11				
	5. Paul departs on the morrow						20:7				

If you try placing the events in Jewish time, Paul leaves the same day and not the next day. Only Roman time will account for the events as given.

Acts 20:8 There were many lamps in the upstairs room where we were meeting. 9 Seated in a window was a young man named Eutychus, who was sinking into a deep sleep as Paul talked on and on. When he was sound asleep, he fell to the ground from the third story and was picked up dead. 10 Paul went down, threw himself on the young man and put his arms around him. "Don't be alarmed," he said. "He's alive!" 11 Then he went upstairs again and broke bread and ate. After talking until daylight, he left. 12 The people took the young man home alive and were greatly comforted.

It's always comforting to me that I am not the first preacher to put a brother to sleep. Paul's "talking" was not a sermon such as we hear on Sundays from our pulpits, but rather similar to our classes in which the audience participates by asking questions and citing verses with the main direction established by the teacher. The Greek word *dialegomai*, meaning "to discuss" is used of Paul's message in both v. 7 and 9. It can be easily seen that the English word dialogue, which means an exchange of views, is derived from this word.

Acts 20:13 We went on ahead to the ship and sailed for Assos, where we were going to take Paul aboard. He had made this arrangement because he was going there on foot. 14 When he met us at Assos, we took him aboard and went on to Mitylene. 15 The next day we set sail from there and arrived off Kios. The day after that we crossed over to Samos, and on the following day arrived at Miletus. 16 Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus to avoid spending time in the province of Asia, for he was in a hurry to reach Jerusalem, if possible, by the day of Pentecost.

We learn that Paul wanted to cover this trip from Macedonia to Jerusalem in the 50 days between the Passover (v. 6) and Pentecost. Since he knew so many people in Ephesus, it would have been difficult to break away from them if he had stopped to visit.

Acts 20:17 From Miletus, Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders of the church. 18 When they arrived, he said to them: "You know how I lived the whole time I was with you, from the first day I came into the province of Asia. 19 I served the Lord with great humility and with tears, although I was severely tested by the plots of the Jews.

Whether there was one church in Ephesus or several as some have claimed, Paul asks the elders of the church, which would include all the elders of the church in Ephesus, to meet with him in Miletus. We note that "they arrived" indicating that all the elders in Ephesus came to meet with him. The Greek word for elders is *presbuteros* which is translated by two English words, "elders" and "presbyters".

Eph 1:1 Paul, an _____ of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To the saints in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus:

Acts 20:20 You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to house.

Paul had preached the gospel which provides everything that we need in life.

I Cor 1:23 but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and _____ to Gentiles,

II Pet 1:3 His _____ power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our _____ of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.

Acts 20:21 I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus.

Repentance is a change of mind brought about by Godly sorrow. It is not the reformation of life which follows.

II Cor 7:10 Godly _____ brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.

Acts 3:19 _____ then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord,

Acts 20:22 "And now, compelled by the Spirit, I am going to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there. 23 I only know that in every city the Holy Spirit warns me that prison and hardships are facing me. 24 However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me--the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace.

Paul's task was the same as that of all the apostles.

Acts 1:22 beginning from John's _____ to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a _____ with us of his resurrection."

The word translated "task" is the Greek *diaconos* from which we also get the related words "deacon", "servant" and "ministry". Just as the Lord gave Paul a task, each of us has a course set before us and we must determine how we will run the race. We have been given

abilities by the Lord, and just as in the parable of the talents (Mt 25:14-30), we must use those abilities to gain more. If we are faithful persons of ability, we will teach the word of God to others.

II Tim 4:7 I have fought the good fight, I have _____ the race, I have kept the faith. 8 Now there is in store for me the _____ of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day--and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his _____.

II Tim 2:2 And the _____ you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be _____ to teach others.

The word for men in II Tim 2:2 is from the Greek *anthropos* and is indicative of mankind and not just men. Women also have a responsibility to teach, it is merely limited by the situation, that is, it must not take dominion over the man.

Col 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you _____ and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual _____ with gratitude in your hearts to God.

Tit 2:3 Likewise, teach the _____ women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to _____ what is good.

I Tim 2:11 A woman should learn in quietness and full _____ 12 I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent.

Acts 20:25 "Now I know that none of you among whom I have gone about preaching the kingdom will ever see me again. 26 Therefore, I declare to you today that I am innocent of the blood of all men. 27 For I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God.

Paul preached the kingdom which is equivalent to preaching the gospel. The plan of entry into the kingdom is the same as that for the church. Many religions fail to realize the nature of the kingdom, thinking that it is still coming. Jesus tells us that it would come in the lifetime of those standing there who heard his voice, while Paul tells us that he and the Colossian brethren were already in the kingdom in less than 5-6 years from the date under discussion here. This was in fulfillment of OT prophecy.

Mk 9:1 And he said to them, "I tell you the _____, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the _____ of God come with power."

Col 1:13 For he has rescued us from the _____ of darkness and brought us into the _____ of the Son he loves,

Dan 2:44 "In the _____ of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be _____, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself _____ forever.

Acts 20:28 Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

The job of the elder, to whom he was speaking, v. 17, is to watch and feed, just as a shepherd does for the sheep.

Jer 3:15 Then I will give you _____ after my own heart, who will _____ you with knowledge and understanding.

In case you haven't ever been a shepherd of the sheep, one of the things that you would have found out is that sheep can't be told what to do or made to do it. They must be led by the shepherd. He must care for them gently, knowing each and knowing what each needs. The same is true of the shepherd of God's flock.

Mt 20:25 Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles _____ it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. 26 Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become _____ among you must be your servant, 27 and whoever wants to be first must be your slave--

I Pet 5:2 Be _____ of God's flock that is under _____ care, serving as overseers--not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; 3 not _____ it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.

Thus, the elder in the Lord's church is not going to be the one making all the decisions, but the one leading in all the work. The job is one of responsibility and not like a corporate board which directs all the work from a position of power or prestige.

The word translated as "overseers" in the NIV is from the Greek word *episkopos* which is also translated as "bishops" in I Tim 3. The word for "shepherd" is the Greek word *poimen* for which the noun form is translated "pastor" in Eph 4:11. Thus we find that the men gathered by Paul were "pastors" and "bishops". According to I Tim 3, the office is restricted to men. Those women who claim this position are deficient in their knowledge of the Scriptures.

Eph 4:11 It was he who gave some to be _____, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, 12 to _____ God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the _____ of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

I Tim 3:2 Now the _____ must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, _____ to teach,

At this point, I must emphasize that the Scriptures teach that the congregation will determine who should be deacons (Acts 6:3), how much the congregation will send to others (Acts 11:29-30). The elder's responsibilities are to watch and care for the church in teaching the word of God. No decisions in the NT church were ever made by the elders except those made on the basis of the scriptures (Acts 16:4), including apostolic example (Acts 15:14), the direct commands of God (Acts 15:15) and the necessary conclusions drawn from these (Acts 15:19).

Acts 6:3 Brothers, _____ seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this _____ over to them

Acts 11:29 The disciples, each according to his _____, decided to provide help for the brothers living in Judea. 30 This _____ did, sending their gift to the elders by Barnabas and Saul.

Acts 16:4 As they traveled from town to town, they delivered the _____ reached by the apostles and _____ in Jerusalem for the people to obey.

Acts 15:14 Simon has _____ to us how God at first showed his concern by taking from the Gentiles a people for himself. 15 The _____ of the prophets are in agreement with this, as it is written: ... 19 "It is my _____, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God.

<p><i>Acts 20:29 I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. 30 Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them.</i></p>
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In keeping with the teaching function of the elders, the Ephesian elders are told that error will arise due to the desire for popularity of men filling the eldership. In the church today, the teaching function is often left to the preachers, establishing a "de facto" pastorate. Thus, preachers are the ones who often lead local groups away from the Lord. Nevertheless, we should take note that those in positions of leadership are not infallible and we will not be excused if we are led away. The elders will answer for their misdeeds and the disciples will answer for theirs.

II Cor 5:10 For we must all appear before the _____ seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the _____, whether good or bad.

Eze 18:20 The soul who sins is the one who will die. The son will not _____ the guilt of the father, nor will the father share the guilt of the son. The _____ of the

righteous man will be credited to him, and the wickedness of the wicked will be _____ against him.

Rev 2:7 He who has an ear, let him _____ what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who _____, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.

Acts 20:31 So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears.

The warning given was that of the gospel which was able to save if Christians remain steadfast.

I Cor 15:2 By this _____ you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have _____ in vain.

Acts 20:32 "Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. 33 I have not coveted anyone's silver or gold or clothing. 34 You yourselves know that these hands of mine have supplied my own needs and the needs of my companions.

The effort that Paul put forth as a tentmaker in Ephesus allowed him to support himself and those that were with him in this mission field. This clearly shows that one brother can help another in the preaching of the gospel and that the church does not necessarily have to be involved.

II Cor 12:17 Did I _____ you through any of the men I sent you?

I Cor 4:11 To this very hour we go _____ and thirsty, we are in rags, we are brutally treated, we are homeless. 12 We work _____ with our own hands. When we are cursed, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure it;

Mt 6:19 "Do not store up for yourselves _____ on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and _____.

Acts 20:35 In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

Paul's example followed that of Christ just as our example should follow that of Paul, as he follows Christ, Jesus.

1 Cor 11:1 Follow my example, as I follow the _____ of Christ.

Phil 3:17 Join with others in following my _____, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you.

This saying of Jesus is not recorded in the gospels, however, we must remember that too many things were said and done to be written down. Many sayings and miracles would have been current among the disciples when Saul was baptized. In addition, the Lord revealed much to him in the deserts of Arabia.

Jn 20:30 Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the _____ of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book.

Jn 21:25 Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the _____ world would not have room for the books that would be _____.

Gal 1:15 But when God, who set me apart from birth and called me by his grace, was pleased 16 to _____ his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not _____ any man, 17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before I was, but I went _____ into Arabia and later returned to Damascus.

<p><i>Acts 20:36 When he had said this, he knelt down with all of them and prayed. 37 They all wept as they embraced him and kissed him. 38 What grieved them most was his statement that they would never see his face again. Then they accompanied him to the ship.</i></p>

Prayer is a petition to God and is to be engaged in at all times. The attitude of prayer is one of humility, acknowledging that we cannot make it on our own. Kneeling is not the only way to engage in prayer as standing was also used.

Col 3:17 And _____ you do, whether in word or _____, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Mt 6:5 "And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray _____ in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have _____ their reward in full.

The grief of these men is completely understandable since the work that Paul had done among them had endeared him to them. The companionship of brethren is always valuable, especially in times of trouble or distress.

Questions

1. How long did Paul stay at Troas? _____
2. On what day of the week did the disciples in Troas meet? _____
3. At what time of the day did the disciples in Troas meet? _____
4. Why did the disciples in Troas meet?

5. When did Paul want to reach Jerusalem? _____
6. What three words in Greek refer to the elders?

7. What 6 English words are used in reference to the elders?

8. What is the elder's duty? _____
9. Who supported Paul and the men with him while he was in Ephesus?

10. Where is Jesus statement quoted by Paul in v. 35 found?

A Workbook Commentary on the Book of Acts
Chapter 21

Acts 21:1 After we had torn ourselves away from them, we put out to sea and sailed straight to Cos. The next day we went to Rhodes and from there to Patara. 2 We found a ship crossing over to Phoenicia, went on board and set sail. 3 After sighting Cyprus and passing to the south of it, we sailed on to Syria. We landed at Tyre, where our ship was to unload its cargo. 4 Finding the disciples there, we stayed with them seven days. Through the Spirit they urged Paul not to go on to Jerusalem.

The trip from Miletus apparently goes rather quickly. The length of time necessary for sailing this distance being completely dependant on the winds. When Luke says that they found the disciples there, he indicates that they had to search them out. The practice of quickly looking in a directory was not possible. Here too, a prophet among the disciples warns Paul of what will happen to him in Jerusalem. The fact that they stayed seven days would mean that they spent one Lord's day with the disciples in Tyre along with the other meetings that they might have had with smaller groups. The trip from Miletus to Patara is on a small sailing vessel which anchored each night while the trip from Phoenicia was on a larger merchant vessel.

Acts 21:5 But when our time was up, we left and continued on our way. All the disciples and their wives and children accompanied us out of the city, and there on the beach we knelt to pray. 6 After saying good-by to each other, we went aboard the ship, and they returned home.

Once again, we find the encouragement that the brethren gave to Paul was precious to him and is given by the Holy Spirit as an example for us.

Acts 21:7 We continued our voyage from Tyre and landed at Ptolemais, where we greeted the brothers and stayed with them for a day. 8 Leaving the next day, we reached Caesarea and stayed at the house of Philip the evangelist, one of the Seven. 9 He had four unmarried daughters who prophesied.

During the time of miracles, we find that these gifts were to be given both to males and females. Philip had the gift of performing miracles as well as his daughters.

Acts 2:17 "In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see _____, your old men will dream dreams. 18 Even on my _____ both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will _____.

