

## THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

### Chapter 1: God's Purpose for His Church

1. What is God's purpose for the church? Is your church fulfilling that purpose?
2. What would it take for your church to become a house of prayer for all people (Isaiah 56:7)? What changes would have to take place?
3. Joseph and Daniel lived in difficult circumstances, yet they were a source of life to those around them. How is your church bringing life to your community?
4. Israel was privileged to be God's representative to the world. Adventists also believe that they have a special message for the world. Discuss how Israel failed in its mission.

### Chapter 2: The Training of the Twelve

1. What type of people did Jesus choose to proclaim the kingdom of God in this world? What was the secret of their success?
2. Why were thousands converted by the words of simple, unlearned people? What does that say to you?
3. Read the prayer of Jesus for His disciples in John 17:6-19. Imagine Jesus praying this prayer for you. What is Jesus calling you to do?

### Chapter 3: The Great Commission

1. What insights did the disciples gain concerning their task and mission during the forty days that Jesus spent with them?
2. Matthew 28:18 says that all authority is given to Jesus in heaven and on earth. What does this mean? How does this benefit you in your work of carrying out the Great Commission?
3. Have you ever won anyone to Jesus Christ by having superior arguments? Share instances when the Holy Spirit has given you just the right approach in talking with someone.
4. God's plan for sharing the Good News with the world depends on people. How can you become more active in taking the gospel to the world?

### Chapter 4: Pentecost

1. Read Acts 2:1-6. What outward signs were given when the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples in the upper room?
2. Why were the priests unwilling to accept the truth about the source of the Holy Spirit?
3. Contrast ministry with the power of the Holy Spirit and without the power of the Holy Spirit. What kind of ministry is happening in your community? What did the disciples do before the coming of the Spirit?

### Chapter 5: The Gift of the Spirit

1. Read John 14:16, 17. What were some of the immediate changes that happened when the disciples received the Holy Spirit?
3. Christ's promise to send the Holy Spirit to His people has not changed. Why is it that many people who claim to be Christians do not live a Spirit-filled life and do not have Spirit-filled ministries?
4. Read John 16:8. Consider how the Spirit reproves the world of sin, teaches about righteousness, and warns about the coming judgment.

## Chapter 6: At the Temple Gate

1. Why were the people of Jerusalem amazed when Peter and John were able to heal the cripple? How did Peter explain the healing? See Acts 3:16.
2. Read Acts 4:1-3, 5-7, 10. The boldness of the disciples amazed the priests and religious leaders because just a few weeks earlier the disciples had fled and hid when Jesus had been taken prisoner. What caused the change? Can the same thing happen to you?
3. What would you do if you were ordered by the government not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus?
4. Read the prayer of the disciples in Acts 4:24-30. What three things did the disciples ask for in their prayer? Have you ever asked for anything like that?

## Chapter 7: A Warning Against Hypocrisy

1. What is a hypocrite? Why don't people like hypocrites? What did Ananias and Sapphira want people to think about them?
2. God blesses, increases goods, and provides the daily needs of all, but in return He expects people to pay tithe and give generous offerings. Think about your record of returning tithes and offerings. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you in this area of life.
3. Read Revelation 21:27. Consider God's attitude toward those who tell lies.
4. What did God want to teach the many new believers in the church by the swift judgment on Ananias and Sapphira? See Acts 5:11.

## Chapter 8: Before the Sanhedrin

1. Contrast the differences between the training that the disciples received and that which the Sadducees and Pharisees received.
2. People are still persecuted for preaching and worshiping Christ. Share recent stories of persecution, then pray for the people in that community or country.
3. Read Acts 5:17-20. Why did the priests and rulers arrest the apostles? What did the priests and rulers hope to accomplish by putting the apostles in prison?

## Chapter 9: The Seven Deacons

1. Why were there problems between the Greeks and the Jews?
2. Read the story of two deacons, Stephen (Acts 7) and Philip (Acts 8). What made these men such powerful workers for God?
3. Read Titus 1:7-9. Discuss the qualifications for spiritual leadership.
4. What should be the relationship between deacons and elders or pastors?

