

ST MARY'S COPTIC CHURCH
BIBLE STUDY CURRICULUM MINISTRY



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INTRO TO THE BOOK OF ACTS

Lesson Plan: Introduction to the Book of Acts

LINK TO THE BOOK OF ACTS MAPS

[Acts Maps](#)

[A New Map of Paul's Missionary Journeys | Viz.Bible
pauls_travels.pdf](#)

Lesson Objectives

By the end of this lesson, youth will:

- Understand the authorship, purpose, and unique nature of Acts
- Explore the power and role of the Holy Spirit in the early church
- Reflect on the life and devotion of the first Christians
- Learn how Acts applies to modern Christian living and church life

Lesson Outline:

1. Introduction to the Book of Acts

→ *Written by Luke, a doctor, historian, and companion of Paul*

Luke is the only Gentile author in the Bible. His profession as a physician shows in his careful attention to detail. He traveled with Paul and documented not only the life of Jesus (in the Gospel of Luke) but also the growth of the church (in Acts).

→ *Acts is the sequel to the Gospel of Luke*

Acts continues “what Jesus began to do and teach” (Acts 1:1). Jesus’ work didn’t stop at the resurrection—it continues through the Holy Spirit working in believers.

→ *Addressed to Theophilus*

The name means “lover of God.” Theophilus may have been a real Roman official or a general term for any sincere seeker. Luke carefully lays out evidence, almost like a legal case, to show the truth of Christianity.

→ *Records the first 30 years of church history*

Acts is not just history—it’s Holy Spirit-filled history. It shows what happens when ordinary people are filled with extraordinary power.

2. Thematic Overview

Can be used as discussion themes:

1. The Human and Divine Craftsmanship of Luke

Luke uses careful research and firsthand accounts to craft his writings, but the Holy Spirit guides his words. This dual authorship shows that the Bible is both human and divine in its origin.

2. Luke's Audience and Legal Sensibility

Acts may have been written in part as a defense for Paul's trial in Rome. Luke carefully shows that Christianity is not a political threat, but a spiritual kingdom. It's logical, moral, and rooted in truth.

3. Bridging the Gospels and Epistles

The Gospels end with the resurrection of Jesus. The Epistles assume the reader knows how the church began. Acts fills the gap—how the apostles went from fearful to bold, how the church spread, and how the message reached the Gentiles.

4. The Four-Fold Pattern of New Birth

- **Repentance (turning from sin)**
 - **Faith in Jesus (trusting Christ for salvation)**
 - **Water Baptism (sacrament of new birth, baptized person is spiritually united with Christ,**
 - **Receiving the Holy Spirit (empowerment for living)**
- These are consistently found in Acts as essential parts of becoming a true disciple.**

5. Acts as the Missionary Manual

More than theology, Acts shows how the church grew and spread. It includes practical lessons on evangelism, cross-cultural ministry, miracles, church planting, leadership, and persecution.

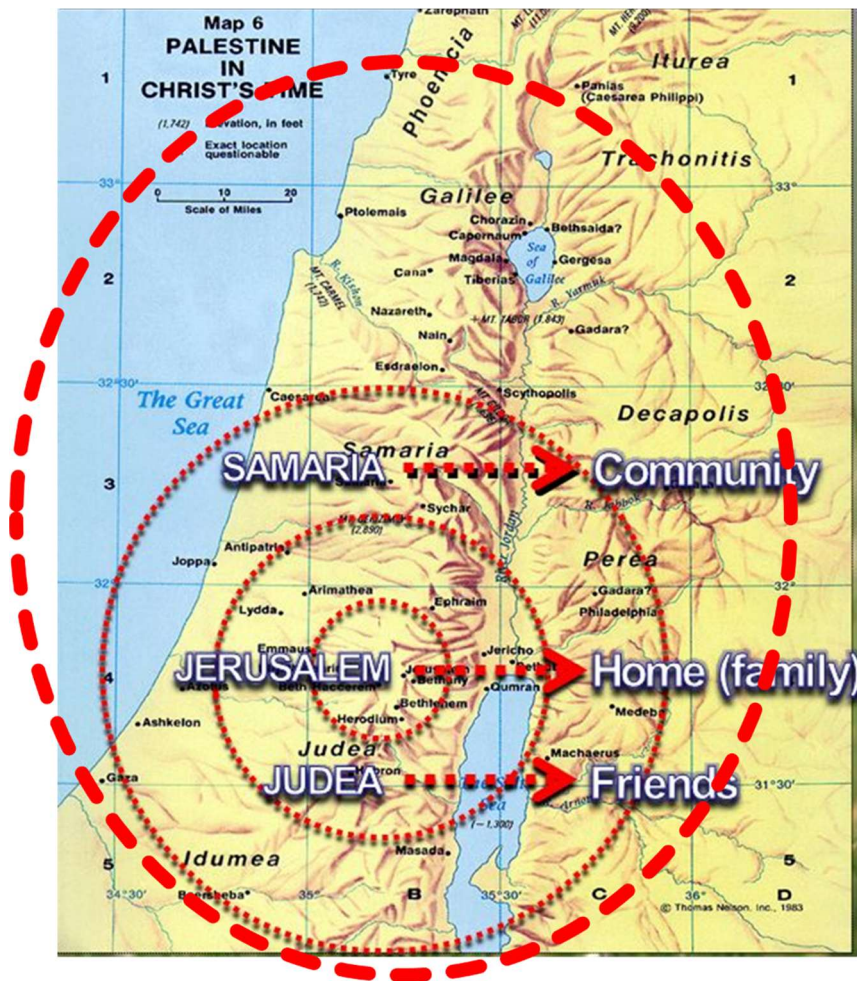
6. A Book of Firsts and Church Origins

Acts documents the first outpouring of the Spirit, the first church gathering, the first martyrdom, the first Gentile conversions, and more. It's the "Genesis of the Church," showing how God begins new things.

3. Key Verse

Acts 1:8

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



Explanation:

- This is the mission statement of Acts.
- The book follows this geographical pattern:
 - Jerusalem (Acts 1–7) - FAMILY
 - Judea & Samaria (Acts 8–12) - FRIENDS
 - Ends of the Earth (Rome) (Acts 13–28)- COMMUNITY- is the outer circle beyond all.

Spiritual Insight:

- The Holy Spirit empowers believers for bold witness.
- We are not called just to believe, but to testify—locally, regionally, and globally.

4. Memory Verse

Acts 2:42

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”

Explanation:

This verse describes the lifestyle of the early church. It's a simple but powerful model:

- Teaching – Being grounded in Scripture and sound doctrine
- Fellowship – Sharing life and spiritual support with other believers
- Breaking of bread – Celebrating communion and sharing meals
- Prayer – Living in constant communication with God

Application:

What we devote ourselves to shapes our spiritual health. This verse is a mirror: what do I devote myself to?

5. Spiritual Benefits of Studying Acts

1. Deepens Your Understanding of the Holy Spirit

- Acts shows the Spirit as a person, not a force.
- He leads, speaks, sends, fills, and transforms.
- You learn how to walk in step with the Spirit.

2. Equips You to Be a Witness

- Every Christian is called to be a witness, not just priests or missionaries.
- Acts shows how to boldly and wisely share the Gospel—even in hostile environments.

3. Builds Expectation for God's Power

- Miracles weren't just for then—they reveal what's possible when we depend on God.
- Healing, deliverance, divine guidance, and boldness are all part of Spirit-filled living.

4. Teaches You How the Church Should Function

- Church is not a building—it's a Spirit-led, mission-driven community.
- Acts challenges churches today to be more spiritual and less institutional.

5. Encourages You in Persecution and Suffering

- The early church faced threats, jail, beatings—and rejoiced through it.
 - Acts reminds us that suffering doesn't stop God's work—it often accelerates it.
-

6. Practical Application & Challenge - Optional

Personal Questions:

- Am I living with the same power and passion as the early believers?

- Do I view the Holy Spirit as essential or optional in my daily life?
- How can I be a witness for Jesus in my own “Jerusalem” (my immediate circle)?

Group Challenge:

- This week, memorize Acts 2:42
- Read Acts 1–2 and write down what stands out
- Ask the Holy Spirit to fill and use you in your daily life
- Share with one person what you're learning from Acts

Review Summary Table

| | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Key Verse | Acts 1:8 – Witness through Holy Spirit |
| Memory Verse | Acts 2:42 – Devotion to teaching, fellowship, communion, prayer |
| Major Themes | Holy Spirit, Mission, Church Life, Growth, Persecution |
| Spiritual Benefits | Empowerment, Boldness, Church Renewal, Spiritual Depth |

Closing Prayer

“Father, thank You for the powerful truths in the Book of Acts. May we not just learn from it, but live it. Fill us with Your Holy Spirit. Help us be bold, obedient witnesses and devoted followers. Renew our churches. And let Your kingdom come through us. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

BOOK OF ACTS CHAPTER 1

GOAL OF THE LESSON

By the end of this lesson, youth will:

1. Understand how Jesus prepared His disciples for their mission through teaching, the promise of the Holy Spirit, and the Ascension.
2. Recognize the importance of waiting on God, living in unity, and depending on the Holy Spirit for effective witness.
3. Identify practical ways to be Christ's witnesses in their daily lives and to trust God's timing

1. HOOK (ENGAGE THE AUDIENCE)

Option A – The Unfinished Letter

Imagine receiving a letter from someone you deeply admire. The last line says:

“Continue what I’ve begun.”

You turn the page, expecting more—but it’s blank.

How would you feel? What would you do?

Acts 1 feels like that moment. Jesus ascends, leaving the disciples with the responsibility to *continue His work*—but with a divine promise that they would not do it alone.

Option B – The Power You Need

Ask:

“Have you ever been given a job you felt completely unprepared for?”

Just like that, the disciples were called to transform the world, but Jesus told them:

Don’t start until you receive the power.

This sets up the tone of Acts 1.

2. INTRODUCTION (CONTEXT & OVERVIEW)

Acts 1 serves as a bridge:

- It connects Jesus' earthly ministry (in the Gospels) to His ongoing ministry through the Church (in Acts).
- It explains the foundation of the Church's mission: the Resurrection, the Ascension, the promise of the Holy Spirit, and the establishment of apostolic leadership.

Key Background Points:

- Luke, the author, writes to give a *clear, orderly account* of how Christ continues to act through the Spirit-filled Church.

- Acts 1 focuses on preparation—not action. The mission does not begin until Acts 2, but Acts 1 shows what kind of people God uses and how He prepares them.

3. BODY OF THE LESSON

A. The Forty Days: Proof and Preparation (Acts 1:1–5)

- Jesus spent forty days after His resurrection teaching about the Kingdom and giving infallible proofs of His rising.
- This emphasizes the pastoral tenderness of Christ, personally strengthening His disciples' shaken faith.

This highlights the historical reliability and eyewitness nature of Christianity.

Main Point:

Before sending His disciples, Jesus first stabilizes them.

Key Truth:

Jesus prepares His servants before He sends them.

B. The Question of the Kingdom (Acts 1:6–8)

The disciples ask:

"Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"

This reveals their expectation of a visible, earthly kingdom, which Jesus gently redirects. Jesus' response forms the heart of Acts:

1. Timing belongs to the Father.
2. Power comes from the Holy Spirit.
3. Witnessing is the task of the Church.
4. The scope is universal: Jerusalem → Judea → Samaria → the ends of the earth.

Main Point:

The Church's mission flows from the Spirit's power, not human strategies.

C. The Ascension: Christ's Reign and Our Mission (Acts 1:9–11)

- Highlights the joyous and victorious nature of the Ascension: Christ ascends as our High Priest, taking our humanity into heavenly glory.
- Emphasizes how the Ascension marks the beginning of Christ's heavenly ministry and sets the expectation of His future return.

The angels' message helps shape the early Church:

- Stop staring upward—start obeying the mission.
- Christ will come back; until then, we witness.

Main Point:

The Ascension empowers expectation, responsibility, and mission.

D. Community, Prayer, and Restoration of Leadership (Acts 1:12–26)

The disciples gather in the upper room. What do they do?

- 1. They remain together in unity. Unity is a sign of spiritual maturity and preparation.**
- 2. They devote themselves to prayer.**

The early Church as a praying community, depending fully on God’s guidance.

- 3. Peter leads the restoration of the apostolic circle.**
 - This shows the early Church’s respect for Scripture and apostolic authority.**
 - He also is restoring the missing apostle prepares the community to receive the fullness of Pentecost.**

- 4. They seek God’s will through Scripture and prayer.**

The choice of Matthias shows:

- Human responsibility (nominating)**
- Divine sovereignty (God choosing through the lot)**

Main Point:

Before God uses His people, He forms their character, leadership, unity, and prayer life.

4. APPLICATION (BRING IT HOME)

A. Wait for God’s Power Before You Act

We often rush into decisions, relationships, or ministries without prayer or dependence on the Spirit. Acts 1 teaches: Spiritual work requires spiritual power.

Reflection:

What area of your life needs waiting and praying rather than rushing?

B. Live as Christ’s Witness Daily

Witnessing isn’t only about preaching. It is:

- living with integrity**
- speaking truth with love**
- showing Christ through our actions**
- being aware that all of life is a testimony**

Where is your “Jerusalem,” the place God is calling you to witness first?

C. Trust God’s Timing

The disciples asked about restoring the kingdom; we ask about fixing our lives. Jesus says:

“The timing is the Father’s. Focus on your mission.”

Where do you need to surrender your timing to God?

D. Build a Life of Prayer and Unity

The early Church did not begin with activity—they began with prayer, Scripture, and community.

How can you strengthen your prayer habits or your connection to other believers?

E. Let Christ’s Ascension Shape Your Hope

If Jesus reigns, then:

- your life is secure
- your future is assured
- your mission is meaningful

Are you living as though Christ is truly reigning today?

CONCLUSION

Acts 1 is not a chapter of action but of preparation. The Church learns:

- look to the risen Christ
- wait for the Spirit
- unite in prayer
- follow God’s Word
- step boldly into mission

Pentecost is coming—but first, Acts 1 teaches us how disciples become *ready*.

Summary Chapter 1: *Jesus commissions His disciples to be His witnesses, empowering them with the Holy Spirit, and promises His return.* The Book of Acts begins with the church waiting for the power of the Holy Spirit.)

BOOK OF ACTS CHAPTER 2 – may be split to two lessons

ACTS CHAPTER 2 — Pentecost: The Coming of the Spirit & Birth of the Church

GOAL OF THE LESSON

By the end of this lesson, students will:

1. Understand the meaning, purpose, and impact of the Holy Spirit's coming at Pentecost.
 2. Identify how the Spirit empowers believers for witness and forms true Christian community.
 3. Apply Pentecost principles to their own spiritual lives, relationships, and ministry.
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HOOK

Use one (or combine several) of these to open discussion:

1. The Powerless Tool (Illustration)

Bring a power tool (or show a picture).

Ask:

- “What can this tool do without electricity?”
- “Is it still a tool? Yes. But is it effective? No.”

Tell the class:

“The disciples were the tools. Pentecost was the power.”

2. Silent Personal Reflection

Have everyone close their eyes and ask silently:

- “Where in my life do I feel spiritually tired, weak, empty, or ineffective?”
- “What would it feel like to be filled with God's power again?”

3. Leading Question

Ask:

“Why do many Christians live without power, boldness, joy, or effectiveness?
Is it because the Spirit is weak—or because we are unfilled?”

Use this to transition into the main lesson: Pentecost is God's answer to human weakness.

INTRODUCTION

1. Pentecost Was One of Israel's Major Feasts

- Known as the Feast of Weeks or Shavuot.
- Celebrated 50 days after Passover.
- Symbolized:
 - the firstfruits of the harvest
 - the giving of the Law on Sinai (according to Jewish tradition)

Pentecost symbolically becomes the firstfruits of the Church and the giving of the Spirit, just as Sinai gave the Law.

2. The Disciples Are Waiting Obediently

- Jesus told them to wait until the Spirit came.
- Their posture: unity, prayer, expectation.

This shows the Church operates not by human timing or planning but by God's spiritual empowerment.

3. The Stage Is Set for a New Era

Explain the transition:

- Jesus' earthly ministry → Finished
- Jesus' heavenly ministry → Begins
- Spirit's ministry → Poured out
- Church's mission → Launched

“Acts 2 is the birthday of the Church. The moment heaven touches earth.”

BODY OF LESSON

Break the chapter into six major scenes with explanations, insights, and discussion prompts.

◆ Scene 1: The Coming of the Spirit (2:1–4)

A. *What They Heard*

A sound like a rushing, violent wind

- Wind = breath of God (Genesis 2:7; Ezekiel 37).

- Symbol of new creation.

As God breathed life into Adam, God breathes life into the Church.

B. What They Saw

Tongues of fire

- Fire symbolizes God's holy presence (Exodus 3, 19).
- Fire purifies, illuminates, empowers.

C. What They Experienced

They were filled with the Spirit

- Not just an external sign but an internal transformation.
 - Fear replaced by boldness.
 - Confusion replaced by clarity.
 - Weakness replaced by power.
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◆ Scene 2: Speaking in Languages (2:5–13)

A. Languages Were Actual Human Languages

People from 15+ national backgrounds heard in their own language.

B. Meaning

- God intends the Gospel for every culture.
- Church is born multilingual and multicultural.
- A reversal of Babel (Genesis 11).