Acts 8:6 When the crowds heard Philip and saw the miraculous _____ he did, they all paid close attention to what he said. 7 With shrieks, evil spirits came out of many, and many paralytics and cripples were healed. ... 13 Simon himself believed and was baptized. And he followed Philip everywhere, astonished by the great _____ and miracles he saw.

The question often arises as to whether the prophecy that these women did was in the assembly. We must look at other passages which speak of the place of prophets and the women in the assembly. First among these are Paul's directions, as guided by the Holy Spirit, to the church at Corinth, where these gifts were a problem. It is apparent that all of the Corinthians wanted to be able to speak in tongues, thinking that this was the greatest gift, however, we are informed that prophecy was the greatest gift since by it all could be strengthened.

I Cor 12:7 Now to each one the manifestation of the _____ is given for the common good. ...14:1 Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy. 2 For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not _____ to men but to God. Indeed, no one understands him; he utters mysteries with his spirit. 3 But everyone who _____ speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort. 4 He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies _____ the church.

Paul has not yet begun dealing with spiritual gifts in I Cor 11, but is dealing with the proper decorum in the church in accord with the customs of the time in I Cor 11. This is shown by his statement concerning judging for ourselves. Only matters of opinion are matters that we judge for ourselves. All matters of faith are determined by the word of God.

I Cor 11:13 Judge for yourselves: Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head _____? 14 Does not the very nature of things teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a disgrace to him,

Mt 4:4 Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every _____ that comes from the mouth of God.'"

Jn 12:48 There is a _____ for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will _____ him at the last day.

Rom 10:17 Consequently, faith comes from _____ the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

When Paul addresses the church on the gift of prophecy and its proper use, he does so in I Cor 14. In I Cor 14, Paul addresses those who speak to the assembly and in every case, we find that they are married men and their wives are told to keep silent in the assembly.

I Cor 14:29 Two or three prophets should speak, and the _____ should weigh carefully what is said. ... 32 The spirits of prophets are _____ to the control of

prophets. 33 For God is not a God of disorder but of peace. As in all the congregations of the saints, 34 women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the Law says. 35 If they want to _____ about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is _____ for a woman to speak in the church.

While the women in question in v. 34 are clearly the wives of the prophets, we find two pieces of information in this passage. First, all of the prophets prophesying in the assembly were men, as shown by the direction of the Holy Spirit for them to ask their husbands at home. The second is a general statement which would apply to all females since we cannot differentiate in the disgrace that a single and a married woman would have in speaking in the assembly. This is in accord with the instruction that Paul, always speaking in his writing through the Holy Spirit, gives to Timothy, again concerning the assembly.

I Tim 3:14 Although I hope to come to you soon, I am writing you these _____ so that, 15 if I am delayed, you will know how people _____ to _____ themselves in God's household, which is the _____ of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.

I Tim 2:8 I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing. ... 11 A _____ should learn in quietness and full submission. 12 I do not permit a woman to teach or to have _____ over a man; she must be silent.

Thus, the prophesying done by Philip's daughters was not in the assembly where they would have preached, taking a leadership role over men.

Acts 21:10 After we had been there a number of days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. 11 Coming over to us, he took Paul's belt, tied his own hands and feet with it and said, "The Holy Spirit says, 'In this way the Jews of Jerusalem will bind the owner of this belt and will hand him over to the Gentiles.'" 12 When we heard this, we and the people there pleaded with Paul not to go up to Jerusalem. 13 Then Paul answered, "Why are you weeping and breaking my heart? I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."

We have previously seen Agabus at Antioch, where he foretold the famine that would cause special problems for the church in Judea. This fulfilled prediction would no doubt cause the disciples greater anguish over his prophecies concerning Paul.

Acts 11:28 One of them, named _____, stood up and through the Spirit predicted that a severe famine would spread over the entire Roman world. (This happened during the reign of Claudius.) 29 The disciples, each according to _____ ability, decided to _____ help for the brothers living in Judea.

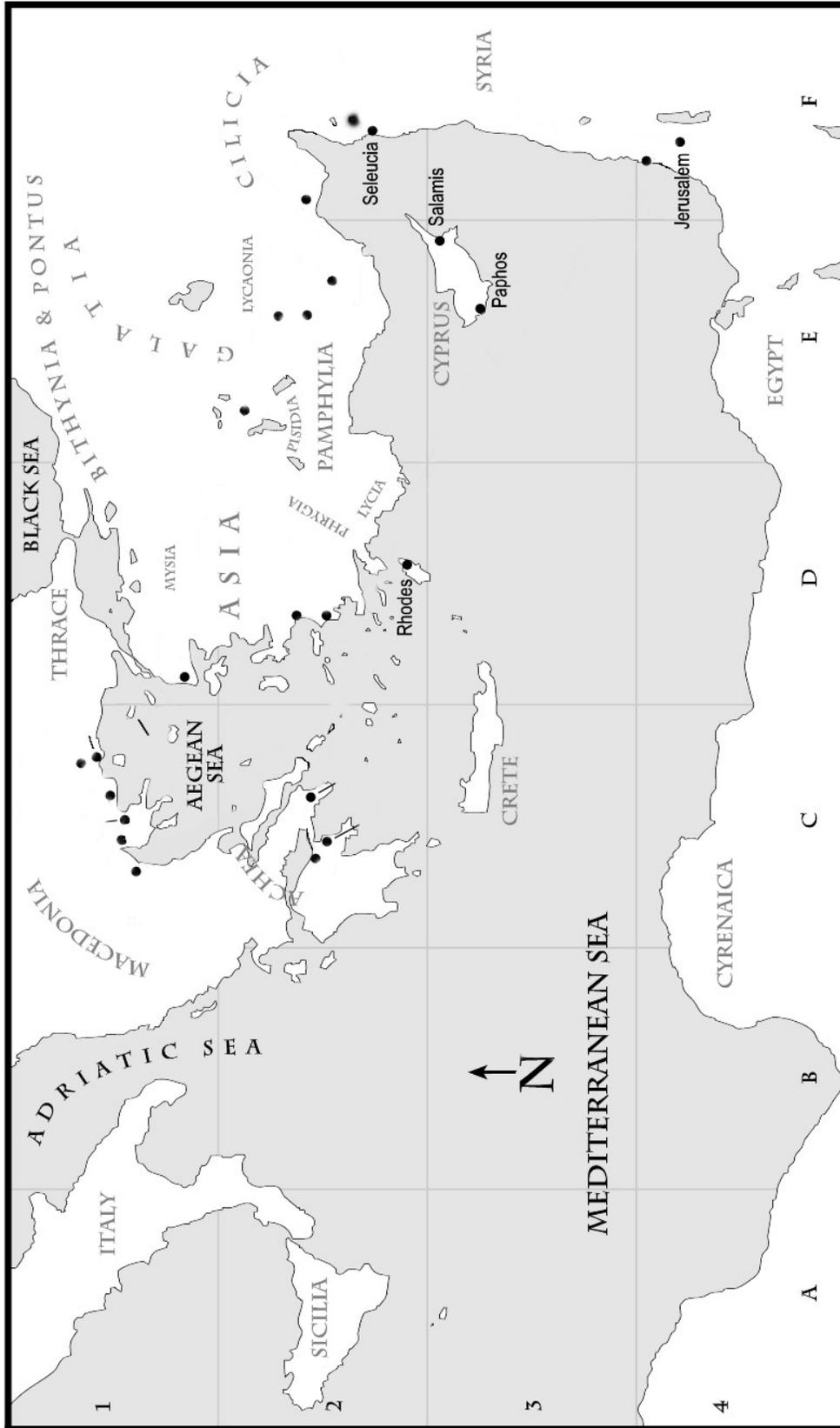
Once again, Paul does not want anything to prevent him from accomplishing his appointed task.

Acts 20:24 However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and _____ the task the Lord Jesus has given me--the task of testifying to the gospel of God's _____.

Acts 21:14 When he would not be dissuaded, we gave up and said, "The Lord's will be done." 15 After this, we got ready and went up to Jerusalem. 16 Some of the disciples from Caesarea accompanied us and brought us to the home of Mnason, where we were to stay. He was a man from Cyprus and one of the early disciples.

A minor point, but we notice that Luke, through the Holy Spirit, is always correct in even the smallest point. Here he notes that they went "up" to Jerusalem, an city higher in elevation than the city of Caesarea.

On the following page, you will find a map of the area of Paul's third missionary journey. Trace Paul's route on this journey, naming all the cities and areas mentioned where Paul visited.



Acts 21:17 When we arrived at Jerusalem, the brothers received us warmly. 18 The next day Paul and the rest of us went to see James, and all the elders were present. 19 Paul greeted them and reported in detail what God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. 20 When they heard this, they praised God. Then they said to Paul: "You see, brother, how many thousands of Jews have believed, and all of them are zealous for the law.

It appears that even though the church had come together in Acts 15 to determine what should be done about the question of the Law of Moses, a large number of Jews in Jerusalem still clung to the Law of Moses, not completely recognizing the difference in the old and new covenants. The letter to the Hebrews covers this problem in greater detail than any of the other epistles and must have been written at a later date than this occasion. I am convinced that the letter to the Hebrews was not written by Paul as it would not have been well received of the brethren based upon this passage and in addition the testimony of the writer states that he was not given the information by the Lord himself during his earthly ministry. Paul, although not present, did not have these things confirmed by men, but by God.

Heb 2:3 how shall we escape if we ignore such a great _____? This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who _____ him.

Gal 1:11 I want you to know, brothers, that the gospel I preached is not something that _____ made up. 12 I did not receive it from any _____, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by _____ from Jesus Christ.

Acts 21:21 They have been informed that you teach all the Jews who live among the Gentiles to turn away from Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children or live according to our customs.

This was not true since Paul had circumcised Timothy in order that he might not be discredited by those Jews who knew him to be a Jew. However, this teaching was exactly what Paul proclaimed in his letters written after his captivity in Rome. As a result of this seeming contradiction, we must assign a date of AD 65-68 for the letter to the Galatians in which Paul clearly shows that to observe the Law of Moses, for either Jew or Gentile, is to be severed from Christ.

Gal 5:2 Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be _____, Christ will be of no value to you at all. 3 Again I declare to every man who lets himself be _____ that he is obligated to obey the _____ law. 4 You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen _____ from grace.

*Acts 16:1 He came to Derbe and then to Lystra, where a disciple named _____ lived, whose mother was a Jewess and a believer, but whose father was a _____.
2 The brothers at Lystra and Iconium spoke well of him. 3 Paul wanted to take him along on the journey, so he _____ him because of the Jews who lived in that area, for they all _____ that his father was a Greek.*

He taught that those who were Jews should not forsake their traditions because circumcision was nothing. However, neither could they trust in circumcision. The Jews were not to become Gentiles, but neither were the Gentiles to become Jews.

I Cor 7:18 Was a man already _____ when he was called? He should not become uncircumcised. Was a man _____ when he was called? He should not be circumcised.

The gospel preacher and teacher must always be aware of the prejudices that affect the people to whom he preaches.

I Cor 9:19 Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a _____ to everyone, to win as many as possible.

It is interesting to note that the same charge of encouraging the Jews to leave the Law of Moses was made against Stephen before he was stoned.

Acts 6:11 Then they secretly persuaded some men to say, "We have heard Stephen speak words of blasphemy against _____ and against God." ... 14 For we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will _____ this place and change the _____ Moses handed down to us."

Acts 21:22 What shall we do? They will certainly hear that you have come, 23 so do what we tell you. There are four men with us who have made a vow. 24 Take these men, join in their purification rites and pay their expenses, so that they can have their heads shaved. Then everybody will know there is no truth in these reports about you, but that you yourself are living in obedience to the law. 25 As for the Gentile believers, we have written to them our decision that they should abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality."

This vow was evidently a temporary vow and the vow was released in the same way as that of the Nazarite.

Num 6:13 "Now this is the law for the _____ when the period of his separation is over. He is to be brought to the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. 14 There he is to present his offerings to the LORD: a year-old male lamb without _____ for a burnt offering, a year-old ewe lamb without defect for a sin offering, a ram without defect

for a fellowship offering, 15 together with their grain offerings and drink offerings, and a basket of bread made without yeast--cakes made of fine flour mixed with oil, and wafers spread with oil.

It is indeed curious that the elders would ask Paul to show that he lived in obedience to the law when they had participated in the decision made by direct command, approved apostolic example and necessary inference in Acts 15 concerning circumcision. They realized that the Gentiles were not bound by the Law of Moses, but they had not yet perceived that the Jews were not bound by the Law of Moses. This reasoning comes from the fact that they decided among themselves rather than consulting the Holy Spirit. Paul is very clear on this subject in later writings during and after his Roman captivity.

Gal 5:2 Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be _____, Christ will be of no value to you at all. 3 Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law. 4 You who are trying to be _____ by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace.

Gal 3:10 All who rely on _____ the law are under a curse, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law." 11 Clearly no one is justified before God by the law, because, "The righteous will live by faith."

Col 2:10 and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority. 11 In him you were also _____, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, 12 having been buried with him in _____ and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. 13 When you were dead in your sins and in the _____ of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, 14 having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. 15 And having disarmed the powers and _____, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross. 16 Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. 17 These are a _____ of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.