## Chapter 10: The First Christian Martyr

1. What motivated the priests and rulers to condemn Stephen to death?
2. According to Luke, the apostle, Stephen ably defended the truth so that he utterly defeated his opponents. Read Luke 21:14, 15. If we are called to speak in Jesus' name, who will be the source of our wisdom?
3. Read Psalm 34:7. The author writes that as Stephen faced his judges to answer the charge of blasphemy, his face appeared as the face of an angel. Why did Stephen have the appearance of angel?

4. Read Acts 7:54, 57, 58. Why did Stephen rehearse the history of the chosen people of God when he was answering the charge against himself? What was the effect of this rehearsal of history on his audience?

### **Chapter 11: The Gospel in Samaria**

1. The persecution that followed Stephen's death scattered the church to Judea, Samaria, and other parts of the world. Do you know of other situations where problems in the church caused the church to grow in new areas?
2. Read Acts 8:4-8. Discuss the various aspects of Philip's ministry.
3. An angel told Philip to travel south on the road from Jerusalem toward Gaza. If an angel told you to go to some distant place, would you obey? Have you ever been guided by an angel to minister to someone?
4. Who does the author say is responsible for fulfilling the Great Commission to take the gospel to the entire world?

### **Chapter 12: From Persecutor to Disciple**

1. Describe Saul's zeal in persecuting the Christians.
2. What changes in belief and attitude resulted from Jesus speaking to Saul on the road to Damascus?
3. Read Acts 9:10-19. What objections did Ananias have for not wanting to visit Saul? Would you have gone? Would you have called Saul a brother? Would you have baptized him so quickly?

### **Chapter 13: Days of Preparation**

1. Consider the activities of Paul while he was in Arabia. How important was this preparation before entering into ministry?
2. The author suggests that Paul's success as a preacher of the gospel was directly related to his study of the Scriptures. What approach do you take to studying the Scriptures? What role do prayer and fellowship with others of similar belief play in your study?
3. Read Acts 22:17, 18. If God spoke to you through a dream or vision, would you do what you were told to do? How would you know it was God speaking?

### **Chapter 14: A Seeker for Truth**

1. Read Acts 9:36-38. If someone died in your church, would you pray that God would raise that person back to life? Why? Or why not?
2. Why was Peter reluctant to associate with Cornelius?
3. How would you answer the argument that the instructions to Peter to eat the unclean animals show that there is no longer any food that should be considered unclean? See Acts 11:1-18.
4. Are there people in your region or in your country who you do not think are interested in the gospel? What if God sent you to them? Would you go and share the Good News?

### **Chapter 15: Delivered From Prison**

1. What was Herod's motivation for killing James?
2. Why did the church pray for Peter day and night? Why is such prayer important?
3. List the precautions that Herod took to make sure Peter could not escape from prison.
4. Even though the church was earnestly praying for Peter's release, they were astonished and at first did not believe Rhoda when she said that Peter was at the door. Do you too, sometimes pray earnestly, but secretly doubt?

## Chapter 16: The Gospel Message in Antioch

1. Among the teachers in Antioch were several foreigners who had gone there to preach about Jesus Christ. How important is it to take the gospel to new, unentered areas?
2. The believers were first called Christians at Antioch. What does it mean to be called by the name “Christian”?
3. What did placing hands on the heads of Barnabas and Paul signify?
4. Why did Peter, James, and John primarily minister to the Jewish population, while Paul went primarily to the Gentiles?

## Chapter 17: Heralds of the Gospel

1. Read Acts 13:6-12. How did the temporary blinding of Elymas demonstrate that his power was inferior to the power of God? What does this story suggest about God’s desire to draw all people to Jesus Christ?
2. Barnabas gave Mark a second chance to minister by taking him along on a missionary journey. Do you know people, such as Barnabas, who are quick to see potential in others and to give people a second chance? How did Mark use his second opportunity?
3. When ministering among the Jews, Paul used the Old Testament prophecies as a starting point, whereas among Gentiles he started with the cross. Why do you think that Paul used different approaches with different groups of people? Do you study people to avoid needlessly arousing their antagonism as you present the gospel?

