



Small Group Discussion Guide- Day 63, Week 9 (Acts 15-21)

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 9 (Acts 15-21) 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 9, Pastor Michelle highlighted events and characters from chapters 15-21. How did the story of the expansion of the early church in this week's readings build on what was described in the readings from the previous week?
2. Day 57, Acts 15:1-41
 - a. What was the sharp dispute in the church in Antioch (15:2)?



- b. How did Peter and James approach addressing this question and problem? (15:6-19)
- c. What was the conclusion of the church council in Jerusalem and how did they approach communicating and implementing it? (15:20-35)
- d. Where the church council in Jerusalem appeared to successfully resolve conflict with acceptable terms to the community, the next passages show a parting of ways of two friends and long-time partners in missionary activity- Paul and Barnabas. What was their disagreement over and why could they not resolve it? (15:36-40)
- e. How was the greater church blessed through each of their new ministry directions? (15:39-41)
- f. Tradition attributes the Gospel of Mark to be written by John Mark with Peter's testimony as a source and authority behind it and Paul's later letters share positive comments about John Mark in a way that suggests they were reconciled at a later time. How do you see Romans 8:28 at work here?
 - i. With seemingly irreconcilable conflict in the church today, what guidance or encouragement can be gained by the story of John Mark and Romans 8:28?
- g. *What other insights or questions do you have from this section?

3. Day 58, Acts 16:1-40

- a. In this next chapter of Acts, Paul leaves behind one young mentee (John Mark) with Barnabas, and picks up another in Timothy in Lystra. Since the church decided circumcision was not necessary for gentiles, why do you think Paul had Timothy circumcised at the beginning of their ministry together? (16:4)
 - i. How did that help their mission since the message they were sharing was that circumcision was not required for gentiles to become Christians? (16:4-5)
- b. After the Holy Spirit kept them from preaching the word in several places, Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia begging him to "come over to Macedonia and help us." (16:9). How do you think Paul felt about this divine calling to a region rather than a particular city?
 - i. How long did it take for Paul to respond? (16:10)
 - ii. What kind of clarity or confirmation to a particular calling do you believe you would need today before taking some kind of action? How would you approach it?
 - iii. Please see the cities in this region on the map provided on the last page and see the cities named in 16:11-13. In Phillipi (in Macedonia) there



was no synagogue. How did the Lord seem to prepare the way for Paul in his mission to Macedonia? (16:13-15)?

- c. Rather than getting in trouble with the Jews this time, Paul and Silas got in trouble with the townspeople of this gentile city. How so? (16:16-24)
- d. How did God provide a way for both Paul's and Silas's freedom as well as the jailer not being killed for negligence, but rather he and his household being saved? (16:35-40).
 - i. Do you think this could have been in the man in Saul's vision? (16:9)
 - ii. How would you describe the boldness or courage of Paul in this new mission to Macedonia?
 - iii. How many had converted to the faith so far in Macedonia?
- e. *What other insights or questions do you have from this section?

4. Day 59, Acts 17:1-34

- a. In Thessalonica, there was a synagogue and some Jews as well as God-fearing Greeks began to follow them (17:4). What kind of accusations did the Jews level against Paul and Silas and the believers who hosted them? (17:6-7, compare Luke 23:2)
- b. How was their choice to move on to Berea an act of mercy to their hosts?
- c. How were the Jews in Berea "of more noble character" than the Jews in Thessalonica?
 - i. How were they examples for Christians to follow today?
- d. As before, in the middle of the conflict, Paul moved on to another city, this time Athens. There he spoke in both the Synagogue and in the marketplace. How would you describe Paul's introduction to the gospel message was adjusted according to the people he was speaking to in the marketplace? (17:22-25)
- e. How was this different than when he or the other Apostles would share the gospel with Jews?
- f. In 17:29-31, Paul confronted the people on idol worship. How had he done this before the mission to Macedonia with gentiles in Syria (Psidian Antioch)? (14:15-18).
 - i. How was there both bold clarity and gentleness both times (14:16; 17:30-31)?
 - ii. In sharing your faith today, do you find it hard to present faith with both bold clarity and gentleness? How so?
- g. 17:32-34 summarizes that some sneered about the resurrection of the dead, some wanted to hear more, and some chose to become believers. In light of this experience with gentiles in Athens, what do you think Paul meant when he



wrote the following? “We preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.” 1 Corinthians 1:22-23.

h. *What other insights or questions do you have from this section?