At Babel, languages divided. At Pentecost, languages unite.

C. Two Responses

- Amazement: “How do we hear this in our own language?”
- Mockery: “They’re drunk.”

Discussion Prompt

“Why do some people respond to God’s work with amazement and others with mockery?”

◆ Scene 3: Peter Preaches (2:14–36)

The longest section—use it to teach the heart of the Gospel.

A. Peter’s New Boldness

Compare Peter denying Jesus → Peter preaching Jesus.

The difference: the Holy Spirit.

B. Peter Explains Joel’s Prophecy (2:17–21)

- God will pour out His Spirit on *all flesh* (men, women, young, old).
- Prophecy, dreams, visions.
- The last days have begun.

C. Peter Explains Jesus’ Life and Death (2:22–24)

- Jesus was attested by miracles.
- They rejected Him.
- God raised Him up.

D. Peter Explains David’s Prophecy (2:25–31)

- The Resurrection was foretold.
- Jesus is the promised Messiah.

E. Peter Declares Jesus as Lord (2:32–36)

- **Jesus is exalted to the Father’s right hand.**
 - **Jesus poured out the Spirit.**
 - **Jesus is Lord and Christ.**
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◆ **Scene 4: The People Respond (2:37–41)**

A. “Cut to the Heart”

True conviction is the Spirit’s work.

B. Peter’s Three-Point Response

1. **Repent**
2. **Be baptized**
3. **Receive the Holy Spirit**

C. 3,000 Are Baptized

A massive spiritual harvest—on the feast of harvest!

◆ **Scene 5: The Church’s New Lifestyle (2:42–47)**

This is the blueprint of a Spirit-filled community.

1. Devotion to the Apostles’ Teaching

The Word becomes the foundation of life.

2. Fellowship

Deep sharing of life—not superficial friendliness.

3. Breaking of Bread

Both meals and Eucharistic fellowship.

4. Prayers

Corporate prayer as the heartbeat of the Church.

5. Signs and Wonders

God confirming His presence among His people.

6. Radical Generosity

Not forced communism, but voluntary Spirit-led giving.

7. Worship, joy, growth

- **Worship in the Temple**
- **Hospitality in homes**
- **Joyful hearts**

- Favor with people
- Daily conversions

This is the Spirit-shaped Church.

APPLICATION

Close by applying the five major themes:

1. Live Filled with the Spirit

Ask:

“Am I living as a Christian without power?”

Daily seek the Spirit’s filling through surrender and prayer.

2. Boldly Witness for Christ

The Spirit empowers us to speak clearly, lovingly, confidently.

3. Devote Yourself to Church community

Real Christian fellowship requires:

- vulnerability
- commitment
- generosity
- shared worship
- prayer
- hospitality

Challenge the group:

“Which one of the Acts 2 practices is God calling you to grow in?”

4. Practice Radical Generosity

Spirit-filled believers loosen their grip on possessions because God loosens the grip of greed.

5. Expect God to Work

Signs of Spirit-filled life today:

- transformed hearts
- healing of relationships
- renewed purpose
- unity
- joyful worship

Invite the group to pray together:

“Come, Holy Spirit. Fill Your church again.”

MEMORY VERSE

Acts 2:38

“Repent, and let every one of you be baptized... and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

CONCLUSION: *On Pentecost, the Holy Spirit fills the disciples, leading to a powerful sermon by Peter, the conversion of thousands, and the birth of the Church.*

This is the moment when the Church is born in power.

BOOK OF ACTS CHAPTER 3

Theme: *A Beautiful Miracle in a Beautiful Place — Christ’s Name Brings Restoration*

GOAL OF THE LESSON

By the end of this lesson, students will:

1. Understand how Peter’s healing of the lame man reveals Jesus’ continuing ministry through the apostles.
 2. Recognize how miracles in Acts function as doors for Gospel proclamation.
 3. See repentance as the pathway to restoration, “refreshing,” and participation in God’s purposes.
 4. Learn to offer Christ—not merely solutions—to people in need.
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HOOK

Use one or more of these:

1. What People Think They Need

Ask:

“Have you ever begged God for something — and later realized you needed something completely different?”

Examples:

- Asking for money when you really needed wisdom.
- Asking for a job when you actually needed healing.
- Asking for relief when you needed transformation.

Explain:

The lame man asks for coins.

Jesus gives him a completely different kind of gift.

2. Show a Picture of the Temple Gate

Explain that the “Beautiful Gate” was extraordinarily decorated.

Yet at that beautiful place sat a man whose life was anything but beautiful.



His story teaches that Jesus brings beauty to brokenness.

3. Leading Question

“What if your greatest limitation is the exact place God plans to show His greatest power?”

This prepares the group for the man who was lame from birth.

INTRODUCTION

1. Acts 3 continues the story of Pentecost

After the Spirit fills the Church in Acts 2, Acts 3 shows the first public miracle done through the apostles.

- This miracle confirms the apostles’ authority.
 - It demonstrates that Jesus is still active, now through His followers.
-

2. The Setting: The Beautiful Gate

- The gate represents the beauty of God’s house.
- The lame man symbolizes humanity crippled by sin, waiting outside God’s fullness.

“Beautiful on the outside, broken on the inside” describes many lives.

3. Purpose of Miracles in Acts

- Miracles are signposts, not the main focus.
- Every miracle opens a door for Gospel proclamation.

Acts 3 is structured as:

1. Miracle →
2. Crowd gathers →

3. Sermon →

4. Call to repentance

This is Luke's pattern throughout the whole book.

BODY OF LESSON

Break the chapter into four major scenes.

◆ Scene 1: The Healing of the Lame Man (3:1–10)

A. Peter and John Were Going to Pray

- Their faithfulness in small spiritual habits opened doors for great spiritual moments.

B. The Man's Condition

- Lame from birth
- Over 40 years old (Acts 4:22)
- Dependent, hopeless, immobile
- Symbol of spiritual paralysis

He represents humanity waiting for salvation outside the Beautiful Gate—unable to enter without Christ.

C. The Man Asks for Alms

He asks for something small.

God gives him something unimaginable.

Application:

We often pray for relief.

God wants to give restoration.

D. Peter's Famous Words

“Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you:
In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.”

Insights:

- Peter knows what he DOESN'T have.
- Peter knows what he DOES have.
- Peter gives what only Jesus can give.

The apostolic authority is not in wealth, but in union with Christ.

The healing proves Jesus' power continues after His ascension.

E. The Miracle

Describe it visually:

- Feet straighten
- Ankles strengthen
- He stands
- Then walks
- Then leaps
- Then praises God

This mirrors Isaiah 35:6: “the lame shall leap like a deer.”

F. The People's Reaction

- Full of wonder and amazement
- They recognize him
- They understand something divine has happened

This crowd prepares the stage for Peter's sermon.

Discussion Question

“What can we learn from Peter's willingness to give what he DID have—even when it wasn't what the man asked for?”

◆ Scene 2: The People Gather (3:11–12)

A. The Healed Man Clings to Peter and John

A natural reaction to the first people who showed him Christ's power.

B. The People Run to See What Happened

Miracles are magnets—but not ends in themselves.

C. Peter Redirects Attention

“Why do you stare at us, as if by our own power or godliness we made this man walk?”

The apostles are careful to avoid personal glory.

They immediately shift the spotlight from human agents to Christ the true Healer.

Discussion Question

“How do we guard against taking credit for things God does through us?”

◆ Scene 3: Peter’s Sermon (3:13–26)

Peter uses the miracle to proclaim Christ.

A. Peter Identifies the True Healer (3:13–16)

He declares:

1. **The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob has glorified Jesus**
2. **You delivered Jesus up**
3. **You denied the Holy and Righteous One**
4. **You killed the Author of Life**
5. **God raised Him from the dead**
6. **Faith in Jesus’ Name healed this man**

Peter boldly confronts their sin while offering hope.

B. Peter Shows Mercy (3:17)

“You acted in ignorance.”

This softens their hearts—Peter offers understanding, not condemnation.

C. The Fulfillment of Prophecy (3:18–24)

- **The suffering of the Messiah was foretold by the prophets.**
- **Jesus fulfills Moses’ prophecy about a prophet like him.**
- **All prophets point to Jesus’ work.**

Peter builds an unbreakable case from Scripture.

D. The Call to Repent (3:19–21)

Peter describes THREE results of repentance:

1. **Forgiveness (“sins blotted out”)**

Like ink erased from parchment.

2. Times of Refreshing

This means renewal, healing, spiritual springtime.

3. Participation in Christ's future kingdom

Repentance aligns believers with God's unfolding plan.

E. The Covenant Promise (3:25–26)

“You are sons of the prophets and of the covenant... God sent His Servant to bless you by turning you from your wickedness.”

Blessing = transformation.

Discussion Prompt

“Why does Peter connect repentance to refreshing? What does ‘refreshing’ look like in a believer’s life?”

◆ Scene 4: The Crowd's Responsibility (3:22–26)

Peter explains that rejecting Jesus has consequences.

A. Moses Warned Them

“A prophet like me... whoever does not listen will be destroyed.”

B. The Promise to Abraham

“In your seed, all families will be blessed.”

C. Jesus Is the Fulfillment

- **Blessing = turning from sin**
 - **Blessing = receiving new life**
 - **Blessing = being restored to God**
-

APPLICATION

Draw out the key principles:

1. We Must Offer People What They TRULY Need

- **Not silver**
- **Not gold**
- **But Jesus**

Who in your life is asking for “coins” when they really need Christ?

2. Stay Spiritually Available

**Peter and John were just going to pray.
A miracle happened along the way.**

Daily life is filled with divine appointments.

3. Bold Witness Follows God’s Work

When God opens a door (through kindness, healing, crisis), share the hope you have.

4. Repentance Leads to Refreshing

True restoration begins with turning fully to God.

Invite personal prayer:

“Lord, reveal the places where I need to repent so You can refresh me.”

5. We Are Called to Bless Others

Just as Abraham was blessed to bless the nations, so are we.

How can you be a “blessing” this week?

MEMORY VERSE

Acts 3:19

“Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.”

St. John Chrysostom (Homily VIII):

“Miracles prior to preaching confirm the truth; deeds prepare the hearts, while words teach the minds.”

— On the healing at the gate of the temple.

BOOK OF ACTS CHAPTER 4

Theme: *Boldness in Opposition — The Spirit Gives Courage to Witness for Christ*

GOAL OF THE LESSON

By the end of this lesson, students will:

1. Understand the first persecution of the Church and how the apostles responded with Spirit-filled boldness.
 2. Recognize the contrast between religious intimidation and Holy Spirit empowerment.
 3. Learn how prayer, unity, and reliance on God produce courage in trials.
 4. Practice applying biblical boldness, rooted in humility and dependence on God.
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HOOK

1. Fear vs. Boldness Exercise

Ask students to silently write down:

- One thing they fear doing for God.
- One situation where they remain silent even though they know they should speak.

Tell them:

“Acts 4 shows how God transforms fear into boldness.”

2. Ask the Class

“What’s the difference between *natural confidence* and *spiritual boldness*?”

Draw answers on a board.

Explain:

Natural confidence is rooted in self.

Spiritual boldness is rooted in God.

3. Illustration: The Flashlight Without Batteries

A flashlight looks like it should shine—but without batteries it’s powerless.

The disciples looked ordinary, but the Spirit filled them with extraordinary courage.

INTRODUCTION

1. Acts 4 continues the story of the healing at the Beautiful Gate

After the miracle (Acts 3), opposition rises.
Miracles attract seekers—but also enemies.

Opposition is normal whenever the Gospel confronts hardened hearts.

2. The First Recorded Persecution in Church History

- The Jewish leaders thought they had eliminated Jesus.
- Now His followers are performing miracles in His name.
- They feel threatened both theologically and politically.

This persecution is not random—Satan is reacting to the triumph of Pentecost.

3. Peter and John Face the Sanhedrin

The same court that condemned Jesus now interrogates His followers.
This is a continuation of the spiritual conflict of the Gospels.

4. The Theme of the Chapter

Holy Spirit Boldness vs. Human Authority

The apostles show that obedience to God outweighs obedience to men.

BODY OF LESSON

Break the chapter into **five major scenes**.

◆ Scene 1: Arrest and Interrogation (4:1–7)

A. The Opponents

- Priests
- Captain of the Temple Guard
- Sadducees

Sadducees deny the resurrection—so Peter’s preaching directly contradicts them.

Their anger is theological **and** political. They want to silence the movement.

B. The Arrest

Peter and John are arrested simply for preaching Jesus and the resurrection.

The Church was born in persecution. God allows this to strengthen—not weaken—His people.

C. The Night in Jail

This mirrors Christ’s own arrest.

The disciples now truly share His sufferings.

D. 5,000 Men Believe

Even persecution cannot stop the Gospel; it only accelerates it.

E. The Interrogation

They ask:

“By what power or by what name have you done this?”

This question sets the stage for a powerful testimony.

◆ Scene 2: Peter’s Bold Spirit-Filled Response (4:8–12)

A. Peter Is Filled With the Holy Spirit

This filling gives:

- Clarity
- Confidence
- Conviction
- Courage

The Spirit *controls* Peter’s words; the boldness is supernatural.

B. Peter Accuses the Leaders

He says **they crucified Jesus**, but **God raised Him**.

This is incredibly bold considering Peter is speaking to the same court that killed Jesus.

C. The Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth

The healing was not magic, not apostolic power, but **Jesus’ living authority**.

Peter gives all glory to Christ.

D. Peter Quotes Psalm 118:22

“The stone which was rejected by you has become the chief cornerstone.”

This shows that rejecting Christ does not stop God’s plan—it fulfills prophecy.

E. Salvation Exclusively in Christ

“Salvation is found in no one else.”

This is the clearest claim of exclusivity in the New Testament.

Jesus is not *a* way; He is *the* way.

◆ Scene 3: The Leaders’ Reaction (4:13–22)

A. They Notice the Apostles’ Boldness

They recognize:

- Peter and John are uneducated
- They are common men
- They have been with Jesus

This is one of the most beautiful statements in Acts.

Discuss:

What does it mean for people to recognize that we “have been with Jesus”?

B. The Healed Man Standing There

The leaders cannot deny the miracle.

Miracles authenticate the message; they are irrefutable evidence.

C. The Leaders’ Dilemma

- They want to stop the apostles.
- But they cannot deny the miracle.
- So they threaten them.

The enemy always tries intimidation when he lacks truth.

D. Peter and John’s Famous Response

“Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than God, you judge. We **cannot** but speak what we have seen and heard.”

Their boldness reveals that fear of God has conquered fear of man.

E. The Threats Continue

But without grounds, they must release the apostles.

◆ Scene 4: The Church's Prayer (4:23–31)

This is one of the most important prayers in all of Scripture.

A. They Return to Their Community

Persecution drives them into deeper unity.

B. They Pray Scripture (Psalm 2)

They interpret the persecution through the lens of God's Word.

They do not pray for safety—they pray for **courage**.

C. The Content of the Prayer

They ask for:

1. **Boldness**
2. **God's hand to heal**
3. **Signs and wonders** in Jesus' name

Not escape—but empowerment.

D. God Answers Immediately

- The place shakes
- They are filled with the Spirit again
- They speak the Word with boldness

The shaking symbolizes God's presence, just as in Sinai.

◆ Scene 5: The Church's Generosity and Unity (4:32–37)

A. One Heart and One Soul

True unity comes from the Spirit, not human effort.

B. Radical Generosity

Believers freely sold possessions to care for each other.

This was voluntary sharing, not forced socialism.

C. The Apostles' Testimony

Their preaching is powerful because the Spirit empowers it and the community lives it.

D. Barnabas Introduced

- His name means “son of encouragement.”
- He sells land and gives the money.
- He becomes a major figure later in Acts.

Note Barnabas as a model of joyful Christian giving.

APPLICATION

1. Boldness Comes From Being With Jesus

Ask:

“How can you structure your daily life to be more intentionally ‘with Jesus’?”

2. Expect Opposition

Persecution or pushback is normal—not a sign that God is absent.

3. Pray for Courage, Not Comfort

Encourage the group to shift their prayer life to align with Acts 4.

4. Radical Generosity Is a Mark of Spirit-Filled Community

Where is God calling you to practice sacrificial love?

5. Obey God Over Man

There will be moments when loyalty to God will conflict with cultural expectations.

Ask:

“Where do you need to choose obedience to God this week?”

MEMORY VERSE

Acts 4:12

“Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

Summary: *After being arrested and threatened, Peter and John boldly testify about Jesus, and the early Church prays for more boldness and unity.*

Boldness in the face of persecution is empowered by prayer; The Church grows in unity and strength through persecution;

BOOK OF ACTS CHAPTER 5

Theme: *Purity, Power, Persecution & Perseverance in the Early Church*

Reminder:

Acts 3 ended with the healing and preaching in the temple; Acts 4 shows the first major opposition. The boldness given by the Spirit. How persecution tests the Church's resolve. Power and opposition always come together in Acts. Chapter 4 flows naturally from chapter 3 by showing the cost of public witness. This chapter continues both the growth and the challenges begun earlier.

