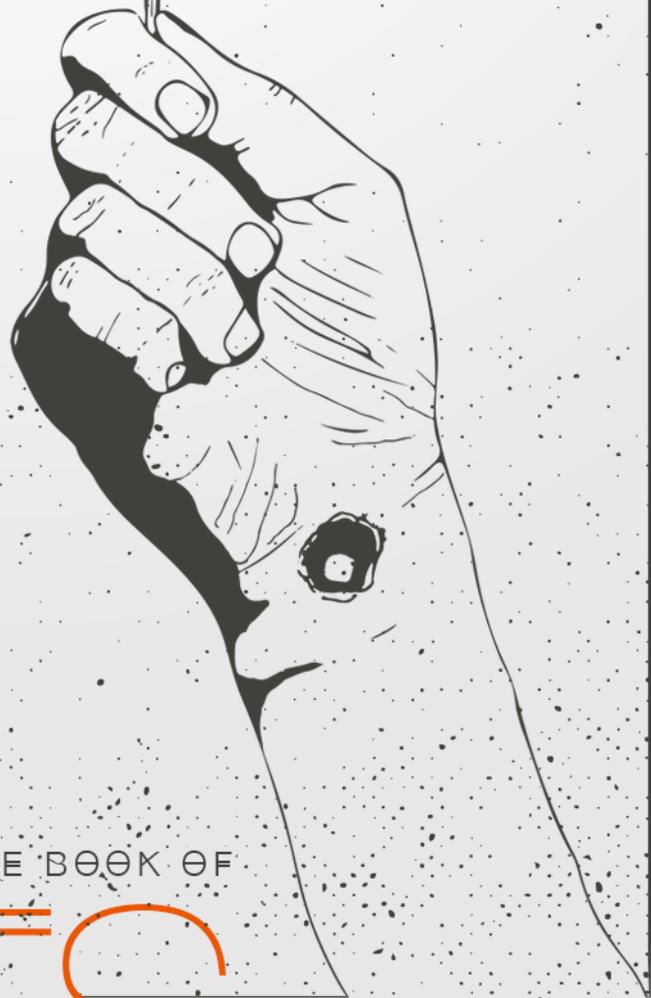


THE SPIRIT OF REVIVAL



A SERIES IN THE BOOK OF

ACTS

LS DISCIPLESHIP GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION

The book of Acts is about the acts of Jesus and the Holy Spirit through the early Church. It's author, Luke, details the history of the first days of the Christian faith and it's spread from Jerusalem throughout Rome. As we'll see in our study of Acts over the next seven months this movement is nothing short of a revival.

As we dive into the book of Acts we'll be investigating the nature of revival in the Church, which will bring us to celebrate and study the person and work of the Holy Spirit in the Church. Understanding who the Holy Spirit is and how he works in our lives not only moves us to worship God but also encourages and empowers us in our daily lives.

The life of a Christian is centered on Jesus' kingdom mission, relies on the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, and is all worship to God the Father. The book of Acts gives us stories of fellow Christians who gave their whole lives to this mission and give us an example to pursue.

From now until August, the book of Acts will encourage, exhort, correct, rebuke, comfort, and awaken each of us as we hear the story of God at work through the Spirit of Revival.

Grace & Peace

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

LISTEN

SERMON DROPBOX FOLDER bit.ly/ActsDropbox

Click the link above for access to sermons and teachings on the book of Acts. *Dropbox account not required.*

WATCH

THE BIBLE PROJECT: ACTS bit.ly/BibleProjectActs

The first half of the Book of Acts explained through illustrated videos from the Bible Project.

READ

FORGOTTEN GOD bit.ly/ChanSpirit

Francis Chan rips away paper and bows to get at the true source of the church's power—the Holy Spirit. Chan contends that we've ignored the Spirit for far too long, and we are reaping the disastrous results. Thorough scriptural support and compelling narrative form Chan's invitation to stop and remember the One we've forgotten, the Spirit of the living God.

ACTS: SEEING THE SPIRIT AT WORK bit.ly/ActsStott

Covering the exciting action of the Spirit in the years just following Jesus' life on earth, John Stott's study will open your eyes to the Spirit's power in the past *and* present and help you apply the riches of Scripture to your own life.

