



Small Group Discussion Guide- Day 49, Week 7 (Acts 6-9)

Welcome again to our journey together through the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts this summer! Remember <http://christchurchsl.org/la70> is the learning resources center for pastor's videos, discussion guides, reading plans, and the link to the closed Facebook Group. Also, if you would like a pastor's insight to a question you have about your readings, please email them to LA70@christchurchsl.org so that a reply may be emailed to you and posted to the Facebook Group.

This discussion guide is provided as a tool for small group discussions that center on the readings for week 7 (Acts 6-9) or for personal reflections for our independent readers. For the best small group discussion it will be helpful to have done the following prior to each meeting:

- 1- Watched the Pastor's video about the readings for the week
- 2- Completed the daily readings for the week
- 3- Noted at least 2-3 questions or insights from the readings to bring to the meeting to share with the group

Possible Meeting Format for 1 Hour Small Group Meeting:

1. Brief Opening Prayer (1-2 minutes)
2. Discussion of Predetermined Questions & New Questions & Insights from the Group (45 minutes).
 - a. Leader's discretion to be used on question and time management
 - b. You are intentionally provided with more questions than you need (you may wish just to choose the first general question and then one from each day's readings)
 - c. If people have brought insights or questions from their readings during the week, they are encouraged to share them as the group moves through the verses in order.
3. Summarize Life Application Points From Conversation (5 minutes)
4. Prayer Requests & Closing Prayer (5 minutes)
5. Reminders for the Coming Week & Resources (2 minutes)

Predetermined Questions & New Questions & Insights from the Group:

1. In the Pastor's video for week 7, Pastor Dan provided an overview of Acts 6-9 encompassing such characters as Stephen the first martyr of the Christian Church (aside from Christ), Philip the evangelist, the Ethiopian Eunuch, Simon the sorcerer, Peter and John, Saul who was converted on the road to Damascus, Barnabus the encourager, a paralyzed man in Lydda and Tabitha who died in Joppa, both of whom were healed



through Peter. What do you believe was happening in general through the faith of these persons in the early church?

2. Day 43, Acts 6:1-15
 - a. What was the relational and practical problem that needed to be addressed in 6:1? What were the qualifications required of those tending to the problem and why (6:3)?
 - b. Could it be said that Stephen was the first committee chairperson of the Christian church? Why or why not?
 - c. Did the change result in the outcome they had hoped for (6:7)? How so or why?
 - d. Was that his only job or role within the community (6:8, 10)?
 - e. Why do you think the people of the synagogue had a problem with Stephen (6:8-11, 13-14)?
 - f. How does 6:8-14 contain echoes of Jesus' experiences and predictions for his apostles in the Gospel of Luke (Luke 21:12-19, 22:66-23:5, 23:13-14)?
 - g. *What other insights or questions do you have from this section?
3. Day 44, Acts 7:1-38
 - a. Stephen's response began with an overview of their common religious history and heritage that was largely positive (7:2-38). How was this a wise beginning in responding to the charges that were being made against him?
 - b. What major aspects of the Jewish faith do the figures of Abraham, Joseph and Moses represent?
 - c. Why did Stephen speak more about Moses in this setting?
 - d. Up until verse 38, do you think there was anything that Stephen said that was offensive or upsetting? Why or why not?
 - e. *What other insights or questions do you have from this section?
4. Day 45, Acts 7:39-8:1a
 - a. What parallels did he draw between Moses and Jesus (L.C.)?
 - b. What reasons did Stephen point to for the exile in Babylon (7:42)?
 - c. How did quoting Isaiah 66:1-2 in 7:48-50 soften the significance or importance of the temple?
 - d. In 7:51-53, Stephen's response leads into a more directly aggressive and accusatory tone. What do you think he meant by "uncircumsized hearts and ears" (7:51)?
 - e. How was Stephen's response to the council different than Jesus' response when he was before them? Why?
 - f. How was Christ glorified in Stephen's persecution and death (7:56, 7:59-60)?
 - g. *What other insights or questions do you have from this section?



