

THE BOOK OF ACTS DEVOTIONAL PART 2

CONTENTS

A Study of the Book of Acts	1
How to SOAP	2
Example of SOAP	3
Week 8 Acts 9	4
Week 9 Acts 10	9
Week 10 Acts 13	14
Week 11 Acts 17	19
Week 12 Acts 19	24
Week 13 Acts 20	29
Week 14 Acts 21-28	34
Map: The Missionary Journeys of the Apostle Paul	39

A STUDY OF THE BOOKS ACTS

We will be using the acronym SOAP to guide us along and help us unearth some of the truths found within the book of Acts. In the initial weeks of the study we will highlight the parts of SOAP with the corresponding letters. This will give us a feel for what we are doing.

Then as we progress through the book of Acts and become more familiar with process we will remove the letters within the study. The process of "SOAPing" will also provide an easy way of sharing what you're learning through the Word with those you do life with.

We pray that each of us would know the truth of God's Word, love Him more deeply, and live for Him more fully!

CONTEXT

Acts is a historical narrative, which simply means, it's a book written to tell a story or account of historical facts. Sometimes called the Acts of the Holy Spirit, the book of Acts introduces us to the Counselor or Helper Jesus referenced as His Father's gift (see Luke 24:49, Act 1:4, and John 14:16), the Holy Spirit.

It was written by Luke, who also wrote the Gospel of Luke. We see in the opening of the book that Luke is writing to Theophilus, to whom he had also addressed the book of Luke. As a doctor, and one of the Apostle Paul's traveling companions later, Luke offers a rather detailed account of the time following Jesus' resurrection.

There are about 30 years covered by the book of Acts, and these were important transition years for followers of Christ. Within the book we see Jesus' final instructions to his followers, the introduction of the Holy Spirit, the growth of the early church, and the spread of Christianity to all the known world. As in the rest of God's Word, we see in Acts God's presence and power to those who believe.

HOW TO SOAP

When you have your daily time with God, use SOAP to help you think through what you are reading.

Scripture | Pick a book of the Bible and read 1-2 chapters a day. Each day, write out the Bible verse that stood out the most to you.

Observation | What is God saying in this verse? What truth did you learn? Write down your observations, thoughts, or questions.

Application | How can you apply what you learned? What truths do you need to believe? Write down a practical way you can apply this truth

Prayer |Respond to God in prayer. Write down a short prayer thanking God for this truth and ask Him to help you apply it in your life.

EXAMPLE OF SOAP

Scripture | John 15:5 - "I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing."

Observation | We don't naturally abide in Jesus so He commands us to abide. Following this command is not burdensome, but actually for our benefit. If we're not connected to Jesus, we can't do anything. Jesus is the true vine and if we abide in Him we will bear fruit. The fruit we bear brings glory to God.

Application | What are ways I can abide in Jesus? Jesus says I will abide in Him if I keep His commandments, but am I actually doing that? Abiding in Jesus allows me to experience the joy that Jesus has for me. I can continue to abide in Him through regularly reading the Bible and prayer.

Prayer | Jesus, thank You for saving me! Please always remind me of how amazing Your Gospel is. I confess that most of the time I would rather do my own thing than abide in You. Teach me more about what it means to abide in You and I pray that abiding in You would result in great fruit for Your glory!

Pray that God would make His Word alive to you this week and that His Spirit would fill you and give you understanding and wisdom as you read.

S | Read Acts chapter 9.

Write down the thing that stood out to you most in this chapter. It could be a verse or simply a sentence.

O | Now that we've got our initial observation down on paper, let's spend a few minutes getting a little context for our passage.

After being introduced to Saul in chapter 8, what do we learn about him in this chapter?

What different places are mentioned in this chapter?

Who are some of the people referenced in Acts 9?

In relation to the mission Jesus gives in Acts 1, what do we see happening in this chapter?

- **A** | Write down the names of 3 people you would love to experience Christ in a redeeming way.
- **P** | Thank God for His Word! Ask Him to remind you of His truth often this week. Pray for the 3 people you wrote down.

Take a moment to invite God into this time and ask Him for eyes to see the truth of His character in His Word.

- **S** | Read Acts 9 verses 1-31.
- **O** | What do we learn about Jesus in the first 22 verses?

How did the disciples respond when Saul came to Jerusalem and tried to join the community?

Who tries to kill Saul in this chapter? Why might that be?

We see two men in this chapter that seem pivotal, especial in Saul's story. Who are they? (vs. 10 & vs. 27) What stands out to you when you see the role these men played in advancing the gospel?