The Hebrew writer was even stronger in his revelation concerning the Law of Moses and its being taken out of the way.

Heb 8:13 By calling this covenant "new," he has made the first one _____, and what is obsolete and aging will soon _____.

Heb 9:15 For this reason Christ is the mediator of a _____ covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance--now that he has died as a ransom to

set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant. 16 In the case of a _____, it is necessary to prove the _____ of the one who made it

The conclusion we reach is that Paul is directed to do something to satisfy the elders, and perhaps they believe, the Jewish Christians at Jerusalem, which in and of itself is not wrong, but is done for the wrong reason and with incorrect motives. The very thing that the elders were worried about was the teaching that men could forsake the law of Moses, which was in fact the very doctrine that Christ and the apostles taught. They were not to forsake the customs only because to do so would make it more difficult to teach the Jews the gospel. Although not specifically stated, the elders were wrong. The end result was wrong. But God knew their hearts and those of the Jews and used this to fulfill the prophecies made concerning Paul's being bound when he came to Jerusalem. This is a part of the continuing revelation made to the apostles and prophets as Paul described in his letter to the Corinthians.

1Cor 9:19 Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a _____ to everyone, to win as many as possible.

1Cor 13:8 Love never fails. But where there are _____ they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part, 10 but when _____ comes, the imperfect disappears. 11 When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. 12 Now we see but a poor _____ as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know _____, even as I am fully known.

To believe otherwise is to not only decide that Paul is hypocritical but also to decide that one might engage in religious practice which has not been authorized by God and which is contrary to his will, based on the authority of the elders. The elders have no intrinsic authority but derive all authority from God and his word. Those who say they do must admit the doctrine of Catholicism and the authority of the church.

The elders and James clearly misunderstand the teaching of the Lord and the method of arriving at the Lord's will which was set forth in Acts 15. This is close to Moses taking the glory from God when he struck the rock instead of following the Lord's will. The decision in Acts 15 was not the elder's but the Lord's. It had been obtained based on the express command of God, the approved apostolic example and the necessary conclusions based on the command and example. The KJV says that they had "written and concluded", but the conclusions were based on the Lord's word and not on their own understanding.

Num 20:8 "Take the staff, and you and your brother Aaron gather the _____ together. Speak to that rock before their eyes and it will pour out its water. You will bring water out of the rock for the community so they and their livestock can drink." 9 So Moses took the _____ from the LORD's presence, just as he commanded him. 10 He and Aaron gathered the assembly together in front of the rock

and Moses said to them, "Listen, you rebels, must _____ bring you water out of this rock?"

11 Then Moses raised his arm and struck the rock twice with his staff. Water gushed out, and the community and their livestock _____. 12 But the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not _____ in me enough to honor me as holy in the sight of the Israelites, you will not bring this community into the land I give them."

Acts 21:26 The next day Paul took the men and purified himself along with them. Then he went to the temple to give notice of the date when the days of purification would end and the offering would be made for each of them. 27 When the seven days were nearly over, some Jews from the province of Asia saw Paul at the temple. They stirred up the whole crowd and seized him, 28 shouting, "Men of Israel, help us! This is the man who teaches all men everywhere against our people and our law and this place. And besides, he has brought Greeks into the temple area and defiled this holy place." 29 (They had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian in the city with Paul and assumed that Paul had brought him into the temple area.)

The result of the elder's suggestion proves to be disastrous. There was no harm in Paul going with these men to a religious service, but the result was that the Jews mistakenly identify Paul as having brought a Greek into the temple. This, of course, should reinforce the idea advanced earlier. If the Gentiles were acceptable to God, how could they have been prevented or dissuaded from worshiping as the Jews did. Clearly, the elders in using human wisdom, had sinned and the consequences of that sin were Paul's imprisonment.

We can only speculate that in the presence of such eminent leaders of the Jerusalem church, Paul did not seek the Lord's advice but instead did immediately as James and the elders asked. Alternatively, the Holy Spirit may have known that to reveal this truth now would have been more than they could bear.

John 16:12 "I have much more to _____ to you, more than you can now bear.

On reflection, prayer and a study of God's will, Paul would have done better to confront these elders at the time and to have refused to follow their incorrect advice and to have followed the word some think was written earlier (Galatians, although this explains the later date the author of this commentary advocates) and later (Eph, Col) on this matter.

At this point, we would have to argue for a date in the middle 60's for the writing of the Galatian letter, following Paul's imprisonment. Otherwise we would have to say that Paul fully understood the implication of the law and its non-binding nature on the Christian, whether Jew or Gentile, and allowed himself to sin (Gal 5:4) by taking part in a religious ceremony which was without the authority of Christ. This hardly seems tenable given the nature of the apostle and his outspoken teaching which he claimed to have received from the Lord in I Cor 14:37.

Acts 21:30 The whole city was aroused, and the people came running from all directions. Seizing Paul, they dragged him from the temple, and immediately the gates were shut. 31 While they were trying to kill him, news reached the commander of the Roman troops that the whole city of Jerusalem was in an uproar. 32 He at once took some officers and soldiers and ran down to the crowd. When the rioters saw the commander and his soldiers, they stopped beating Paul. 33 The commander came up and arrested him and ordered him to be bound with two chains. Then he asked who he was and what he had done. 34 Some in the crowd shouted one thing and some another, and since the commander could not get at the truth because of the uproar, he ordered that Paul be taken into the barracks. 35 When Paul reached the steps, the violence of the mob was so great he had to be carried by the soldiers. 36 The crowd that followed kept shouting, "Away with him!"

The Jews did not want to defile the temple with blood so they took Paul outside the temple and closed the gates with a bang. The officers are Centurions and we conclude that several hundred soldiers were called in to stop the riot. The commander supposed that Paul must have been a violent criminal guilty of some heinous crime to have caused such a commotion. The Jews use the same cry for Paul that they used for Jesus.

Lk 23:18 With one _____ they cried out, "Away with this man! Release Barabbas to us!"

Acts 21:37 As the soldiers were about to take Paul into the barracks, he asked the commander, "May I say something to you?" "Do you speak Greek?" he replied. 38 "Aren't you the Egyptian who started a revolt and led four thousand terrorists out into the desert some time ago?" 39 Paul answered, "I am a Jew, from Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no ordinary city. Please let me speak to the people." 40 Having received the commander's permission, Paul stood on the steps and motioned to the crowd. When they were all silent, he said to them in Aramaic:

Paul spoke Greek to the commander but he addressed the crowd in the common language of the day, Aramaic. The KJV calls this Hebrew, but it was not the Hebrew of the OT, but rather a version which the Jews of that day used in Palestine.

Questions:

1. What did Philip's daughters do? _____
2. Did they do this in the assembly? (Why or why not)? _____
3. Who was Agabus and where have we heard of him before? _____
4. To whom did Paul report in Jerusalem? _____

5. What was being said about Paul in the church at Jerusalem? _____
6. What did the men want Paul to do? _____
7. What was covered in the decision these men cited? _____
8. Who did the Jews think Paul had brought into the temple? _____
9. What did the Jews do to Paul? _____

A Workbook Commentary on the Book of Acts
Chapter 22

Acts 22:1 "Brothers and fathers, listen now to my defense." 2 When they heard him speak to them in Aramaic, they became very quiet. Then Paul said:

The people knew that Paul was a Jew from Israel and not foreign born by the fact that he spoke the language of the common people, thus they were interested in what he had to say.

Paul will counter the charges against him and show that he was a Jew who would not have profaned the temple and that he had become a Christian. It is only when he comes to this last point that the crowd turns against him.

Acts 22:3 "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city. Under Gamaliel I was thoroughly trained in the law of our fathers and was just as zealous for God as any of you are today. 4 I persecuted the followers of this Way to their death, arresting both men and women and throwing them into prison, 5 as also the high priest and all the Council can testify. I even obtained letters from them to their brothers in Damascus, and went there to bring these people as prisoners to Jerusalem to be punished.

Paul was sent to Jerusalem for training as a youth according to a later account. His teacher was Gamaliel, a member of the ruling council, about whom we read in Acts 5:34.

Acts 26:4 "The _____ all know the way I have lived ever since I was a child, from the beginning of my life in my own country, and also in _____.

Acts 5:34 But a Pharisee named _____ a teacher of the law, who was honored by all the people, stood up in the Sanhedrin and ordered that the men be put outside for a little while.

Paul equates the riotous action with a zeal for God and thus is conciliatory in his tone. He then goes on to place himself along side the rioters by his actions recorded in Acts 8 and 9

Acts 8:1 And Saul was there, giving approval to his death. On that day a great _____ broke out against the church at Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout _____ and Samaria.

I Tim 1:13 Even though I was once a _____ and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and _____. 14 The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and _____ that are in Christ Jesus. 15 Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save _____ --of whom I am the worst.

Paul was probably a member of the Sanhedrin at the time of these actions as he indicates that he cast votes against Christians calling for their death. This would account for his statements about his advanced standing in the Jewish religion.

Acts 26:10 And that is just what I did in Jerusalem. On the authority of the chief priests I put many of the _____ in prison, and when they were put to death, I cast my _____ against them.

Gal 1:14 I was advancing in Judaism beyond many Jews of my own age and was _____ zealous for the traditions of my fathers.

Acts 22:6 "About noon as I came near Damascus, suddenly a bright light from heaven flashed around me. 7 I fell to the ground and heard a voice say to me, 'Saul! Saul! Why do you persecute me?' 8 "Who are you, Lord?' I asked. "I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting,' he replied. 9 My companions saw the light, but they did not understand the voice of him who was speaking to me.

An alleged discrepancy is found in Luke's record at this point between Acts 9:7 and 22:9. We find that although the companions heard the sound, they could not distinguish the voice and the discrepancy is explained. (See notes on Acts 9:7) We note especially, however, that Paul uses exactly the same terminology in describing a foreign language which no one understood.

1 Cor 14:2 For anyone who speaks in a _____ does not speak to men but to God. Indeed, no one _____ him; he utters mysteries with his spirit.

There is no evidence for the addition in the KJV of the phrase "and were afraid" at v. 9.

Acts 22:10 "What shall I do, Lord?' I asked. "Get up,' the Lord said, 'and go into Damascus. There you will be told all that you have been assigned to do.' 11 My companions led me by the hand into Damascus, because the brilliance of the light had blinded me. 12 "A man named Ananias came to see me. He was a devout observer of the law and highly respected by all the Jews living there. 13 He stood beside me and said, 'Brother Saul, receive your sight!' And at that very moment I was able to see him.

Once again, this passage provides us with greater understanding of the passage in Acts 9. Paul indicates that Ananias laid his hands on him that he might receive his sight and not in order to receive the Holy Spirit. Had a man given Paul the Holy Spirit, Paul would not have been equal to the other apostles, but merely like Stephen or Philip. Paul claims that he was not less than the apostles.

II Cor 11:5 But I do not think I am in the least _____ to those "super-apostles."

Acts 22:14 "Then he said: 'The God of our fathers has chosen you to know his will and to see the Righteous One and to hear words from his mouth. 15 You will be his witness to all men of what you have seen and heard.'

Once again, we obtain additional information about Saul's conversion as Paul gives a fuller account of what Ananias has to say to him. It is important at this point because Paul is laying the stage for the revelation that he has left Judaism.

Paul was to be a witness of not only hearing the Lord, but of also seeing him after his resurrection, thus meeting the criteria of an apostle of the Lord.

I Cor 15:8 and last of all he _____ to me also, as to one _____ born.

Acts 1:22 beginning from John's baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a _____ with us of his resurrection."

I Cor 9:1 Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not the result of my work in the Lord?

Acts 22:16 And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name.'

There is no plainer passage in the NT of the reason for baptism than this one. The new Contemporary English Version is the only version that manages to mess this verse up, having Paul pray for the remission of his sins. Paul had been praying for 3 days and it hadn't done him any good. He had seen Jesus, had a conversation with him and been blinded and some will say that he "didn't really believe" at this point. The lengths to which men will go to get around the clear teaching of the gospel is always amazing to me. There is a lot of contention about the Greek *eis* which is used here and in Acts 2:38 which can be translated "because of", however, we can rest assured that Paul was not being baptized because of the remission of his sins since he still had them and was told to wash them away.

I Pet 3:21 and this _____ symbolizes _____ that now saves you also-- not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

I Cor 6:11 And that is what some of you were. But you were _____, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the _____ of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Rom 6:3 Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4 We were therefore buried with him through _____ into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

Although many commentators try to get around this clear teaching, even one Baptist commentator (Robertson) finally says, "Baptism here pictures the washing away of sins by the blood of Jesus Christ."

Acts 22:17 "When I returned to Jerusalem and was praying at the temple, I fell into a trance 18 and saw the Lord speaking. 'Quick!' he said to me. 'Leave Jerusalem immediately, because they will not accept your testimony about me.' 19 "'Lord,' I replied, 'these men know that I went from one synagogue to another to imprison and beat those who believe in you. 20 And when the blood of your martyr Stephen was shed, I stood there giving my approval and guarding the clothes of those who were killing him.'