REVIVAL bit.ly/RevivalBook

In every era, the church needs revival—certainly today as much as ever. And in the heart of every committed Christian, there is the longing for personal revival—to know the quality and depths of spiritual reality and the presence of God in one's personal life. Martyn Lloyd-Jones invites us to study and hope for God's work through revival.

UPCOMING EVENTS

MEMBERSHIP CLASS - June 11th, 2017 // 2-4pm

If you have been coming to Living Stones for a while, and you would consider this church your home, this is your opportunity to commit and become a member here. We would like to provide you with a meal and childcare, but we need you to RSVP so we know that you are coming. If you would like to register, visit to the connect desk or email seth@lschurches.com

PRAYER NIGHTS - April 12th and July 26th

Our Prayer Nights provide us with the chance to corporately practice what is being preached as we move through the book of Acts. Simply attend the Prayer Night with your Community Group. Not in a community group? Email nathan@lschurches.com.

READING PLANS & DEVOTIONALS

The 2017 Bible Reading plans are about experiencing the Scriptures through the daily commitment to opening your heart and mind to God. This is a discipline essential to all disciples of Jesus.

WHOLE BIBLE - AS IT HAPPENED bit.ly/AsItHappenedPlan

For 2017, the pastors invite you to join them as they read through the whole Bible using the “As It Happened” reading plan, this chronological reading plan will guide us through the Bible day by day reading the story of the Bible as it historically came together. You can find this plan within the YouVersion Bible App (search: As it Happened) or through the link above.

NEW TESTAMENT - OUTREACH bit.ly/OutreachPlan

If the prospect of reading through the whole Bible is bit daunting but you’re still looking for a way to daily immerse yourself in the Bible, please subscribe to the “Outreach” reading plan. This reading plan will guide you through the New Testament day by day reading the story of Jesus and the Early Church. You can find this plan within the YouVersion Bible App (search: Outreach New Testament) or through the link above.

DEVOTIONAL - NEW MORNING MERCIES bit.ly/NewMorningMercies

Mornings can be tough. Sometimes, a hearty breakfast and strong cup of coffee just aren’t enough. Offering more than a rush of caffeine, best-selling author and pastor Paul David Tripp wants to energize you with the most potent encouragement imaginable: the gospel. Forget “behavior modification” or feel-good aphorisms, Tripp knows that our greatest need is an encounter with the living God. Then we’ll be prepared to trust in God’s goodness, rely on his grace, and live for his glory each and every day.

DEVOTIONAL - VALLEY OF VISION bit.ly/ValleyVision

A selection of prayers and meditations in the Puritan tradition, widely valued since its publication in 1975.

COMMUNITY GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Week 1

REVIVAL and MISSION

Call to Worship (5 minutes)

Discussion - What is the reason of why we meet each week?

Connect to Sunday (5 minutes)

Discuss the Call to Worship and Benediction from Sunday. Why do we do these each week?

Scripture Study (20 minutes)

Jesus has ascended into Heaven and he has left us as his witnesses here on Earth. But he hasn't left us alone, he has given us the Holy Spirit to accomplish his witnessing mission.

- Read Acts 1:1-11
- Discuss the context of the book of Acts.
- Who wrote the book of Acts? Why?
- What are you looking forward to studying in the book of Acts?

Application (15 minutes)

- Discuss what a witness is, maybe look at a dictionary definition.
- What does it mean for you to witness to the life Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit?

Prayer (10-15 minutes)

Pray for that God would use our group to be his witnesses by the Power of the Holy Spirit.

Week 2

THE SPIRIT OF REVIVAL

Call to Worship (5 minutes)

Discussion - How can our Community Group gatherings impact personal & church revival?

Connect to Sunday (5 minutes)

If God was trying to get your attention about something during the Sunday service this week or last, what was it?

Scripture Study (20 minutes)

Acts 2 is one of the most pivotal moments in all of redemptive history. God's people have now received God's Spirit and he is not only with us but the gospel reality is that he is in us. The Spirit is a person and not a force.