## Chapter 18: Preaching Among the Heathen

1. From Iconium, the missionary team went to Lystra and Derbe—heathen towns with few Jews—using initial topics very different from those they would have chosen if they had been preaching in Jewish synagogues. Discuss how the various groups in your community would need different approaches if you are to reach them with the Good News.
2. In Lystra, Paul’s work was attacked, a mob was incited against him, and he was stoned and left for dead. If the same thing had happened to you, what would you have done?
3. How does your church strengthen new members? Are you able to retain most new converts? What else could be done to strengthen new believers?

## Chapter 19: Jew and Gentile

1. Read Acts 14:27. Does your church have a habit of reporting all that God has done in your community? If not, why not start a book of remembrance for your church?
2. Jewish Christians were afraid that they would lose their distinctive Jewish culture if the Gentile believers were not also required to follow Jewish rituals. Do today’s missionaries sometimes introduce their culture as part of the gospel? Discuss what the early church would have been like if Jewish practices, such as following the ceremonial law and circumcision of new believers, would have been continued.
3. What were the recommendations of the Council at Jerusalem? See Acts 15:28, 29.
4. Compare the Council at Jerusalem with the meeting of the General Conference in Session. How important is it that matters of faith and practice be discussed in a forum with broad representation? What are the strengths and weaknesses of such an approach?

## Chapter 20: Exalting the Cross

1. What training did Timothy receive that prepared him for missionary work?
2. Suggest ways that those who are unable to read the Word of God can be strengthened in biblical truths. Does your church minister effectively to those who are unable to read?
3. Discuss the difference between lifting up the cross of Christ and tearing down other denominations or religions.

### **Chapter 21: In the Regions Beyond**

1. What characteristics do you appreciate in Lydia?
2. Read Acts 16:16-19. What event triggered the mob to seize Paul?
3. Read Acts 16:25. After being beaten and placed in an inner cell with their feet in stocks, Paul and Silas sang and prayed. What would have been a more normal response? Why were Paul and Silas able to respond in such a positive way?
4. Paul and Silas baptized the jailer and his family immediately following their conversion to Christianity. Discuss why the jailer and his household were ready for baptism?

### **Chapter 22: Thessalonica**

1. List at least two Old Testament prophecies that showed that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah.
2. Read Acts 17:4, 5. After Paul had preached a few weeks in Thessalonica, some of the Jews believed while others opposed him and his message. Why did some Jews reject Paul's message?
3. How did Paul deal with constant persecution and opposition to his ministry? How do you react to opposition?

### **Chapter 23: Berea and Athens**

1. Read Acts 17:10, 11. What was a major difference between the people of Thessalonica and those of Berea?
2. What was the city of Athens like in Paul's day?
3. Paul used great tact in presenting his message to the Athenians. How important is the same kind of tact and careful approach in your personal ministry?

### **Chapter 24: Corinth**

1. Read 1 Corinthians 2:2, 4. What strategy did Paul use in Corinth? Why did Paul use different strategies in different places?
2. What was Paul signifying by shaking out his clothes?
3. Gallio was the Proconsul of Achaia. How did God use him to protect Paul? Has God used government officials in your community or country to allow the gospel to be preached?

### **Chapter 25: The Thessalonian Letters**

1. How important is it to know that the dead are asleep and that there is no immortal soul or spirit that lives apart from the body? See 1 Thessalonians 4:13, 14.
2. What commonly held beliefs in your community go against the biblical teaching concerning death?
4. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6. Discuss the importance of Christ's return to the people in your community. What can you do to encourage more people to be ready for Christ's return?

**Chapter 26: Apollos at Corinth**

1. Read 1 Corinthians 2:1, 4, 5. Examine Paul's strategy in Corinth.
2. Why did Paul not "rebuke, directly those who were licentious"? What is your approach toward those living in sin?
3. Consider the following statement: "In the apostle's day there were some misguided souls who claimed to believe in Christ, yet refused to show respect to His ambassadors." Are there similar problems in the church today?

**Chapter 27: Ephesus**

1. What kind of city was Ephesus?
2. In Ephesus, God gave Paul great power so that even handkerchiefs and aprons touched by him could heal the sick. See Acts 19:11, 12. Why did God demonstrate such power in this heathen city?
3. How did the seven sons of Sceva find out about the sacredness of the name of Jesus?
4. Why was it important for those who believed in Jesus to burn their magical books?