Paul tells us that the Lord told him the Jews would not accept his testimony about his actions in Acts 8 and 9.

Acts 7:58 dragged him out of the city and began to _____ him. Meanwhile, the witnesses laid their clothes at the feet of a young man named _____.

Acts 8:1 And Saul was there, giving approval to his death. On that day a great _____ broke out against the church at Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. 2 Godly men buried Stephen and mourned deeply for him. 3 But _____ began to destroy the church. Going from house to house, he dragged off men and _____ and put them in prison.

Acts 22:21 "Then the Lord said to me, 'Go; I will send you far away to the Gentiles.'" 22 The crowd listened to Paul until he said this. Then they raised their voices and shouted, "Rid the earth of him! He's not fit to live!"

Paul finally comes to the Gentiles, which he mentions obliquely in his account of Ananias coming to him. This raises a commotion that exceeds that of Paul's initial seizure. Their initial words are increased in vehemence by their wish to get him off the earth

Acts 21:30 The whole city was aroused, and the people came running from all _____ . Seizing Paul, they dragged him from the temple, and immediately the gates were shut. ... 36 The crowd that followed kept shouting, " _____ with him!"

Acts 22:23 As they were shouting and throwing off their cloaks and flinging dust into the air, 24 the commander ordered Paul to be taken into the barracks. He directed that he be flogged and questioned in order to find out why the people were shouting at him like this.

Beatings are one way to get men to tell the truth and the commander assumes that Paul has not done so due to the actions of the people. However, a Roman citizen could not be beaten or tortured without trial. Evidently Lysias could not speak Aramaic and was still confused about what was happening.

Acts 22:25 As they stretched him out to flog him, Paul said to the centurion standing there, "Is it legal for you to flog a Roman citizen who hasn't even been found guilty?"

The officer in charge of carrying out the command of Lysias the commander is questioned by Paul about the legality of his actions. We are not told why Paul did not speak of this earlier, but we presume that he had not been given a chance to speak until he is being tied down for the flogging.

Acts 22:26 When the centurion heard this, he went to the commander and reported it. "What are you going to do?" he asked. "This man is a Roman citizen." 27 The commander went to Paul and asked, "Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?" "Yes, I am," he answered. 28 Then the commander said, "I had to pay a big price for my citizenship." "But I was born a citizen," Paul replied.

Birth in the city of Tarsus did not make Paul a Roman citizen as it was an *urbs libera* and not a *colonia*. Thus, one of Paul's ancestors, evidently on his father's side, must have performed some distinguished act which resulted in his being awarded citizenship. It is very probable that Paul was from a wealthy family noting that he was educated by the greatest rabbi of the day, he was entrusted with a serious commission at an early age, he had advanced far beyond his contemporaries and probably set on the Sanhedrin at an early age and he is treated well when he is questioned later by Felix, Festus and Agrippa and set free by Caesar.

Buying citizenship was a method of getting funds from those who had served in foreign wars and been awarded booty as a result. The commander had evidently served in a meritorious way in one of the campaigns which gave him his promotion and allowed him to buy his citizenship.

Acts 22:29 Those who were about to question him withdrew immediately. The commander himself was alarmed when he realized that he had put Paul, a Roman citizen, in chains. 30 The next day, since the commander wanted to find out exactly why Paul was being accused by the Jews, he released him and ordered the chief priests and all the Sanhedrin to assemble. Then he brought Paul and had him stand before them.

Due to the error in procedure and the possible repercussions to the commander and his questioners, Paul is released and then asked to meet his accusers in order to determine what the problem was that caused the riot.

Questions

1. In what language did the common people of Israel speak? _____
2. Where was Paul born? _____
3. Who educated Paul? _____
4. Why did Ananias lay his hands on Saul? _____
5. What did Ananias tell Saul God had chosen him for? _____
6. What did Ananias tell Saul to do to rid himself of his sins? _____
7. Why was Paul to be flogged? _____
8. Why was the centurion worried about Paul's flogging? _____
9. How did Paul get his Roman citizenship? _____

A Workbook Commentary on the Book of Acts
Chapter 23

Acts 23:1 Paul looked straight at the Sanhedrin and said, "My brothers, I have fulfilled my duty to God in all good conscience to this day."

There are large numbers of religious people today who believe that they should "let their conscience be their guide". Paul couldn't! He had never done anything to defile his conscience and yet at one time he was lost in sin! He told Timothy he was the chief of sinners and sin is what separates us from God!

Acts 22:16 And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be _____ and wash your _____ away, calling on his name.'

I Tim 1:13 Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a _____ man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. 14 The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. 15 Here is a trustworthy saying that _____ full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save _____ -- of whom I am the worst.

Isa 59:2 But your _____ have separated you from your God; your sins have _____ his face from you, so that he will not hear.

I Cor 8:7 But not everyone _____ this. Some people are still so accustomed to idols that when they eat such food they think of it as having been sacrificed to an idol, and since their conscience is _____, it is defiled. 8 But food does not bring us near to God; we are no worse if we do not eat, and no better if we do. 9 Be careful, however, that the _____ of your freedom does not become a stumbling block to the weak. 10 For if anyone with a weak _____ sees you who have this _____ eating in an idol's temple, won't he be emboldened to eat what has been sacrificed to idols?

As the verses above clearly show, we must train our consciences with the word of God in order for them to be a just guide. Having a conscience that is incorrectly trained, just as Saul's was by his Jewish upbringing with all of its additional rules and sayings (see for example Mt 5-6) will not allow us to stand justified before God. A good conscience requires proper training.

Jn 12:48 There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my _____; that very word which I spoke will _____ him at the last day.

Acts 23:2 At this the high priest Ananias ordered those standing near Paul to strike him on the mouth. 3 Then Paul said to him, "God will strike you, you whitewashed wall! You sit there to judge me according to the law, yet you yourself violate the law by commanding that I be struck!"

This and other passages indicate that Paul's vision was impaired and may have been his thorn in the flesh. Paul normally used a scribe to write his letters but when he signed them, he did so with "large letter" an indication of poor eyesight. This affliction may have affected his physical appearance as well.

II Cor 12:7 To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a _____ in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me.

Gal 6:11 See what _____ letters I use as I write to you with my own hand!

Rom 16:22 I, Tertius, who _____ down this letter, greet you in the Lord.

Gal 4:13 As you know, it was because of _____ illness that I first preached the gospel to you. 14 Even though my illness was a trial to you, you did not treat me with _____ or scorn. Instead, you welcomed me as if I were an angel of God, as if I were Christ Jesus himself.

God had forbidden the Jews to strike a defendant unless he had been judged guilty by the court.

Deut 25:1 When men have a dispute, they are to take it to court and the judges will decide the case, _____ the innocent and condemning the guilty. 2 If the guilty man deserves to be _____, the judge shall make him lie down and have him flogged in his presence with the number of lashes his crime deserves,

Acts 23:4 Those who were standing near Paul said, "You dare to insult God's high priest?" 5 Paul replied, "Brothers, I did not realize that he was the high priest; for it is written: 'Do not speak evil about the ruler of your people.'"

Paul was very active in the Jewish circles in his youth, as by the age of about 25, he had been a student of Gamaliel and had perhaps at this early age become a member of the Sanhedrin, as he cast a vote in the trial of Christians. It would be very unlikely for him to have not known the members of the household of Caiaphas who had a number of high priests in the family, even 25 years later. Between 37 and 70 A.D., Annas, his son-in-law, Caiaphas, five of his sons, and a grandson held the office of high priest due to political influence. All of the Caiaphas family were Sadducees and even though Paul was a Pharisee as he relates in the next verse, he would have

known the other members of the Sanhedrin by sight, if his vision had been sufficient to see across the room (the high priest was some distance away and others were near).

Acts 26:10 And that is just what I did in Jerusalem. On the authority of the chief priests I put many of the saints in prison, and when they were put to death, I _____ my _____ against them.

Exod 22:28 "Do not blaspheme God or _____ the ruler of your people.

Acts 23:6 Then Paul, knowing that some of them were Sadducees and the others Pharisees, called out in the Sanhedrin, "My brothers, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee. I stand on trial because of my hope in the resurrection of the dead." 7 When he said this, a dispute broke out between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and the assembly was divided. 8 (The Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, and that there are neither angels nor spirits, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all.)

Jesus had put the Sadducees to silence on this subject by a careful study of God's word. We need to note every line and phrase when it comes to a study of God's word or we may miss the point entirely. The resurrection was clearly shown in the OT, but the Sadducees had missed it entirely.

Mt 22:23 That same day the Sadducees, who say there is no _____ came to him with a question. ... 31 But about the _____ of the dead-- have you not read what God said to you, 32 'I _____ the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not the God of the _____ but of the living." 33 When the crowds heard this, they were _____ at his teaching. 34 Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together.

Phil 3:5 circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a _____;

Acts 23:9 There was a great uproar, and some of the teachers of the law who were Pharisees stood up and argued vigorously. "We find nothing wrong with this man," they said. "What if a spirit or an angel has spoken to him?"

There is nothing like introducing a problem between two religions to get people to look at the word of God. In this case, however, there was no looking, there was only arguing. Arguing without the word will never settle any religious question.

Acts 23:10 The dispute became so violent that the commander was afraid Paul would be torn to pieces by them. He ordered the troops to go down and take him away from them by force and bring him into the barracks. 11 The following night the Lord stood near Paul and said, "Take courage! As you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome."

The Lord knew that this episode would dishearten even Paul and had spoken to him earlier to encourage him. We all need encouragement. We receive it from the Lord and our brethren. When brethren are discouraging, they have engaged in the devil's work. Nevertheless, we work not for the brethren's approval, but for God's.

Acts 22:17 "When I returned to Jerusalem and was praying at the temple, I fell into a trance 18 and saw the Lord speaking. 'Quick!' he said to me. ' _____ Jerusalem immediately, because they will not accept your _____ about me.'

1 Cor 15:58 Therefore, my dear brothers, stand _____. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your _____ in the Lord is not in vain.

Paul had been chosen as a witness of the Lord to speak to the Gentiles and even as he had stood firm for the Lord in Jerusalem, many would obey the gospel in Rome on hearing Paul's testimony. Paul was an apostle and he had seen the risen Lord. His testimony was not like so many today who have neither qualification. The testimonies given today are of changes in people's lives and many things can cause that. Consider the lives of Mormons or Jehovah's Witnesses, both of whom I have heard give testimony. But their testimony was false! We need to hear the word of God.

Acts 22:15 You will be his _____ to all men of what you have seen and heard.

1 Cor 15:14 And if Christ has not been _____, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. 15 More than that, we are then found to be false _____ about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised.

Acts 26:16 'Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a _____ of what you have seen of me and what I will show you. 17 I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them 18 to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive _____ of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'

Acts 23:12 The next morning the Jews formed a conspiracy and bound themselves with an oath not to eat or drink until they had killed Paul. 13 More than forty men were involved in this plot.

The Jews were given to this oath taking, but we know that this is one they didn't keep. We need to be careful to keep our vows to the Lord, but we need to be careful about our statements so that we don't have things like this standing between us and God or have the terrible fate of someone like Jephtha to deal with.

Deut 23:21 If you make a _____ to the LORD your God, do not be slow to pay it, for the LORD your God will certainly demand it of you and you will be _____ of sin. 22 But if you refrain from making a vow, you will not be _____. 23 Whatever your lips utter you must be sure to do, because you made your vow freely to the LORD your God with your own mouth.

Eccl 5:4 When you make a _____ to God, do not delay in fulfilling it. He has no pleasure in fools; fulfill your vow. 5 It is _____ not to vow than to make a vow and not fulfill it. 6 Do not let your mouth lead you into sin. And do not protest to the temple messenger, "My vow was a mistake." Why should God be _____ at what you say and destroy the work of your hands?

Judg 11:30 And Jephthah made a _____ to the LORD: "If you give the Ammonites into my hands, 31 whatever comes out of the door of my house to meet me when I return in triumph from the Ammonites will be the LORD's, and I will _____ it as a burnt offering." ... 34 When Jephthah returned to his home in Mizpah, who should come out to meet him but his _____, dancing to the sound of tambourines! She was an only child. Except for her he had neither son nor daughter. 35 When he saw her, he tore his clothes and cried, "Oh! My daughter! You have made me _____ and wretched, because I have made a vow to the LORD that I cannot break." 36 "My father," she replied, "you have given your word to the LORD. Do to me just as you _____, now that the LORD has avenged you of your enemies, the Ammonites.

Acts 23:14 They went to the chief priests and elders and said, "We have taken a solemn oath not to eat anything until we have killed Paul. 15 Now then, you and the Sanhedrin petition the commander to bring him before you on the pretext of wanting more accurate information about his case. We are ready to kill him before he gets here."

The involvement of the chief priests and the elders in this plot and their willing participation shows the depths to which religious people will sink in an imagined service to God. Jesus had foretold that such things would happen to the apostles.

John 16:2 They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is _____ a service to God.

