

New Testament Recovery Version

Study Guide

Book V

**THE ACTS
OF THE APOSTLES**

BRINGING SAINTS INTO THE TRUTH

THERE IS THE DESPERATE NEED OF THE LIVING TRUTH

Suppose that on this earth among the human race there had never been such a book as the Bible. If we had not had a Bible in our hands during the past 2,000 years since the Lord Jesus resurrected and ascended to the heavens, everything would be in the air and nothing could be solid. Even the things concerning the Spirit could not be solid. The Spirit depends upon the Word. This is why the Lord said that the words that He spoke to us are spirit (John 6:63)... Without the Word the Spirit might be just “a phantom.” ... whenever people contact the holy Word, many times they get the Spirit ... A principle has been set up through history that there is the desperate need of the living truth to produce the church, to help the church exist, and to build up the church.

THE MOST PROFITABLE WRITINGS AND PUBLICATIONS ARE THE LIFE-STUDY MESSAGES WITH THE NOTES OF THE RECOVERY VERSION

Through the past ten years up to the present time it has been fully proven among us that the most profitable writings and publications are the Life-study messages with the notes of the Recovery Version. I wrote these things, not for scholarly study for people to get a degree, but for life ministering, for truth releasing, and for opening up the books of the Bible.

THIS IS NOT TO REPLACE THE BIBLE, BUT TO BRING PEOPLE INTO THE BIBLE

The holy Word itself says in Psalm 119:130: “The opening of Your words gives light,”... Nearly everywhere you go today you find a Bible, but who has entered into the Bible? There has nearly been no entrance. Many have a copy of the Bible, but the Bible has been closed and nearly never opened. Now the Lord has given us a key, an opener. I consider our writings as the opener to open the holy Word. I believe that those of you who have read the Life-study

messages can testify honestly that these messages with the notes of the Recovery Version have opened up a certain chapter or a certain book of the Bible to you. This is not to replace the Bible, but to bring people into the Bible.

SPENDING AT LEAST THIRTY MINUTES IN THE WORD EVERY DAY

We should help the saints to build up a practice or a habit that every day they would spend at least thirty minutes in the Word.... Some saints may decide to study the book of Romans or the book of Hebrews. They should study every day either three times of ten minutes each or one time of thirty minutes. We should charge them to pray-read two or three verses of this book every day. Then they have to study the accompanying message.... The saints do not need to pray-read the Life-study messages, but they have to pray-read the biblical verses in order to get the help to enter into the truth conveyed in these few verses. They also need the help of the notes and the Life-study messages to enter into the truth.

AFTER ONE YEAR OF STUDYING THE BIBLE IN THIS WAY, THERE WILL BE A SOLID CHANGE

After one year of studying the Bible in this way, there will be a solid change in the saints’ home life, private life, and church life.

Therefore, as leading brothers try your best in your locality to stir up an atmosphere and to create a hunger and thirst in the saints after the Lord’s truth. Tell them that the truth is in the unique holy Word and that the best help to usher them into the Word is the Recovery Version with the notes and all the Life-studies. Of course, we should not practice anything legal. We should not make these things a legal matter that the saints are required to do. However, if the saints do love the Lord’s recovery, they must get themselves fed all the time with the healthy food that they may be strong. As a result of eating a proper, regular diet, the saints will be strong and the Lord will have a strong testimony. (*Elders' Training, Book 03: The Way to Carry Out the Vision, pp. 102-104, 108-111*)

Week 1 Day 1 Acts 1:1-26

I. Key Verse:

Acts 1:8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

II. Your Favorite Verses: _____, _____, _____.

III. Crucial Points of the Truth:

The apostles bear a living _____ of the resurrected and ascended Christ in life, differing from preachers who merely preach doctrines in letters. In His _____ Christ carried out His ministry on the earth by Himself, as recorded in the Gospels, to sow Himself as the _____ of the kingdom of God only in the Jewish land. In His _____ He would carry out His ministry in the heavens through these _____, in His resurrection _____ and with His ascension power and authority, as recorded in the Acts, to spread Himself as the development of the kingdom of God from _____, as a beginning, unto the _____ part of the earth. (See Acts 1:8 note 3)