5. Day 46, Acts 8:1b-25

- a. How did Stephen's death spark the fulfilment of Acts 1:8?
- b. What role did Saul have in the beginnings of this new time of persecution (7:58; 8:1-3)?
- c. How was the witness for Christ extended to Samaria (8:4-8)?
- d. Why did Simon want to be like Peter (8:9-11, 13, 18-19)?
- e. How was his motivation impure as Ananias and Saphira wanting to be like Barnabus was? Why was Simon spared (8:20-24)?
- f. Why do you think the Holy Spirit did not come upon the people when Philip baptized them but only later when Peter and John arrived (8:15-17)?
- g. How do you think they knew they received the Holy Spirit?
- h. How was this experience ironic given John's previous experience with Jesus in Samaria (Luke 9:52-55)?
- i. *What other insights or questions do you have from this section?

6. Day 47, Acts 8:26-40

- a. How was Philip a Holy Spirit driven evangelist? How did the Holy Spirit send him and prepare the opportunity (8:26-31)?
- b. How did the passage the Ethiopian Eunuch was reading from Isaiah 53 parallel Jesus' experience?
- c. How would the Eunuch know to inquire about Christian baptism (2:41)?
- d. Do you think the eunuch going away rejoicing indicated that he both was baptized and received the Holy Spirit (8:39)?
- e. How was the gospel advanced "to the ends of the earth" (1:8) through this encounter?
- f. What similarities do you see here with the walk to Emmaus story (Luke 24:13-35)?
- g. *what other insights or questions do you have from this section?

7. Day 48, Acts 9:1-19a

- a. What were Saul's intentions in going to Damascus (9:1-2)?
- b. How was this appearance of Jesus unique compared to the ones which came prior to the ascension (9:3-8)?
- c. What do you believe was going on in Saul's heart during his three days of blindness (9:8-9)?
- d. How was Saul's healing and being filled with the Holy Spirit at the hand of Ananias (not one of the 12 apostles) as much a faith stretch for Ananias as it was for Saul (9:10-19)?



- e. Why do you believe God worked so directly, supernaturally, rapidly and powerfully in Saul's conversion when he had been such an enemy to the growing church? Why conversion and not punishment or just obstructing him (9:15-16)?
- f. How does knowing God would have such mercy on someone like Saul encourage you in your faith walk?
- g. Why would Saul, later as the Apostle Paul, refer to himself as one abnormally born (1 Corinthians 15:7-11)?
- h. *what other insights or questions do you have from this section?

8. Day 49, Acts 9:19b-43

- a. How long did it take after Saul's conversion before he began preaching (9:19-20)?
- b. How did the people of Damascus react to him (9:21-25)?
- c. How was Barnabus instrumental in Paul's being received in Jerusalem with the disciples (9:26-28)?
- d. How did Saul prove Barnabus's words true (9:28-30)? How would you describe or account for the "new" Saul?
- e. How did the healing works of Peter in Lydda, Joppa remind you of the miracles of Jesus in Luke (Luke 5:24-25; 7:12-15; 8:51-56)?
- f. Why do you think we don't see as many supernatural healings such as these in the U.S. in our time?
- g. *what other insights or questions do you have from this section?

*If you did not bring any questions or insights ahead of time, the following questions may help you develop some in the moment. (Discussion questions from Immerse: The Reading Bible by Tyndale)

- What stood out to you this week?
- Was there anything confusing or troubling?
- Did anything make you feel differently about God?

Summary of Life Application Points from the Conversation:

1. How might what we have learned today change how we live?
2. In light of this conversation today and the readings for week 7, what do you believe the Lord is calling you to move towards in your thinking or actions or relationships?

Prayer Requests & Closing Prayer:



1. What recent life events are worth giving thanks to God for or lifting up as a prayer request before the group?
2. The facilitator closes the meeting in prayer

Reminders for Next Time & Support Resources:

1. Please bring 2-3 questions or new insights from your readings to our meeting next time on Day 56.
2. If you would like input from a pastor on particular questions about the readings, please email them at LA70@christchurchsl.org and they will get back to you via email and/or post on the closed LA70 Facebook Group.
3. You can access all resources including the Reading Plan, Online Daily Readings, Pastor's Videos, Discussion Guides and a link to the Facebook Group on the church webpage <http://christchurchsl.org/LA70>.
4. You can directly access the daily scriptures on your smart phone or computer or tablet from the LA70 webpage through the hyperlinks, see <https://christchurchsl.org/la70-reading-plan/>
5. For the leader- if you would like additional background information about the verses each week in addition to information provided in the Pastor's Videos of what to look for in your readings, The Bible Project is another good source. They have a 9-part video series on Luke-Acts, see <https://bibleproject.com/explore/category/luke-acts-series/>