Acts 23:16 But when the son of Paul's sister heard of this plot, he went into the barracks and told Paul. 17 Then Paul called one of the centurions and said, "Take this young man to the commander; he has something to tell him."

This is just one more reference to show the station of Paul's family. Paul's sister's son must have been among the counsel members as a student or a worker or he would not have been mentioned in connection with this event.

Acts 23:18 So he took him to the commander. The centurion said, "Paul, the prisoner, sent for me and asked me to bring this young man to you because he has something to tell you." 19 The commander took the young man by the hand, drew him aside and asked, "What is it you want to tell me?" 20 He said: "The Jews have agreed to ask you to bring Paul before the Sanhedrin tomorrow on the pretext of wanting more accurate information about him. 21 Don't give in to them, because more than forty of them are waiting in ambush for him. They have taken an oath not to eat or drink until they have killed him. They are ready now, waiting for your consent to their request." 22 The commander dismissed the young man and cautioned him, "Don't tell anyone that you have reported this to me." 23 Then he called two of his centurions and ordered them, "Get ready a detachment of two hundred soldiers, seventy horsemen and two hundred spearmen to go to Caesarea at nine tonight. 24 Provide mounts for Paul so that he may be taken safely to Governor Felix."

A Roman officer was not about to let someone go who had caused a riot because unrest was one of the biggest problems the Romans had with the nations they held captive. At the same time he was not going to let the Jews harm a Roman citizen due to the possibility of loss of his own life as a result.

Acts 23:25 He wrote a letter as follows: 26 Claudius Lysias, To His Excellency, Governor Felix: Greetings. 27 This man was seized by the Jews and they were about to kill him, but I came with my troops and rescued him, for I had learned that he is a Roman citizen. 28 I wanted to know why they were accusing him, so I brought him to their Sanhedrin. 29 I found that the accusation had to do with questions about their law, but there was no charge against him that deserved death or imprisonment. 30 When I was informed of a plot to be carried out against the man, I sent him to you at once. I also ordered his accusers to present to you their case against him. 31 So the soldiers, carrying out their orders, took Paul with them during the night and brought him as far as Antipatris. 32 The next day they let the cavalry go on with him, while they returned to the barracks. 33 When the cavalry arrived in Caesarea, they delivered the letter to the governor and handed Paul over to him.

Felix had been a slave but was freed and later made procurator (NIV governor) of Judea by Claudius in A.D. 52. He held the position till Festus succeeded him after complaints by the Jews to Nero. He married Drusilla the daughter of Herod Agrippa I with the hope of winning the favor of the Jews. Tacitus, the Roman historian, says that "with all cruelty and lust he exercised the power of a king with the spirit of a slave."

Notice that the letter gives no mention of the role of Lysias in the near beating of Paul, thus presenting Lysias in the best possible light while giving a reasonably factual account of the events. Lysias reverses the order of his discovery that Paul was a Roman citizen and the reason for Paul's rescue. Lysias finds that Paul is not guilty as do all of the succeeding tribunals, even though Paul's imprisonment from this point takes 5 years.

The distance to Antipatris was 40 miles making the journey, even on horse, an arduous one. Thus Paul returns to Caesarea only a short time after Agabus made the prophecy concerning these happenings.

Acts 21:8 Leaving the next day, we reached _____ and stayed at the house of Philip the evangelist, one of the Seven. 9 He had four unmarried daughters who prophesied. 10 After we had been there a number of days, a prophet named _____ came down from Judea. 11 Coming over to us, he took Paul's belt, tied his own hands and feet with it and said, "The Holy Spirit says, 'In this way the Jews of _____ will bind the owner of this belt and will hand him over to the Gentiles.'" 12 When we heard this, we and the people there pleaded with Paul not to go up to _____.

Acts 23:34 The governor read the letter and asked what province he was from. Learning that he was from Cilicia, 35 he said, "I will hear your case when your accusers get here." Then he ordered that Paul be kept under guard in Herod's palace.

By asking "what province he was from" Felix is determining whether he has jurisdiction in the matter. Both Cilicia and Judea were under the control of the Proprator of Syria, which was an imperial province. Paul's arrest took place in Jerusalem and thus was under the jurisdiction of Felix. If it had been a matter of insurrection Paul could appeal to the Proprator of Syria.

Questions:

1. How can you show that your conscience isn't always a good guide? _____
2. Why should Paul not have been struck in the presence of the High Priest? _____
3. What do Sadducees believe about the resurrection? _____
4. Who plotted to kill Paul? _____

5. Who informed Paul about the plot to kill him? _____

6. To whom was Paul transferred for trial? _____

7. Where was Paul taken for trial? _____

A Workbook Commentary on the Book of Acts
Chapter 24

Acts 24:1 Five days later the high priest Ananias went down to Caesarea with some of the elders and a lawyer named Tertullus, and they brought their charges against Paul before the governor.

Robertson tells us that Tertullus is a diminutive of Tertius and it is interesting to speculate that perhaps the writer of the letter of Romans was this same man, although this is no certainty about this question. A lawyer would have been required for the Roman court and because the case would have to be presented in Latin. It is quite possible that either through the gift of languages given by the Holy Spirit or by study that Paul understood Latin.

Rom 16:22 I, _____, who wrote down this letter, greet you in the Lord.

Acts 24:2 When Paul was called in, Tertullus presented his case before Felix: "We have enjoyed a long period of peace under you, and your foresight has brought about reforms in this nation. 3 Everywhere and in every way, most excellent Felix, we acknowledge this with profound gratitude. 4 But in order not to weary you further, I would request that you be kind enough to hear us briefly. 5 "We have found this man to be a troublemaker, stirring up riots among the Jews all over the world. He is a ringleader of the Nazarene sect

Flattery will accomplish much with vain men and from the record we know that Felix would have appreciated the language used to place Tertullus and the Jews on the side of peace and Paul on the side of riots.

Jesus was often called the Nazarene and Tertullus puts a smear on Paul's background by linking him with a sect.

Mt 2:23 and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth. So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets: "He will be called a _____."

Jn 19:19 Pilate had a notice prepared and fastened to the cross. It read: JESUS OF _____, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

Acts 24:6 and even tried to desecrate the temple; so we seized him.

You will recall that it was not the Sanhedrin which seized Paul but the citizens began to riot over him and Lysias, the commander of Jerusalem, rescued him to stop the riot and inquire what the problem was. The Jews have changed the charge from profaning the temple to attempting to profane the temple.

Acts 21:28 shouting, "Men of Israel, help us! This is the man who teaches all men everywhere against our _____ and our law and this place. And besides, he has brought Greeks into the temple area and defiled this holy place." 29 (They had previously seen _____ the Ephesian in the city with Paul and assumed that Paul had brought him into the temple area.)30 The whole city was aroused, and the people came running from all directions. Seizing _____, they dragged him from the temple, and immediately the gates were shut. 31 While they were trying to kill him, news reached the commander of the Roman troops that the whole city of Jerusalem was in an uproar. 32 He at once took some officers and soldiers and ran down to the crowd. When the _____ saw the commander and his soldiers, they stopped beating Paul.

Acts 24:7 (Not in NIV)

This passage, given below in the KJV, is not in the most reliable and ancient manuscripts (including the Sinaitic, Vaticanus, Alexandrinus and others), but is a later introduction contained in the Textus Receptus. Notice that this part of the speech contradicted the earlier record.

6 cont'd --whom we took, and would have judged according to our law. But the chief captain Lysias came upon us, and with great violence took him away out of our hands, --

Acts 24:8 By examining him yourself you will be able to learn the truth about all these charges we are bringing against him." 9 The Jews joined in the accusation, asserting that these things were true. 10 When the governor motioned for him to speak, Paul replied: "I know that for a number of years you have been a judge over this nation; so I gladly make my defense. 11 You can easily verify that no more than twelve days ago I went up to Jerusalem to worship. 12 My accusers did not find me arguing with anyone at the temple, or stirring up a crowd in the synagogues or anywhere else in the city. 13 And they cannot prove to you the charges they are now making against me.

Paul clearly states the facts of the case and then launches the religious discussion.

Acts 24:14 However, I admit that I worship the God of our fathers as a follower of the Way, which they call a sect. I believe everything that agrees with the Law and that is written in the Prophets, 15 and I have the same hope in God as these men, that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.

Paul styles the disciples as "follower(s) of the Way". He has done so once before.

Acts 22:4 I persecuted the followers of this _____ to their death, arresting both men and women and throwing them into prison,

It is often said of members of the church that they do not believe the Law, however, this is not true. Paul, as guided by the Holy Spirit, tells us that the law was there to lead us to Christ. In this he agrees with what Jesus and John said.

Rom 15:4 For everything that was written in the past was _____ to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

Gal 3:24 So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be _____ by faith.

Lk 24:44 He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be _____ that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms." 45 Then he opened their minds so they could _____ the Scriptures.

John 20:30 Jesus did many other miraculous _____ in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. 31 But these are written that you may _____ that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Paul speaks of the resurrection and although we know that the High Priest and his party were Sadducees, there must have been a number of Pharisees among the group gathered here. Perhaps Paul was relying on this trick to once again dissolve the Jews against one another.

Jn 5:28 "Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their _____ will hear his voice 29 and come out--those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be _____.

This will take place when Jesus returns with his angels. There will not be a period of time between the rising of the righteous dead to ever be with the Lord and the unrighteous dead to an eternal hell but the events will take place in the same day.

Heb 9:27 Just as man is destined to _____ once, and after that to face judgment,

I Thes 4:15 According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not _____ those who have fallen asleep. 16 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 After that, we who are still _____ and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the _____. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

II Thes 1:6 God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you 7 and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is

revealed from heaven in _____ fire with his powerful angels. 8 He will punish those who do not know God and do not _____ the gospel of our Lord Jesus. 9 They will be punished with everlasting _____ and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power 10 on the _____ he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you.

Acts 24:16 So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man.

Paul had made this same claim to the riotous crowd and once again we are reminded that a good conscience is insufficient to make one pleasing to God. Paul uses the same words here that he did in his early defense against Ananias and it must have been sufficient to make Ananias' stomach ache since he had Paul struck the first time Paul used these words. However, in this tribunal, Ananias has no jurisdiction.

Acts 23:1 Paul looked straight at the _____ and said, "My brothers, I have fulfilled my duty to God in all _____ conscience to this day."

1 Tim 1:13 Even though I was once a _____ and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and _____. 14 The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. 15 Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save _____ -- of whom I am the worst.

Acts 24:17 "After an absence of several years, I came to Jerusalem to bring my people gifts for the poor and to present offerings.

1 Cor 16:1 Now about the _____ for God's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. 2 On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his _____, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made. 3 Then, when I arrive, I will give letters of introduction to the men you approve and send them with your gift to _____. 4 If it seems advisable for me to go also, they will accompany me.

Rom 15:26 For Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to make a _____ for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem.

The reason for Paul's visit is given in his speech and we clearly learn that Paul did not yet understand the Law had been done away, even though he had participated in reaching the decision on circumcision in Acts 15. His people in Jerusalem would have been Jewish

Christians; by any measure, “his people”. A second reason for this trip was to bring the funds collected by the Gentile brethren to the church in Jerusalem.

Paul tells us that he had come to Jerusalem to worship

Acts 24:11 You can easily verify that no more than twelve days ago I went up to Jerusalem to _____.

Acts 20:16 Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus to avoid spending time in the province of Asia, for he was in a hurry to reach _____, if possible, by the day of Pentecost.

Acts 24:18 I was ceremonially clean when they found me in the temple courts doing this. There was no crowd with me, nor was I involved in any disturbance.

That is, Paul had completed the rites necessary to enter the temple.

Acts 21:26 The next day Paul took the men and _____ himself along with them. Then he went to the temple to give notice of the date when the days of purification would end and the offering would be made for each of them.

Acts 24:19 But there are some Jews from the province of Asia, who ought to be here before you and bring charges if they have anything against me. 20 Or these who are here should state what crime they found in me when I stood before the Sanhedrin-- 21 unless it was this one thing I shouted as I stood in their presence: 'It is concerning the resurrection of the dead that I am on trial before you today.'"

Those men who had been the witnesses of the actual occurrence were not present.

Acts 21:27 When the seven days were nearly over, some Jews from the province of _____ saw Paul at the temple. They stirred up the whole crowd and seized him,

Once again, Paul renews his question that divided the Jews into the separate groups of Pharisees and Sadducees. (See the discussion on Acts 23:6.)

Acts 23:6 Then Paul, knowing that some of them were Sadducees and the others Pharisees, called out in the Sanhedrin, "My brothers, I am a _____, the son of a Pharisee. I stand on trial because of my hope in the resurrection of the dead."

Acts 24:22 Then Felix, who was well acquainted with the Way, adjourned the proceedings. "When Lysias the commander comes," he said, "I will decide your case." 23 He ordered the centurion to keep Paul under guard but to give him some freedom and permit his friends to take care of his needs. 24 Several days later Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was a Jewess. He sent for Paul and listened to him as he spoke about faith in Christ Jesus.