IV. Further Reading: *Life-Study of Acts Msg. 1-5.*

Note:

Week 1 Day 2 Acts 2:1-21

I. Key Verse:

Acts 2:21 And it shall be that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

II. Your Favorite Verses: _____, _____, _____.

III. Crucial Points of the Truth:

_____ on the Lord's name is vitally necessary in order for us, the believers in Christ, to participate in and _____ the all-inclusive _____ with all He has accomplished, attained, and obtained (1 Cor. 1:2). It is a major practice in God's New Testament economy that enables us to enjoy the _____ Triune God for our full _____ (Rom. 10:10-13). The early believers practiced this everywhere (1 Cor. 1:2), and to the unbelievers, especially the _____, it became a popular _____ of Christ's believers. (See Acts 2:21 note 1)

IV. Further Reading: *Life-Study of Acts Msg. 6-9.*

Note:

Week 1 Day 3 Acts 2:22-41

I. Key Verse:

Acts 2:38 And Peter said to them, Repent and each one of you be baptized upon the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

II. Your Favorite Verses: _____, _____, _____.

III. Crucial Points of the Truth:

Forgiveness of sins is based on the _____ of Christ, which was accomplished through His death (Acts 10:43; Eph. 1:7; 1 Cor. 15:3); it is the initial and basic blessing of God's full _____. Based on it the blessing of God's full salvation goes forward and consummates in the receiving of the gift of the Holy _____.

The apostles preached and ministered _____, but when their hearers repented and believed in Him, they received this wonderful _____ of the Triune God. This implies that this Spirit is just the resurrected and _____ Christ Himself. The receiving of the Spirit here is both _____ and _____, in a general and all-inclusive sense. (See Acts 2:38 note 5, note 7)

IV. Further Reading: *Life-Study of Acts Msg. 10-11.*

Note:

Week 1 Day 4 Acts 2:42-3:18

I. Key Verse:

Acts 2:42 And they continued steadfastly in the teaching and the fellowship of the apostles, in the breaking of bread and the prayers.

II. Your Favorite Verses: _____, _____, _____.

III. Truth Quiz:

1. What are the relationships between the teaching, the fellowship, the breaking of bread and the prayers?
2. Why was the believers "having all things common" a testimony rather than a practice of legality?
3. What is the significance of meeting from house to house?

Answer:

1. See Acts 2:42 note 1.
2. See Acts 2:44 note 1.
3. See Acts 2:46 note 3.

IV. Further Reading: *Life-Study of Acts Msg. 12-13.*

Note:

Week 1 Day 5 Acts 3:19-4:31

I. Key Verse:

Acts 3:19 Repent therefore and turn, that your sins may be wiped away,
Acts 3:20 So that seasons of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord...

II. Your Favorite Verses: _____, _____, _____.

III. Crucial Points of the Truth:

The seasons of refreshing denote a time of _____ of all things with joy and rest, referring to the times of _____ of all things in Acts 3:21, which will be brought in by the coming of the _____ in His glory, as taught and prophesied by the Savior in Matt. 19:28 (see note 1 there). It seems that Peter's word skips over the _____ age and goes directly from the time of Pentecost to the millennium. This may indicate that Peter did not have a clear vision concerning the church age in God's New Testament _____. The entire New Testament reveals that before the seasons of refreshing, the _____ occupies a considerable period of time in God's dispensation. (See Acts 3:20 note 1)

IV. Further Reading: *Life-Study of Acts Msg. 13-16.*

Note:

Week 1 Day 6 Acts 4:32-5:32

I. Key Verse:

Acts 5:31 This One God has exalted to His right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.

II. Your Favorite Verses: _____, _____, _____.

III. Crucial Points of the Truth:

To give repentance and forgiveness of sins to God's _____ people requires Christ to be exalted as a ruling Leader and Savior. His _____ ruling causes and leads God's chosen people to _____, and His salvation, which is based on His redemption, affords them _____ of sins.

Repentance is for _____ of sins (Mark 1:4). On God's side, forgiveness of sins is based on Christ's _____ (Eph. 1:7); on man's side, forgiveness of sins is through man's _____.