GOALS OF THE LESSON

1. Understand why God judged Ananias and Sapphira so severely and what it teaches about holiness.
 2. See how purity in the Church leads to power in its witness.
 3. Understand how the apostles responded to persecution with joy, boldness, and steadfast obedience.
 4. Apply courage, integrity, and fear of God in their personal lives and ministry.
-

HOOK

1. The White Shirt Illustration

Show (or describe) a perfectly white shirt.

Ask:

“What happens to the smallest stain on something pure white?”

Explain:

The early Church was spiritually “pure white.”

Even a small stain—like deceit—threatened the entire testimony.

2. The Counterfeit Currency

Ask:

“How much damage can one counterfeit bill do in a bank?”

One fake bill can contaminate the whole system.

Ananias and Sapphira were the first “counterfeit” Christians—presenting themselves as generous and holy while living in deceit.

3. Leading Question

“What’s more dangerous to the Church: persecution from outside or hypocrisy from inside?”

This prepares the heart for the seriousness of Acts 5.

INTRODUCTION

1. Acts 5 Continues the Contrast of Acts 4

- Barnabas (end of Acts 4) shows true generosity & sincerity.
- Ananias and Sapphira represent false generosity & hypocrisy.

Luke places these stories back-to-back to show the difference between Spirit-filled giving and self-seeking giving.

2. The Attack Shifts from External to Internal

In Acts 4, the Church faced persecution **from outside**.

In Acts 5, Satan attacks **from within** through deceit.

Internal corruption is more dangerous than external persecution.

3. God Protects the Holiness of His Church

Just as God purified Israel in the Old Testament (Achan in Joshua 7), He purifies His new covenant community here.

4. The Theme of Acts 5

Holiness leads to power.

Hypocrisy leads to judgment.

BODY OF LESSON

Break the chapter into **four major scenes**.

◆ Scene 1: The Sin and Judgment of Ananias and Sapphira (5:1–11)

A. Their Sin Was Not Keeping Part of the Money

Peter says clearly:

- The land was theirs.
- The money was theirs.
- They had full freedom.

Their sin was:

1. **Lying to God**
2. **Pretending to be more spiritual than they were**
3. **Seeking human praise instead of God's approval**

Their offering was a “false incense”—a counterfeit devotion.

B. Peter Confronts Ananias

Peter, filled with the Spirit, discerns the deception.

“Why has Satan filled your heart...?”

This parallels Pentecost:

- Believers filled with the Spirit
- Hypocrites filled by Satan

Satan cannot destroy the Church externally, so he attempts internal sabotage.

C. Ananias Falls Dead

This shocks modern readers, but:

- God was establishing holiness at the Church's birth.
- Hypocrisy threatens spiritual revival.
- God is jealous for purity in His people.

This is not cruelty, it is protection.

D. Sapphira Enters Three Hours Later

Peter gives her a chance to tell the truth.

She repeats the lie. She falls dead as well.

E. Fear Fills the Church

“Great fear came upon all the Church.” This is not terror but *holy reverence*.

The first time the word “Church” is used in Acts is in the context of holiness.

Discussion Question

“Why is God especially severe with hypocrisy at the Church's beginning? What does that teach us today?”

◆ Scene 2: The Apostles' Power and Ministry (5:12–16)

A. Miracles Increased Dramatically

- Many signs and wonders
- One heart and one accord
- People gathered from cities around Jerusalem

The purity of the community made it a powerful instrument.

B. People Respected Them but Feared to Join Hypocritically

“None of the rest dared join them.”

True holiness inspires both awe and conviction.

C. Even Peter's Shadow

People believed even his shadow might bring healing.

Not superstition—this shows an atmosphere charged with faith and God's presence, similar to the woman touching Jesus' garment.

D. Multitudes Are Healed

God validates the apostles' message with undeniable signs.

Discussion Prompt

“What does this teach us about the connection between holiness and spiritual power?”

◆ Scene 3: The Apostles Arrested and Freed by an Angel (5:17–32)

A. Jealousy Motivates Persecution

The high priest and Sadducees are filled with jealousy.

They cannot deny the miracles.

They cannot stop the Gospel.

So they attack the messengers.

B. The Angel of the Lord Frees Them

This mirrors Jesus' resurrection:

- Locked doors cannot stop God.
- Human authority cannot bind God's messengers.

C. The Angel's Command

“Go, stand in the Temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life.”

The Gospel is described as “Life” because Jesus is Life Himself.

D. The Leaders Are Confused

They find the jail locked but no prisoners inside.

This divine irony highlights human weakness against God's power.

E. The Apostles Brought Before the Council

The leaders say:

“You have filled Jerusalem with your teaching.”

This is meant as an accusation—but it is actually a testimony to the Gospel's power.

F. Peter and the Apostles Respond Boldly

“We must obey God rather than men.”

This repeats their conviction from Acts 4.

They affirm their allegiance even knowing it may cost them their lives.

G. Peter's Short Gospel Summary

- God raised Jesus
 - Jesus is exalted
 - Jesus is Prince and Savior
 - Forgiveness and repentance come through Him
 - The Holy Spirit witnesses with them
-

Discussion Prompt

“What does it look like practically to ‘obey God rather than men’ today?”

◆ Scene 4: Gamaliel's Wise Counsel and the Apostles' Response (5:33–42)

A. The Sanhedrin Wants to Kill Them

Their hearts are hardened, mirroring their response to Jesus.

B. Gamaliel Speaks Up

Gamaliel, a respected Pharisee and teacher of Paul, gives strategic advice:

1. If the movement is human, it will die.
2. If the movement is from God, you cannot stop it.
3. Fighting against it is fighting against God.

Gamaliel's reasoning is logical, not supportive, but God uses it.

C. The Apostles Are Beaten

This is the first physical violence against the apostles.

They receive **39 lashes**.

D. Their Reaction

“They rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer for the Name.”

\This is a supernatural joy—the fruit of the Spirit in persecution.

E. The Apostles Continue Preaching Daily

- In the Temple
- From house to house
- Without ceasing

The chapter ends with unstoppable Gospel momentum.

APPLICATION

1. God Takes Holiness Seriously

Ask:

“Where am I tempted to appear spiritual instead of being honest before God?”

2. Hypocrisy Kills Spiritual Power

Personal and community purity strengthens ministry.

3. Obey God Over Man

Where is God calling you to obey courageously—even when it costs something?

4. *Expect Joy in Suffering*

Spirit-filled believers find meaning and joy even in trials.

5. *Be Consistent Like the Apostles*

“Daily in the Temple and in every house...”

Faithfulness is the soil of spiritual fruit.

MEMORY VERSE

Acts 5:29

“We ought to obey God rather than men.”

Summary: Ananias and Sapphira lie about their giving and are struck dead, while the apostles perform miracles, facing more opposition but continuing to preach boldly.

Integrity in the community is crucial for God’s blessing; God disciplines His people to maintain purity; God’s judgment in the early church is a call to holiness.)

St. John Chrysostom (Homily VIII):

“Miracles prior to preaching confirm the truth; deeds prepare the hearts, while words teach the minds.”

— On the healing at the gate of the temple.

BOOK OF ACTS CHAPTER 6

Theme: *Service, Leadership, and the Growth of God’s Kingdom*

Acts 4 ended with unity and generosity; Acts 5 contrasts it with the dishonesty of Ananias and Sapphira, which shows God protecting the holiness of His Church, highlights divine discipline as necessary for the community’s integrity. Also tells us that Satan attacks from within when he cannot stop the Church from outside. This sets up the story of Stephen that continues into chapter 7.

GOAL OF THE LESSON

By the end of this lesson, students will:

- 1. Understand the importance of wise leadership and delegation in the early Church.**
 - 2. See how conflict can be an opportunity for God’s plan to advance.**
 - 3. Recognize the qualities God looks for in servants: Spirit-filled, full of wisdom, and trustworthy.**
 - 4. Apply these principles in church life, community service, and personal ministry.**
-

HOOK

1. Delegation Exercise

Ask:

- **“Imagine you’re organizing a big event. Can you do everything yourself?”**
- **“What happens if you try?”**

Explain:

The early Church faced a similar problem—they needed to delegate to focus on prayer and the Word.

2. The “Juggling Act” Illustration

Show or describe someone juggling many balls.

Ask:

“What happens if one drops?”

Transition:

“The apostles recognized that ministry requires both focus and teamwork.”

INTRODUCTION

1. Background Context

- **The Church is growing rapidly.**
- **Hellenistic Jews (Greek-speaking) feel neglected in daily food distribution.**
- **Internal conflict threatens unity.**

Growth brings challenges—both spiritual and practical. How a church handles these defines its strength.

The apostles' response demonstrates that leadership is not only about preaching but also about practical wisdom.

2. The Need for Delegation

- **The apostles prioritize prayer and ministry of the Word.**
 - **Service to others is essential, but it does not replace spiritual leadership.**
-

3. The Theme of Acts 6

Godly leadership preserves unity and empowers growth.

BODY OF LESSON

Break the chapter into three major scenes.

◆ Scene 1: The Problem Identified (6:1–4)

A. *The Complaint*

- Greek-speaking widows are neglected in daily distribution.
- The Hellenistic Jews feel overlooked.

This shows early multicultural tensions even within the Church.

B. *The Apostles' Response*

- They do not dismiss the complaint.
- They recognize the need for practical organization.

The apostles show humility—they do not see themselves as above the needs of the people.

C. *The Solution*

- Select seven men to serve (later called “deacons”).
 - Apostles remain focused on prayer and ministry of the Word.
-

D. *The Principle*

God values both:

1. Spiritual priorities
2. Practical service

Ask:

“Are there areas in our church where prayer and action need to be balanced?”

◆ Scene 2: The Selection of the Seven (6:5–7)

A. *Qualifications*

- Full of the Spirit
- Full of wisdom
- Honest, reputable

Godly service requires character, not just talent.

Spiritual maturity is essential for church leadership—practical skills alone are not enough.

B. The Chosen Men

- **Stephen**
- **Philip**
- **Prochorus**
- **Nicanor**
- **Timon**
- **Parmenas**
- **Nicolas (proselyte)**

Stephen is highlighted as the first martyr in the next chapter.

C. The Outcome

- **Apostles lay hands on them**
- **Ministry grows stronger**
- **Word of God spreads**
- **Church continues to increase in number**

Ask:

“What happens when spiritual leadership and practical service work together?”

◆ Scene 3: The Impact and Opposition (6:8–15)

A. Stephen’s Ministry

- **Full of grace**
- **Performs great wonders and signs among the people**

God works through Spirit-filled servants; miracles validate ministry.

B. Opposition Arises

- **Some members of the synagogue oppose him**
- **They accuse him falsely of blasphemy**
- **The stage is set for the first martyrdom**

Even Spirit-filled leaders face resistance. Opposition often confirms God’s purpose.

C. Stephen as a Model

- **Bold**
- **Spirit-filled**
- **Winsome**
- **Wise in speech**

Discussion Prompt:

“How can we cultivate both boldness and wisdom in our own lives?”

APPLICATION

1. Importance of Delegation

Ask:

“Where can you serve or empower others in your church, school, or family?”

2. Spiritual and Practical Balance

- **Prayer + Word ministry**
 - **Service + oversight**
 - **Wisdom + Spirit-filled living**
-

3. Qualities for Leadership

- **Integrity**
 - **Spirit-filled**
 - **Wisdom**
 - **Willingness to serve**
-

4. Responding to Opposition

- **Do not be discouraged by resistance**
 - **Let Spirit-filled service speak for itself**
-

5. Growth Comes From Cooperation

- **Church growth requires unity, delegation, and obedience to God.**

Ask:

“What small step can you take this week to help the community/church thrive?”

MEMORY VERSE

Acts 6:4

“But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”

St. John Chrysostom (Homily XV):

“The selection of the seven deacons reflects that the Church must combine prayer with service.”

— On appointment of the seven.

BOOK OF ACTS CHAPTER 7

Theme: *Faithful Witness and Courage Under Pressure*

Reminder: With rapid growth in Acts 6 that shows organizational development as the apostles appoint seven servants. As the Church adapting to new needs, leadership multiplication as essential for mission. This sets up the story of Stephen that continues into chapter 7.

GOAL OF THE LESSON

By the end of this lesson, teens will:

1. Understand Stephen's boldness in standing for God.
 2. Learn how faith in God gives courage, even in danger.
 3. See the power of God's plan working through history.
 4. Apply standing firm in faith, speaking truth, and forgiving others.
-

HOOK

1. The "Stand Your Ground" Game

- Ask: "Have you ever had to stand up for what's right, even when others were against you?"
- Share a short story of a teen defending a friend, being honest, or refusing to cheat.

2. Question to Teens

- "What would you do if everyone around you was against God, and you were the only one standing for Him?"

Transition:

This is exactly what Stephen faced.

INTRODUCTION

1. Context

- Stephen, one of the seven leaders from Acts 6, is full of the Holy Spirit.
- He preaches boldly about Jesus to Jewish leaders.
- He faces the Sanhedrin (Jewish council) because they are angry.

Stephen is the first Christian martyr, showing that faith sometimes costs everything.

2. Theme of Acts 7

Faithful witness sometimes costs, but God's plan is unstoppable.

BODY OF LESSON

Break the chapter into **three main sections**.

◆ Section 1: Stephen's Speech (7:1–53)

A. A Survey of God's Faithfulness

- **Abraham: called out of Ur, promised descendants**
- **Joseph: betrayal leads to preservation**
- **Moses: God's deliverer, Israel resists him**
- **Kings and Prophets: God's work often rejected**

Stephen demonstrates that God's plan transcends human institutions; history shows God's guidance and Israel's resistance.

The speech reveals a pattern: God sends deliverers, but humans resist; Stephen links that pattern to their rejection of Jesus.

B. Key Themes

1. **God is not confined to the Temple.**
2. **Israel has often resisted God's messengers.**
3. **Jesus is the fulfillment of God's promises.**

Discussion:

- **How does seeing God's faithfulness in history encourage us today?**
 - **Are we resisting God in subtle ways?**
-

◆ Section 2: Reaction of the Leaders (7:54–57)

- **The council is enraged.**
- **Stephen, filled with the Holy Spirit, stands firm.**
- **They cover their ears and shout at him.**

This shows the spiritual tension: truth offends pride and self-interest.

Stephen's Spirit-filled presence contrasts with the hardened hearts of the Sanhedrin.

◆ Section 3: Stephen's Martyrdom (7:58–60)

A. The Stoning

- **Stephen is dragged out and stoned outside the city.**
- **Stephen prays: “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.”**
- **Forgives his persecutors: “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.”**

Forgiveness at the moment of death exemplifies Christlikeness and divine grace.

Stephen's martyrdom marks the beginning of widespread persecution, showing that God's work often advances through suffering.

B. Stephen as a Model

- **Bold in witness**
 - **Spirit-filled**
 - **Faithful to God's plan**
 - **Forgiving in suffering**
-

APPLICATION

1. Stand Up for God

- Even if friends or others mock you.
- Example: Refuse to lie, cheat, or gossip.

2. Pray for Courage

- Ask the Holy Spirit for boldness.

3. Trust God's Plan

- Even if life seems unfair or scary, God's plan is bigger.

4. Forgive Others

- Like Stephen, forgive people who hurt you.

5. Be a Light

- Let your actions and words point to Jesus.
-

MEMORY VERSE

Acts 7:59–60

“Lord Jesus, receive my spirit... Lord, do not hold this sin against them.”

Summary: Stephen, the first martyr, gives a powerful defense of the faith and is stoned, while Saul (Paul) watches and approves. Stephen's martyrdom reflects the power of standing for Christ; Stephen's speech is a history lesson showing Israel's rejection of God; Stephen's death sparks the spread of the gospel. **This chapter transitions from Jerusalem-centered ministry to outward movement.**

This lesson can easily be done interactively with group discussion, role-play of Stephen speaking, and reflection on personal courage.

Acts 7

St. John Chrysostom (Homilies XVI–XVIII):

“Stephen's witness shows how truth, when nourished by the Spirit, becomes a sacrifice of praise even amid death.”

— On Stephen's speech and martyrdom.

BOOK OF ACTS CHAPTER 8

Theme: *The Expansion of the Gospel and the Work of the Holy Spirit*

Reminder: Acts 6 ends with Stephen accused; Acts 7 records his defense. Stephen's speech as a spiritual overview of salvation history. Also emphasizes how Stephen shows Israel's repeated rejection of God's messengers. Stephen's death becomes the spark that sends the gospel outward.

GOAL OF THE LESSON

By the end of this lesson, students will:

1. Understand how persecution can become an opportunity for gospel expansion.
2. Recognize the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit in ministry.
3. See the importance of personal evangelism and obedience.
4. Apply lessons of bold witness, discipleship, and Spirit-led action in their lives.

HOOK

"Turning Obstacles Into Opportunities"

Ask:

- "Have you ever faced a challenge that later opened a new door for growth?"
- Invite 1–2 students to briefly share examples.

Transition: Stephen's martyrdom and the resulting persecution forced the early Church to spread the Gospel beyond Jerusalem, showing how God can turn difficulties into blessings.

INTRODUCTION

1. Context

- Acts 7 ends with Stephen's martyrdom.
- Acts 8 begins with a major persecution led by Saul (later Paul).
- This persecution scatters believers but also spreads the Gospel to Judea and Samaria.

God's plan is unstoppable—even persecution advances His Kingdom.

The early Church grows strategically: persecution prompts missionary activity, leading to evangelism beyond the Jewish heartland.