Felix is said to be well acquainted with Christianity but no indication of where he obtained this knowledge is given. There was a church in Caesarea and Philip the evangelist was also located there, but we are told of no connection between these brethren and Felix.

Concerning Paul's friends, we might speculate that in addition to the members of the church in Caesarea, Philip, Luke and the other traveling companions Paul had brought on this journey would have also helped him.

Acts 20:4 He was accompanied by Sopater son of Pyrrhus from Berea, Aristarchus and _____ from Thessalonica, Gaius from Derbe, Timothy also, and Tychicus and _____ from the province of Asia.

Drusilla, Felix's wife, had been married the King Aziz of Emesa. Her father was Herod Agrippa I who murdered the apostle James (Acts 12:1), her great-uncle was Herod Antipas who slew John the Baptist (Mk 6:16-29), while it was her great-grandfather, Herod the Great, who killed the babes of Bethlehem (Mt 2:7, 17-19). (See the chart at Acts 25:13 for a full description of the relationship of this family.

Acts 24:25 As Paul discoursed on righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and said, "That's enough for now! You may leave. When I find it convenient, I will send for you."

It is so unfortunate that Felix lost that fear, but many do the same today. They think of the Lord only in time of distress and are then able to put all thoughts of hell away. This also shows that those who want the preacher to "just preach love" are sadly mistaken. The message must be one of reward for righteousness and punishment for unrighteousness.

Acts 24:26 At the same time he was hoping that Paul would offer him a bribe, so he sent for him frequently and talked with him.

Paul had come with "gifts for the poor" and it is probably this that Felix hoped to secure.

Acts 24:27 When two years had passed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus, but because Felix wanted to grant a favor to the Jews, he left Paul in prison.

The exact date of Felix' replacement is not known. Felix was removed due to an unwise use of force in settling a small riot between the Jews and Gentiles in which a large number of Jews were killed and a formal complaint to the emperor resulted.

Questions:

1. What was the name of the Sanhedrin's lawyer? _____
2. What charge was laid against Paul? _____
3. What did Paul call the church? _____
4. What was Paul's hope in God? _____
5. How long will there be between the raising of the good and the evil? _____
6. Why had Paul come to Jerusalem? _____
7. Who did Felix bring with him to hear Paul speak? _____
8. Who succeeded Felix? _____
9. Why was Paul left in prison? _____

A Workbook Commentary on the Book of Acts
Chapter 25

Acts 25:1 Three days after arriving in the province, Festus went up from Caesarea to Jerusalem, 2 where the chief priests and Jewish leaders appeared before him and presented the charges against Paul. 3 They urgently requested Festus, as a favor to them, to have Paul transferred to Jerusalem, for they were preparing an ambush to kill him along the way. 4 Festus answered, "Paul is being held at Caesarea, and I myself am going there soon. 5 Let some of your leaders come with me and press charges against the man there, if he has done anything wrong."

The ability of the Jewish leaders to even request a favor shows the particular attachment of the Roman governors for bribes. The true reason for the favor was not given thus further showing the evil nature of these men.

Acts 25:6 After spending eight or ten days with them, he went down to Caesarea, and the next day he convened the court and ordered that Paul be brought before him. 7 When Paul appeared, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood around him, bringing many serious charges against him, which they could not prove. 8 Then Paul made his defense: "I have done nothing wrong against the law of the Jews or against the temple or against Caesar." 9 Festus, wishing to do the Jews a favor, said to Paul, "Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem and stand trial before me there on these charges?"

In order to gain favor with the Jews, Festus spends time with them and as soon as he reaches Caesarea, he begins the trial. Paul's defense is that he has done nothing wrong and there is evidently no proof offered by the Jews that Paul has done something wrong. Once again, they simply assert that Paul has violated the temple but did not bring the witnesses with them to the trial.

Acts 25:10 Paul answered: "I am now standing before Caesar's court, where I ought to be tried. I have not done any wrong to the Jews, as you yourself know very well. 11 If, however, I am guilty of doing anything deserving death, I do not refuse to die. But if the charges brought against me by these Jews are not true, no one has the right to hand me over to them. I appeal to Caesar!"

Paul, no doubt exasperated by the continued favoritism shown to the Jews by the Roman authorities, exercises his right as a Roman citizen to have his case, one which the Jews had sought to make a capital offense, heard by Caesar. Paul feels that he was forced to do this, evidently due to the favoritism.

Acts 28:19 But when the Jews objected, I was _____ to appeal to Caesar--not that I had any charge to bring against my own people.

Acts 25:12 After Festus had conferred with his council, he declared: "You have appealed to Caesar. To Caesar you will go!"

The council in question were his chief officers and local officials who would have been familiar with the procedure in such cases. The last phrase of this verse would indicated that Festus thought that Paul had made a mistake in appealing to Caesar, either due to the expense involved or the possibility of irritating the emperor.

Acts 25:13 A few days later King Agrippa and Bernice arrived at Caesarea to pay their respects to Festus. 14 Since they were spending many days there, Festus discussed Paul's case with the king. He said: "There is a man here whom Felix left as a prisoner. 15 When I went to Jerusalem, the chief priests and elders of the Jews brought charges against him and asked that he be condemned. 16 "I told them that it is not the Roman custom to hand over any man before he has faced his accusers and has had an opportunity to defend himself against their charges. 17 When they came here with me, I did not delay the case, but convened the court the next day and ordered the man to be brought in. 18 When his accusers got up to speak, they did not charge him with any of the crimes I had expected.

Agrippa was the son of Herod Agrippa I who put James to death, imprisoned Peter and was later eaten by worms. Bernice was Agrippa's sister. She had previously been married to her uncle, Herod King of Chalcis, and to Polemon, King of Cilicia, but had left both to live with her brother as his consort. Later Bernice became the mistress of the emperor Titus.

Acts 12:1 It was about this time that King Herod arrested _____who belonged to the church, intending to persecute them. 2 He had _____, the brother of John, put to death with the sword. 3 When he saw that this _____ the Jews, he proceeded to seize Peter also. This happened during the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Acts 12:23 Immediately, because _____ did not give praise to God, an angel of the Lord struck him down, and he was eaten by _____ and died.

Festus clearly shows by the favorable account given to Agrippa that Claudius Lysias was not the only Roman capable of putting himself in the best light.

At this point, I insert an outline of the descendants of Herod the Great in order to allow you to follow the players as this family unfolds in the Scriptures. The outline shows the relationship by indention to show the level of relation. Herod's wives, Pallas (#3) and Phaidra (#4) are not mentioned in the Scriptures and are left out.

Antipater (Idumean) and Cypros (Arabian)

Herod the Great, ruled 40-4 BC (had 7 wives but only following 5 were noteworthy)

Mt 2:1-22 (rebuilt temple and executed infants in Bethlehem)

1. Doris

Antipater (executed 10 days prior to father's death)

2. Mariamne I (Executed by Herod, 28 BC)

Aristobulus executed at father's command, 7 BC

Herod Agrippa I, ruled 41-44 AD

killed James, imprisoned Peter Acts 12:1-6, 19-23

King Agrippa II Acts 25:13-27 Acts 26:1-32

Bernice Acts 25:13-23 Acts 26:30

Drusilla (Felix' wife) Acts 24:24

Herodias

married Herod Philip, her half-uncle Mt 14:3, 6

married Herod Antipas, her half-uncle Mk 6:17-28 Lk 3:19

Alexander executed at father's command, 7 BC

5. Mariamne II

Herod Philip (married Herodias and was divorced by her)

Mt 14:3 Mk 6:17 Lk 3:19

6. Malthace (a Samaritan)

Archelaus (Ethnarch of Judea 4BC-6AD, then banished to Gaul) Mt 2:22

Herod Antipas (Tetrarch of Galilee 4 BC-39 AD)

Beheaded John the Baptist Mt 14:1-11 Mk 6:14-28 Lk 3:1, 19

Mk 8:15 Lk 9:7; 13:31-32; 23:7-12 Acts 4:27

7. Cleopatra (not **THE** Cleopatra of Egyptian fame)

Philip (Tetrarch of Iturea 4 BC-34 AD) Wife Salome Lk 3:1

Acts 25:19 Instead, they had some points of dispute with him about their own religion and about a dead man named Jesus who Paul claimed was alive. 20 I was at a loss how to investigate such matters; so I asked if he would be willing to go to Jerusalem and stand trial there on these charges. 21 When Paul made his appeal to be held over for the Emperor's decision, I ordered him held until I could send him to Caesar." 22 Then Agrippa said to Festus, "I would like to hear this man myself." He replied, "Tomorrow you will hear him." 23 The next day Agrippa and Bernice came with great pomp and entered the audience room with the high ranking officers and the leading men of the city. At the command of Festus, Paul was brought in. 24 Festus said: "King Agrippa, and all who are present with us, you see this man! The whole Jewish community has petitioned me about him in Jerusalem and here in Caesarea, shouting that he ought not to live any longer. 25 I found he had done nothing deserving of death, but because he made his appeal to the Emperor I decided to send him to Rome.

In v. 19 where the NIV translates “religion”, the use of the word “superstition” in the KJV is hardly warranted since Agrippa is a Jew and this would not have been polite. Festus would not have wanted to offend Agrippa, even though he probably knew that Agrippa was living with Bernice and thus gave little thought to the Jewish religion. It is clear that Festus had a clear understanding of the differences between Paul and the Jews which centered on Paul’s belief in Jesus and his resurrection.

Acts 25:26 But I have nothing definite to write to His Majesty about him. Therefore I have brought him before all of you, and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that as a result of this investigation I may have something to write. 27 For I think it is unreasonable to send on a prisoner without specifying the charges against him."

The phrase “His Majesty” is translated as “my Lord” in the KJV, which is much closer. The Greek *kurioo* is normally translated Lord and it became the point of contention that resulted in many deaths as the Christians would not use this word in connection with the emperor but only in addressing Jesus. It is from this word that the German word for church, *kirche*, is derived and from the German, the English word “church” is derived, which has as its root “belonging to the Lord”. Thus the modern translation of “church” for the Greek *ekklesia* is improper. At the same time, we must remember that only Jesus is Lord.

It is clear that Festus was going to be embarrassed by sending Paul to the emperor without having charged him with a capital offense. This would be a waste of the emperor’s time and might result in a severe reprimand for Festus

1. Why did Paul appeal to Caesar? _____
2. Who was King Agrippa? _____
3. Who was Bernice? _____

A Workbook Commentary on the Book of Acts
Chapter 26

Acts 26:1 Then Agrippa said to Paul, "You have permission to speak for yourself." So Paul motioned with his hand and began his defense: 2 "King Agrippa, I consider myself fortunate to stand before you today as I make my defense against all the accusations of the Jews, 3 and especially so because you are well acquainted with all the Jewish customs and controversies. Therefore, I beg you to listen to me patiently.

Paul's hand is chained at this point even though no charges are lodged against him. Agrippa's family has lived in this area for many years with Agrippa being raised according to Jewish custom.

Acts 26:29 Paul replied, "_____ time or long--I pray God that not only you but all who are listening to me today may _____ what I am, except for these chains."

Acts 26: 4 "The Jews all know the way I have lived ever since I was a child, from the beginning of my life in my own country, and also in Jerusalem. 5 They have known me for a long time and can testify, if they are willing, that according to the strictest sect of our religion, I lived as a Pharisee.

Paul does not need to make the distinction between Sadducees and Pharisees for Agrippa, but simply states that he was well known to the leaders of the Jews and that he had opposed their philosophy, believing in the resurrection prior to his conversion by the Lord.

Acts 26:6 And now it is because of my hope in what God has promised our fathers that I am on trial today. 7 This is the promise our twelve tribes are hoping to see fulfilled as they earnestly serve God day and night. O king, it is because of this hope that the Jews are accusing me. 8 Why should any of you consider it incredible that God raises the dead? 9 "I too was convinced that I ought to do all that was possible to oppose the name of Jesus of Nazareth.

Recall that Saul had persecuted the church.

Acts 8:1 And Saul was there, giving approval to his death. On that day a great _____ broke out against the church at Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. 2 Godly men buried Stephen and mourned deeply for him. 3 But Saul began to _____ the church. Going from house to house, he dragged off men and women and put them in _____.

Acts 26:10 And that is just what I did in Jerusalem. On the authority of the chief priests I put many of the saints in prison, and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. 11 Many a time I went from one synagogue to another to have them punished, and I tried to force them to blaspheme. In my obsession against them, I even went to foreign cities to persecute them.

It would appear from this passage that Paul was a member of the Sanhedrin in his younger days. It would have been necessary for him to have been married at that time, but by the time he wrote I Cor. he must have been a widower.

I Cor 7:4 The wife's _____ does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife. 5 Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. 6 I say this as a concession, not as a command. 7 I wish that all _____ were as I am. But each man has his own gift from God; one has this gift, another has that.

As we have learned in our study of the Ananias' visit to Saul in Damascus (Acts 9 and 22), the Christians at the time were following the Law of Moses, not yet having understood that the Law had passed. Thus, they would have continued meeting in the synagogue, albeit at a different time than the Sabbath, in order to proclaim the Lord's death until he comes again. This changed only when God revealed specifically to Peter that the Gentiles were to be included in the church (Acts 10 and 11) and that the Gentiles were not required to be circumcised (Acts 15).