_____ is the way and the condition for one to receive and enjoy the Spirit of God. (See Acts 5:31 note 3, note 4; 32 note 3)

IV. Further Reading: *Life-Study of Acts Msg. 17-18.*

Note:

Week 1 Day 7 Acts 5:33-7:1

I. Key Verse:

Acts 6:7 And the word of God grew, and the number of the disciples in Jerusalem multiplied greatly; and a large number of the priests obeyed the faith.

II. Your Favorite Verses: _____, _____, _____.

III. Truth Quiz:

1. Why is prayer needed for the ministry of the word?
2. What does “the word of God grew” indicate?
3. Why was Jesus accused of “destroying the temple”?

Answer:

1. See Acts 6:4 note 1.
2. See Acts 6:7 note 1.
3. See Acts 6:14 note 1.

IV. Further Reading: *Life-Study of Acts Msg. 18-20.*

Note:

CALLING UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD

Acts 2:21 speaks of calling on the name of the Lord. The name denotes the person. Jesus is the name of the Lord, and the Spirit is His Person. When we call, “Lord Jesus,” we receive the Spirit.

According to the context, 2:21 is the conclusion of the quotation of Joel’s prophecy, which began in verse 17. The fact that verse 21 is the conclusion of the quotation indicates that the issue of God’s pouring out of His Spirit upon all flesh is their salvation through calling on the name of the Lord. God’s outpouring of His Spirit is the application of the Lord’s salvation unto His chosen people. To be saved is to receive this Spirit, which is the blessing of the gospel in God’s New Testament economy (Gal. 3:2, 5, 14). This Spirit is the Lord Himself as the breath (John 20:22) and the living water (John 4:10, 14) to us. To breathe Him in as our breath and drink Him as our living water, we need to call upon Him. Lamentations 3:55-56 indicates that calling upon the Lord is breathing, and Isaiah 12:3 and 4 indicate that calling upon the Lord is drinking. After we believe in the Lord, we need to call upon Him so that we may not only be saved but also enjoy His riches (Rom. 10:12-13). His riches are enjoyed through our calling upon Him by exercising our spirit. This is the real worship of God (John 4:24).

When we preach the gospel and help others to be saved, we need to encourage them to call on the name of the Lord and say, “O Lord Jesus!” From experience we know that the stronger a person calls on the name of the Lord Jesus, the stronger will be his experience of salvation.

Let us suppose that someone who has heard the preaching of the gospel and who wants to be saved prays softly and weakly, “Lord Jesus, You love me, and You died for me. I believe in You.” It may be difficult to recognize that one who prays in such a weak manner is saved. However, suppose someone strongly calls on the name of the Lord Jesus and says, “Lord Jesus! O Lord Jesus! I’m a sinner, Lord, but You died for me! O Lord Jesus, I love You!” No doubt, anyone who prays like this, calling strongly on the name of the Lord, is saved. He may even be beside himself with joy in the Lord for His salvation. (*Life-Study of Acts, pp. 71-72*)

Week 2 Day 1 Acts 7:2-8:3

I. Key Verse:

Acts 7:55 But being full of the Holy Spirit, he looked intently into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God;

II. Your Favorite Verses: _____, _____, _____.

III. Truth Quiz:

1. Why was it said that “The God of glory appeared to Abraham”?
2. Stephen saw “Jesus standing at the right hand of God.” What does this indicate?
3. Why was it called “the church which was in Jerusalem” in Acts 8:1?

Answer:

1. See Acts 7:2 note 2.
2. See Acts 7:55 note 3.
3. See Acts 8:1 note 1.

IV. Further Reading: *Life-Study of Acts Msg. 21.*

Note:

Week 2 Day 2 Acts 8:4-40

I. Key Verse:

Acts 8:31 And he said, How could I unless someone guides me?
And he entreated Philip to come up and sit with him.

II. Your Favorite Verses: _____, _____, _____.

III. Truth Quiz:

1. Why did the believers in Samaria need to receive the Holy Spirit?
2. “The Spirit led Philip to preach the gospel”. What does “The Spirit” indicate?
3. “Philip preached water baptism to the eunuch”. What does Philip preached” indicate?