2. Theme of Acts 8

God uses challenges to expand His Kingdom, and the Holy Spirit empowers bold, Spirit-led witness.

BODY OF LESSON

Break the chapter into **three main sections**.

◆ Section 1: Persecution and Scattering (8:1–8)

A. Saul's Persecution

- Saul approves Stephen's death.
- A great persecution arises, scattering believers to Judea and Samaria.

B. Gospel Expansion

- Scattered believers preach the Word wherever they go.
- Philip preaches in Samaria, performing signs and miracles.

God uses suffering to multiply ministry and reach new areas.

Even opposition can be a catalyst for growth when the Church relies on the Spirit.

C. Application

- God can use your difficulties to advance His purposes.
 - Evangelism often begins in unexpected places.
-

◆ Section 2: Philip in Samaria (8:4–25)

A. Ministry of Philip

- Preaches Christ, performs miracles, heals the sick.
- Many believe and are baptized.

B. Peter and John's Visit

- Apostles lay hands; believers receive the Holy Spirit.
- Introduces the importance of Spirit empowerment for effective ministry.

Spirit-led ministry is essential for the growth of the Church.

Baptism and Spirit-filled life are central to full participation in God's mission.

C. Application

- Ministry without the Spirit is limited; prayer and Spirit-dependence are key.
- God desires both personal faith and public witness.

◆ Section 3: Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch (8:26–40)

A. Divine Guidance

- Angel directs Philip to meet the Ethiopian official.
- Philip explains Scripture and shares the good news about Jesus.

B. Baptism

- The Ethiopian believes and is baptized immediately.

C. Evangelism Principle

- Obedience and responsiveness to the Spirit open doors for evangelism.
- God works through ordinary believers to reach the nations.

Philip's obedience shows how the Spirit guides personal evangelism. Evangelism combines Scripture, explanation, and immediate response to God's leading.

APPLICATION

1. Respond to God's Guidance

- Be attentive to the Spirit's promptings in everyday life.

2. Share the Gospel Boldly

- Like Philip, don't wait for perfect conditions.

3. Trust God in Persecution

- Difficulties may be the very way God grows His Church.

4. Spirit-Filled Ministry Matters

- Rely on the Spirit for effectiveness, not human strength alone.

5. Baptism and Commitment

- Immediate and public obedience demonstrates faith.
-

MEMORY VERSE

Acts 8:4

“Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went.”

Summary: *Persecution scatters the Church, but Philip boldly preaches in Samaria, and the Ethiopian eunuch is baptized.*

Persecution is used by God to spread the gospel. The gospel reaches new areas beyond Jerusalem; The spread of the gospel is unstoppable, even in the face of opposition.

St. John Chrysostom (Homily XIX):

“Philip shows the Spirit’s method: teach first, then baptize those who receive the Word.”
— On Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch.

BOOK OF ACTS CHAPTER 9

Theme: *Conversion, Transformation, and God's Sovereignty in Salvation*

GOAL OF THE LESSON

By the end of this lesson, students will:

1. Understand the dramatic conversion of Saul (Paul) and its implications.
 2. Recognize God's power to transform even the most unlikely individuals.
 3. See the role of obedience and prayer in spiritual growth.
 4. Apply lessons of transformation and God's calling to their own lives.
-

HOOK

1. "A Complete 180" Illustration

Ask:

- "Have you ever seen someone change completely for the better?"
- "What would it take for a person known for doing wrong to become a leader for good?"

Transition:

Saul's story is the ultimate example of God's transforming power.

INTRODUCTION

1. Context

- Saul, a fierce persecutor of Christians, is on his way to Damascus to arrest believers.
- God intervenes in a powerful, supernatural way to redirect Saul's life.
- This chapter marks the turning point in the spread of the Gospel to the Gentiles through Paul.

God can use even those who oppose Him to accomplish His purposes. Saul becomes the greatest missionary because of God's transformative power.

Saul's conversion demonstrates divine initiative—salvation begins with God, not human effort.

2. Theme of Acts 9

God's power transforms lives, turning enemies into instruments for His Kingdom.

BODY OF LESSON

Break the chapter into **three main sections**.

◆ Section 1: Saul's Conversion (9:1–19)

A. The Encounter on the Road to Damascus

- Saul is struck by a heavenly light and hears Jesus' voice.
- He is blinded and led into Damascus.

B. God's Instructions

- Saul hears that he will be told what to do.
- He experiences complete dependence on God.

The encounter demonstrates God's initiative; conversion is God's work first.

Spiritual blindness precedes spiritual insight—Saul must rely on God before he can serve Him.

C. Ananias' Role

- God sends Ananias to restore Saul's sight and baptize him.
- Ananias restoring Saul's sight and baptizing him proves that Christ intentionally established priesthood and confession as necessary channels of healing, forgiveness, and communion within the Church.
- Obedience to God brings about a miraculous ministry.

D. Key Principle

Transformation often involves both God's intervention and human obedience.

◆ Section 2: Saul Preaches in Damascus (9:20–25)

- Saul immediately begins preaching Jesus as the Son of God.
- He astonishes those who knew him as a persecutor.
- Jews plot to kill him, but he escapes in a basket.

True conversion leads to immediate action—Saul could not remain passive.

The radical nature of Saul's transformation is a testimony to God's power and sovereignty.

◆ Section 3: Peter's Ministry and Expansion (9:26–43)

A. Saul Accepted by the Apostles

- Initially met with suspicion; Barnabas introduces him to the apostles.
- Saul begins working alongside the believers.

B. Peter's Miracles

- Healing of Aeneas and raising Tabitha (Dorcas) from the dead.
- Demonstrates the power of the Spirit at work in the early Church.

God continues to use ordinary people (Peter, Tabitha) to confirm His work through signs and wonders.

The spread of the Gospel requires both transformed individuals and Spirit-empowered leaders.

APPLICATION

1. God Can Transform Anyone

- No past sin disqualifies you from God's plan.

2. Obedience Matters

- Like Ananias, we must obey God to be instruments of transformation.

3. Immediate Action After Conversion

- True faith produces action and witness.

4. Spirit-Empowered Ministry

- God confirms His work through prayer, miracles, and community support.

5. Trust God's Calling

- God can call us to roles we never imagined, even in the face of danger.
-

MEMORY VERSE

Acts 9:15

“But the Lord said to him, ‘Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel.’”

This lesson highlights the themes of **divine initiative, radical transformation, obedience, and Spirit-empowered ministry** and allows for discussion on personal life application.

St. John Chrysostom (Homilies XX–XXI):

“Saul’s conversion is the most brilliant proof that God’s grace can renew even the fiercest enemy.”

— On Paul’s encounter with Christ.

BOOK OF ACTS CHAPTER 10

Theme: *God's Salvation for All and the Breaking of Barriers*

GOAL OF THE LESSON

By the end of this lesson, students will:

1. Understand God's plan to extend salvation to Gentiles.
 2. Recognize the importance of obedience to God's guidance.
 3. Learn to overcome personal and cultural barriers to sharing the Gospel.
 4. Apply lessons of inclusion, discernment, and Spirit-led action in their lives.
-

HOOK

1. "Breaking Barriers" Illustration

Ask:

- "Have you ever been hesitant to include someone because of their background, culture, or status?"
- Share a story of someone bridging a gap in friendship, work, or ministry.

Transition:

Acts 10 shows Peter learning that God's salvation is for everyone, not just the Jews.

INTRODUCTION

1. Context

- Peter, a Jewish apostle, is accustomed to ministry among Jews.
- Cornelius, a Gentile centurion, is a God-fearing man who receives a divine vision.
- God orchestrates a meeting to demonstrate that the Gospel is for all people.

Peter's vision and Cornelius' encounter illustrate God's desire to remove barriers and extend salvation universally.

Acts 10 highlights divine initiative: God directs believers to obey, breaking long-held cultural restrictions.

2. Theme of Acts 10

God's salvation is for all people, and His Spirit guides believers to obey and break down barriers.

BODY OF LESSON

Break the chapter into **three main sections**.

◆ Section 1: Cornelius' Vision (10:1–8)

- Cornelius is a devout, God-fearing centurion.
- Angel instructs him to send for Peter.
- Cornelius responds in obedience and prepares to receive God's message.

God uses faithful seekers like Cornelius to demonstrate His inclusive plan.

Obedience opens the door for divine revelation.

Application

- Be attentive to God's guidance in unexpected ways.
 - God may lead you to people or places outside your comfort zone.
-

◆ Section 2: Peter's Vision and Revelation (10:9–23)

- Peter sees a sheet with unclean animals and hears God's voice: *"Do not call anything impure that God has made clean."*
- Peter struggles to understand but obeys the Spirit's guidance.

God challenges cultural and personal prejudices to accomplish His purposes.

The vision prepares Peter to accept Gentiles, showing that God's plan transcends human traditions.

Application

- Be open to God's correction of personal or cultural biases.
 - Trust God's wisdom, even when it challenges familiar patterns.
-

◆ Section 3: Peter and Cornelius Meet (10:24–48)

A. Peter Preaches the Gospel

- Explains Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.
- Emphasizes faith, repentance, and receiving the Holy Spirit.

B. Gentiles Receive the Holy Spirit

- Spirit falls on all who hear, shocking the Jewish believers present.
- Peter realizes God shows no favoritism: salvation is for all.

The gift of the Holy Spirit confirms that Gentiles are fully included in God's family.

Peter's obedience and preaching demonstrate that God's plan is universal; the Spirit empowers believers to witness beyond familiar boundaries.

APPLICATION

1. Obey God Promptly

- Cornelius and Peter both respond without hesitation.

2. Overcome Prejudices

- God calls us to break down barriers of race, culture, or tradition in ministry.

3. Preach Boldly

- Share the Gospel clearly and Spirit-empowered.

4. Trust the Spirit's Work

- God confirms His work through the Spirit in unexpected ways.

5. Salvation Is Inclusive

- God's love and grace are for everyone—no one is outside His reach.

MEMORY VERSE

Acts 10:34–35

“Then Peter began to speak: ‘I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right.’”

This lesson emphasizes **obedience, Spirit-led revelation, breaking cultural barriers, and the universal nature of salvation**. Discussion can include practical ways to reach beyond comfort zones.

St. John Chrysostom (Homilies XXII–XXIV):

“Cornelius and Peter together show that the Gospel’s net catches both Jews and Gentiles alike.”

— On baptism of the Gentiles.

BOOK OF ACTS CHAPTER 11

Theme: God's Inclusive Plan and the Growth of the Church

Acts 10's Gentile conversion leads to explanation and acceptance in Acts 11. Highlights the unity the Spirit creates. Peter's defense clarifies God's new direction for the Church. Also, points out Antioch becoming the new mission center. The chapter transitions from Jewish-only mission to a global Church.

GOAL OF THE LESSON

By the end of this lesson, students will:

1. Understand the early Church's response to the inclusion of Gentiles.
2. Recognize the importance of discernment, testimony, and unity in the Church.
3. Apply lessons of openness, evangelism, and encouragement in their own lives.

HOOK

1. "Newcomers in the Community" Illustration

Ask:

- "Have you ever been hesitant to welcome someone, or new comer to church because they were different from you?"
- Share a story of initial skepticism that turned into blessing.

Transition:

The early Church wrestled with similar issues when Gentiles came to faith. Acts 11 shows God confirming His work and guiding the Church in understanding.

INTRODUCTION

1. Context

- Acts 10 records Gentiles receiving the Gospel and the Holy Spirit.
- Jewish believers are surprised and even critical of this development.
- Acts 11 explains how the apostles discern God's guidance and respond with unity.

The chapter teaches that God's plan is inclusive, and the Church must adapt with understanding and openness.

This chapter emphasizes both **defense of God’s work** and the **importance of testimony** to clarify divine action.

2. Theme of Acts 11

God’s work among the Gentiles is real, and the Church must respond with discernment, acceptance, and encouragement.

BODY OF LESSON

Break the chapter into **three main sections**.

◆ Section 1: Peter Explains His Actions (11:1–18)

- Peter reports his vision, encounter with Cornelius, and the coming of the Holy Spirit on Gentiles.
- Some believers criticize, but Peter recounts God’s clear guidance.
- The Church listens, discerns, and praises God.

Peter models humility and clarity—he explains his actions based on obedience, not personal preference.

The story shows that God confirms His work with **evidence and testimony**, not human argument.

Application

- When encountering new situations, seek God’s guidance first.
 - Testimony and clear explanation build unity, not division.
 - Be ready to adjust traditional practices in obedience to God.
-

◆ Section 2: The Church in Antioch (11:19–26)

- Scattered believers reach Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching to Jews and Gentiles.
- Barnabas is sent from Jerusalem to encourage and train new believers.
- Saul (Paul) joins Barnabas; they teach in Antioch for a year.
- The disciples are first called **“Christians”** here.

Antioch becomes a center of Spirit-led, multicultural evangelism.

This illustrates that encouragement, teaching, and leadership are essential for Church growth.

Application

- Be a mentor or encourager to new believers.
 - Understand that the Church grows through teaching, unity, and outreach.
 - Evangelism should cross cultural and social barriers.
-

◆ Section 3: God's Plan Confirmed (11:27–30)

- Prophets come from Jerusalem; Agabus predicts a famine.
- Antioch believers respond generously, sending aid to Jerusalem.
- Demonstrates the Church's practical love and unity.

God's work is confirmed when the Church responds in **faith, generosity, and obedience**.

The Holy Spirit guides both spiritual and practical decisions for the growth and care of God's people.

APPLICATION

1. Be Open to God's Guidance

- Accept new people, ideas, and ministries when God clearly leads.

2. Testify Clearly

- Like Peter, explain your actions with humility and evidence of God's work.

3. Encourage and Teach

- Invest in mentoring and training others in faith.

4. Show Practical Love

- Generosity and service confirm God's work among believers.

5. Embrace Unity

- God's work is hindered when His people are divided—seek unity in mission.
-

MEMORY VERSE

Acts 11:18

“When they heard this, they had no further objections and praised God, saying, ‘So then, even to the Gentiles God has granted repentance that leads to life.’”

This lesson emphasizes **obedience, discernment, inclusivity, mentoring, and practical care**, with opportunities for discussion on welcoming and teaching new believers.

St. John Chrysostom (Homily XXV):

“The Church at Antioch became a school of grace where disciples were first called Christians.”

— On Church growth and identity.

BOOK OF ACTS CHAPTER 12

Theme: God's Protection, Prayer, and Deliverance

Acts 11 ended with growth in Antioch; Acts 12 returns to intense persecution in Jerusalem. God's deliverance of Peter as a sign of His care. God's protection of the Church with Herod's downfall. Highlights the unstoppable progress of the Word. This chapter closes the Jerusalem-centered section of Acts.

GOAL OF THE LESSON

By the end of this lesson, students will:

1. Understand God's protection over His people in times of persecution.
2. Recognize the power and effectiveness of prayer.
3. Learn to trust God's sovereignty even when circumstances seem dire.
4. Apply lessons of courage, prayer, and dependence on God in daily life.

HOOK

1. "When Danger Feels Close" Illustration

Ask:

- "Have you ever faced a situation where danger or difficulty seemed unavoidable?"
- "How did you react? Did you feel God's protection?"

Transition:

Acts 12 shows God delivering Peter from prison and protecting His Church even under violent opposition.

INTRODUCTION

1. Context

- King Herod Agrippa persecutes the Church, executing James and imprisoning Peter.
- The Church responds with prayer.
- God intervenes miraculously, showing His power over human authorities.

God is sovereign over life, death, and political powers; prayer is His chosen instrument of action.

Acts 12 emphasizes the interplay between human plans and divine sovereignty—persecution cannot thwart God’s purpose.

2. Theme of Acts 12

God protects His people and answers prayer, demonstrating His sovereignty over authorities and circumstances.

BODY OF LESSON

Break the chapter into three main sections.

◆ Section 1: Persecution by Herod (12:1–5)

- Herod executes James and imprisons Peter, intending to kill him.
- The Church responds with fervent prayer.

Prayer is the Church’s first defense and demonstrates faith in God’s sovereignty.

Even in dire circumstances, God hears His people and acts according to His timing.

Application

- In danger or difficulty, pray first and trust God’s protection.
 - Prayer is both a weapon and a means of spiritual dependence.
-

◆ Section 2: Peter’s Miraculous Escape (12:6–19)

- An angel appears in Peter’s cell, releasing him from chains.
- Peter is guided out past guards and realizes God has delivered him.
- Peter goes to Mary’s house where believers are praying for him.

God delivers according to His plan—miracles confirm His care and power.

God’s intervention may be miraculous or ordinary, but His purposes are always fulfilled.

Application

- Expect God to act, even when situations seem impossible.
- Miracles may happen in unexpected ways.

- God’s protection allows us to continue His work.

◆ Section 3: Herod’s Death (12:20–25)

- Herod accepts praise as a god, and an angel strikes him down.
- God’s justice is revealed, contrasting His care for His people with judgment on oppressors.
- The Word of God continues to spread, and Barnabas and Saul return from mission work.

God’s timing is perfect: He delivers His people and punishes the arrogant.

The Church thrives not through human power, but through God’s providence and the faithfulness of His servants.

APPLICATION

1. Depend on God in Persecution

- Trust God’s protection even when threats seem real.