- **A** | Has God ever asked you to do something scary with the assurance that He was in the middle of it?
- P | Write a short prayer below thanking God for what we've learned of His character in this chapter. Include anything personal that may have impacted you as you looked at His Word today.

Pray that God's Spirit would fill you, reveal His truth, and give you understanding as you read.

- **S** | Read all of Acts 9 again. Try reading it out loud if you can, is there anything new you notice?
- **O** | What is the thing that stood out most to you today as you read?

What do we learn about humanity in this passage?

In verse 27 we see the words "But Barnabas...". Sometimes very godly men find themselves afraid of what God might be doing because they don't fully understand it. I can't help but marvel at the hope that these two words offer as Barnabas stands in the gap for Saul and speaks of what he's seen so that those who are serving the Lord are able to do it more fully.

Do you have any questions about this passage? Take a couple minutes to write them down.

- **A** | What truth about this passage do you need to believe?
- **P** | Thank God for His Son Jesus and the power of His resurrection. Write a short prayer thanking God for a way He has been present in your life.

Take a moment to invite God into this time and ask Him for eyes to see the truth of His character in His Word.

- **S** | Read Acts 9:32-43
- **O** | Where was Peter in these verses?

While we see Peter outside of Jerusalem, he is still ministering to Jewish believers. Verse 32 show us he was visiting the saints, who were most probably converted under the witness of pilgrims (remember Philip, those in Jerusalem at Pentecost, or even those dispersed because of persecution 8:1 & 11:19)

In this passage Peter performs 2 physical healing miracles. What difference do you notice in them?

Who did Peter stay with in Joppa?

- A | Within these verses we get some details about the recipient of the second miracle, Tabitha. What part of God's heart do we see in her? What can you do this week that may grow your heart closer to His in this way?
- **P** | Take time right now to start praying for whatever God has laid on your heart.

Pray and ask God for wisdom as you read His word and apply it to your life.

- **S** | Read through Acts 9 one more time. Write down the Bible verse that stands out to you most in this chapter.
- **O** | Were there any parts you found yourself almost saying by memory? We are trusting that we might be so saturated with God's Word that the truth in it would be forever imprinted on our hearts.

How does what you've observed this week help you better understand the verse you noted?

A | Write down a practical way the truth you've learned this week can be applied to your life.

Remember to share this with a friend, your Huddle, or your City Group!

P | Pray for an opportunity to show Christ to those around you.
Pray specifically for the individuals you wrote down in Day 1.

Pray that God would make His Word alive to you this week and that His Spirit would fill you and give you understanding and wisdom as you read.

- **S** | Read Acts chapter 10.
- **O** | Write down one thing that stood out to you most in this chapter.

Now that we've got our initial observation down on paper, let's spend a few minutes getting a little context for our passage.

Who is introduced at the start of Acts 10?

Where does this chapter take place?

What little details of this chapter stood out to you?

- A | Write down the names of 3 people you would love to experience Christ in a redeeming way.
- **P** | Thank God for His Word! Ask Him to remind you of His truth often this week. Pray for the people you've wrote down.

Take a moment to invite God into this time and ask Him for eyes to see the truth of His character in His Word.

- **S** | Read Acts 10 verses 1-23.
- **O** | How is Cornelius described?

How does Cornelius respond to his vision?

Note some details from Peter's vision.

What do we learn about humanity in this passage?

- **A** | We don't always understand what we see God doing. What truth from this passage stirs your heart to wonder?
- P | Write a short prayer below thanking God for what we've learned of His character in this chapter. Include anything personal that may have impacted you as you looked at His Word today.

Pray that God's Spirit would fill you, reveal His truth, and give you understanding as you read.

- **S** | Read Acts 10:24-48.
- **O** | By the time Peter is talking with Cornelius and his household how much time had passed from when Cornelius had his vision?

What do we learn about God in this chapter?

What is the thing that stood out most to you today as you read?

- **A** | What truth about this passage do you need to believe?
- **P** | Thank God for His Son Jesus and the power of His resurrection. Write a short prayer thanking God for a way He has been present in your life.

Take a moment to invite God into this time and ask Him for eyes to see the truth of His character in His Word.

S | Take some time to read Acts 11 today. This will give us some context as we move forward.

O | When Peter goes back to Jerusalem what problem does he face?

After Peter retells the story of Cornelius, note his concluding words. What was the response of the Jewish believers?

What do we see happening in verses 19-30?

Who does it say Barnabas went to get?

- **A** | Where might God be calling you to step into a need?
- **P** | Take time right now to start praying for whatever God has laid on your heart.