**Chapter 28: Days of Toil and Trial**

1. How long did Paul stay in Ephesus? What does this suggest about the time needed for encouraging and nurturing new believers?
2. Read Acts 19:23-27. List several reasons why Demetrius stirred up the mob against Paul? The angels protected Paul from the mob at Ephesus. Can you point to times when your life has been protected by an angel?
3. Have you ever been more concerned with your job than with following truth? Have you ever had to choose between keeping your job and following Jesus?

**Chapter 29: A Message of Warning and Entreaty**

1. Paul worked in Corinth for a year and a half. After his departure, many false teachings crept into the church. What were some of those teachings?
2. Read 1 Corinthians 5:1, 2. Why did Paul suggest that the members of the Corinthian church should disfellowship the man who practiced sexually immorality?
3. What does Paul mean when he says that the Corinthians were washed, sanctified, and justified? See 1 Corinthians 6:9-11.

**Chapter 30: Called to Reach a Higher Standard**

1. Discuss the importance of foot races in the time of Paul. To what activity does Paul compare foot races? Do you prepare your spiritual life with the same kind of hard work and training?
2. Why does Paul in 1 Corinthians emphasize the importance of being particular about lifestyle issues? Can you be careless about daily habits and still value spiritual things?
3. In 1 Corinthians 12 Paul uses the human body to explain the relationship between the members of a congregation who have various spiritual gifts. What is the purpose of these gifts? Why do Christians need one another?
4. Read 1 Corinthians 15. If Christ had not been resurrected from the dead, what difference would this have made to your salvation?

**Chapter 31: The Message Heeded**

1. What kind of response did the church in Corinth give to Paul's divinely inspired instructions?
2. In 2 Corinthians 2:4, Paul speaks of his deep emotions concerning the situation in Corinth. Have you had similar feelings toward someone you have introduced to Jesus?
3. What motivated Paul to preach, to suffer, and to endure hardship? What motivates you to sacrifice for Jesus?

**Chapter 32: A Liberal Church**

1. Read Deuteronomy 18:5. "One tenth of all the increase was claimed by the Lord as His own, and to withhold the tithe was regarded by Him as robbery." What other Bible texts can you use to support this concept?
2. Tithing teaches that God is the owner of everything; returning tithes and giving offerings is how God encourages His people to overcome human selfishness. How does your church understand the issue of tithing?
3. Discuss the problem of always wanting a little more. Since God is love, where does the spirit of selfishness originate?

**Chapter 33: Laboring Under Difficulties**

1. Contrast the pros and cons of supporting oneself financially while doing God's work.
2. Read 1 Thessalonians 4:11, 12 and 2 Thessalonians 3:10-12. What are the benefits of wholesome, honest work?
3. Discuss God's plan for supporting the financial needs of gospel workers. What could be done in your community if funds were available for more outreach activities?

**Chapter 34: A Consecrated Ministry**

1. Is it common in your culture for powerful, important people to serve the poor and people of little influence?
2. What cultural practices would have to change if Christians in your culture were to consider themselves servants? See Matthew 20:26-28.
3. Paul often took young people with him in order to teach them by example how to minister. Who are you training to pray, teach, read the Word, and to minister in Christ's name in your community?
4. God is still calling missionaries to leave the comforts of home to share the gospel with those who have never heard about Jesus. Would you go as a missionary if God called you?

**Chapter 35: Salvation to the Jews**

1. Why did Paul write his letter to the Romans? What are some of the great themes of the book of Romans?
2. "It was God's purpose that His grace should be revealed among the Gentiles as well as among the Israelites." Is it also God's purpose that His grace be revealed among Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists? How often do you pray that the gospel will be preached to the whole world?
3. "In the closing proclamation of the gospel, when special work is to be done for classes of people hitherto neglected, God expects His messengers to take particular interest in the Jewish people." Are you praying for Jews to accept the Messiah?

**Chapter 36: Apostasy in Galatia**

1. What false doctrine and traditions were being accepted by the church in Galatia?
2. What was the danger of having Gentile believers follow the Jewish ceremonies?
3. What contemporary religions teach their followers that they can earn salvation?

