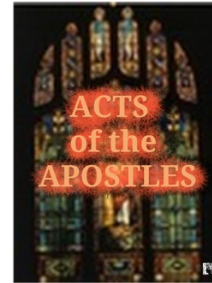


Ways to do the church-wide Acts Bible Study

1. Use this insert by yourself or with a partner.
 - Commit to spending 1 hour each week
 - Consider partnering with someone to whom you are not related
2. Form a small group to discuss the questions together
3. Come to the retreat on Saturday, January 30 from 9-3 and watch the Bible on video and talk about it with others. Lunch included.
4. Use the online Bible Study at www.StPetersSaints.com
 - Find the Practicing our Faith page and then click on Reading the Bible

Pathways for Faith
www.StPetersSaints.com



DISCOVERING OUR MISSION CHURCH-WIDE STUDY OF THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Insert #3

Call to All-in Discipleship and Standing up for Jesus

The early church was intimate, had everything in common, and lived with a high degree of trust in God and in each other. By agreement, believers sustained the church with their own assets, donated at 100% value. When Ananias and Sapphira schemed to deceive for personal gain, there were serious consequences. God will not be mocked.

The faithful apostles continued to preach the message of Jesus Christ, providing a pathway for both Jews and Gentiles to become disciples of Jesus. Their work was accompanied by signs and wonders of the Holy Spirit, just as Jesus was in his time. As a result of the persistent preaching and teaching, the church grew.

The growth of the Christian movement threatened the Jewish religious establishment, who tried unsuccessfully to use political means to put a stop to the ministry of the Gospel.

The growth of the church also put stress on the community of faith. The initial Jewish Christians took care of their own, but did not expand their ministry to include the newer Greek-speaking believers. All agreed this was important, but more people were needed to do it. Also, it was important that these deacons be of good reputation and full of the Spirit and wisdom. They were set apart by the laying on of hands and prayer. Stephen was their leader, and his life was about to get very interesting...

- Trust God with 100% of your life
- Do not fear the growth that comes when the Gospel is preached and lived
- Choose church leaders wisely, according to the Spirit

Week 3
STUDY GUIDE

SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS
Acts Chapters 5&6

Read: Acts chapters 5 and 6

For Reflection:

1. For what sin did Peter hold Ananias & Sapphira accountable?
2. On what basis was the sin unnecessary?
3. How was the authority of the apostles visible?
4. How did God reinforce the word of life he commanded the apostles to preach?
5. Why did the officers think that if they arrested Peter by force, they would be stoned?
6. By what authority did Peter stand up to the high priest?
7. Was the high priest successful in stopping the Gospel?
8. What happened when the church started to grow bigger than the initial intimate group?
9. What distinguishes the work of the apostles from that of the other disciples?
10. Why was Stephen such a powerful believer?
11. How was he arrested and brought up on charges?

Go Deeper:

1. What difference would it make if we trusted God and each other with 100% of what God has given us?
2. How might we stand up to pressure to soft-pedal the Gospel?
3. What challenges would growth in our congregation present?
4. How can we distribute the ministry to be more effective?
5. What does this Word suggest for the life of St. Peter's

For Further Study go to www.StPetersSaints.com

Write your responses to the following questions and tear off this page and leave it in the Response Box at church, OR leave them on the feedback page of the Pathways for Faith website, OR e-mail them to Chris Kann qcic5131@comcast.net.

1. What is God doing in these two chapters?
2. What are people doing in these two chapters? (sometimes at odds with God)
3. What lessons are here for the church in that day?
4. What lessons are here for the church today?
5. What is this telling us about a possible vision purpose for our ministry?