Answer:

1. See Acts 8:16 note 1, note 3; 17 note 1.
2. See Acts 8:29 note 1.
3. See Acts 8:36 note 1.

IV. Further Reading: *Life-Study of Acts Msg. 22-24.*

Note:

Week 2 Day 3 Acts 9:1-43

I. Key Verse:

Acts 9:4 And he fell on the ground and heard a voice saying to him, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?

Acts 9:5 And he said, Who are You, Lord? And He said, I am Jesus, whom you persecute.

II. Your Favorite Verses: _____, _____, _____.

III. Crucial Points of the Truth:

A _____ "Me," comprising Jesus the Lord and all His _____. Saul did not have this revelation. He thought that he was persecuting _____ and other _____-followers, who were in the Way, which he considered heresy (24:14). He did not know that when he persecuted these he persecuted _____, for they were _____ with Him by being _____ to Him through their faith in Him. To him this was a _____ revelation in the universe! By this he began to see that the Lord Jesus and His _____ are one great _____ — the wonderful "_____." This must have impressed and affected him for his future ministry concerning Christ and the _____ as the great mystery of God. (*See Acts 9:4 note 1*)

IV. Further Reading: *Life-Study of Acts Msg. 25-28.*

Note:

Week 2 Day 4 Acts 10:1-43

I. Key Verse:

Acts 10:43 To this One all the prophets testify that through His name everyone who believes into Him will receive forgiveness of sins.

II. Your Favorite Verses: _____, _____, _____.

III. Truth Quiz:

1. What was the state of "a trance came upon Peter"?
2. What does "a certain vessel like a great sheet descending" symbolize?
3. How will the Lord "judge the living and the dead"?

Answer:

1. See Acts 10:10 note 3.
2. See Acts 10:11 note 2; 28 note 1.
3. See Acts 10:42 note 1.

IV. Further Reading: *Life-Study of Acts Msg. 29-30.*

Note:

Week 2 Day 5 Acts 10:44-11:30

I. Key Verse:

Acts 10:44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those hearing the word.

Acts 10:45 And the believers who were of the circumcision, as many as had accompanied Peter, were amazed, because on the Gentiles also the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out.

II. Your Favorite Verses: _____, _____, _____.

III. Crucial Points of the Truth:

Like the early apostles and the _____ believers on the day of _____ (2:4), the Gentile believers in the house of _____ received the Holy Spirit _____ directly from the ascended Head. Only these two instances in the New Testament are considered the baptism in the Holy _____ (1:5; 11:15-16). By these two steps the Head of the Body baptized all His believers, both _____ and _____, once for all into His one _____ (1 Cor. 12:13). Hence, the baptism in the Spirit is an accomplished fact carried out by Christ in His ascension, on the day of _____ and in the house of _____. (See Acts 10:47 note 1)

IV. Further Reading: *Life-Study of Acts Msg. 30-33.*

Note:

Week 2 Day 6 Acts 12:1-13:4

I. Key Verse:

Acts 13:2 And as they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, Set apart for Me now Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.

II. Your Favorite Verses: _____, _____, _____.

III. Crucial Points of the Truth:

This was a great step taken by the Lord for the spread of the gospel of His kingdom to the _____ world. It was begun from _____, a Gentile center in Syria, without the organizing of a _____, without the raising of funds, without human _____, and without any human plan or method. It was initiated by _____ faithful and seeking members of the Body of Christ, who gave the Head of the Body an opportunity through their _____ and _____, that He, as the _____, might set them apart to carry out His great commission to spread His kingdom for the establishing of His _____ in the Gentile world through the preaching of His gospel. (See Acts 13:2 note 3)

IV. Further Reading: *Life-Study of Acts Msg. 34-36.*

Note:

I. Key Verse:

Acts 13:47 For so the Lord has commanded us, "I have set you as a light of the Gentiles, that you would be for salvation unto the uttermost part of the earth."