- Read Acts 2:1-41
- Close your eyes while reading the passage aloud two or three times. Designate someone new to read each time. Imagine and visualize yourself as one of the characters in this passage?
- What is God doing in this passage? What is he showing about his character?
- How did the Jews and people of the city react and respond to Holy Spirit's arrival?
- What were Peter's three main evidences he used to prove Jesus was Lord & Christ?

Application (15 minutes)

- Discuss what it means that through the Holy Spirit, God is inside you.
- Peter was once a foolish and cowardly disciple, now he preaches with authority and conviction? What changed? What has changed in you since you became a Christian?
- Peter ends his sermon with a call to repent and be baptized, why are these the initial signs of salvation in Christianity?

Prayer (10-15 minutes)

Prayer Walk - If the weather is nice and time of day appropriate, go on a prayer walk in smaller groups of 3 to 4 people. If not, divide into smaller groups based on the neighborhoods you live in and pray together for those areas.

Week 3

GOOD WORKS & GOOD NEWS

Call to Worship (5 minutes)

Discuss the Communion element from the Sunday gathering.

Communion assumes that God comes to us in love and that we respond joyfully to the beauty of his perfections and the offer of his fellowship. He may sometimes come with a rod of discipline. But even in our tears, we can rejoice in the Father's loving discipline (Hebrews 12:6–11). Communion with God may lay us in ashes or make us leap. But it never destroys our joy. It is our joy (Psalm 43:3). (46)

If you were at church last Sunday and took communion, where was your heart posture towards God while you were taking communion?

Connect to Sunday (5 minutes)

Were there any words that rang out to you in the sermon or worship songs or any other part of the Sunday service? If so, what?

Scripture Study (20 minutes)

Good works always go with good news. Gospel preaching is always preceded by gospel living. In this passage we see God healing a man and using it as a platform to proclaim the gospel. This is why we are *in the city, for the city*.

- Read Acts 3
- Break up into teams of three or four people. Make a list of all the details and events you find happening in the passage. Then, make another list of questions about the text you may have for the entire group. Finally, make a third list of new lessons you have learned in the text, as God's people. Reconvene with the entire group and share your questions and what you have learned.

Application (15 minutes)

- How are you *in the city for the city*? How can we grow in our intentionality in this calling?
- How can your participation in the city lead to gospel proclamation?
- Can you recall an experience or time where you have witnessed the Holy Spirit using the church to bring healing to someone in need? How did that impact you and point you closer to Christ?

Prayer (10-15 minutes)

Communion- Ask the Worship Role Holder to prepare and guide the group through Communion together. Thank God that through the death of the Author of Life, we have moved from death to life.

Week 4

COURAGe and PRAYER

Call to Worship (5 minutes)

Review - Discuss the “3 Wins” of Community Groups, how are we doing as a group in each of these areas? How can we grow stronger? (Outsider to Insider, Christians in Maturity, Leaders Developed)

Connect to Sunday (5 minutes)

Ask a consistent group member who is not a role holder or co-leader to prepare a time of sharing of what impacted them the most from the previous worship gathering. (Leader, please ask your group member to share and plan two weeks in advance)

Scripture Study (20 minutes)

True gospel proclamation is always accompanied by persecution. Our world does not like the gospel because it challenges their deeply held beliefs and behaviors. The true gospel will always offend both conservatives and liberals, don't forget they always killed prophets.

- Read Acts 4:1-31 two to three times with different readers for different sections.
- What stuck out to you the different times we read the passage?
- Who were the Sadducees? Who were Annas, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander? Why were these groups opposing the Church?
- What were the Church's responses to the persecution they faced?
- What does their prayer tell you about their faith in the character, power, and faithfulness of God?

Application (15 minutes)

- How does the gospel offend both conservatives and liberals in our day?
- What does it look like for us to preach the gospel in persecution?
- How can your participation in the city lead to gospel proclamation?
- Make a list of prayer topics similar to the prayer we see in Acts 4:23-31 on boldness. Pray for our leaders, our city, and our nation's leaders. Keep a personal copy of your prayer list and use the list to pray during your personal prayer time. Also, schedule a few weeks to pray over your team list with your group in the Prayer Room, during our Sunday services.