Acts 22:12 "A man named Ananias came to see me. He was a _____ observer of the law and highly respected by all the _____ living there.

Acts 10:14 "Surely not, Lord!" Peter replied. "I have never eaten anything _____ or unclean." ... 19 While Peter was still thinking about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Simon, three men are looking for you. 20 So get up and go downstairs. Do not _____ to go with them, for I have sent them." ... 28 He said to them: "You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with a _____ or visit him. But God has shown me that I should not call any man impure or unclean. ... 44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. 45 The _____ believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out _____ on the Gentiles. 46 For they heard them speaking in tongues praising God. Then Peter said, 47 "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with _____ ? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have." 48 So he ordered that they be _____ in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days.

Acts 15:1 Some men came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the brothers: "Unless you are _____, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be _____." 2 This brought Paul and Barnabas into sharp dispute and debate with them. So Paul and Barnabas were appointed, along with some other believers, to go up to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders about this question ... 19 "It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the _____ who are turning to God. 20 Instead we should write to them, telling them to abstain from food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from the meat of strangled animals and from blood. 21 For _____ has been preached in every city from the earliest times and is read in the synagogues on every _____."

Acts 26:12 "On one of these journeys I was going to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests. 13 About noon, O king, as I was on the road, I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, blazing around me and my companions. 14 We all fell to the ground, and I heard a voice saying to me in Aramaic, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.' 15 "Then I asked, 'Who are you, Lord?' "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,' the Lord replied. 16 'Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen of me and what I will show you. 17 I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them 18 to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'

Paul's statement of his mission gives hope for all who would fight against the gospel and makes it clear that he was the apostle to the Gentiles.

Acts 9:15 But the Lord said to Ananias, "Go! This man is my _____ instrument to carry my name before the _____ and their kings and before the people of Israel."

Acts 26:19 "So then, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven. 20 First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and to the Gentiles also, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds. 21 That is why the Jews seized me in the temple courts and tried to kill me. 22 But I have had God's help to this very day, and so I stand here and testify to small and great alike. I am saying nothing beyond what the prophets and Moses said would happen--"

Repentance is not the deeds which indicate it but the change of mind which compels one to reform his life. Repentance is often connected with the deeds as seen below.

Mt 3:8 Produce _____ in keeping with repentance.

Acts 3:19 Repent, then, and _____ to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that _____ of refreshing may come from the Lord,

2 Cor 7:10 Godly _____ brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly _____ brings death.

Acts 26:23 that the Christ would suffer and, as the first to rise from the dead, would proclaim light to his own people and to the Gentiles." 24 At this point Festus interrupted Paul's defense. "You are out of your mind, Paul!" he shouted. "Your great learning is driving you insane." 25 "I am not insane, most excellent Festus," Paul replied. "What I am saying is true and reasonable. 26 The king is familiar with these things, and I can speak freely to him. I am convinced that none of this has escaped his notice, because it was not done in a corner.

There is a fear among many that those who have spent a great deal of time in study will be adversely affected. Fortunately, we now know that the more the mind is used, the longer the mind lasts and the further the arrival of senility is pushed away. Paul had the equivalent of his Ph.D. or Th. D. due to his studies with Gamaliel which began at a young age. Agrippa refused to believe that any man could rise from the dead just as do many skeptics today. A study of evidences is always profitable, but most aptly to those who have spent a great deal of time in the study of man's wisdom.

Acts 26:27 King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know you do." 28 Then Agrippa said to Paul, "Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?"

Paul knew that Agrippa had been taught the words of the prophets from his childhood although he was not living according to the Law of Moses. Agrippa immediately realizes that Paul wants to show him that Jesus, the Messiah, was foretold by the prophets and beats Paul to the punch line by asking whether Paul thinks that with such little effort Agrippa would become a Christian. Agrippa can neither answer yes, in which case Paul will prove his case, or no, in which case he would offend the Jews.

The translation of the KJV "almost" is not indicated by the Greek as indicated further by Paul's reply in the next verse.

The use of the term "Christian" indicates that the disciples were well known by that name, first used in Antioch and used only one other time in the Greek.

Acts 11:26 and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The _____ were called Christians first at _____.

I Pet 4:16 However, if you suffer as a _____ do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that _____ .

Acts 26:29 Paul replied, "Short time or long--I pray God that not only you but all who are listening to me today may become what I am, except for these chains."

No greater finish to a gospel sermon could be envisioned than these few words by the apostle Paul. He had lived a life of service since coming to God and had set the example which we should follow, even as he followed Christ.

I Cor 11:1 Follow my _____, as I follow the example of Christ.

2 Tim 4:7 I have fought the good fight, I have _____ the race, I have kept the faith. 8 Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day-- and not only to me, but also to all who have _____ for his appearing.

Acts 26:30 The king rose, and with him the governor and Bernice and those sitting with them. 31 They left the room, and while talking with one another, they said, "This man is not doing anything that deserves death or imprisonment." 32 Agrippa said to Festus, "This man could have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar."

Agrippa agrees that Paul has done no wrong and that it is only because of favors to the Jews that he now remains in prison.

Questions:

1. What evidence is there that Saul was a member of the Sanhedrin? _____
2. Where did Saul go to get Christians? _____
3. What is repentance? _____
4. How does repentance relate to reformation of life? _____
5. How many times and where is the term Christian used in the Greek text? _____

A Workbook Commentary on the Book of Acts
Chapter 27

Acts 27:1 When it was decided that we would sail for Italy, Paul and some other prisoners were handed over to a centurion named Julius, who belonged to the Imperial Regiment. 2 We boarded a ship from Adramyttium about to sail for ports along the coast of the province of Asia, and we put out to sea. Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica, was with us.

Luke rejoins Paul at this point, accompanying Aristarchus as Paul's traveling companions.

Acts 19:29 Soon the whole city was in an uproar. The people seized Gaius Aristarchus, Paul's _____ companions from Macedonia, and rushed as one man into the theater.

Acts 20:4 He was _____ by Sopater son of Pyrrhus from Berea, Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica, Gaius from Derbe, Timothy also, and Tychicus and Trophimus from the province of Asia.

Col 4:10 My fellow prisoner Aristarchus sends you his greetings, as does Mark, the _____ of Barnabas. (You have received instructions about him; if he comes to you, welcome him.)

Phm 1:24 And so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas and Luke, my _____ workers.

We are told that the story of this voyage is one that is so exact in detail that those who sailed before the advent of modern navigation methods are enthralled with the account. Even in this modern age, having spent nights on the Mediterranean Sea in which 30 foot waves were encountered, the feelings of the voyagers are well understood. Everything on the ship that is not lashed down will go sailing across the ship and eating a meal becomes an exercise in keeping the glasses upright on the table.

The ship is evidently a small one which stays close to the coast to prevent being overwhelmed by high seas (due to great depth of water) while far from land. We find at v. 11 that the centurion is in charge of the ship, thus leading to speculation that the Imperial Regiment was part of the supply corp and this ship was under their command or at least commission.

Acts 27:3 The next day we landed at Sidon; and Julius, in kindness to Paul, allowed him to go to his friends so they might provide for his needs. 4 From there we put out to sea again and passed to the lee of Cyprus because the winds were against us. 5 When we had sailed across the open sea off the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we landed at Myra in Lycia.

Sidon was about 67 miles from Caesarea. The centurion evidently thinks highly of Paul as he allows him considerable leisure and is seen to take a personal interest in Paul's well being while on the trip.

Acts 27:43 But the centurion wanted to spare Paul's life and kept them from _____ out their plan. He ordered those who could swim to jump overboard first and get to land.

Acts 28:16 When we got to _____, Paul was allowed to live by himself, with a soldier to guard him.

Paul's friends would have been the Christians already in Phoenicia, of which Sidon was a part.

Acts 11:19 Now those who had been scattered by the persecution in connection with _____ traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, telling the _____ only to Jews.

They sailed between Cyprus and the coast of Asia Minor to gain protection from the winds which would have been from the northwest, or opposite of the direction they wanted to go. Myra is inland from the coast of the Mediterranean about 2.5 miles on the Andracus river.

Acts 27:6 There the centurion found an Alexandrian ship sailing for Italy and put us on board. 7 We made slow headway for many days and had difficulty arriving off Cnidus. When the wind did not allow us to hold our course, we sailed to the lee of Crete, opposite Salmone. 8 We moved along the coast with difficulty and came to a place called Fair Havens, near the town of Lasea. 9 Much time had been lost, and sailing had already become dangerous because by now it was after the Fast. So Paul warned them,

Cnidus is on the coast of Asia Minor, just between the islands of Cos and Rhodes in the Aegean Sea. Once again due to problems with the wind, the ship is forced to sail south of the island of Crete. Approximately midway on the south coast of Crete, they reach Fair Havens which has virtually no protection in its harbor.

Paul warns that the journey will be dangerous as it was past the celebration of the day of atonement. In A.D. 59, this fast would have occurred on Oct 5. The Mediterranean was thought to be unsafe for travel between October and March and Paul had already been shipwrecked 3 times, thus giving weight to his opinion.

Lev 16:29 "This is to be a _____ ordinance for you: On the tenth day of the seventh month you must deny yourselves and not do any work--whether native-born or an alien living among you-- 30 because on this day _____ will be made for you, to cleanse you. Then, before the LORD, you will be clean from all your sins. 31 It is a sabbath of rest, and you must deny yourselves; it is a lasting _____.

II Cor 11:25 Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was _____, I spent a night and a day in the open sea,

Acts 27:10 "Men, I can see that our voyage is going to be disastrous and bring great loss to ship and cargo, and to our own lives also." 11 But the centurion, instead of listening to what Paul said, followed the advice of the pilot and of the owner of the ship. 12 Since the harbor was unsuitable to winter in, the majority decided that we should sail on, hoping to reach Phoenix and winter there. This was a harbor in Crete, facing both southwest and northwest. 13 When a gentle south wind began to blow, they thought they had obtained what they wanted; so they weighed anchor and sailed along the shore of Crete.

The harbor in Phoenix, on the south coast of Crete, is far superior to that of Fair Havens, giving protection from the storms of winter.

Acts 27:14 Before very long, a wind of hurricane force, called the "northeaster," swept down from the island. 15 The ship was caught by the storm and could not head into the wind; so we gave way to it and were driven along.

The name of the wind is given in the KJV, but interpreted in the NIV.

Acts 27:14 But not long after there arose against it a tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon.

Acts 27:16 As we passed to the lee of a small island called Cauda, we were hardly able to make the lifeboat secure. 17 When the men had hoisted it aboard, they passed ropes under the ship itself to hold it together. Fearing that they would run aground on the sandbars of Syrtis, they lowered the sea anchor and let the ship be driven along. 18 We took such a violent battering from the storm that the next day they began to throw the cargo overboard.

Cauda is about 50 miles from the southeast coast of Crete. The lifeboat was not normally carried on the vessel but towed behind.

The sandbars of Syrtis were between Carthage and Cyrenaica and were probably not near enough to give danger, yet the sailors did not know their position in the Mediterranean and thought that they needed to lighten the boat to keep it from running aground.

Acts 27:19 On the third day, they threw the ship's tackle overboard with their own hands. 20 When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days and the storm continued raging, we finally gave up all hope of being saved.

The only means of navigation at the time was to look at the position of the sun or the stars in order to know the position. Once lost, there was no hope of knowing where they were in the Mediterranean.

Acts 27:21 After the men had gone a long time without food, Paul stood up before them and said: "Men, you should have taken my advice not to sail from Crete; then you would have spared yourselves this damage and loss. 22 But now I urge you to keep up your courage, because not one of you will be lost; only the ship will be destroyed. 23 Last night an angel of the God whose I am and whom I serve stood beside me 24 and said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you.' 25 So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me. 26 Nevertheless, we must run aground on some island."

Whether the men were either so sea sick that they could not eat or were just too worried to take time to prepare food, they were undoubtedly affected by their lack of hope which brought them to despair.

Although the ship contained few believers, they recognized that Paul had been correct in his earlier statements and this would have given them hope.

Acts 27:27 On the fourteenth night we were still being driven across the Adriatic Sea, when about midnight the sailors sensed they were approaching land. 28 They took soundings and found that the water was a hundred and twenty feet deep. A short time later they took soundings again and found it was ninety feet deep. 29 Fearing that we would be dashed against the rocks, they dropped four anchors from the stern and prayed for daylight.

By dropping the anchors from the stern, they kept the ship from swinging around and going onto the rocks from the rear. The ocean, being unknown to them because of the lack of knowledge of position, could have risen very rapidly and thus been less than an anchor and ship's length from the rocks.

The reason for the four anchors would have been for safety. As the hymn says, "Will your anchor hold in the storms of night?"

Acts 27:30 In an attempt to escape from the ship, the sailors let the lifeboat down into the sea, pretending they were going to lower some anchors from the bow. 31 Then Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, "Unless these men stay with the ship, you cannot be saved." 32 So the soldiers cut the ropes that held the lifeboat and let it fall away.