2. Pray Persistently

- Prayer aligns the Church with God’s plan and unleashes His power.

3. God Acts Sovereignly

- Recognize God’s hand in deliverance and judgment.

4. Continue His Work

- God delivers not only for safety but to continue ministry and mission.

5. Praise and Witness

- Testimonies of God’s protection encourage the Church and spread His Word.

MEMORY VERSE

Acts 12:5

“So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him.”

This lesson emphasizes prayer, divine protection, faith under persecution, and God’s sovereignty, with discussion opportunities on trusting God in modern challenges.

Summary: *Peter is miraculously freed from prison, and King Herod dies, showing God’s sovereignty in protecting His people.*

Prayer and faith can bring miraculous deliverance; God's power is evident in His protection and judgment; God's sovereignty prevails over earthly rulers.

Acts 12

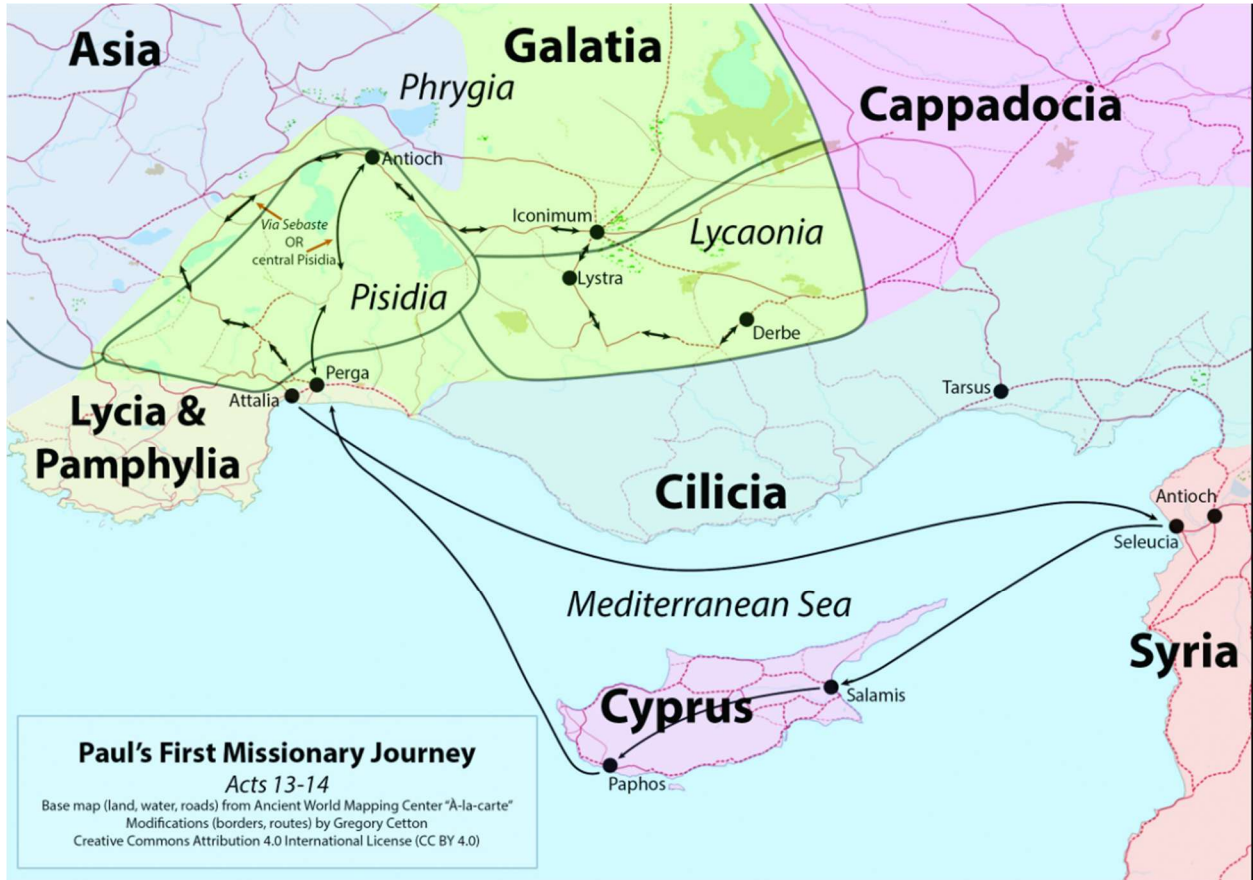
St. John Chrysostom (Homily XXVI):

“The Lord's deliverance of Peter reminds us God hears the prayer of His servants, even in prison.”

— On Peter's rescue.

BOOK OF ACTS CHAPTER 13

Theme: *Missionary Work and God's Guidance in Spreading the Gospel*



GOAL OF THE LESSON

By the end of this lesson, students will:

1. Understand how the Holy Spirit directs missionary work.
2. Recognize the importance of obedience and discernment in ministry.
3. Learn to proclaim the Gospel boldly, relying on God's guidance.
4. Apply lessons of faith, evangelism, and perseverance in their own lives.

HOOK

1. "Following God's Call" Illustration

Ask:

- “Have you ever felt God calling you to do something that scared you or seemed impossible?”
- Share a story about someone taking a bold step in obedience to God.

Transition:

Acts 13 shows how the Holy Spirit guides the Church in sending missionaries to spread the Gospel boldly.

INTRODUCTION

1. Context

- **The Church in Antioch prays, fasts, and seeks God’s guidance.**
- **The Holy Spirit directs Barnabas and Saul (Paul) for mission work.**
- **This chapter marks the beginning of Paul’s first missionary journey.**

The Church’s mission requires both prayerful dependence on God and bold action.

Acts 13 emphasizes divine initiative: God leads and empowers His servants for the work He has called them to do.

2. Theme of Acts 13

God directs and empowers His servants to proclaim the Gospel to all nations.

BODY OF LESSON:

Break the chapter into three main sections.

◆ Section 1: Sending of Barnabas and Saul (13:1–3)

- **Prophets and teachers in Antioch, guided by the Holy Spirit, fast and pray.**
- **The Spirit instructs them to set apart Barnabas and Saul for the work.**
- **The Church commissions them with prayer and fasting.**

God calls and equips those He chooses; the Church’s role is to confirm and support.

Missionary work begins with prayer, fasting, and listening to the Spirit’s direction.

Application

- **Seek God’s guidance in all ministry decisions.**

- Support those God calls through prayer and encouragement.
- Be willing to step into God's plan even when it requires leaving comfort zones.

◆ Section 2: Preaching in Cyprus and Pisidian Antioch (13:4–41)

- Barnabas and Saul proclaim the Gospel in synagogues, starting with Jews and God-fearers.
- Paul preaches about God's faithfulness, salvation history, and Jesus' resurrection.
- Some believe; others resist and oppose the message.

Bold proclamation involves teaching, reasoning, and pointing to God's work in history.

Faithful preaching may face opposition, but the Spirit confirms the message in those who believe.

Application

- Be bold in sharing the Gospel with clarity and confidence.
- Expect resistance but trust God to work in the hearts of listeners.
- Use Scripture to explain God's plan and faithfulness.

◆ Section 3: Opposition and Turning to the Gentiles (13:42–52)

- Many Jews reject the message; Paul and Barnabas turn to the Gentiles.
- Gentiles rejoice and respond with faith, marking the expansion of the Gospel.
- The Church is encouraged, filled with the Holy Spirit, and continues to grow.

God's mission is inclusive; rejection by some does not hinder His plan.

The spread of the Gospel moves beyond cultural and religious boundaries, empowered by the Spirit.

APPLICATION

1. Obey the Spirit's Leading

- God's guidance is essential for fruitful ministry.

2. Proclaim the Gospel Boldly

- Teach, reason, and testify with confidence.

3. Accept Opposition

- Not everyone will accept God’s Word—remain faithful.

4. Reach Beyond Comfort Zones

- The Gospel is for all nations; cultural or religious barriers cannot stop God.

5. Encourage and Support

- The Church must pray, encourage, and support those called to mission work.

MEMORY VERSE

Acts 13:47

“For this is what the Lord has commanded us: ‘I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.’”

This lesson emphasizes Spirit-led mission, bold preaching, faith under opposition, and the inclusivity of God’s plan, with opportunities to discuss personal evangelism and obedience.

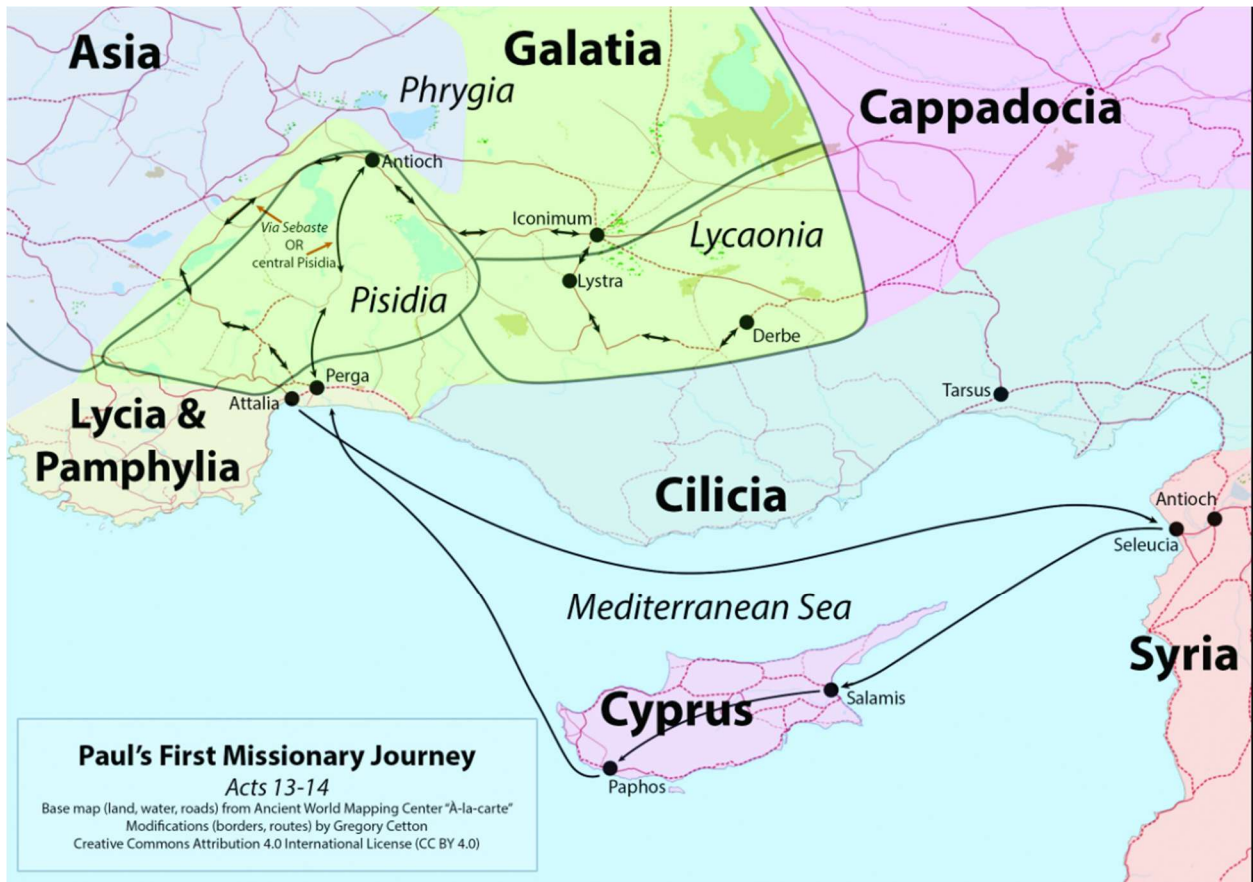
Acts 13

St. John Chrysostom (Homily XXVII):

**“When the Spirit says, ‘Set apart,’ He is sending not just men, but witnesses of Christ.”
— On the commissioning of Paul and Barnabas.**

BOOK OF ACTS CHAPTER 14

Theme: *Perseverance in Mission and Trusting God Amid Opposition*



GOAL OF THE LESSON

By the end of this lesson, students will:

1. Understand the challenges and opposition faced in ministry.
2. Recognize the importance of perseverance and reliance on God.
3. Learn to encourage and strengthen new believers.
4. Apply lessons of courage, faith, and follow-up in their own spiritual journey.

HOOK

1. "Staying Strong Under Pressure" Illustration

Ask:

- "Have you ever faced rejection, criticism, or difficulty while trying to do something good?"
- "How did you respond? Did you persevere or give up?"

Transition:

Acts 14 demonstrates how Paul and Barnabas faced opposition yet trusted God and continued their mission.

INTRODUCTION

1. Context

- **Paul and Barnabas continue their first missionary journey in Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe.**
- **They preach the Gospel, perform miracles, and face opposition from both Jews and Gentiles.**
- **Despite challenges, they strengthen new believers and continue their work.**

The chapter shows that ministry often involves struggle, but God protects, strengthens, and guides His servants.

Faithful ministry requires courage, perseverance, and a focus on God’s purposes, not human approval.

2. Theme of Acts 14

God strengthens His servants to persevere in ministry, and the Church grows despite opposition.

BODY OF LESSON

Break the chapter into three main sections.

◆ **Section 1: Ministry in Iconium (14:1–7)**

- **Paul and Barnabas preach in the synagogue; many believe. Some Jews stir opposition, leading to a division among the people.**
- **God’s plan continues despite human resistance.**

Faithful preaching brings both acceptance and resistance; God remains in control.

Opposition is expected in ministry; perseverance is essential.

Application

- **Expect resistance when sharing the Gospel.**
- **Trust God to guide and protect your efforts.**
- **Remain faithful even when outcomes are uncertain.**

◆ Section 2: Ministry in Lystra and Derbe (14:8–20)

- In Lystra, Paul heals a crippled man; the people mistake them for gods.
- Paul and Barnabas clarify their humanity, pointing to God.
- Jews from Iconium stir a crowd; Paul is stoned but survives and continues his mission.

Even when misunderstood or attacked, God’s servants are empowered to continue their work.

God’s presence sustains believers through trials and apparent failures.

Application

- Respond with humility when misinterpreted or glorified by others.
 - Keep serving God faithfully, even after setbacks.
 - Rely on God’s strength in times of danger or misunderstanding.
-

◆ Section 3: Strengthening the Churches (14:21–28)

- Paul and Barnabas return to strengthen the disciples, appoint elders, and encourage perseverance.
- They report to the Church in Antioch, sharing what God accomplished.

Spiritual follow-up and encouragement are crucial in ministry. Discipleship ensures lasting growth.

The Church thrives when leaders nurture, encourage, and organize new believers.

APPLICATION

1. Persevere in Ministry

- Keep serving even when facing opposition or danger.

2. Depend on God’s Protection

- Trust God to guide, sustain, and protect you.

3. Clarify God’s Glory

- Always point people to God, not yourself.

4. Encourage and Discipleship

- Support new believers and help them grow in faith.

5. Celebrate God's Work

- Share testimonies and victories with the Church community.
-

MEMORY VERSE

Acts 14:22

“We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God.”

This lesson emphasizes perseverance, humility, discipleship, and God's protection, with discussion opportunities on facing opposition and strengthening others in faith.

St. John Chrysostom (Homily XXVIII):

“Perseverance in preaching amid opposition shows that tribulation is the proof of authenticity.”

— On ministry in Iconium and Lystra.

BOOK OF ACTS CHAPTER 15

Theme: *Unity, Guidance, and Resolution in the Church*



GOAL OF THE LESSON

By the end of this lesson, students will:

1. Understand how the early Church resolved doctrinal disputes.
2. Recognize the importance of unity, consultation, and discernment.
3. Learn to follow God's guidance in communal and personal decisions.
4. Apply lessons of humility, wisdom, and love in resolving conflicts.

HOOK

1. "Resolving a Disagreement" Illustration

Ask:

80

- “Have you ever disagreed with someone about what is right or best?”
- “How was the disagreement resolved—through discussion, compromise, or authority?”

Transition:

Acts 15 shows the early Church facing a serious doctrinal dispute and relying on prayer, Scripture, and the Holy Spirit to guide them to unity.

INTRODUCTION

1. Context

- **Some believers insisted that Gentiles must follow the Law of Moses to be saved.**
- **Paul and Barnabas travel to Jerusalem to discuss the issue with the apostles and elders.**
- **The Church resolves the issue through careful consideration, Scripture, and the Holy Spirit’s guidance.**

The chapter demonstrates that God desires unity, clarity, and guidance in His Church.

Acts 15 emphasizes wisdom, humility, and the authority of the apostles in addressing disputes, preventing division.

2. Theme of Acts 15

God guides His Church to unity and clarity when facing doctrinal disputes.

BODY OF LESSON

Break the chapter into three main sections.

◆ Section 1: The Dispute Over Gentiles (15:1–5)

- **Some Jewish Christians insist Gentiles must be circumcised and follow the Law.**
- **The Church seeks guidance from the apostles and elders in Jerusalem.**

Unity in the Church requires addressing disputes openly and seeking God’s wisdom.

Disagreements should be resolved by Scripture, prayer, and collective discernment.