II. Your Favorite Verses: _____, _____, _____.

III. Crucial Points of the Truth:

This word is a quotation from Isa. 49:6, which refers to _____ as God's Servant, whom God made a light to the _____ that His salvation might reach to the end of the _____. Because he was one with _____ in carrying out God's salvation in Christ, the apostle Paul _____ this prophetic word to himself in his ministry of gospel preaching for the turning of the gospel from the Jews, because of their _____, to the _____. In His ministry on earth the Lord expressed the same thing to the stubborn _____ in Luke 4:24-27. (See Acts 13:47 note 1)

IV. Further Reading: *Life-Study of Acts* Msg. 36-38.

Note:

The principle is the same with Christ's incarnation, resurrection, ascension, breathing of the Spirit into His disciples, and the pouring out of the Spirit upon His disciples. It is not the case that whenever someone believes in the Lord Jesus, it is necessary for Him to breathe the Spirit into that one, or pour out the Spirit upon him. On the contrary, the breathing of the Spirit into the believers has been accomplished once for all in John 20. In the same principle, Christ, the Head of the Body, has baptized all His believers, every member of the Body, into the Spirit once for all in two steps. The first step was on the day of Pentecost, when the Jewish believers were baptized in the Holy Spirit. The second step was in the house of Cornelius, when the Gentile believers were baptized in the Holy Spirit.

Let us use the making and eating of a sandwich to illustrate how the incarnation, the crucifixion, the resurrection, the breathing of the essential Spirit, the ascension, and the pouring out of the economical Spirit apply to us today. In preparing a sandwich we may take two slices of bread. We then may apply mayonnaise to the bread and put on turkey, cheese, tomato, and lettuce. In the preparation of such a sandwich we go step by step. But in the eating of the sandwich, we do not take first the bread, then the turkey, and then the other elements of the sandwich. Instead, we take all the ingredients of the sandwich at once. In like manner, the six matters of Christ's incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, breathing of the Spirit, ascension, and outpouring of the Spirit are applied to us at the same time. They were accomplished step by step, but they are applied to us simultaneously. Using the illustration of the sandwich, we may say that the incarnation is the bread, that the crucifixion is the turkey, and the resurrection, the breathing of the Spirit, the ascension, and the pouring out of the Spirit are yet other ingredients. When we come to eat this all-inclusive "sandwich," we do not first "eat" the "bread" of the incarnation and then the "turkey" of the crucifixion. Rather, we take the whole sandwich at one time. We do not consider which item comes first and which comes last.

Hence, if you are asked whether you have received the Holy Spirit, you should boldly reply, "Yes, I definitely have received the Holy Spirit!" In giving such an answer we need to realize that actually we received the Holy Spirit more than nineteen hundred years ago and that now day by day we are enjoying Him by faith. (*Life-Study of Acts* pp.255, 260, 262)

Week 3 Day 1 Acts 14:1-15:11

I. Key Verse:

Acts 14:22 Establishing the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith and saying that through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God.

II. Your Favorite Verses: _____, _____, _____.

III. Truth Quiz:

1. How were the elders appointed in Acts 14?
2. Why did Paul and Barnabas need to go to Jerusalem in Acts 15?
3. How did the apostles and elders gather together to fellowship about the matter concerning circumcision?

Answer:

1. See Acts 14:23 note 1.
2. See Acts 15:2 note 2.
3. See Acts 15:6 note 1.

IV. Further Reading: *Life-Study of Acts Msg. 39-42.*

Note:

Week 3 Day 2 Acts 15:12-16:5

I. Key Verse:

Acts 16:5 And so the churches were strengthened in the faith and increased in number daily.

II. Your Favorite Verses: _____, _____, _____.

III. Truth Quiz:

1. What does “the tabernacle of David which has fallen” refer to?
2. How did it show that James was under the heavy influence of his Judaic background?
3. What was the consequence of the sharp contention between Barnabas and Paul?

Answer:

1. See Acts 15:16 note 1.
2. See Acts 15:21 and note 1.
3. See Acts 15:39 note 1.

IV. Further Reading: *Life-Study of Acts Msg. 42-43.*

Note:

Week 3 Day 3 Acts 16:6-40

I. Key Verse:

Acts 16:31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved, you and your household.

II. Your Favorite Verses: _____, _____, _____.

III. Truth Quiz:

1. What does “having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia” indicate?
2. Why did it say “the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them”?
3. Please illustrate how the family of the believer is a complete unit for God's salvation.