Prayer (10-15 minutes)

Public Prayer - The leader will announce five prayer topics. The group will all pray aloud in unison for a couple minutes on each prayer topic: 1. Pray for our Church. 2. Pray for the City of Reno. 3. Pray and repent for any sin we need to address to God. 4. Pray for protection against spiritual attacks and persecution. 5. Pray thanksgiving for what God is doing in our lives and His church.

Week 5

HOLINESS and OBEDIENCE

Call to Worship (5 minutes)

Discussion - Share some evidences of grace this past week or some of the highs and lows of the past week.

Connect to Sunday (5 minutes)

List the elements of Sunday worship. Are there any areas you sense would be good for your heart and walk with God to incorporate into your life more frequently or with greater focus and length of time beyond the Sunday service?

(Bible, Singing, Confession, Assurance, Community, Blessing, etc.)

Scripture Study (20 minutes)

God is holy and at certain times, one of the ways his holiness is expressed is through his wrath. This story reminds us that God is less tolerant of our false image than we are.

- Read Acts 5
- Do a recap of the past four weeks of Scripture. How does the text from previous weeks connect to this week's discussion? What would you say is the main theme so far?
- Pretend you are watching the interaction between Peter and Ananias and Sapphira (5:3-9). How would you report this incident?
- What have Ananias and Sapphira done that is not consistent with Christian community (5:1-2)? What are other examples of inconsistency in the church today, or even your life?

Application (15 minutes)

- How is your giving of tithes and offerings?
- In what ways are you spinning a false image of yourself (either through religion or rebellion)?
- How can you help others understand what Christian community is about?
- This story shows how highly God hold truth and unity in the Church, how can we foster these characteristics in our lives and community?

Prayer (10-15 minutes)

Pray and acknowledge and worship God and ask for his help. Specifically, pray in regards to what was discussed tonight. Spend a few minutes thanking God for how he has shown who he is in what we discussed tonight. We'll then also spend a few minutes asking for the Holy Spirit to empower us to live differently this week. (Please pray for yourself aloud, and when others are praying, pray for them also silently. Begins and closes prayer.)

Week 6

ORGANIZED REVIVAL

Call to Worship (5 minutes)

Testimony - Have one member prepare a small testimony. Ask the member to include why community group is important to them. The member can also prepare a prayer and/or verse to reflect on God's design for community.

Connect to Sunday (5 minutes)

Every Sunday, we take time to confess our sins and shortcomings to God. Why do you think we do this weekly? Do you take time to confess your sins and shortcomings to God outside of church? When and why? Why is confession a part of a Christian's life? What is the difference between confession and repentance?

Scripture Study (20 minutes)

Gospel movements always have two components: the trellis and the vine (or the structure and the growth). When the church grows and expands it always requires both. This passage is also where the roles of elders and deacons have developed.

- Read Acts 6:1-7
- As a group, retell what you just read in your own words. As each person is sharing:
- What are you learning about God's character?
- What have you learned about the human characters?
- As the church grew, what needs began to grow in the church?
- How did the apostle's meet those needs?

Application (15 minutes)

- Which to you gravitate the trellis or the vine? The structure or the organic growth?
- How can you challenge yourself to grow in and respect the other?
- As we look at the role of leadership and service within the church, how are you feeling called to lead, serve, or see those roles?
- What gifts to serve and lead do you see in each other?

Prayer (10-15 minutes)

Small Group Prayer- Pray in smaller groups of 3-4 people- Spend the next 5 minutes sharing with one another what has been fascinating to us about God recently, in knowing and learning about him. Then, spend the next 10 minutes in prayer, thanking God for what we are learning about who he is, and then praying for boldness to continue to speak God's word.

Week 7

THE SEED OF REVIVAL

Call to Worship (5 minutes)

Throughout the week, it can become easy to forget God. We forget His promises to us in Christ. We forget who we are. We forget that we're designed for union and communion with our Maker. And this forgetfulness allows us to worship lesser things—people, money, possessions, prestige, the “perfect life.” For a Call to Worship, remember together, “Yes, this is who I am; this is what I'm called to do! I am a son/daughter of God, and in Christ, I am His holy temple, His servant, His worshiper, His friend, His Bride, His possession, His love.