**Chapter 37: Paul's Last Journey to Jerusalem**

1. Why did Paul want to be in Jerusalem for the Passover?
2. Read Acts 21:10, 11. Discuss the Prophet Agabus's message to Paul in Caesarea. Would you have gone to Jerusalem if you had received such a message? What would you use to guide your decision as to whether to go?

**Chapter 38: Paul a Prisoner**

1. There were still some among the leaders in Jerusalem who were suspicious of Paul's work among the Gentiles. What were some of the questions they had about Paul's work?
2. How important is unity in God's work? What was the tragic result of the disagreement and distrust of Paul's methods?
3. How can you support those who are using special methods to reach out to unreached peoples?

**Chapter 39: The Trial At Caesarea**

1. What method did Tertullus the lawyer use in presenting his case against Paul?
2. Why did Felix not set Paul free even though he knew Paul was innocent?
3. What effect did Paul's preaching have on Felix? See Acts 24:24, 25.
4. Felix held Paul in prison for two years. What did Felix hope Paul would do to secure his own release?

**Chapter 40: Paul Appeals to Caesar**

1. Read Acts 25:8-11. Why did Festus want to take Paul back to Jerusalem for trial?
2. Paul was safer in the hands of a heathen court than he would be with his own people, so he appealed to Caesar. Does God still use secular courts to provide safety from religious persecution?
3. What can you do to prepare for situations where you might face persecution because of your commitment to Jesus Christ?



**Chapter 41: “Almost Thou Persuadest Me”**

1. Paul shared his personal testimony with Agrippa. When was the last time you shared a personal testimony with a person who did not know Jesus?
2. What were some of the thoughts that went through Agrippa’s mind as Paul spoke?
3. Read Acts 26:28, 29. How important are choice and the ability to make decisions? What kind of choices and decisions do you make each day that affect your eternal destiny?

**Chapter 42: The Voyage and Shipwreck**

1. Describe what it was like to sail in the first century.
2. Who accompanied Paul on his journey to Rome?
3. Read Acts 27:21-26. What was Paul doing during the storm that hit his ship. Would you have been praying for others during such a crisis? What does this reveal about Paul’s character?
4. Have you ever prayed for sick people? Do you expect Jesus to heal those for whom you pray?

**Chapter 43: In Rome**

1. Read Acts 28:14, 15. Describe the many joyous reunions that took place as Paul made his way to Rome.
2. What occupied Paul’s time for the first two years that he was in Rome?
3. Read Paul’s letter to Philemon. Contrast the change in character of Onesimus after his conversion to Christianity. What principles of the gospel change slave/master relationships?

**Chapter 44: Caesar’s Household**

1. What positive results were realized in the church, even though Paul was a prisoner in Rome?
2. What kind of witness do you bear when you are persecuted, troubled, weary, or facing difficult situations?
3. How can a Christian remain in the world yet be protected from the evil one? See John 17:15.

**Chapter 45: Written From Rome**

1. What two epistles did Paul write while a prisoner in Rome?
2. Read Philippians 4:4-7. This encouraging passage was written by Paul when he was a prisoner in Rome. Do you have the same outlook on difficult situations?

**Chapter 46: At Liberty**

1. Describe Nero’s character. Contrast Nero’s character with Paul’s.
2. What calamity in Rome did Nero use as an excuse to murder thousands of Christians who were living in the city?
3. Where was Paul and what was he doing during the period of persecution under Nero?

**Chapter 47: The Final Arrest**

1. For what crime did the Jews accuse Paul at his trial before Nero?
2. Describe how Christians in Rome were treated and looked upon.
3. Read 2 Timothy 1:16-18; 4:11. Who encouraged Paul during his last days as a prisoner for Christ?

**Chapter 48: Paul Before Nero**

1. What opportunity did Paul have to witness for Christ in his trial before Nero and the Roman court?
2. Describe Nero's last day in Rome.

**Chapter 49: Paul's Last Letter**

1. What was Paul's great concern in writing his second letter to Timothy? Is there a sense of urgency in his letter?
2. Read Colossians 1:27, 28. What is the biblical solution to the alarming increase of evil in the world?
3. To hate sin yet love the sinner is a difficult assignment. How does a Christian manage this delicate balance without condoning sin or being overly severe on the wrongdoer?
4. A true minister of the gospel must have strength and "not shun hardship or responsibility." What is the source of this strength? Read Ephesians 3:7.