Pray and ask God for wisdom as you read His word and apply it to your life.

- **S** | Read through Acts 10 one more time. Write down the Bible verse that stands out to you most in this chapter.
- **O** | Were there any parts you found yourself almost saying by memory? We are trusting that we might be so saturated with God's Word that the truth in it would be forever imprinted on our hearts.

How does what you've observed this week help you better understand the verse you noted?

A | Write down a practical way the truth you've learned this week can be applied to your life.

Remember to share this with a friend, your Huddle, or your City Group!

P | Pray for an opportunity to show Christ to those around you.
Pray specifically for the individuals you wrote down in Day 1.

Pray that God would make His Word alive to you this week and that His Spirit would fill you and give you understanding and wisdom as you read.

S | Read Acts chapter 13.

Write down one thing that stood out to you most in this chapter. It could be a verse or simply a sentence.

O | Now that we've got our initial observation down on paper, let's spend a few minutes getting a little context for our passage.

Where does this chapter take place?

Who are the main people in this chapter?

Note any references to other Biblical references in the chapter. (These can be quoted verses or people elsewhere in the Bible.)

A | Take a moment to appreciate how God connects His Word and helps us see His bigger picture.

Write down the names of 3 people you would love to experience Christ in a redeeming way.

P | Thank God for His Word! Ask Him to remind you of His truth often this week. Pray for the people you've wrote down.

Take a moment to invite God into this time and ask Him for eyes to see the truth of His character in His Word.

- **S** | To get a little context for what has happened to bring us to this point in our study we want to take today to read Acts 12.
- **O** | What event sets the tone in this chapter?

What is the thing that stood out most to you today as you read?

Do you have any questions about this passage? Take a couple minutes to write them down.

- A | What truth about this passage do you need to believe?
- P | Write a short prayer below thanking God for what we've learned of His character in this chapter. Include anything personal that may have impacted you as you looked at His Word today.

Pray that God's Spirit would fill you, reveal His truth, and give you understanding as you read.

- **S** | Read Acts 13 verses 1-12.
- **O** | After seeing a glimpse of the Gospel going to the Gentiles in chapter 10 with Cornelius, what significant move do we see in this passage?

What do you notice about how Paul and Barnabas were called and sent out?

Often times names hold significance in the Bible. In verse 9 we see Saul begin to go by Paul. Without context, some might think the name change happens in conversion, however Saul's conversion is much earlier, in Acts 9. As an interesting fact, Saul was his Hebrew name and Paul was his Roman name. Here we see after Saul has been set apart to be a witness to the Gentiles he shifts to use his gentile Roman name, Paul.

Why might this matter?

What miraculous act does Paul do in this passage and what does it remind you of?

Who believes as a result?

- **A** | What truth in this passage do you need to believe?
- **P** | Thank God for His Son Jesus and the power of His resurrection. Write a short prayer thanking God for a way He has been present in your life.

Take a moment to invite God into this time and ask Him for eyes to see the truth of His character in His Word.

- **S** | Read Acts 13:13-52
- **O** | Where does this passage take place?

Note any references to other Biblical passages in this section.

In what ways does Paul's message in verses 16-41 resemble Peter's in chapter 2 and again in chapter 3?

What was the response of the Gentiles in verse 48 after hearing Paul and Barnabas speak?

What was the Jewish response here according to verse 50?

- A | How does this passage challenge or encourage your heart?
- **P** | Take time right now to start praying for whatever God has laid on your heart.

Pray and ask God for wisdom as you read His word and apply it to your life.

- **S** | Take some time to read Acts 14 today. This will give us some context as we move forward.
- O | The 3 chapters we study this week are looking at the first missionary journey of Paul and Barnabas. What stands out to you about how they are received by the people here in chapter 14?

What is something Paul and Barnabas do at the end of the chapter that helps build the church?

Sometimes it's easy to get caught up in the story and the places of Acts and miss the little details. Are there things you've noticed that give us a glimpse into the heart of these missionaries?

What do we learn about God from chapters 12-14?

A | Write down a practical way the truth you've learned this week can be applied to your life.

Remember to share this with a friend, your Huddle, or your City Group!

P | Pray for an opportunity to show Christ to those around you.Pray specifically for the individuals you wrote down in Day 1.

Pray that God would make His Word alive to you this week and that His Spirit would fill you and give you understanding and wisdom as you read.

S | Read Acts chapter 17.

Write down one thing that stood out to you most in this chapter. It could be a verse or simply a sentence.

O | Now that we've got our initial observation down on paper, let's spend a few minutes getting a little context for our passage.

What do we learn about Paul in this chapter?