Connect to Sunday (5 minutes)

List the elements of Sunday worship. Are there any areas that would be good for your heart and walk with God to incorporate into your life more frequently or with greater focus beyond the Sunday service? (Bible, Singing, Confession, Assurance, Community, Blessing)

Scripture Study (20 minutes)

“The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.” - Eusebius

Friction in the Church and in our own life is usually followed by traction, they usually feed off each other. There's always a death before a resurrection. Stephen's speech and martyrdom caused the movement to catch fire.

- Close your eyes while reading Acts 6:8-7:60 aloud. Designate someone new to read each time. Imagine and visualize yourself as one of the characters in the text. How do you see God working in this passage? What is Stephen experiencing both physically and emotionally in this passage?
- What do the accusations against Stephen tell us about why the Jewish religious leaders were so upset (6:13-14)?
- Stephen lays out a history of people hardening their hearts to God's Spirit, what are the examples he lists and what are some examples he didn't mention in the Bible or in history?

Application (15 minutes)

- They killed the prophets, are you okay with persecution for truth and your faith?
- Can you see how your own suffering could lead to others benefit?
- Throughout this passage, we see in Stephen the evidence of being full of the Spirit and wisdom. What are the evidences today of being full of the Spirit and wisdom?

Prayer (10-15 minutes)

Pray, acknowledge, and worship God. Ask for His help. Specifically, pray in regards to what was discussed tonight. Spend a few minutes thanking God for how he has shown who he is in what we discussed tonight. We'll then also spend a few minutes asking for the Holy Spirit to empower us to live differently this week. (Please pray for yourself aloud, and when others are praying, pray for them also silently. Begins and closes prayer.)

Week 8

REVIVAL IN THE CHURCH

Call to Worship (5 minutes)

Scripture- One community group member can prepare a few minutes of sharing of verses they have studied that points us towards actively living in community with one another. (Leader, please designate someone in your group at least two weeks in advance to share.)

Connect to Sunday (5 minutes)

Every Sunday we sing worship songs. Why do you think we sing? Who is the singing for? Were you raised singing worship songs? Are some particularly meaningful to you? Do you have questions about why, how or what we sing? Do you sing worship songs outside of church? If so, when and why? Why might singing worship to God be important both personally and together as a church

Scripture Study (20 minutes)

Churches are communities centered on Jesus Christ that care for one another. In these communities, there are both privileges and responsibilities. This week we're going to look at two passages that we've already skimmed over in our study of Acts and look deeper at what it means to be a part of the church.

- Read 4:32-37; 2:42-47
- Break up into teams of three or four people. Make a list of all the details and events you find happening in the passage. Then, make another list of questions about the text you may have for the entire group. Finally, make a third list of new lessons you have learned in the text, as God's people. Reconvene with the entire group and share your questions and what you have learned.

Application (15 minutes)

- How does the life and purpose of your church or community compare to that of this group?
- How does your own life compare to these passages? What comes easier? What is hard?
- What aspects do you appreciate in others you don't have in yourself. (Specifically use this time to celebrate the gifts of others in your group!)

Prayer (10-15 minutes)

Silent Prayers-Prayer brings your presence into God's presence. Have the leader choose a segment of tonight's scripture reading to read aloud to the group. Meditate in silence to hear what God is telling you. Spend time in silent prayer over the scripture reading.

LS KIDS SUMMARY and DISCUSSION

Week 1

WE ARE WITNESSES

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth. - **Acts 1:8**

LESSON SUMMARY:

This week in LS Kids we will talk about what it means to be a witness. In Acts 1 the disciples watched the resurrected Jesus ascending into heaven. Another way we could say this is “the disciples *witnessed* Jesus ascending into heaven.” So in Acts 1:8 when Jesus tells the disciples to be his witnesses he is simply telling the disciples to tell others about what they have seen and heard. They saw Jesus ascend into heaven but we have seen different things God has done. In class today we will discuss what we have seen and heard and how we can tell others about it.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. None of us were there with the disciples when Jesus ascended into heaven. However, we have been witnesses to different things. Take some time to discuss some things you have been a witness to. (i.e. maybe you got to see your friend meet Jesus. Or maybe your parent told you about Jesus and you believed it for the first time).
2. As a witness why is it important to have the Holy Spirit? What does verse 8 mean when it says, “you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you?” Does this mean we’ll be able to shoot lightning bolts out of our eyes and webs out of our hands?
3. In Verse 8 Jesus commands his disciples to go to the end of the earth telling others what they have seen and heard. Did all of Jesus’ disciples make it to the end of the earth in their lifetime? Did any of Jesus’ original disciples make it to Reno?