**Chapter 50: Condemned to Die**

1. Although Paul's execution was held in private to avoid undue attention, what people were influenced and later converted by his cheerful demeanor in the face of death? How did Paul show such peace in the face of pain and suffering?
2. Read Philippians 1:21 and Hebrews 2:14, 15. Paul looked to his martyrdom with "hope and longing expectation." Why did Paul view death with such joy?
3. If your life were to end today, would you be confident that God is able to "raise you up on the last day"? What did Paul focus his mind upon to strengthen his faith in his last moments of life?
4. The "influence of a holy life is the most convincing sermon." What areas in your life could you ask God to change so He can better use your life to convince others?

**Chapter 51: A Faithful Undershepherd**

1. Love, benevolence, eloquence, and zeal are all important for God's work, but what is the "essential qualification" for service to Christ?
2. God needs workers "who will not flatter [His] people, nor treat them harshly, but who will feed them with the bread of life." What are some practical ways you can feed God's sheep?

**Chapter 52: Steadfast Unto the End**

1. Read 2 Peter 1:5-8. List the eight aspects of Christian living and then explore how you can strengthen each one.
2. Peter says in 1 Peter 1:5 that we are "kept by the power of God through faith." Discuss how God's power is related to claiming God's unfailing promises.
3. We are reminded that "none need fail of attaining, in this sphere, to perfection of Christian character." How is this accomplished?
4. Why did Peter request to be crucified head down?

**Chapter 53: John the Beloved**

1. John had several character defects. List some of them. What character defects do you struggle with?

2. Discuss the situation where James and John suggested to Jesus that they bring fire down upon a Samaritan village. How does Christ's answer suggest ways in which we should treat those who are in opposition to our message?
3. Read Matthew 20:20-23. What does this passage say about desire for position and power? Discuss how Christian servant leadership should be lived out in your cultural setting.

### **Chapter 54: A Faithful Witness**

1. Read John 13:34. What else could be done in your community to demonstrate that you love each other?
2. Early "believers began to look for defects in others. Dwelling upon mistakes, giving place to unkind criticism, they lost sight of the Saviour and His love." How does the message of 1 John approach this problem?
3. What specific things could be done in your church family to demonstrate that you love each other? Can you make plans to do something this week?

### **Chapter 55: Transformed by Grace**

1. What is sanctification, and how does one obtain it?
2. Read 1 Thessalonians 4:3. How important is our sanctification to God? Will we ever come to the place where we can claim to be without sin? Why is this?
3. Is there anything you have not surrendered to God—your heart, intellect, money, time? Make a complete surrender right now and ask Him to fill you completely.

### **Chapter 56: Patmos**

1. John's testimony about Jesus enraged his enemies. Trace the events leading up to John's banishment to Patmos.
2. "The history of John affords a striking illustration of the way in which God can use aged workers." How should we treat aged workers?
3. This chapter discusses those who are persecuted by others because of their Christian faith and influence. Can Satan tempt, test, and bring us into trials for the same reasons as did the early believers? Compare being publicly persecuted with experiencing private trials in daily life.
4. List what John saw in nature that spoke to him of God, even on barren Patmos. No matter where you live, give several examples of what you can see or hear in nature that speaks to you about God.

### **Chapter 57: The Revelation**

1. The early church was on fire for God, but then fell into backsliding. If you do not see yourself as on fire for God, what can you do about it?
2. Read Revelation 21–22. What part of the description of the New Earth do you long for the most? Why?

### **Chapter 58: The Church Triumphant**

1. To be the kind of church God wants, it must withdraw "from all allegiance with the world." What kind of allegiances do you have that might hinder you from carrying out God's sacred charge?
2. Read the list of names of reformers part way through the chapter. These individuals contributed to the building of God's kingdom. Does your name belong on the list? What more do you need to do to ensure that you are following in the footsteps of the apostles?
3. Make a list of those with whom you have regular contact (e.g., family, friends, neighbors, coworkers,

and service people). Star the ones you feel may be receptive to Jesus. Begin praying for the people on your list, especially for the starred names, and watch for opportunities to verbally testify about what Jesus has done for you. Ask Jesus to give you a harvest.