Answer:

1. See Acts 16:6 note 1.
2. See Acts 16:7 note 1.
3. See Acts 16:31 note 1.

IV. Further Reading: *Life-Study of Acts Msg. 44-45.*

Note:

Week 3 Day 4 Acts 17:1-34

I. Key Verse:

Acts 17:16 And while Paul was waiting for them in Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he beheld that the city was full of idols.

II. Your Favorite Verses: _____, _____, _____.

III. Truth Quiz:

1. Why was Paul’s spirit provoked?
2. What are the thoughts of the Epicurean and the Stoic philosophers?
3. Why does it say “we are also His race”?

Answer:

1. See Acts 17:16 and note 1.
2. See Acts 17:18 note 1, note 2.
3. See Acts 17:28 note 4.

IV. Further Reading: *Life-Study of Acts Msg. 46-47.*

Note:

Week 3 Day 5 Acts 18:1-28

I. Key Verse:

Acts 18:26 And this man [Apollos] began to speak boldly in the synagogue. And when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him to themselves and expounded the way of God to him more accurately.

II. Your Favorite Verses: _____, _____, _____.

III. Truth Quiz:

1. When did Paul write his first Epistle to the church in Thessalonica?
2. Why did Paul shear his head in Cenchrea?
3. How did Aquila and Priscilla help Apollos?

Answer:

1. See Acts 18:5 note 1.
2. See Acts 18:18 note 1.
3. See Acts 18:25-26 and 25 note 2.

IV. Further Reading: *Life-Study of Acts Msg. 48-50.*

Note:

Week 3 Day 6 Acts 19:1-41

I. Key Verse:

Acts 19:20 Thus, the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.

II. Your Favorite Verses: _____, _____, _____.

III. Crucial Points of the Truth:

According to Acts 19:21, since the Lord the Spirit dwelt in _____ spirit (2 Tim. 4:22; Rom. 8:10-11), Paul must have purposed according to the leading of the Lord the Spirit.

The purpose was to carry out Paul's loving concern for the need of the poor saints in _____. Although he was an apostle set apart by God for the _____ (Acts 22:21; Gal. 2:8), Paul was still concerned for the Lord's interest among the _____. His primary concern was for the _____ of Christ universally, not merely for his part of the New Testament ministry among the Gentiles. (*See Acts 19:21 note 2, note 1*)

IV. Further Reading: *Life-Study of Acts Msg. 50-52.*

Note:

I. Key Verse:

Acts 20:28 Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among whom the Holy Spirit has placed you as overseers to shepherd the church of God, which He obtained through His own blood.

II. Your Favorite Verses: _____, _____, _____.

III. Crucial Points of the Truth:

The main responsibility of the elders as _____ is not to rule over but to _____, to take all-inclusive tender _____ of the flock, the church of God.

Indicating the _____ love of God for the church and the preciousness, the exceeding _____, of the church in the eyes of God. Here the apostle did not touch the divine _____ and _____ of the church as in Eph. 5:23-32, but the value of the church as a _____ to God, a treasure which He acquired with His own precious _____. Paul expected that the _____ as overseers would treasure the church as God did. (*See Acts 20:28 note 4, note 5*)

IV. Further Reading: *Life-Study of Acts* Msg. 52-55.

Paul's word in Acts 20:28 is very important: "Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among whom the Holy Spirit has placed you as overseers, to shepherd the church of God, which He obtained through His own blood."

In Acts 20:28 Paul speaks of the elders shepherding the flock. The main responsibility of the elders as overseers is not to rule over the flock but to shepherd the flock, to take all-inclusive tender care of the flock, the church of God. The elders are not placed in the church by the Holy Spirit as rulers but as shepherds. Shepherding the flock of God requires suffering for the Body of Christ as Christ did (Col. 1:24). This kind of shepherding with suffering will be rewarded with the unfading crown of glory (1 Pet. 5:4).

According to 1 Peter 5:1-3, the elders are not to lord it over the flock; that is, they are not to exercise lordship over the ruled (Matt. 20:25). Among the believers, besides Christ there should be no other lord; all should be servants, even slaves (Matt. 20:26-27; 23:10-11). The elders in the church can take only the leadership (not the lordship), which all the believers should honor and follow (1 Thes. 5:12; 1 Tim. 5:17).