Application

- Address conflicts calmly and biblically.
 - Avoid imposing personal traditions on others.
 - Seek guidance from spiritual leaders and the Word of God.
-

◆ Section 2: The Council at Jerusalem (15:6–21)

- Peter emphasizes that salvation is through grace, not the Law.
- James summarizes the Scriptures, showing God’s plan for Gentiles.
- The Church agrees to guide Gentile believers with a few key instructions (avoid idolatry, sexual immorality, etc.).
Decision-making in the Church must honor God, respect Scripture, and protect unity.

The Holy Spirit confirms decisions that align with God’s Word and purposes.

Application

- Use Scripture as the ultimate authority in resolving disputes.
 - Seek unity over personal preferences.
 - Make decisions guided by the Spirit and for the good of the Church.
-

◆ Section 3: Letters and Encouragement (15:22–35)

- A letter is sent to Gentile believers, confirming the council’s decision.
- Paul and Barnabas continue ministry with encouragement and support.

Communication, clarity, and encouragement help prevent misunderstandings and division.

The Church thrives when guidance is communicated clearly and with love.

APPLICATION

1. Seek Unity

- Work toward reconciliation and consensus in disagreements.

2. Follow Scripture and the Spirit

- Let the Word of God guide decisions, not human traditions.

3. Encourage Others

- Provide support and clarity to prevent confusion or discouragement.

4. Respect Church Leadership

- Leaders are called to discern and guide, not to impose unnecessary burdens.

5. Be Flexible in Minor Matters

- Avoid letting non-essential issues create division.

MEMORY VERSE

Acts 15:11

“We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are.”

This lesson emphasizes unity, wisdom, reliance on Scripture, and communal discernment, with discussion opportunities on resolving disputes in faith communities or personal life.

Church Fathers (Council of Jerusalem) — *as reflected in Chrysostom’s discussion:*

“The unity of the Church is maintained in truth and grace, not in ethnic boundary.”
— A patristic principle drawn from early commentaries on Acts 15.

BOOK OF ACTS CHAPTER 16

Theme: *Guidance of the Holy Spirit and Faithful Obedience*

GOAL OF THE LESSON

By the end of this lesson, students will:

1. Understand how the Holy Spirit directs ministry and missionary work.
 2. Recognize the importance of obedience and courage in serving God.
 3. Learn to trust God in uncertain or challenging circumstances.
 4. Apply lessons of faith, prayer, and evangelism in daily life.
-

HOOK

1. “When You Don’t Know the Way” Illustration

Ask:

- “Have you ever had to make an important decision without knowing the outcome?”
- “How did you know what to do?”

Transition:

Acts 16 shows Paul and his companions being guided step by step by the Holy Spirit, demonstrating obedience and trust in God’s direction.

INTRODUCTION

1. Context

- Paul, Silas, and Timothy begin the second missionary journey.
- The Holy Spirit prevents them from preaching in certain areas and directs them to Macedonia.
- Key events include the conversion of Lydia, the exorcism of a slave girl, and the miraculous imprisonment and release of Paul and Silas.

God’s guidance is often specific, personal, and timely, requiring faith and obedience.

Acts 16 emphasizes the interplay of divine leading and human action in accomplishing God’s mission.

2. Theme of Acts 16

Obedience to the Holy Spirit leads to God's work being accomplished, often in unexpected ways.

BODY OF LESSON

Break the chapter into three main sections.

◆ Section 1: Guidance to Macedonia (16:1–10)

- Paul meets Timothy and circumcises him for ministry unity.
- The Spirit prevents them from preaching in certain areas and leads them to Macedonia through a vision. God's guidance may include both prohibitions and clear direction; discernment is key.

Spiritual sensitivity allows God to direct His servants to the right time, place, and people.

Application

- Listen for God's direction in prayer and Scripture.
 - Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit's guidance in decisions.
 - Trust God's timing and destination, even when uncertain.
-

◆ Section 2: Conversion of Lydia and Ministry in Philippi (16:11–15)

- Paul and his companions meet Lydia, a worshiper of God, who responds to the Gospel.
- Lydia and her household are baptized, showing faith and obedience.

God opens hearts; obedience and hospitality support the spread of the Gospel.

Individual conversions often lead to the formation of a community of believers.

Application

- Be hospitable and supportive to new believers.
 - Recognize God's work in individuals and communities.
 - Celebrate and encourage faith decisions.
-

◆ Section 3: Paul and Silas in Prison (16:16–40)

- A slave girl with a spirit of divination follows them, and Paul commands the spirit to leave.
- Her owners incite authorities; Paul and Silas are imprisoned.
- God miraculously frees them through an earthquake.
- The jailer and his household believe and are baptized.

Trials can become opportunities for God’s power and salvation to be revealed.

Faithfulness in adversity demonstrates God’s power and leads to conversion of others.

Application

- Trust God in difficulties; He can turn challenges into ministry opportunities.
- Stand firm in faith even when facing injustice.
- Be ready to witness through actions and words in all circumstances.

APPLICATION

1. Follow the Spirit’s Leading

- Obedience opens doors for God’s work.

2. Hospitality and Support

- Support those who respond to the Gospel.

3. Faith in Trials

- God can use difficulties for His glory and the salvation of others.

4. Boldness in Ministry

- Stand firm and act faithfully even under opposition.

5. Celebrate God’s Power

- Testimonies of God’s intervention encourage the Church and inspire faith.
-

MEMORY VERSE

Acts 16:31

“Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.”

This lesson emphasizes Holy Spirit guidance, obedience, courage, and trust in God, with discussion opportunities on discerning God’s direction and witnessing through trials.

Early Patristic Insight (Paul at Philippi):

**“Faith frees us from the bondages of fear so that joy may triumph in captivity.”
— A theme in Chrysostom’s reflections on Paul and Silas.**

BOOK OF ACTS CHAPTER 17

Theme: *Proclaiming Christ in Diverse Cultures and Contexts*

GOAL OF THE LESSON

By the end of this lesson, students will:

1. Understand how to proclaim the Gospel in different cultural and intellectual settings.
 2. Recognize the importance of reasoning, dialogue, and contextualization in evangelism.
 3. Learn to respond to opposition with faith and wisdom.
 4. Apply lessons of boldness, discernment, and adaptability in sharing the Gospel.
-

HOOK

1. “Sharing Your Faith in Different Places” Illustration

Ask:

- “Have you ever had to explain your faith to someone who had very different beliefs?”
- “How did you approach it?”

Transition:

Acts 17 shows Paul adapting his message to different audiences, reasoning with Jews, God-fearers, and philosophers, demonstrating both boldness and wisdom.

INTRODUCTION

1. Context

- Paul and his companions continue their second missionary journey.
- They travel to Thessalonica, Berea, and Athens.
- The chapter highlights three methods of evangelism: preaching in synagogues, reasoning from Scripture, and engaging with local culture and philosophy.

The Gospel speaks across cultures; understanding your audience helps communicate God’s truth effectively.

Acts 17 emphasizes a balance of faithfulness to the Gospel and sensitivity to cultural context.

2. Theme of Acts 17

The Gospel reaches all people when proclaimed faithfully, wisely, and contextually.

BODY OF LESSON

Break the chapter into three main sections.

◆ Section 1: Thessalonica (17:1–9)

- Paul reasons in the synagogue, explaining Scripture and proving that Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead.
- Some Jews are persuaded, but others stir opposition, causing persecution.

Even faithful teaching may face resistance; God's Word cannot be silenced by human hostility.

Effective evangelism often involves both conviction and confrontation.

Application

- Be prepared for both acceptance and opposition when sharing the Gospel.
 - Use Scripture to explain and defend the faith clearly.
 - Trust God to work in the hearts of listeners.
-

◆ Section 2: Berea (17:10–15)

- Bereans are described as noble because they receive the Word and examine the Scriptures daily.
- Many believe, demonstrating eagerness and discernment.
- Paul is sent away for safety due to opposition.

Discerning hearts respond to God's Word by testing it and embracing it sincerely.

True spiritual growth involves personal engagement with Scripture, not just passive hearing.

Application

- Encourage personal study and examination of Scripture.
 - Value discernment and thoughtful reception of God's Word.
 - Support and nurture new believers who embrace the Gospel with eagerness.
-

◆ Section 3: Athens (17:16–34)

- Paul engages Greek philosophers at the Areopagus, addressing their altar to the “unknown god.”
- He reasons about God’s nature, creation, and judgment, connecting Scripture with their cultural context.
- Some mock, but others believe, including Dionysius and Damaris.

Cultural sensitivity and reasoning allow the Gospel to touch hearts even in unfamiliar settings.

Effective evangelism combines wisdom, knowledge of Scripture, and contextual awareness.

Application

- Understand your audience and communicate God’s truth in ways they can understand.
 - Use reason, Scripture, and cultural references wisely.
 - Respect differences, but boldly proclaim Christ as Lord.
-

APPLICATION

1. Be Bold and Wise

- Speak truth clearly, but adapt to your audience without compromising the Gospel.

2. Engage Culturally

- Understand the beliefs and values of the people you minister to.

3. Encourage Scriptural Study

- Promote personal examination of the Word to strengthen faith.

4. Persevere Amid Opposition

- Not everyone will respond positively; trust God’s plan.

5. Celebrate Conversion

- Rejoice in even small victories for Christ, as in Dionysius and Damaris.
-

MEMORY VERSE

Acts 17:11

“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.”

This lesson emphasizes faithful proclamation, cultural engagement, wisdom, and perseverance, with discussion opportunities on contextual evangelism and discerning responses to the Gospel.

Acts 17

Patristic Reflection on Paul at Athens:

“In Him we live and move and have our being.” — *Ambrose quoting Paul’s words in Acts 17:28* to teach divine omnipresence.

BOOK OF ACTS CHAPTER 18

Theme: *Partnership, Perseverance, and God's Guidance in Ministry*



GOAL OF THE LESSON

By the end of this lesson, students will:

1. Understand the importance of partnerships in ministry.
2. Recognize the role of perseverance amid opposition.
3. Learn to trust God's guidance in new missions.
4. Apply lessons of collaboration, boldness, and faithfulness in their own work for Christ.

HOOK

1. "Working Together for a Goal" Illustration

Ask:

- "Have you ever worked on a project with someone else to achieve a goal?"
- "What makes partnerships effective?"

Transition:

Acts 18 shows Paul working with Aquila and Priscilla, enduring opposition, and following God’s direction, illustrating the power of teamwork and perseverance in ministry.

INTRODUCTION

1. Context

- **Paul travels to Corinth, a major commercial and cultural city.**
- **He meets Aquila and Priscilla, fellow tentmakers, and works alongside them.**
- **Paul preaches in the synagogue, faces opposition, and then focuses on ministry to the Gentiles.**
- **God assures Paul of His presence and protection.**

Effective ministry often requires partnership, courage, and reliance on God’s promises.

Acts 18 emphasizes boldness in witness, resilience under opposition, and God’s personal guidance.

2. Theme of Acts 18

God strengthens partnerships and perseverance in ministry to accomplish His purposes.

BODY OF LESSON

Break the chapter into three main sections.

◆ Section 1: Ministry in Corinth (18:1–11)

- **Paul meets Aquila and Priscilla, fellow tentmakers, and works with them.**
- **He preaches in the synagogue, convincing many Jews and God-fearing Gentiles.**
- **Opposition arises, but God assures Paul: “Do not be afraid; keep on speaking... I am with you.”**

Partnerships multiply effectiveness; God’s promise provides courage.

Perseverance and boldness in ministry are grounded in God’s presence, not human approval.

Application

- **Build strong partnerships in ministry.**
- **Trust God’s presence when facing opposition.**

- Continue faithfully even when results are slow or resistance arises.

◆ Section 2: Ministry with Aquila and Priscilla (18:12–28)

- Paul is brought before the Roman proconsul Gallio, but the legal charges fail.
- Aquila and Priscilla teach Apollos, who becomes a more effective preacher.

Mentorship and collaboration strengthen the Church and equip others for service.

God works through both personal efforts and the preparation of others for ministry.

Application

- Mentor and support other believers.
 - Share skills and knowledge to strengthen others' ministry.
 - Value teamwork and cooperation in God's work.
-

◆ Section 3: Departure and Ongoing Ministry (18:18–28)

- Paul travels to Ephesus, preaches boldly, and encourages disciples.
- Apollos continues ministry, teaching accurately about Jesus.
- God's work spreads through bold, faithful witness.

Persistence and faithfulness in ministry result in lasting fruit.

Even brief ministries, when faithful, contribute to God's ongoing mission.

Application

- Follow God's guidance in new opportunities.
 - Be faithful and bold wherever you serve.
 - Encourage continuity of ministry by equipping others.
-

APPLICATION

1. Build Godly Partnerships

- Teamwork multiplies ministry effectiveness.

2. Persevere Through Opposition

- Trust God's presence and promises.

3. Mentor and Equip Others

- Invest in teaching and guiding fellow believers.

4. Boldness in New Opportunities

- Move confidently into new missions as God leads.

5. Celebrate Growth in Others

- Rejoice in the effectiveness and faithfulness of those you mentor.
-

MEMORY VERSE

Acts 18:9–10

“Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city who are my people.”

This lesson emphasizes partnership, boldness, mentorship, and reliance on God, with discussion opportunities on teamwork, perseverance, and equipping others for ministry.

Acts 18

Church Fathers on Paul’s Corinth ministry:

“To labor faithfully is to plant seed whose harvest eternal time will reveal.”

— A patristic motto echoed in various homilies about evangelism.

BOOK OF ACTS CHAPTER 19

Theme: *Power of the Holy Spirit and the Authority of Christ*

GOAL OF THE LESSON

By the end of this lesson, students will:

- 1. Understand the work of the Holy Spirit in empowering believers.**
 - 2. Recognize the importance of faith, obedience, and spiritual authority.**
 - 3. Learn how God’s power confronts falsehood and opposition.**
 - 4. Apply lessons of boldness, discernment, and God-centered living.**
-

HOOK

1. “Power That Changes Lives” Illustration

Ask:

- “Have you ever seen someone’s life radically changed through faith or God’s power?”**
- “What was the source of that transformation?”**

Transition:

Acts 19 demonstrates the transforming power of the Holy Spirit through baptism, miracles, and bold proclamation, impacting both individuals and entire communities.

INTRODUCTION

1. Context

- Paul arrives in Ephesus, finds some disciples who had only received John’s baptism.**
- He baptizes them in the name of Jesus, and they receive the Holy Spirit.**
- Miracles, healings, and bold preaching follow, drawing crowds and challenging false spiritual practices.**
- Opposition arises, leading to the famous riot instigated by the silversmiths of Diana.**

The Holy Spirit empowers believers for ministry, confronts falsehood, and glorifies God.

Acts 19 highlights the authority of Christ and the transformational impact of Spirit-filled ministry.

2. Theme of Acts 19

The Holy Spirit empowers believers to witness, confront evil, and glorify God in every sphere of life.

BODY OF LESSON

Break the chapter into three main sections.

◆ Section 1: Disciples in Ephesus and Spirit Baptism (19:1–7)

- Paul meets disciples who had only received John's baptism.
- He explains and baptizes them in Jesus' name, and they receive the Holy Spirit.
- They speak in tongues and prophesy, showing empowerment.

Proper teaching and reception of Christ's authority bring spiritual fullness. Faith and obedience prepare believers to receive the Holy Spirit and operate in spiritual power.

Application

- Ensure understanding of Christ and the Gospel.
 - Seek the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.
 - Obedience and faith are prerequisites for spiritual fruitfulness.
-

◆ Section 2: Miracles and the Spread of the Gospel (19:8–20)

- Paul teaches in the synagogue, then in the lecture hall of Tyrannus for two years.
- God performs extraordinary miracles, including healings and exorcisms.
- People renounce occult practices and burn their magical books.

God's power transforms hearts, challenges false beliefs, and spreads His Word effectively. Spirit-filled ministry demonstrates the superiority of Christ over all spiritual forces.

Application

- Boldly live and proclaim the Gospel in your sphere.
 - God's power can break spiritual strongholds and free people from falsehood.
 - Encourage others to leave harmful practices and follow Christ.
-

◆ Section 3: Opposition and the Riot (19:21–41)

- Demetrius, a silversmith, incites a riot because of Paul’s impact on the trade of idols.
- The city is in chaos, demonstrating both the influence of the Gospel and human resistance.

God’s work often provokes opposition, but His purposes cannot be thwarted. Faithful ministry may face conflict, yet God’s plan advances despite resistance.

Application

- Expect and respond wisely to opposition.
 - Stand firm in truth without escalating conflict.
 - Recognize that God’s work is bigger than human obstacles.
-

APPLICATION

1. Pursue Spirit-Filled Living

- Seek the fullness of the Holy Spirit to live and minister effectively.

2. Boldness in Ministry

- Preach and live the Gospel courageously.

3. Confront Falsehood with God’s Truth

- God’s power triumphs over deception and idolatry.

4. Prepare for Opposition

- Opposition may come, but God’s purposes prevail.

5. Transform Communities

- Spirit-filled lives impact families, communities, and societies for Christ.
-

MEMORY VERSE

Acts 19:20

“In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power.”

This lesson emphasizes Spirit empowerment, bold witness, confrontation of falsehood, and perseverance, with discussion opportunities on living Spirit-filled lives and impacting society through Christ’s authority.

