

WELCOME TO NT365

As you read this week...

- *What stands out as remarkable, intriguing, or challenging?*
- *What did you discover that you've never noticed before? What raises questions?*
- *In what ways do you feel God is speaking to your heart?*

WEEK #21: ACTS CHAPTERS 12-16

Chapter 12

1. Peter is miraculously rescued from prison by an angel (vv.6 & ff.). When have you witnessed God "rescuing" someone? How has God rescued you?
2. Vs.21-23 seems uncustomary: King Herod was struck down for posturing like a god and not giving God the glory. How do you reconcile this account with your understanding of Who God is?

Chapter 13

1. Because many Jewish leaders were rejecting Christ, Paul warned them by quoting an Old Testament prophet: "*I am doing a work in your days, a work that you will not believe, even if one tells it to you*" (vs.41). Who do you know that seems to refuse to acknowledge God's work? When do you suppose you've ignored or overlooked God's work?
2. As Jews leaders speak out against Jesus, Paul warns them that their words will be their judge (vs.46). God is not judging them. God is offering them salvation through His Son, and they are choosing to reject Him. How do you feel knowing that we alone choose to accept or reject God's gift of eternal life?

Chapter 14

1. In vs. 8-18, a crowd watches Paul and Barnabas heal a man, and determine that Paul and Barnabas are gods. When have you been praised for doing God's work? How have you helped others offer their praise to God instead of you?
2. Vs.22 predicts hardships in the lives of Christ-followers because of their commitment to Jesus. What are examples of hardships that faith in Christ has caused in your life?

Chapter 15

1. Some within the early church wanted Christ-followers to also follow Jewish laws (vs.5) Peter argues that believers are saved "through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ," not by following laws (vs.11). Why is it hard to believe that only faith in Christ gets us to heaven, not rituals or deeds?
2. In vs.36, Paul and Barnabas set out to re-visit the people to whom they had delivered the message of Christ. Their example helps us understand our role of nurturing other Christ-followers. In what ways are you following their example and helping others grow in their faith?

3. Vs.39 brings a surprise: Paul and Barnabas have such a significant disagreement that they part company. How does it make you feel to see the early disciples argue? What do we learn about human nature? When have you experienced conflict with other believers? How have you reconciled your conflict?

Chapter 16

1. In v.14, we meet Lydia and learn this about her: "*The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message.*" What does this passage teach us about how a person comes to faith in Christ? How has God opened your heart to Christ? When have you seen God open someone else's heart?
2. Beginning in vs.22, Paul and Silas are beaten and imprisoned. As they worship God, the earth shakes and the doors are opened. In the aftermath, the jailer puts his faith in Christ. When have you seen God use a difficult situation to do great things? What does this story teach us about how our faith in the midst of trials?

WEEK #22: ACTS CHAPTERS 17-21

Chapter 17

1. In vs.11-12, we see that the Jews in Berea were eager to receive God's Word from Paul and Silas, and they "examined the Scriptures" to see if what they were hearing was true. What is your method of discerning what you read and hear concerning your faith?
2. Vs. 16 says Paul was "greatly distressed" when he realized the people of Athens were so committed to their idols. Think about your city and country. What "idols" are distracting today's culture?

Chapter 18

1. In vs. 12-13, Paul is taken to court on charges that he is persuading people to worship God contrary to Jewish law. In what ways have you witnessed religious rituals and traditions become more important than the God we worship?
2. In vs.23, Paul returns to the churches he started in order to strengthen the believers. In what ways does being part of a church strengthened your faith? How has God used you and your church to strengthen others?
3. In vs.24-26, we meet Apollos, a gifted teacher. Priscilla and Aquilla take him aside and help him better understand the message of Christ. Who has been a "Priscilla or Aquilla" in your life? How has God used you as a "Priscilla or Aquilla" for others?

Chapter 19

1. In Ephesus, Paul began to teach in a Jewish synagogue (vs.8-10). When they rejected his teaching, Paul conducted daily discussions at a lecture hall instead. Who in your life has demonstrated inspiring persistence in following God? How have you demonstrated persistence for others?

NT365

The New Testament in a Year

Read the entire
New Testament in a year.

- *One Chapter each day, Monday-Friday.*
- *Daily reading notes & reflection questions.*
- *Excellent for Small Group discussion.*

Guide #6

Weeks 21-24
Acts Chapter 12
to Romans Chapter 3



NEW HORIZON

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- In vs.23-29, we read that some of the people in Ephesus were alarmed and enraged that the teachings of Paul were turning people away from their man-made idols. Are there idols today that you see threatened by the message of Jesus?

Chapter 20

- In vs.22-24, Paul tells us that he knows imprisonment and afflictions await him. Yet he will continue to faithfully proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ. When have you been faced with danger or difficulties for obeying God? What was your response?
- In v.35, Paul tells his listeners to remember the words of Jesus, *"It is more blessed to give than to receive."* When have you experienced this truth?

Chapter 21

- In vs.13, Paul gives a stirring response to those who were urging him not to go to Jerusalem. When have you witnessed this kind of courage in the face of struggles?
- As he predicted, when Paul arrives in Jerusalem, he is immediately arrested by those who wish to silence him (vs. 27-33). How can Paul's faithful perseverance encourage you in your challenges today?