In Acts 20:28 Paul says that the church of God has been obtained "through His own blood." This indicates the precious love of God for the church and the preciousness, the exceeding worth of the church in the eyes of God. Here the apostle does not touch the divine life and nature of the church as in Ephesians 5:23-32, but the value of the church as a treasure to God, a treasure which He acquired with His own precious blood. Paul expected that the elders as overseers would also treasure the church as God did.

Both the Holy Spirit and God's own blood are divine provisions for the church He treasures. The Holy Spirit denotes God's Person, and His own blood, God's work. God's redemptive work acquired the church; now God's Person, the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45), cares for the church through the overseers. (*Life-Study of Acts* pp. 463, 465)

Note:

Week 4 Day 1 Acts 21:1-26

I. Key Verse:

Acts 21:19 And having greeted them, he related one by one the things which God did among the Gentiles through his ministry.

II. Your Favorite Verses: _____, _____, _____.

III. Crucial Points of the Truth:

God might have tolerated Paul's carrying out of a private ____ in 18:18, but He would not allow Paul, a _____ chosen by Him not only for the completing of His New Testament revelation (Col. 1:25) but also for the carrying out of His New Testament _____ (Eph. 3:2, 7-8), to participate in the _____ vow, a strict Judaic practice. Hence, in His sovereignty God allowed Paul to be _____ by the Jews and _____ by the Romans that he might write his last _____ Epistles, which completed the divine revelation. (*See Acts 21:26 note 1, paragraph 3*)

IV. Further Reading: *Life-Study of Acts Msg. 56-59.*

Note:

Week 4 Day 2 Acts 21:27-22:21

I. Key Verse:

Acts 22:7 And I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?
Acts 22:8 And I answered, Who are You, Lord? And He said to me, I am Jesus the Nazarene, whom you persecute.

II. Your Favorite Verses: _____, _____, _____.

III. Crucial Points of the Truth:

And as I (Paul) journeyed and drew near to Damascus about midday, suddenly a great _____ flashed out of heaven around me; And I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, Saul, Saul, why are you _____ Me? And I answered, Who are You, _____? And He said to me, I am _____ the Nazarene, whom you persecute. And those who were with me beheld the _____, but did not hear the voice of the One who was speaking to me. And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said to me, Rise up and go into _____, and there it will be _____ to you concerning all the things which have been appointed to you to do. (*Acts 22:6-10*)

IV. Further Reading: *Life-Study of Acts Msg. 60-61.*

Note:

Week 4 Day 3 Acts 22:22-23:15

I. Key Verse:

Acts 23:11 But in the night following, the Lord stood by him and said, Take courage, for as you have solemnly testified to the things concerning Me in Jerusalem, so also you must testify in Rome.

II. Your Favorite Verses: _____, _____, _____.

III. Crucial Points of the Truth:

To carry out His heavenly _____ for the _____ of Himself that the kingdom of God might be _____ for the _____ up of the churches as His fullness, the ascended Christ wanted to use not a group of _____ trained by man's teaching to do a preaching work, but a body of His _____, martyrs, who bore a living _____ of the incarnated, crucified, resurrected, and ascended Christ. (See Acts 23:11 note 4)

IV. Further Reading: *Life-Study of Acts Msg. 62.*

Note:

Week 4 Day 4 Acts 23:16-24:27

I. Key Verse:

Acts 24:16 Because of this I also exercise myself to always have a conscience without offense toward God and men.

II. Your Favorite Verses: _____, _____, _____.

III. Crucial Points of the Truth:

Since you (Felix) can realize that it is not more than twelve days since I went up to worship in _____. And neither in the temple did they find me disputing with anyone nor stirring up a crowd, nor in the _____, nor throughout the city. Neither are they able to _____ to you the things which they now accuse me of. But I confess this to you, that according to the _____, which they call a sect, so I serve the God of our fathers, believing all the things that are written in the _____ and in the Prophets; Having _____ toward God, which these themselves also look for, that there is to be a _____ of both the righteous and the unrighteous. Because of this I also exercise myself to always have a _____ without offense toward God and men. (Acts 24:11-16)

IV. Further Reading: *Life-Study of Acts Msg. 62-64.*

Note:

Week 4 Day 5 Acts 25:1-26:32

I. Key Verse:

Acts 26:18 To open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.