Patristic Insight on Ephesus:

“Where the Word is proclaimed boldly, all that resists the Spirit will be overturned.”
— A summary of early commentary on Acts 19 revival

. Patristic Insight on Ephesus:

“Where the Word is proclaimed boldly, all that resists the Spirit will be overturned.”
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BOOK OF ACTS CHAPTER 20

Theme: *Faithful Ministry and Shepherding God's People*

GOAL OF THE LESSON

By the end of this lesson, students will:

1. Understand the heart of a faithful minister and shepherd.
 2. Recognize the importance of selflessness, perseverance, and vigilance in ministry.
 3. Learn to prepare others for spiritual maturity.
 4. Apply lessons of leadership, encouragement, and faithful service in their own lives.
-

HOOK

1. "A Servant Leader" Illustration

Ask:

- "Have you ever been inspired by a leader who sacrificed their comfort for the good of others?"
- "What qualities made them admirable?"

Transition:

Acts 20 highlights Paul's dedication, care for the churches, and example of selfless leadership, showing how God's servants shepherd His people.

INTRODUCTION

1. Context

- Paul travels through Macedonia and Greece, encouraging disciples.
- He meets the Ephesian elders at Miletus and delivers a heartfelt farewell.
- Key lessons include perseverance, vigilance against false teaching, and reliance on God's guidance.

True ministry involves shepherding others with love, humility, and sacrifice.

Acts 20 emphasizes pastoral responsibility, courage, and faithfulness in service.

2. Theme of Acts 20

Faithful ministry is marked by love, sacrifice, vigilance, and the desire to equip others for Christ.

BODY OF LESSON

Break the chapter into three main sections.

◆ Section 1: Paul's Travel and Encouragement of the Churches (20:1–12)

- Paul travels through Macedonia and Greece, strengthening believers.
- He stays in Troas, where a young man, Eutychus, falls from a window but is revived by Paul.

God uses ministry opportunities, even in challenging circumstances, to encourage and strengthen the Church.

Care and attention to the flock demonstrate God's love and power through His servants.

Application

- Be active in encouraging and supporting fellow believers.
 - Watch for opportunities to help and restore others.
 - Minister faithfully, even in everyday circumstances.
-

◆ Section 2: Paul's Farewell to the Ephesian Elders (20:13–38)

- Paul summons the elders to Miletus to deliver a personal and passionate farewell.
- He reminds them of his service, warns of future dangers, and exhorts them to shepherd the flock faithfully.
- Paul's example shows humility, integrity, and devotion to God.

A faithful servant serves without seeking personal gain and prepares others to continue the work.

Leadership in ministry is measured by love, dedication, and foresight in equipping others.

Application

- Leaders should serve with humility and integrity.
- Prepare the next generation for faithful ministry.

- Remain alert for challenges and false teaching.

◆ Section 3: Vigilance and Perseverance in Ministry (20:17–38)

- Paul reminds elders that he has been faithful in preaching, teaching, and serving.
- He encourages vigilance, warning that others may arise to distort the truth.
- The elders respond with tears, prayer, and blessing, showing mutual love and accountability.

Faithful ministry requires vigilance, courage, and loving accountability within the community.

The ministry of shepherding combines personal sacrifice, teaching, warning, and spiritual care.

Application

- Remain vigilant against false teaching.
- Persevere in service despite personal cost.
- Cultivate loving relationships with those you lead or mentor.

APPLICATION

1. Lead with Humility and Sacrifice

- Serve others without seeking personal gain.

2. Encourage and Equip Others

- Prepare people spiritually to continue God’s work.

3. Remain Vigilant

- Protect the flock from falsehood and spiritual danger.

4. Persevere in Service

- Faithfulness may involve hardship, but God’s reward is eternal.

5. Show Love and Accountability

- Encourage mutual care, prayer, and support within the community.

MEMORY VERSE

Acts 20:24

“However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news

of God's grace."

This lesson emphasizes faithful leadership, vigilance, selfless service, and encouragement of others, with discussion opportunities on how to shepherd, mentor, and persevere in ministry.

Acts 20

St. John Chrysostom (quoted in translations):

"Paul declares not his own but God's work, for he labors not to please men but to serve Christ."

— On Paul's farewell address (Cited in Chrysostom references).

BOOK OF ACTS CHAPTER 21

Theme: *Obedience to God Despite Danger*

GOAL OF THE LESSON

By the end of this lesson, students will:

1. Understand the importance of obedience to God, even in the face of danger.
 2. Recognize God's guidance through the Holy Spirit and the counsel of others.
 3. Learn to balance spiritual discernment with courage.
 4. Apply lessons of trust, humility, and perseverance in following God's call.
-

HOOK

1. "Following God into the Unknown" Illustration

Ask:

- "Have you ever been called to do something that scared you or seemed risky?"
- "What guided your decision?"

Transition:

Acts 21 shows Paul's unwavering obedience to God's call, even when warned about danger, teaching us to trust God above personal safety.

INTRODUCTION

1. Context

- Paul completes his second missionary journey and begins the third.
- He travels from Macedonia to Jerusalem, despite prophetic warnings.
- Along the way, the Holy Spirit and prophets alert him to upcoming trials.
- Upon arrival in Jerusalem, Paul faces suspicion, misunderstanding, and hostility from both Jews and Roman authorities.

Obedience to God sometimes leads us into difficult and challenging circumstances.

Acts 21 emphasizes submission to God's will, the importance of spiritual counsel, and courage in fulfilling God's plan.

2. Theme of Acts 21

Faithful obedience to God requires courage, trust, and reliance on His guidance, even in the face of danger.

BODY OF LESSON

Break the chapter into three main sections.

✦ Section 1: Paul's Journey and Prophetic Warnings (21:1–14)

- Paul travels from Miletus to Tyre, Ptolemais, and Caesarea.
- The disciples, led by the Holy Spirit, warn Paul not to go to Jerusalem.
- Agabus, a prophet, predicts Paul's imprisonment.

God communicates through the Holy Spirit and fellow believers to prepare us for trials.

Faithful obedience may involve entering danger knowingly, guided by God's direction.

Application

- Seek and heed God's guidance through Scripture, prayer, and godly counsel.
 - Be aware of potential challenges but trust God's plan.
 - *Courage is essential when God calls you into difficult circumstances.*
-

✦ Section 2: Arrival in Jerusalem and Reception (21:15–26)

- *Paul is welcomed by the believers in Jerusalem.*
- He reports on the Gentile mission, showing unity and mutual encouragement.
- To avoid unnecessary offense to Jewish believers, Paul participates in Jewish purification rituals.

Unity and sensitivity within the Body of Christ are essential while remaining faithful to the Gospel.

Wise actions can prevent unnecessary conflicts, but should never compromise God's mission.

Application

- Demonstrate sensitivity to others' convictions while staying faithful to God.
 - Promote unity and reconciliation within the church.
 - Balance boldness with wisdom in interactions.
-

◆ Section 3: Paul's Arrest (21:27–40)

- Paul is falsely accused in the temple, sparking a riot.
- He is seized, beaten, and eventually taken into Roman custody.
- Paul demonstrates courage, clarity, and calmness, even when facing injustice.

God's servants may face persecution, but trust and reliance on God give strength.

Faithfulness to God often brings misunderstanding and opposition, but God's purposes prevail.

Application

- Stand firm in faith, even when wrongly accused or opposed.
- Trust God's protection and guidance in trials.
- Respond with courage and integrity, not fear or compromise.

APPLICATION

1. Obey God Courageously

- Follow His calling, even when it involves danger.

2. Seek Godly Counsel

- Listen to the Spirit and fellow believers for guidance.

3. Promote Unity and Sensitivity

- Respect cultural or personal convictions without compromising faith.

4. Trust God in Persecution

- Opposition is inevitable for faithful servants; rely on God's strength.

5. Respond with Integrity

- Face trials with courage, calmness, and unwavering faith.

MEMORY VERSE

Acts 21:13

"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.'"

This lesson emphasizes obedience, courage, reliance on God, unity, and integrity, with discussion opportunities on trusting God even in risky or challenging circumstances.

St. John Chrysostom (Homily XLVI):

“Paul said all that Christ did through him, not to boast, but that the mercy of God may be proclaimed.”

— On Paul reporting to the Jerusalem elders.

BOOK OF ACTS CHAPTER 22

Theme: *Bold Witness and God's Call*

After the chaos of Acts 21, Paul explains himself in Acts 22 by sharing his testimony. Highlights the power of personal witness, Paul turning every crisis into gospel opportunity. This chapter deepens the conflict that continues in Acts 23

GOAL OF THE LESSON

By the end of this lesson, students will:

1. Understand the importance of boldly testifying about Christ.
 2. Recognize God's call and intervention in Paul's life.
 3. Apply lessons of courage, personal testimony, and reliance on God.
-

HOOK

1. "Sharing Your Story" Illustration

Ask:

- "Have you ever shared your personal story of faith with someone hesitant or hostile?"
- "How did it feel?"

Transition:

Acts 22 shows Paul boldly sharing his personal encounter with Christ, demonstrating the power of testimony to convict and inspire.

INTRODUCTION

1. Context

- Paul is arrested in Jerusalem (Acts 21).
- Before the Jewish crowd, he defends himself by recounting his background and conversion.
- He emphasizes God's plan and call in his life.

Faithful testimony demonstrates God's work and leads to conviction and clarity. Personal testimony is a powerful tool to confront misunderstanding and opposition.

2. Theme of Acts 22

Boldly testifying to God's work in your life can impact hearts and reveal God's plan, even under opposition.

BODY OF LESSON

Section 1: Paul's Background (22:1–5)

- Paul identifies himself as a Jew, trained under Gamaliel.
- He explains his previous persecution of Christians.

Application:

- Own your past and let God's transformation shine through.
 - Authenticity strengthens witness.
-

Section 2: Paul's Conversion (22:6–16)

- Paul recounts his encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus.
- God calls him to be a witness to the Gentiles.
- Paul's baptism signifies obedience and a new life.

Conversion and obedience are the foundation for effective witness.

Testimony of God's intervention demonstrates His power and authority.

Application:

- Boldly share how God has worked in your life.
 - Encourage others through your personal testimony.
-

Section 3: Reaction of the Crowd (22:17–30)

- Paul escapes the crowd's anger when he reveals his Roman citizenship.
- God's protection allows Paul to continue his mission.

God's protection and guidance often accompany those who faithfully witness. Witnessing may provoke opposition, but God's plan prevails.

Application:

- **Trust God when your witness meets resistance.**
 - **Boldness should be coupled with wisdom and reliance on God.**
-

APPLICATION

1. **Share your personal testimony confidently.**
2. **Let God's transformation in your life guide your witness.**
3. **Expect opposition but trust in God's protection.**
4. **Use wisdom and discernment when engaging others.**

MEMORY VERSE

Acts 22:15

"You will be his witness to all people of what you have seen and heard."

Acts 22

Patristic Reflection:

**"Christ's appearance to Paul shows oracles of grace surpass all human wisdom."
— A theme in patristic commentaries on Paul's defense.**

BOOK OF ACTS CHAPTER 23

Theme: *God's Sovereignty and Protection in Times of Conflict*

Acts 22 ends with tension; Acts 23 brings Paul before the Sanhedrin and reveals a plot against his life. God protecting His servant, legal steps leading toward Rome. highlights God's promise that Paul *will* testify in Rome. This chapter ensures the story moves toward Caesar's court.

GOAL OF THE LESSON

By the end of this lesson, students will:

1. Understand God's sovereignty in the midst of conflict and opposition.
2. Recognize how God protects and directs His servants even in danger.
3. Apply lessons of courage, discernment, and reliance on God in challenging situations.

HOOK

"When You Face Conflict" Illustration

Ask:

- "Have you ever been in a situation where everyone seemed against you?"
- "How did you respond—did you act in fear, anger, or trust?"

Transition:

Acts 23 shows Paul facing conflict in the Sanhedrin and plots against his life, yet God's sovereignty and protection guide him through.

INTRODUCTION

1. Context

- Paul is brought before the Sanhedrin.
- He courageously declares his faith and addresses the division between Pharisees and Sadducees.
- God protects Paul from plots to kill him through divine guidance.

Even in danger, God's hand is upon His servants, ensuring His plans prevail.

Acts 23 demonstrates how courage and discernment, guided by the Spirit, allow faithful service amidst opposition.

2. Theme of Acts 23

God protects and guides His servants, and faithful courage can turn conflict into opportunity.

BODY OF LESSON

Section 1: Paul Before the Sanhedrin (23:1–10)

- **Paul confronts the council boldly, speaking truth and justice.**
- **He strategically divides the council by highlighting the Pharisees–Sadducees dispute.**

Wisdom and discernment allow God’s servants to turn challenging situations into opportunities for His glory.

Even in confrontation, God can work through our courage and faithfulness.

Application:

- **Respond to conflict with wisdom and discernment.**
 - **Seek God’s guidance before speaking in tense situations.**
 - **Boldly stand for truth, trusting God to work through you.**
-

Section 2: God’s Protection from Harm (23:11–22)

- **God reassures Paul that he must testify in Rome.**
- **A conspiracy to kill Paul is discovered, showing God’s providence.**

God’s protection is real, often unseen, but always effective in fulfilling His purposes.

Faithfulness includes trusting God to safeguard us while accomplishing His mission.

Application:

- **Trust God’s protection in your life and ministry.**
 - **Pray for discernment to recognize and avoid danger.**
 - **Remember that God’s plan cannot be troubled by human schemes.**
-

Section 3: Paul's Transfer to Caesarea (23:23–35)

- Paul is escorted safely to Caesarea under Roman protection.
- God continues to direct the events so that Paul can fulfill His calling.

Divine providence ensures that God's plans are accomplished even through human authorities.

Obedience and faith in God allow His purposes to prevail in all circumstances.

Application:

- Follow God's guidance, even when it involves submission to authorities.
- Recognize God's hand in protecting and directing you.
- Persevere in ministry, trusting God to use all circumstances for His glory.

APPLICATION

1. Trust God's sovereignty in conflict or danger.
2. Respond to opposition with wisdom and courage.
3. Recognize God's protection in unseen ways.
4. Pray for discernment and boldness in tense situations.
5. Obey God's calling even when circumstances seem threatening.

MEMORY VERSE

Acts 23:11

"The Lord stood near Paul and said, 'Take courage! As you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome.'"

This lesson emphasizes courage, discernment, trust in God's protection, and obedience, showing how Paul's example encourages believers to stand firm and rely on God in the face of danger and opposition.

Acts 23

Patristic Insight (Paul before Sanhedrin):

**"God's hidden counsel often turns conflict into testimony."
— A common patristic reflection on Acts 23.**

BOOK OF ACTS CHAPTER 24

Theme: *Faithfulness in Trials and Testifying to Truth*

After escaping the plot in Acts 23, Paul is tried before Felix in Acts 24. Emphasize Paul's calmness under false accusation, explain Felix's indecision and political motives. Also we see the delay as part of God's timing. The chapter ends with Paul waiting for the next step in God's plan.

GOAL OF THE LESSON

By the end of this lesson, students will:

1. Understand how to respond to false accusations with integrity.
2. Recognize the importance of patience and trust in God during trials.
3. Apply lessons of bold testimony, respect for authority, and reliance on God in difficult circumstances.

HOOK

1. "Falsely Accused" Illustration

Ask:

- "Have you ever been wrongly accused or misunderstood?"
- "How did you respond?"

Transition:

Acts 24 shows Paul standing firm under false accusations before Felix, demonstrating integrity, courage, and faithfulness to God.

INTRODUCTION

1. Context

- Paul is now in Caesarea, held under Roman custody.
- Jewish leaders, led by Tertullus, accuse Paul of being a troublemaker.
- Paul defends himself boldly, focusing on truth, God's law, and his hope in the resurrection.

A servant of God can face opposition and false accusations, yet must maintain integrity and bear witness to truth.

Acts 24 emphasizes patience, wisdom, and faithful testimony in the midst of political and legal challenges.

2. Theme of Acts 24

Faithfulness to God includes responding to accusations with integrity, courage, and trust in His timing.

BODY OF LESSON

Section 1: The Accusation (24:1–9)

- **Tertullus accuses Paul of stirring unrest and profaning the temple.**
- **The Jewish leaders support these claims.**

Opposition often arises when God’s servants confront sin or live righteously.

Paul faces political and religious opposition but remains composed.

Application:

- **Expect opposition when standing for truth.**
 - **Remain calm and patient when falsely accused.**
 - **Respond wisely rather than reacting impulsively.**
-

Section 2: Paul’s Defense (24:10–21)

- **Paul defends himself by emphasizing:**
 1. **His respect for Jewish law.**
 2. **His obedience to God’s call.**
 3. **His hope in the resurrection of the dead.**
- **He demonstrates a balance of boldness and respect.**

Faithful testimony focuses on God’s truth rather than personal defense.

Integrity and clarity in one’s testimony strengthens credibility and honors God.

Application:

- **Speak the truth respectfully, even when defending yourself.**
- **Focus on God’s purposes, not merely on self-preservation.**

- Use challenges as opportunities to testify boldly about your faith.
-

Section 3: Felix Delays Judgment (24:22–27)

- Felix postpones a decision, hoping for a bribe.
- Paul remains in custody but continues to speak boldly when given the opportunity.
- Paul’s faithfulness demonstrates trust in God’s timing.

Patience and perseverance are essential when God’s justice is delayed.