Do you notice any repeated ideas or actions in this chapter?

What do you notice about Paul's communication to the men of Athens?

- A | Write down the names of 3 people you would love to experience Christ in a redeeming way.
- **P** | Thank God for His Word! Ask Him to remind you of His truth often this week. Pray for the people you've wrote down.

Take a moment to invite God into this time and ask Him for eyes to see the truth of His character in His Word.

- **S** | The next 2 days we will do some reading that will give us context for what has happened to bring us to this point in our study. Today read Acts 15.
- **O** | What issue arises at the beginning of chapter 15?

This chapter records a significant historical event in the early church; the Council at Jerusalem. Who was involved here?

What did it result in?

Note any references to other Biblical references in the chapter. (These can be quoted verses or people elsewhere in the Bible.)

What does this teach us about God?

- A | What God is doing sometimes challenges the way we think. Who can you give a listening ear to today in order to explore where God might be at work?
- P | Write a short prayer below thanking God for what we've learned of His character in this chapter. Include anything personal that may have impacted you as you looked at His Word today.

Pray that God's Spirit would fill you, reveal His truth, and give you understanding as you read.

- **S** | Read chapter 16
- **O** | At the end of chapter 15 we see Paul and Barnabas have a sharp disagreement that results in them parting ways for a time. Paul begins his second missionary journey here. Who does he have with him according to Acts 15:40 and Acts 16:1-3?

What is one of the primary things they are doing, according to vs. 4, as they go from town to town?

In what way do you see the Spirit directing Paul in this chapter?

Record anything that stood out to you about the events of this chapter.

- **A** | How does the truth in this chapter move you to respond in action?
- **P** | Thank God for His Son Jesus and the power of His resurrection. Write a short prayer thanking God for a way He has been present in your life.

Take a moment to invite God into this time and ask Him for eyes to see the truth of His character in His Word.

- **S** | Read Acts 17:1-15.
- **O** | What cities were they in when the events of this chapter happened?

Remembering Paul's upbringing and life before Jesus, how does that help as he enters towns? (consider what is noted as his custom in vs. 2)

What caused some of the Jews to start a riot in the city?

How are the Bereans different than the Thessalonians according to this passage?

- A | How does this passage challenge or encourage your heart?
- **P** | Take time right now to start praying for whatever God has laid on your heart.

Pray and ask God for wisdom as you read His word and apply it to your life.

- **S** | Read Acts 17:16-34.
- **O** | Where does this passage take place?

In what way does the reality recorded in vs. 21 give Paul a platform?

(Footnote: The Areopagus was a council that had charge of religious and educational matters in Athens at this time.)

What was the response of the people when Paul spoke at the meeting of the Areopagus?

A | Write down a practical way the truth you've learned this week can be applied to your life.

Remember to share this with a friend, your Huddle, or your City Group!

P | Pray for an opportunity to show Christ to those around you.Pray specifically for the individuals you wrote down in Day 1.

Pray that God would make His Word alive to you this week and that His Spirit would fill you and give you understanding and wisdom as you read.

- **S** | Read Acts 18 today, to fill in the narrative for us before we jump into chapter 19.
- **O** | Where does the first part of chapter 18 take place? Who are we introduced to? Note anything we learn about them (you also see them in verses 18-19, & 26).

How long did Paul stay in Corinth?

We also see the end of the second missionary journey and the start of the third.

Apollos comes on the scene at the end of this chapter? What do we learn about him?

- A | Write down the names of 3 people you would love to experience Christ in a redeeming way.
- **P** | Thank God for His Word! Ask Him to remind you of His truth often this week. Pray for the people you've wrote down.

Take a moment to invite God into this time and ask Him for eyes to see the truth of His character in His Word.

- **S** | Read Acts chapter 19.
- **O** | Write down one thing that stood out to you most in this chapter. It could be a verse or simply a sentence.

Paul makes a promise to the Ephesians in Acts 18:21 and we see him fulfill it here. Do you read anything that indicates how long he may have been in Ephesus?

The style of Pauls ministry shifts a little here (verses 8-10). Who heard the Word of the Lord as a result?

Note a couple issues that arose because of so many people believing.

- **A** | In what ways are you encouraged toward action from the things you've studied today?
- **P** | Pray and thank God for His Son Jesus and the power of His resurrection. Praise Him for how He has been present in your life.

Pray that God's Spirit would fill you, reveal His truth, and give you understanding as you read.

- **S** | Read Acts 19:1-22
- **O** | What is the thing that stood out most to you today as you read?

How does Paul approach the disciples he meets?