Acts 26:19 Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision,

II. Your Favorite Verses: _____, _____, _____.

III. Truth Quiz:

1. Please illustrate how “to open their eyes” in Acts 26:18 was for the carrying out of the fulfillment of God's jubilee.
2. What is the inheritance allotted to the believers?
3. What is the heavenly vision?

Answer:

1. See Acts 26:18 note 1.
2. See Acts 26:18 note 6.
3. See Acts 26:19 note 1.

IV. Further Reading: *Life-Study of Acts Msg. 65-69.*

Note:

Week 4 Day 6 Acts 27:1-44

I. Key Verse:

Acts 27:25 Therefore, cheer up, men, for I believe God that it shall be so, even in the way in which it has been spoken to me.

II. Your Favorite Verses: _____, _____, _____.

III. Crucial Points of the Truth:

And when they had been a long time without food, Paul then stood in their midst and said, O men, you should have _____ to me and not set sail from Crete and gained this damage and loss. And now I advise you to cheer up, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. For this very night an angel of the God whose I am and whom I _____ stood by me, Saying, Do not _____, Paul; you must stand before _____. And behold, God has granted you all those who are sailing with you. Therefore, cheer up, men, for I believe God that it shall be ____, even in the way in which it has been spoken to me. But we must run aground on a certain island. (*Acts 27:21-26*)

IV. Further Reading: *Life-Study of Acts Msg. 70.*

Note:

I. Key Verse:

Acts 28:31 Proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, unhindered.

II. Your Favorite Verses: _____, _____, _____.

III. Crucial Points of the Truth:

The Lord kept the apostle in His ascendancy and enabled him to live a _____ far beyond the realm of _____. This life was fully _____, with the highest standard of human _____ expressing the most excellent divine _____, a life that _____ the one that the Lord Himself had lived on the earth years before. This was Jesus living _____ on the earth in His divinely _____ humanity! This was the wonderful, excellent, and mysterious _____, who lived in the Gospels, continuing to live in the Acts through one of His many _____! This was a living _____ of the incarnated, crucified, resurrected, and God-exalted Christ! (*See Acts 28:9 note 1*)

IV. Further Reading: *Life-Study of Acts Msg. 71-72.*

Note:

In Acts 26:16 the Lord Jesus said to Paul, "I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you a minister and a witness both of the things in which you have seen Me, and the things in which I will appear to you." Notice that here the phrase "in which" is used twice. Here Paul is saying that the Lord had appointed him a minister and a witness of the things He revealed to Paul and of the things He would reveal to him. Although this is Paul's meaning, this is not the way he presented the matter. Rather, this verse speaks of the things in which Paul had seen the Lord and of the things in which the Lord would yet appear to him.

Acts 26:16 indicates that Paul did not receive the revelation of things without seeing Christ. Instead, he received the things in which he saw Christ. In other words, Christ did not reveal things to Paul without Himself as the content of those things. This is the reason that Paul would be a witness of the things in which he had seen the Lord. In all the visions Paul saw he saw Christ. Furthermore, he would be a witness of the things in which the Lord was yet to appear to him. Here the Lord seemed to be saying to Paul, "In all the visions and revelations you will receive, I shall appear to you." This indicates that if we only see visions and revelations and do not see the Lord, then what we see is vanity.

In principle, our experience today should be the same as that of Paul and John. Suppose that in your study of the New Testament you claim to have some understanding of Ephesians 5. However, the crucial question is this: Do you see Christ in Ephesians 5? If you see only the matter of husbands loving their wives and wives submitting to their husbands but do not see Christ, then your understanding of Ephesians 5 is very poor, even vain. You may know certain teachings in the Bible, but in those teachings you do not see Christ.... May we all learn the importance of seeing Christ in the things that we claim to see and know in the Word. (*Life-Study of Acts pp. 593-594, 596, 603-604*)