PRAYER:

Father, thank you for sending us the Holy Spirit.
Holy Spirit, please help to be witnesses to all who do not know you.

Week 2

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS A GIFT

And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” - **Acts 2:38**

LESSON SUMMARY:

In this week’s lesson, we will be talking about the gift of the Holy Spirit. Last week we saw that the Apostles got to see Jesus ascend into heaven. This week we see they had to wait 10 days before God would send them the Holy Spirit. When God sent the Holy Spirit all of the people could suddenly speak different languages so others around them could understand the great things they were saying about Jesus. Some people thought they were crazy but others heard about Jesus and believed in him for the first time. Verse 41 tells us that about 3000 people were saved that day.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How do you think the Apostles felt during the 10 days they had to wait for the Holy Spirit?
2. How did Jewish people traditionally celebrate Pentecost?
3. About how many people we saved on Pentecost?
4. Read Acts 42-47. What are some of the things the new believers did? Are these things we do today?
5. Can we do anything special to deserve to Holy Spirit? How do we receive the Holy Spirit?

PRAYER:

Father, thank you for sending the Holy Spirit.

Jesus, thank you for forgiving us for our sins.

Holy Spirit, please give us boldness to tell others about you.

Week 3

JESUS HEALS US

Peter said, "I have no silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!" - **Acts 3:6**

LESSON SUMMARY:

This week in LS Kids we will be hearing the story of the lame beggar who was healed. First of all, we must know that Peter and John are not the ones who heal the lame beggar. Jesus is the one who heals the beggar and we see the beggar jump up and start praising God not Peter and John. Then the beggar and everyone watching began to run towards Peter and John because they were amazed. Peter then tells the crowd that this is not something he or John could have done on their own. Instead, only God could heal this man.

Later Peter tells the crowd that they are all spiritually lame and need Jesus to heal them. We like the crowd need Jesus to heal us from our spiritual lameness. We have been called to turn from our bad things and follow Jesus.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How would you feel if you saw someone who was disabled walk for the first time?
2. In verse 6 why does Peter say, "In the name of Jesus"? What are some things that we might say in the name of Jesus?
3. What do you need the Holy Spirit to help you with this week?

PRAYER:

Jesus, thank you for healing us.

Holy Spirit, please help us to turn from our sin and follow you.

Week 4

LET'S TALK ABOUT JESUS BOLDLY

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

LESSON SUMMARY:

This week in LS Kids we see Peter and John get arrested and go before the council for teaching people about Jesus. The council then charges them to not speak about Jesus anymore. Peter and John then explain to the council that they cannot stop speaking about Jesus because he is the good news. The council cannot find a good reason to put them back in jail so they are let go. At this point, many of us might go home and ask God for protection or pray for safety from persecution. But Peter and John go home, tell everyone what happened, and pray for boldness and courage to tell more people about Jesus.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Considering the previous week's lesson where the disabled man was made to walk why do you think the priests and Sadducees were upset? Why would they disagree with what Peter was saying and doing?
2. Have you ever told someone about Jesus? Was it easy? What was difficult about it?
3. If someone threatened to put you in jail unless you stopped talking about Jesus what would you do?
4. Read verse 31. Have you ever prayed and your whole house shook?

PRAYER:

Father, you know all things.

Holy Spirit, give us boldness to tell others about the good news of Jesus.

Week 5

WE MUST OBEY GOD RATHER THAN MEN

But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men." - **Acts 5:29**

LESSON SUMMARY:

This week we will be hearing a story from Acts 5 about how the Apostles were healing the sick and telling people about Jesus. In this story, the Sadducees did not like what the Apostles were doing so they arrested them and said they must stop teaching the people about Jesus. The Apostles respond by saying, "We must obey God rather than men." (v.29)

As followers of Jesus, we also must obey God rather than men. In class, we will discuss situations where it may be difficult to obey God but easy to obey men. In these times we must obey God.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. In our story, Peter and the Apostles faced the scary situation of being in jail. Has anyone here ever had to go to jail for telling people about Jesus? Are there people today that are put in jail for telling others about Jesus?
2. If obeying God meant you'd be sent to jail would it be easy to obey God? Is there ever an excuse to disobey God?
3. This week we have talked a lot about obeying God. In fact, our memory verse tells us that we "must obey God." Does Jesus love us more if we are more obedient? Can our obedience save us from our sin?