5. Day 60, Acts 18:1-28

- a. Paul moved next to Corinth and spoke boldly in the synagogue there. After some Jews converted the Jewish community turned abusive toward Paul and he then turned to the gentiles in Corinth. Why was the word from the Lord in Paul’s vision an important message to receive at this time (18:9-10)?
 - i. When or how have you sensed God had spoken just the right message to you at just the right time when you have been on mission for God?
 - ii. What became of the people who tried to run off Paul (18:12-17)?
 - 1. How did God work through those outside the Christian community to accomplish His purposes?

b. In Corinth, Paul first met Aquila (18:1-2). When it came time for Paul to leave one and half years later, Aquila and Priscilla accompanied Paul to Ephesus and became church leaders there. After Paul moved on and returned to Antioch, how did Priscilla and Aquila serve in the church in Ephesus? (18:24-26)

c. How did their service indirectly help a growing community in Achaia? (18:27-28)

d. *What other insights or questions do you have from this section?

6. Day 61, Acts 19:1-41

- a. In a later more extended visit, Paul visited the church in Ephesus to encourage them. In chapt 19, how did Paul first begin with strengthening the faith of the believers there? (19:1-7)
- b. How did the Jews in the synagogue respond to Paul’s teachings and how did Paul adapt? (19:8-10)
- c. Over the next two years, the church continued with Paul’s teaching primarily in public spaces (19:10). How were some of the signs the Holy Spirit’s working during that time?
- d. In 19:23-41, another public riot follows Paul’s ministry activities. What was the cause of the riot (19:23-31)
- e. Why would the crowd be against both the Jews and Believers there? (19:32-34)
- f. Why do you think riots don’t typically happen when we preach the gospel of Jesus Christ today?
- g. *what other insights or questions do you have from this section?

7. Day 62, Acts 20:1-38



- a. On the move again (see cities in 20:2-6 in map on last page), Paul stopped in Troas. What other miracle stories did the story of Eutychus remind you of in 20:7-12?
- b. After visiting a few other cities in Asia minor, Paul stopped in Miletus for an emotional meeting with some of the Christian leaders in the region (particularly in Ephesus) for a final goodbye before, what he was sensing to be, his next phase of his ministry elsewhere. Why did Paul think he might not see them again? (20:17-23, 25, 36-37)
- c. How did Paul summarize his ministry with them in this emotional meeting? (20:20-21, 24, 27, 35)
- d. What were his final charges to the community there? (20:28, 30-32)
- e. How was the hardships of Paul's past and future ministry anticipated by the word given to Ananias at Paul's conversion in 9:15-19?
- f. *what other insights or questions do you have from this section?

8. Day 63, Acts 21:1-40

- a. In 21:1-15 the anticipation (9:15-19) of hardship and possible death of Paul continued in his meetings with Christians in various cities on his way to Syria. How did these expressions parallel the journey of Jesus to Jerusalem in the second half of the Gospel of Luke?
- b. After being away from Jerusalem for so long, why would the Jews come after Paul at this time? (21:20-25; 21:27-32)
- c. What do you think people today find most threatening about the Gospel?
- d. Paul had been rescued from riots previously by public officials. Paul used the occasion to defend himself to yet again share the gospel of Jesus Christ with people. (21:35-40). How do you think Paul's spiritual sense of anticipating costly sacrifice influenced his response in this moment?
- e. *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 8, 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 70.
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/>

in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence.
 12 And when ye call to a brother, salute it.
 13 And if the brother be not found, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace be upon you.

Father.
 30 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.
 31 Therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.
 32 Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, I will confess him before my Father which is in heaven.

peny for-thing in the original, as being the tenth part of the Roman penny? See on ch. 18, 28.

LUKE & ACTS IN 70 DAYS

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