WEEK #23: ACTS CHAPTERS 22-26

Chapter 22

- In vs. 1-21, Paul tells the crowd his story of encountering Jesus and being called to share the Gospel with others. Can you tell a story of how encountering Jesus has changed your life? Have you ever shared your story with others?
- The people listened patiently until vs.22, and then became enraged because Paul is offering the Gospel to non-Jews. Where have you seen signs of prejudice in Christ's church? Which of your prejudices does Christ challenge?

Chapter 23

- In vs.6-8, Paul exposes a rift between groups within the Jewish faith. How have you experienced different churches with different understandings of the Christian faith?
- In vs.10-11, God speaks directly to Paul's heart: *"You will also testify of Me in Rome."* When have you sensed God's personal direction and encouragement in your life?
- In vs.16-22, Paul's nephew is quietly involved in saving Paul's life. When have you experienced God doing extraordinary things in very ordinary ways?

Chapter 24

- In vs.5, Paul is accused of being the "ringleader" of a "sect." Who do you know that believes the Christian faith to be superstitious and foolish? How would you respond to those people?
- In vs.14-16, Paul defends his faith, and invites his accusers to examine his life for evidence of his faith. In what ways does your daily living reflect your beliefs? How might your daily living be contrary to your beliefs?

- Imprisonment and trials don't stop Paul from speaking about Christ Jesus. In fact, these things became opportunities for Paul to share his faith (vs.22-25).. When have challenges in your life provided you an opportunity to talk about your faith?

Chapter 25

- In vs.10-12, Paul makes his appeal to Caesar's high court. This action will set in motion Paul's journey to Rome, as God predicted in Acts 23:11. How is your faith encouraged as you witness the unfolding of God's plan in the pages of Scripture? What is an example of God's ongoing plan in your life?
- Throughout chapter 25, Paul is brought to trial again and again. Yet, God seems to be working God's plan. How has God been working His plan in your life, even though challenges and difficulties?

Chapter 26

- In Paul's testimony before King Agrippa, he asks those assembled a challenging question, *"Why is it thought incredible by any of you that God raises the dead?"* (vs.8). Are you able to believe in the Resurrection of Christ? Are you able to believe that the God Who raises the dead is at work in your life? How does our God need to work in your life today?
- In vs.9, Paul testifies that at first he was convinced he should oppose the name of Jesus. Who do you know that feels compelled to oppose the Christian faith? How can we as Christ-followers respond to these people?
- Paul ends his defense with the stirring words in vs. 29: *"I pray God that all who are listening to me today may become what I am, except for these chains."* Are you encouraged and compelled by Paul's passionate example? In what ways might God be calling you to step forward in courageous and risk-taking faith?

WEEK #24: ACTS CHAPTERS 27-28, ROMANS CHAPTERS 1-3

Chapter 27

- Paul warns the sailing crew of awaiting peril (v.10), yet he demonstrates no sign of fear or anxiety. When have you experienced an unexplainable peace from God, even in the midst of great challenges?
- Paul is encouraged by an angelic visitor, and encourages the ship's crew with a message of hope (v.23-25). When has your faith and courage been inspired by others? When do you feel you've been an inspiration to others?

Chapter 28

- After the shipwreck, Paul continues his ministry by healing a man suffering from dysentery (v.7-9). Paul had every reason to take a break from ministry, but finds every opportunity instead. In what circumstances do you give yourself a "pass" from following Christ? When have you permitted difficulties to deter you from obeying God?

- As Paul arrives in Rome, he begins to share Christ immediately. In vs.22, we learn that many have already heard things spoken against the Christian faith. Who in our culture do you hear speaking against the Christian faith? What is at the heart of their objections?
- The Book of Acts ends abruptly, telling us that Paul continued to preach Christ *"boldly and without hindrance"* v.31. Some scholars believe this ending is intentional, and calls readers to continue in the missionary work of the early church. Do you feel a kindred spirit with the people and the ministry of our predecessors? Do you find yourself encouraged to live more fully for Christ because of their example?

The Book of Romans—Written by the Apostle Paul, Romans is more formal than his other letters. It is presented as a theological essay on Christian doctrine. Right-standing with God does not come by good works, but by grace alone, through faith in Jesus Christ. Chapters 1-11 present basic truths. Chapters 12-16 call believers and Christ's church to live out their faith in love, joy, obedience and service, as a response to the lavish grace of God.

Chapter 1

- Paul tells his readers in vs. 16, *"I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes"*. When are you tempted to shy away from your faith? When have you suffered shame for your faith?
- Paul teaches that some who know God's "righteous decrees" not only continue in sin, but encourage others to do so as well (vs.32). What might be examples of this in our day?

Chapter 2

- In vs.1, Paul warns, *"For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you who judge practice the very same things."* How might God be speaking to you personally in this passage? In what ways do you judge others for the same things you struggle with?
- Vs.4 teaches, *"God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance."* When has God lovingly convicted you and moved you to repentance?

Chapter 3

- In vs.23, Paul teaches us that *"all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."* How does it feel knowing that each of us is distanced from God by our sin? Are you able to acknowledge your sin before God?
- In vs. 28, Paul teaches that, as sinful people, we are incapable of fulfilling God's law. Are you convinced of your inability? Do you struggle with not being able to justify yourself before God by your actions?