PRAYER:

Father, your laws are greater and better than any rules that we could make up. Jesus, thank you for being perfectly obedient when you knew we could not be. Holy Spirit, help to always obey God over man.

Week 6

WE HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO SERVE

And the twelve summoned the full number of disciples and said, “It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables.” - **Acts 6:2**

LESSON SUMMARY:

This week in LS Kids we will hear about how the Body of Christ was growing. More and more people were hearing about Jesus and believing in him. This meant that there were more and more people for Jesus’ disciples to take care of. Specifically, in this story, the widows needed to be taken care of but there weren’t enough disciples to do it. So the twelve decided to appoint seven men who would help them care for the widows.

In verse 2 they say, “It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables.” This does not mean serving tables is a bad thing. It simply means that the most important thing for the Apostles to do was preach the word of God.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Has anyone here ever gone through a growth spurt? After you grow can you wear the same clothes you used to wear? No, you need to get new clothes to fit your body. In the story, the body of Christ was growing. Did the Body of Christ need new clothes? What did the Body of Christ need?
2. Does the body of Christ continue to grow today? What can we do to help the body of Christ grow?
3. In verse 6 the disciples pray for the seven who were chosen to serve. Should we pray for one another as we all serve the church?

PRAYER:

Father, thank you for letting us serve in your kingdom.

Jesus, thank you for being the perfect example of serving.

Holy Spirit, help us to serve one another as the Body of Christ grows.

Week 7

THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVES US STRENGTH AND COURAGE

Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as evil, on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for so they did to the prophets. - **Luke 6:22-23**

LESSON SUMMARY:

This week in LS Kids we will be hearing the story of Stephen from Acts 6 & 7. In this story, Stephen suffers for following Jesus and boldly telling others the truth about him. If we follow Jesus and tell others about him it is likely that we will also suffer. We may not be stoned to death like Stephen but we can expect the enemy to do everything he can to stop us from telling others about Jesus.

In the story, we see that the Holy Spirit gives Stephen strength and courage even in the face of death. The Holy Spirit can give us strength and courage as well when we tell our friends and neighbors about Jesus.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. When we become a Christian suffering is something we can expect to encounter. How do you feel about suffering in the name of Jesus? What things does Jesus command us to do that may cause us to encounter suffering?
2. Stephen reminds us that God's people have always treated his prophets poorly. What is the difference between Jesus and all the prophets who came before him?
3. At the end of our story, Stephen prays for the people who are throwing rocks at him. Does this remind you of another story in the bible? (Need help? Read Luke 23:34). Should we also pray for our enemies?
4. Are there Christians today who suffer like Stephen suffered? What can we do for them?

PRAYER:

Father, please help those around us who are persecuted for following you.
Jesus, thank you for meeting us in our suffering.
Holy Spirit, please give us strength and courage to tell others about you.

Week 8

WE CARE FOR ONE ANOTHER

And all who believed were together and had all things in common. - **Acts 2:44**

LESSON SUMMARY:

This week in LS Kids we will be talking about two passages describing the early church and how they had everything in common. As we read these passages we will take note of the things that the early church did: selling their possessions and giving as anyone had need, eating together, attending the temple together, praising God together. In class, we will discuss how we can do all of these things as today's church.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. When we talk about the early church having everything in common does this mean that everyone combed their hair the same, wore the same t-shirts and had the same shoes? What does Luke mean when he says they had everything in common?
2. Take some time to discuss things the early church did. How do we do these things today?
3. These passages also talk about the early church growing day by day. Why is this important? Considering our lesson from last week, did the church grow with out opposition? Should the church today also be growing?

PRAYER:

Holy Spirit, please help us to serve and care for one another like the early church. Jesus, thank you for being the perfect example of serving and caring for us.