The centurion and soldiers are now ready to do whatever Paul says without hesitation. The sailors would have been required to beach the vessel and to keep it from being sunk before reaching the shore.

Acts 27:33 Just before dawn Paul urged them all to eat. "For the last fourteen days," he said, "you have been in constant suspense and have gone without food--you haven't eaten anything. 34 Now I urge you to take some food. You need it to survive. Not one of you will lose a single hair from his head." 35 After he said this, he took some bread and gave thanks to God in front of them all. Then he broke it and began to eat. 36 They were all encouraged and ate some food themselves. 37 Altogether there were 276 of us on board. 38 When they had eaten as much as they wanted, they lightened the ship by throwing the grain into the sea.

They would not have starved themselves, but would not have eaten large amounts as even the hardiest of sailors suffers in a violently rough sea. Paul would not have been one to have displayed his faith as a matter of show, but at this point he gives his thanks to God "in front of them all".

Acts 27:39 When daylight came, they did not recognize the land, but they saw a bay with a sandy beach, where they decided to run the ship aground if they could. 40 Cutting loose the anchors, they left them in the sea and at the same time untied the ropes that held the rudders. Then they hoisted the foresail to the wind and made for the beach. 41 But the ship struck a sandbar and ran aground. The bow stuck fast and would not move, and the stern was broken to pieces by the pounding of the surf. 42 The soldiers planned to kill the prisoners to prevent any of them from swimming away and escaping. 43 But the centurion wanted to spare Paul's life and kept them from carrying out their plan. He ordered those who could swim to jump overboard first and get to land. 44 The rest were to get there on planks or on pieces of the ship. In this way everyone reached land in safety.

Soldiers were responsible for the security of the prisoners and would have wanted to prevent their escape and any consequent punishment of the soldiers.

Acts 12:19 After Herod had a thorough search made for him and did not find him, he cross-examined the _____ and ordered that they be _____. Then Herod went from Judea to Caesarea and stayed there a while.

Acts 16:23 After they had been severely _____, they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to _____ them carefully. ... 27 The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to _____ himself because he thought the prisoners had _____.

Questions:

1. Who are Paul's traveling companion(s) to Rome? _____
2. What time of the year was it when they reached Fair Havens? _____

3. Who told them that no life would be lost? _____
4. Why did the soldiers want to kill the prisoners? _____
5. Why were the prisoner's lives spared? _____

A Workbook Commentary on the Book of Acts
Chapter 28

Acts 28:1 Once safely on shore, we found out that the island was called Malta. 2 The islanders showed us unusual kindness. They built a fire and welcomed us all because it was raining and cold. 3 Paul gathered a pile of brushwood and, as he put it on the fire, a viper, driven out by the heat, fastened itself on his hand. 4 When the islanders saw the snake hanging from his hand, they said to each other, "This man must be a murderer; for though he escaped from the sea, Justice has not allowed him to live." 5 But Paul shook the snake off into the fire and suffered no ill effects.

Malta is an island off the southern coast of Sicily about 90 miles from Syracuse, Sicily.

At the present time there are no poisonous vipers of any kind on the island, however, one of the first things that a large population on an island will do is to eradicate the snakes. People in general have an extreme dislike of snakes, even non-poisonous ones. There is no reason to believe that the natives did not know a poisonous snake when they saw one just because we can't find snakes on the island now.

In the disputed portion of Mk 16:9-20 the apostles were promised that they would not be harmed by any deadly serpent.

Mk 16:17 And these _____ will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will _____ in new tongues; 18 they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly _____, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well."

Even today, people are sure that the physical destruction of someone is due to their evil nature or deed. Paul was obviously a prisoner and the local folks presumed his guilt of a terrible crime by his personal misfortune.

Acts 28:6 The people expected him to swell up or suddenly fall dead, but after waiting a long time and seeing nothing unusual happen to him, they changed their minds and said he was a god.

This crowd is no different than an earlier crowd which thought that Paul and Barnabas were Gods because Paul healed a man and then a short time later stoned Paul.

Acts 14:9 He listened to Paul as he was speaking. Paul looked directly at him, saw that he had faith to be healed 10 and called out, "Stand up on your feet!" At that, the man jumped up and began to walk. 11 When the _____ saw what Paul had done, they shouted in the Lycaonian language, "The _____ have come down to us in human form!" ... 19 Then some Jews came from Antioch and Iconium and _____ the

_____ over. They stoned Paul and dragged him outside the city, thinking he was dead.

Acts 28:7 There was an estate nearby that belonged to Publius, the chief official of the island. He welcomed us to his home and for three days entertained us hospitably. 8 His father was sick in bed, suffering from fever and dysentery. Paul went in to see him and, after prayer, placed his hands on him and healed him. 9 When this had happened, the rest of the sick on the island came and were cured.

One can only imagine the effect that this show of God's power had on the Roman guards and centurion. The illness of Publius' father probably resulted in intermittent fever as the plural "fevers" is used in the Greek. There are a number of diseases that would have caused these symptoms but the physicians of that day would not have been able to cure them since they are viral or microbial in origin and no drugs were available that would have been of value. Thus Paul healed him rather than Luke, Paul's traveling companion, who was a physician.

Acts 28:10 They honored us in many ways and when we were ready to sail, they furnished us with the supplies we needed. 11 After three months we put out to sea in a ship that had wintered in the island. It was an Alexandrian ship with the figurehead of the twin gods Castor and Pollux. 12 We put in at Syracuse and stayed there three days. 13 From there we set sail and arrived at Rhegium. The next day the south wind came up, and on the following day we reached Puteoli.

Syracuse was on the eastern coast of the island of Sicily. The fact that a ship from Alexandria, Egypt had wintered at Malta indicates the fine nature of the harbor and the violence of the Mediterranean at this time of the year. Castor and Pollux were the gods of sailors who had painted these figures on each side of the prow as both a name for the ship and a charm to prevent evil.

The ship had to tack slowly due to the wind to reach Rhegium which is located on the strait of Messina which separates Sicily and Italy. The following day with a favorable wind they were able to make the 182 miles from Rhegium to Puteoli. Puteoli is located across the Bay of Naples opposite Pompeii and Mt. Vesuvius. The harbor was the closest one to Rome which would allow large sailing vessels in the harbor. It was 150 miles to Rome by an excellent road.

Acts 28:14 There we found some brothers who invited us to spend a week with them. And so we came to Rome.

Hospitality is a responsibility of all Christians and especially of the elders.

Rom 12:13 Share with God's people who are in need. Practice _____.

I Tim 3:2 Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, _____, _____, able to teach,

Acts 28:15 The brothers there had heard that we were coming, and they traveled as far as the Forum of Appius and the Three Taverns to meet us. At the sight of these men Paul thanked God and was encouraged.

Once again we see that even the apostle Paul had need of encouragement. We need to remember all those who labor in the word that they might receive the encouragement they need to continue to boldly proclaim the word of the Lord.

Acts 28:16 When we got to Rome, Paul was allowed to live by himself, with a soldier to guard him. 17 Three days later he called together the leaders of the Jews. When they had assembled, Paul said to them: "My brothers, although I have done nothing against our people or against the customs of our ancestors, I was arrested in Jerusalem and handed over to the Romans. 18 They examined me and wanted to release me, because I was not guilty of any crime deserving death. 19 But when the Jews objected, I was compelled to appeal to Caesar--not that I had any charge to bring against my own people. 20 For this reason I have asked to see you and talk with you. It is because of the hope of Israel that I am bound with this chain." 21 They replied, "We have not received any letters from Judea concerning you, and none of the brothers who have come from there has reported or said anything bad about you. 22 But we want to hear what your views are, for we know that people everywhere are talking against this sect."

Paul finally reaches Rome but not by the route that he thought he would take in meeting the brethren there.

Rom 15:22 This is why I have often been _____ from coming to you. 23 But now that there is no more place for me to work in these regions, and since I have been _____ for many years to see you, 24 I plan to do so when I go to Spain. I hope to visit you while passing through and to have you assist me on my journey there, after I have enjoyed your company for a while. 25 Now, however, I am on my way to Jerusalem in the service of the saints there. 26 For Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem. 27 They were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in the Jews' spiritual blessings, they owe it to the Jews to share with them their material blessings. 28 So after I have completed this task and have made sure that they have received this fruit, I will go to Spain and _____ you on the way. 29 I know that when I _____ to you, I will come in the full measure of the blessing of Christ.

Upon his arrival, Paul seeks an audience with the Jews in order to explain the unlawful and incorrect charges made against him by the council in Jerusalem.

Acts 28:23 They arranged to meet Paul on a certain day, and came in even larger numbers to the place where he was staying. From morning till evening he explained and declared to them the kingdom of God and tried to convince them about Jesus from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets.

Even if someone is an atheist or a non-believer in the Scriptures, we have the necessary information to teach them that God exists, that Jesus is his son and that Jesus now reigns.

Lk 24:44 He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be _____ that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms." 45 Then he opened their minds so they could _____ the Scriptures.

Rom 1:20 For since the creation of the world God's invisible _____ eternal power and divine nature--have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been _____, so that men are without excuse. 21 For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became _____ and their foolish hearts were darkened.. 22 Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for _____ made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.

Mt 5:17 "Do not think that I have come to _____ the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to _____ them. 18 I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until _____ is accomplished.

Jn 20:30 Jesus did many other miraculous _____ in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. 31 But these are _____ that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have _____ in his name.

Acts 28:24 Some were convinced by what he said, but others would not believe. 25 They disagreed among themselves and began to leave after Paul had made this final statement: "The Holy Spirit spoke the truth to your forefathers when he said through Isaiah the prophet: 26 "Go to this people and say, "You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving." 27 For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.' 28 "Therefore I want you to know that God's salvation has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will listen!"

Jesus has used this same passage in speaking to the unbelieving Jews in Galilee (Mt 13:14) and by the apostle John In Jn 12:40.

Although verse 29 is not in the most reliable texts of the Scripture, the truth of the statement is seen by the fact that this always happened at other times Paul talked to the Jews. Acts 28:29 *And when he had said these words, the Jews departed, and had great reasoning among themselves. (KJV)*

Acts 28:30 For two whole years Paul stayed there in his own rented house and welcomed all who came to see him. 31 Boldly and without hindrance he preached the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ.

As a result of the freedom that Paul had many were brought to Christ. In addition, while in captivity in Rome Paul wrote the epistles to the Philippians, Colossians, Ephesians and to Philemon,.

Phil 1:12 Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the _____. 13 As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole _____ guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. 14 Because of my chains, most of the brothers in the Lord have been encouraged to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly.

Phil 4:22 All the saints send you greetings, especially those who belong to _____ household.

Many of the brethren that we have met on Paul's journeys are with him in Rome at various times. These include Aristarchus, Epaphras, Mark, Demas, and Luke the beloved physician and constant companion.

Col 4:10 My fellow _____ Aristarchus sends you his greetings, as does Mark, the cousin of Barnabas. (You have received instructions about him; if he comes to you, welcome him.)

Col 4: 14 Our dear friend _____, the doctor, and Demas send greetings.

Phle 1:23 Epaphras, my fellow _____ in Christ Jesus, sends you greetings. 24 And so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas and Luke, my fellow _____.

Luke's account ends here with Paul in prison and yet we know that Paul's efforts in the gospel continued after his release. We can only surmise that Paul's defense before Caesar was like that he had previously given and no cause for his death could be found. Paul's release and continued work is seen in his letters to Timothy and Titus. Some of the events recounted there are not compatible with his earlier adventures and so must have come later in Paul's life. The following are some of those instances.

I Tim 1:2 To Timothy my true son in the faith: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. 3 As I urged you when I went into _____, stay there in _____ so that you may command certain men not to teach false doctrines any longer

II Tim 4:19 Greet Priscilla and Aquila and the household of Onesiphorus. 20 Erastus stayed in _____, and I left Trophimus sick in _____. 21 Do your best to get here before winter. Eubulus greets you, and so do Pudens, Linus, Claudia and all the brothers.

Tit 1:4 To Titus, my true son in our common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior. 5 The reason I left you in _____ was that you might straighten out what was left _____, and appoint in every town, as I directed you.

Tit 3:12 As soon as I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, do your best to come to me at _____, because I have decided to _____ there.

In addition, God's revelation is not yet complete since the requirement that even the Jews must cease to observe the Law of Moses in Paul's letter to the Galatians requires that it be dated at AD 62 or later. Paul has the time spent in prison to reflect on prophecies made by God that said that the Jewish nation would cease. The writer of Hebrews dwells on this at length. We long to know more of these events but will have to wait until such questions may be asked when we join Paul in that heavenly home for which he longed.

Questions:

1. On what island was Paul shipwrecked? _____
2. What miraculous event occurred there? _____
3. Where did the brethren from Rome meet Paul? _____

4. How long was Paul in prison in Rome? _____
5. What did Paul do while in prison in Rome? _____
6. Who of Paul's earlier companions were with him in Rome? _____
7. What places did Paul visit after his imprisonment ended? _____