Trusting God’s timing is crucial, even in the face of injustice.

Application:

- Be patient and faithful when outcomes are delayed.
 - Continue living righteously, regardless of immediate results.
 - Trust that God’s justice and purpose will prevail.
-

APPLICATION

1. Respond with Integrity

- Speak truth with humility and respect.

2. Testify Boldly

- Focus on God’s work, not defending yourself personally.

3. Trust God’s Timing

- Persevere even when justice or outcomes seem delayed.

4. Remain Faithful under Pressure

- Opposition or false accusations are opportunities for witness.

5. Use Wisdom and Patience

- Navigate authority and challenging situations with discernment.
-

MEMORY VERSE

Acts 24:16

“So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man.”

This lesson emphasizes faithful testimony, integrity, patience, and trust in God, with discussion opportunities on responding to opposition and remaining steadfast under pressure.

Church Fathers on Paul's Trial:

"Truth tested by court is not shaken but shines more brightly."

— Reflecting early commentaries on Acts trials.

BOOK OF ACTS CHAPTER 25

Theme: *Faithful Witness in the Midst of Injustice*

GOAL OF THE LESSON

By the end of this lesson, students will:

1. Understand how to respond with faith and wisdom when facing unjust authority.
 2. Recognize the importance of trusting God's timing and plan.
 3. Apply lessons of patience, strategic witness, and courage in difficult circumstances.
-

HOOK

“Waiting for Justice” Illustration

Ask:

- “Have you ever faced a situation where justice was delayed or unfair?”
- “How did you respond while waiting?”

Transition:

Acts 25 shows Paul navigating an unjust legal system while remaining faithful to God, teaching us to trust Him even when human authority seems unfair.

INTRODUCTION

1. Context

- Paul has been held in Caesarea under Felix (Acts 24).
- Felix is replaced by Festus, and the Jewish leaders bring accusations against Paul again.
- Paul wisely appeals to Caesar to ensure God's plan continues.

God's servants may face repeated opposition, but God's sovereignty ensures His purpose is fulfilled.

Faithful witness includes knowing when to appeal to justice and how to act with

discernment under authority.

2. Theme of Acts 25

Trusting God’s guidance and timing allows believers to bear witness faithfully, even under unjust authority.

BODY OF LESSON

Section 1: Festus Becomes Governor (25:1–5)

- **Festus assumes responsibility from Felix.**
- **Jewish leaders press him to take immediate action against Paul.**
- **Festus listens but does not rush into injustice.**

God sometimes uses human authorities to accomplish His plans, even imperfectly.

Wisdom involves assessing situations and seeking fairness, even when pressured.

Application:

- **Trust God to work through authorities and circumstances.**
 - **Respond to pressure with patience and discernment.**
-

Section 2: Paul’s Defense and Appeal (25:6–12)

- **Paul appears before Festus.**
- **Festus hears the charges but sees no clear evidence of wrongdoing.**
- **Paul appeals to Caesar, exercising his legal right as a Roman citizen.**

Faithfulness requires courage to use God-given opportunities to advance His purpose.

Appealing to higher authority was both a legal right and a strategic step in God’s plan.

Application:

- **Stand firm in your rights when it aligns with God’s purpose.**
 - **Be strategic and wise in navigating difficult situations.**
 - **Trust God to guide your steps and protect your mission.**
-

Section 3: Festus Consults the Jewish Leaders (25:13–22)

- King Agrippa and Bernice visit Festus.
- Festus explains Paul’s case, admitting he is unsure of guilt.
- This sets the stage for Paul’s further testimony.

God orchestrates circumstances so His servants can testify to truth at the right time.

Even when human leaders are confused or unjust, God’s plan moves forward.

Application:

- Recognize God’s providence in arranging circumstances for witness.
- Be patient and faithful as God prepares the way for your testimony.

APPLICATION

1. Respond with patience and discernment under pressure.
2. Stand firm in truth and exercise wisdom when navigating authority.
3. Trust God to orchestrate circumstances for His purpose.
4. Use opportunities strategically to advance God’s kingdom.
5. Persevere in faith, even when human justice is delayed or unclear.

MEMORY VERSE

Acts 25:11

“If then I am a wrongdoer and have committed anything worthy of death, I do not seek to escape death; but if there is nothing in these things of which these men accuse me, no one can deliver me to them. I appeal to Caesar.”

This lesson emphasizes faithful witness, courage, strategic wisdom, and trust in God’s providence, providing discussion points on standing firm under pressure and navigating authority wisely.

BOOK OF ACTS CHAPTER 26

Theme: *Bold Testimony and the Power of Personal Witness*

GOAL OF THE LESSON

By the end of this lesson, students will:

1. Understand the power of personal testimony in bringing others to faith.
 2. Recognize the importance of boldly proclaiming Christ in every circumstance.
 3. Apply lessons of courage, clarity, and reliance on God when sharing their faith.
-

HOOK

“Your Story Matters” Illustration

Ask:

- “Have you ever had a moment when sharing your personal story completely changed someone’s perspective?”
- “Why do you think personal testimony can be so powerful?”

Transition:

Acts 26 shows Paul boldly presenting his testimony before King Agrippa, demonstrating how personal experiences with Christ can powerfully influence others.

INTRODUCTION

1. *Context*

- Paul is standing trial before Festus and King Agrippa.
- He recounts his Jewish heritage, zeal for the law, persecution of Christians, and dramatic conversion.
- He explains God’s calling for him to serve the Gentiles.

A clear and bold personal testimony can convict hearts and show God’s power in transformation.

Acts 26 emphasizes the importance of clarity, confidence, and reliance on God in presenting your faith.

2. Theme of Acts 26

Bold, personal testimony can impact influential leaders and inspire faith when shared with clarity and conviction.

BODY OF LESSON

Section 1: Paul's Heritage and Zeal (26:1–11)

- **Paul describes his Jewish upbringing and training under Gamaliel.**
- **He explains his previous persecution of Christians.**

Acknowledging past mistakes and showing God's transformation strengthens credibility.

Honesty about one's past enhances the authenticity of testimony.

Application:

- **Share your past openly to show God's transforming power.**
 - **Use personal history as a platform to highlight God's grace.**
-

Section 2: Paul's Conversion (26:12–18)

- **Paul recounts the encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus.**
- **Jesus commissions him to preach to the Gentiles and bring light to the Jews.**

Divine encounters transform lives and equip believers to serve boldly.

God's calling includes both obedience and active witness to others.

Application:

- **Recognize and embrace God's call in your life.**
 - **Share your encounter with Christ as a testimony to God's work.**
-

Section 3: Bold Witness Before Agrippa (26:19–32)

- **Paul explains his obedience to God's call, focusing on faith, repentance, and hope in the resurrection.**
- **Agrippa responds, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."**

Faithful testimony can move even influential people, showing the impact of courage and clarity.

Witnessing requires confidence, clarity, and dependence on God, regardless of the listener's position.

Application:

- Speak with boldness and clarity about your faith.
- Trust God to work in the hearts of your listeners.
- Encourage others through your testimony, even when the response is uncertain.

APPLICATION

1. Share your personal story of faith with clarity and boldness.
2. Acknowledge God's transforming power in your life.
3. Trust God to use your testimony, even in difficult or intimidating situations.
4. Encourage and inspire others by modeling obedience and faithfulness.
5. Remember that even one testimony can have far-reaching impact.

MEMORY VERSE

Acts 26:18

"To open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in me."

This lesson emphasizes bold testimony, obedience to God's call, personal witness, and courage, with discussion points on influencing others through clarity, faith, and the power of God's work in one's life.

BOOK OF ACTS CHAPTER 27

Theme: *Faith and God's Protection in Life's Storms*



GOAL OF THE LESSON

By the end of this lesson, students will:

1. Understand how to trust God during life's trials and uncertainties.
2. Recognize God's guidance and protection even in seemingly hopeless situations.
3. Apply lessons of faith, obedience, and perseverance in difficult circumstances.

HOOK

"Caught in a Storm" Illustration

Ask:

- "Have you ever felt overwhelmed by circumstances you couldn't control?"
- "How did you find hope or guidance in that situation?"

Transition:

Acts 27 shows Paul experiencing a literal storm at sea, yet God's presence and guidance bring deliverance—teaching us to trust Him in life's storms.

INTRODUCTION

1. Context

- Paul is being sent to Rome as a prisoner to appeal to Caesar.
- He boards a ship with other prisoners and sailors, heading toward Italy.
- A violent storm arises, threatening the lives of everyone on board.

Life may place us in storms, but God’s guidance and protection remain constant.

Even under dire circumstances, God’s purposes prevail, and His people can act in faith and wisdom.

2. Theme of Acts 27

Trusting God during trials ensures guidance, safety, and eventual deliverance.

BODY OF LESSON

Section 1: The Voyage Begins (27:1–12)

- Paul warns the centurion about the danger of sailing in winter, but they proceed.
- Despite the warning, they face adverse winds and rough seas.

Faithful advice may be ignored, yet God’s purposes continue.

Wisdom and discernment are important, but God can work even through human mistakes.

Application:

- Listen to God’s guidance and counsel from others.
- Trust God even when circumstances are beyond your control.

Section 2: The Storm and God’s Assurance (27:13–26)

- A violent storm arises, threatening the ship.
- Paul encourages everyone with God’s promise of safety: “God has graciously given you all who sail with me.”
- Paul’s faith gives hope and direction to those around him.

Faith inspires courage and obedience even amid fear.

God often gives assurance and instruction through His servants in crisis.

Application:

- **Rely on God's promises when facing uncertainty.**
- **Encourage and lead others with faith during trials.**
- **Recognize God's voice and instruction even in turbulent times.**

Section 3: Shipwreck and Deliverance (27:27–44)

- **The ship runs aground on Malta.**
- **Despite the danger, everyone survives, fulfilling God's promise.**
- **God's deliverance demonstrates His power and faithfulness.**

God protects His people and accomplishes His purposes, even in life-threatening situations.

Obedience and faithfulness during trials result in deliverance and testimony to God's power.

Application:

- **Trust God to protect and guide you through life's storms.**
- **Persevere and obey God even when outcomes seem**

BOOK OF ACTS CHAPTER 28

Theme: *Faithfulness to God in Every Circumstance*

GOAL OF THE LESSON

By the end of this lesson, students will:

1. Understand the importance of trusting God's plan even in uncertain circumstances.
 2. Recognize God's provision, protection, and faithfulness in difficult situations.
 3. Apply lessons of perseverance, ministry, and bold witness in their own lives.
-

HOOK

“God's Plan Prevails” Illustration

Ask:

- “Have you ever thought something was going wrong, only to see it work out perfectly later?”
- “How does knowing God has a plan help you face challenges?”

Transition:

Acts 28 shows Paul's final journey to Rome, including shipwreck, ministry on Malta, and bold witness in Rome, demonstrating God's faithfulness in every stage of life.

INTRODUCTION

1. Context

- Paul survives a shipwreck on Malta.
- He heals the sick and gains the favor of the islanders.
- Finally, he arrives in Rome, where he preaches under house arrest for two years.

God's plans are perfect, even when circumstances seem dire or uncertain.

Acts 28 demonstrates God's providence, protection, and the unstoppable spread of the Gospel.

2. Theme of Acts 28

God works through difficulties to accomplish His purposes, and faithful witness continues under all circumstances.

BODY OF LESSON

Section 1: Shipwreck and God's Protection (28:1–10)

- **Paul and the crew are shipwrecked on Malta.**
- **Paul is bitten by a snake but suffers no harm.**
- **He heals the sick and is honored by the islanders.**

God protects and blesses His servants, often using trials to demonstrate His power.

Obedience, faith, and courage allow God to work through challenging circumstances.

Application:

- **Trust God's protection in life-threatening or challenging situations.**
 - **Be ready to serve and bless others even in difficulty.**
 - **Look for opportunities to demonstrate God's power and love.**
-

Section 2: Ministry on Malta (28:1–10)

- **Paul's miraculous acts bring the people to faith and gratitude.**
- **Even in a temporary, isolated place, he fulfills God's mission.**

Faithfulness in small places prepares for greater works.

Ministry is effective wherever we are, through actions and the message of Christ.

Application:

- **Serve faithfully wherever God places you.**
 - **Trust God to use you to influence and bless others.**
 - **Recognize that no circumstance is too small or limiting for God's work.**
-

Section 3: Arrival and Ministry in Rome (28:11–31)

- **Paul reaches Rome and preaches boldly under house arrest.**
- **He proclaims the kingdom of God and teaches about Jesus without hindrance.**
- **The book ends with the unstoppable spread of the Gospel.**

Faithful witness is not limited by circumstances or restrictions.

God's purposes cannot be hindered; His Word continues to spread through faithful servants.

Application:

- Remain faithful in ministry regardless of limitations.
- Use every opportunity to share Christ boldly.
- Trust God to accomplish His work through you, even in confinement or adversity.

APPLICATION

1. Trust God's plan even in unexpected trials.
2. Look for opportunities to bless and serve others wherever you are.
3. Persevere in ministry regardless of circumstances.
4. Remember that God's Word and purposes cannot be stopped.
5. Testify boldly about Christ, even in restrictive or challenging situations.

MEMORY VERSE

Acts 28:31

"He proclaimed the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ—with all boldness and without hindrance."

This lesson emphasizes faithfulness, perseverance, trust in God's plan, and bold witness, showing how Paul's example encourages believers to serve and proclaim the Gospel under all circumstances.

If you want, I can compile all 28 chapters of Acts with lessons, goals, memory verses, and map links into a single complete teaching guide for easy use in your classes. Do you want me to do that?

St. John Chrysostom & Early Fathers:

**"Even in chains, the Gospel chains the hearts of those who will hear."
— Summing up the closing witness of Paul in Rome.**

OPTIONAL CLOSING LESSON FOR THE BOOK OF ACTS

1. The Holy Spirit Is the Real Main Character

Coptic liturgy calls Acts “Πραξις” — “The Acts” — meaning the *acts or deeds done in God’s power*. The Spirit is active from Pentecost onward, forming the Church, giving courage to the apostles, and leading the mission.

Today’s Application:

Ask the Holy Spirit daily for wisdom, boldness, and strength — not just knowledge. Your faith isn’t just something you *know* — it’s something the Spirit *does through you*.

2. The Church Is Not a Human Organization — It Is Christ’s Body Alive in the World

Acts is read liturgically during services because it shows the *birth and life of the Church after Christ’s Ascension*. It teaches that the Church is a living communion with Christ through the Spirit, not just a gathering of believers.

Today’s Application:

Our Church isn’t just a meeting place. It’s where the Holy Spirit builds your spiritual life through prayer, sacraments, and love.

3. Baptism and Repentance Are Central for Salvation

From the very beginning (Pentecost in Acts 2) the apostles proclaim repentance and baptism in Christ’s name — not just as ritual, but as a true entrance into new life. This *sacramental foundation* is central to how the Coptic Church reads Acts.

Today’s Application:

Baptism into Christ isn’t symbolic — it’s *participation in His death and resurrection*. Live out your baptism daily by turning from sin and turning to Christ.

4. Mission Is Love in Action — Not Just Words

In the early Church seen in Acts, believers shared everything, prayed together, and cared for one another. This reflects the Coptic emphasis on community and sacrificial love, not isolation.

Today’s Application:

Your witness isn’t only in what you *say* — it’s in *how you love and serve your family, classmates, and neighbors*.

5. God’s Plan Is Greater Than Our Expectations

Just as the apostles misunderstood Jesus' question about *times and seasons* and instead were shown a *kingdom of hearts* centered on Christ, Our Church sees Acts as revealing that God's work is deeper than outward power — it's *the transformation of hearts*.

Today's Application:

Don't measure success by popularity or human expectations. God works invisibly and profoundly in hearts — including *yours*.

In Summary

The *Book of Acts* is:

- The story of the Holy Spirit forming the Church
 - The fulfillment of Christ's promise to empower His disciples
 - The witness of the Gospel to all nations
 - A model of Church life rooted in prayer, sacrament, and love
- All of this points to the reality that the Church today is the same Spirit-led Church of the apostles — called to be Christ's living presence in the world.

In Acts, we see that God doesn't just call people to believe — He equips them by His Spirit to share Jesus, form loving community, and courageously change the world.

REFLECTION POINTS

✓ 1. You Have a Mission — Not Just a Message

Just like the early believers, you are called to be a witness — that means sharing your faith through both *words* and *actions* in the places you live, learn, and work.

Ask Yourself:

Am I representing Jesus with my life when I'm with friends and family?

✓ 2. You Are Empowered by the Holy Spirit

You don't have to figure life out on your own. The same Holy Spirit who enabled the apostles can help you face challenges, share your faith, and grow in love.

Action Step:

Pray each day, "Holy Spirit, lead me, strengthen me, and fill me with courage."

✓ 3. Your Community Matters

Acts shows that believers *loved one another, supported each other, and stuck together even in trouble.*

Church isn't just a building — it's a *family*.

Challenge:

Reach out to someone who seems alone this week — show them Christ's love.

✓ 4. Obstacles Can Help You Grow

Persecution didn't stop the early Church — it *expanded* it.

Your struggles can shape your faith and open doors to deeper trust in God.

Reflection:

When things are hard, ask, "*How can this situation draw me closer to God and strengthen my faith?*"