What can we learn about humanity from verses 13-20?

Who are two helpers we find still with Paul up through our passage?

- **A** | What truth about this passage do you need to believe?
- **P** | Write a short prayer praising God for His holiness and power. Include anything personal that may have impacted you as you looked at His Word today.

Take a moment to invite God into this time and ask Him for eyes to see the truth of His character in His Word.

- **S** | Read Acts 19:23-41.
- **O** | Describe the scene a little.

Bottom line...what is Demetrius concerned about here?

What rallying statement did Demetrius make to get people on his side?

Sometimes we want to hold on to what we worship so tightly we miss how the only one worthy of worship is in our midst.

- A | How does this passage challenge or encourage your heart?
- **P** | Take time right now to start praying for whatever God has laid on your heart.

Pray and ask God for wisdom as you read His word and apply it to your life.

S | Read through Acts 19 one more time.

Write down the Bible verse that stands out to you most in this chapter.

O | Were there any parts you found yourself almost saying by memory? We are trusting that we might be so saturated with God's Word that the truth in it would be forever imprinted on our hearts.

How does what you've observed this week help you better understand the verse you noted?

A | Write down a practical way the truth you've learned this week can be applied to your life.

Remember to share this with a friend, your Huddle, or your City Group!

P | Pray for an opportunity to show Christ to those around you.
Pray specifically for the individuals you wrote down in Day 1.

Pray that God would make His Word alive to you this week and that His Spirit would fill you and give you understanding and wisdom as you read.

S | Read Acts chapter 20.

Write down one thing that stood out to you most in this chapter. It could be a verse or simply a sentence.

O | Now that we've got our initial observation down on paper, let's spend a few minutes getting a little context for our passage.

What are the two Jewish festivals mentioned in this chapter?

Do you notice any emotion in this chapter? What are the causes of each?

- **A** | Write down the names of 3 people you would love to experience Christ in a redeeming way.
- **P** | Thank God for His Word! Ask Him to remind you of His truth often this week. Pray for the people you've wrote down.

Take a moment to invite God into this time and ask Him for eyes to see the truth of His character in His Word.

- **S** | Read Acts 20:1-16.
- **O** | Luke give us a brief overview of the next portion of the journey as well as a list of those who accompanied Paul. Are there any names you recognize?

What does it say Paul is doing as he travels around?

Remembering Luke, the author of Acts, was a doctor and a firsthand witness to the events of this passage, does it change the way you see the details in this passage? What details may have been included because of who is writing?

Many places are listed in this chapter, but where do we learn Paul is headed? When does he want to arrive by?

- A | Think about someone you can speak words of encouragement to today. Text, call or speak them soon.
- P | Write a short prayer below thanking God for His mission. Include anything personal that may have impacted you as you looked at His Word today.

Pray that God's Spirit would fill you, reveal His truth, and give you understanding as you read.

- **S** | Read Acts 20 again. Try reading it out loud if you can, is there anything new you notice?
- **O** | What is the thing that stood out most to you today as you read?

What do we learn about God in this chapter?

Do you have any questions about this passage? Take a couple minutes to write them down.

- **A** | What truth about this passage do you need to believe?
- **P** | Thank God for equipping us as believers with His Holy Spirit. Write a short prayer thanking God for a way He has been present in your life.

Take a moment to invite God into this time and ask Him for eyes to see the truth of His character in His Word.

- **S** | Read Acts 20:17-38.
- **O** | What stands out to you about Paul's interaction with the elders from the church at Ephesus?

What warning do you find in the passage?

What do we learn about how Paul ministered from this passage?

- A | In verse 25 Paul tells them he knows he will never see them again. Put yourself in the elders shoes...how does this passage challenge or encourage your heart?
- **P** | Take time right now to start praying for whatever God has laid on your heart.

Pray and ask God for wisdom as you read His word and apply it to your life.

- **S** | Read through Acts 20 one more time. Write down the Bible verse that stands out to you most in this chapter.
- **O** | Were there any parts you found yourself almost saying by memory? We are trusting that we might be so saturated with God's Word that the truth in it would be forever imprinted on our hearts.

How does what you've observed this week help you better understand the verse you noted?

A | Write down a practical way the truth you've learned this week can be applied to your life.

Remember to share this with a friend, your Huddle, or your City Group!

P | Pray for an opportunity to show Christ to those around you.Pray specifically for the individuals you wrote down in Day 1.

Pray that God would make His Word alive to you this week and that His Spirit would fill you and give you understanding and wisdom as you read.

- **S** | Read Acts 21:1-22:29
- **O** | Write down one thing that stood out to you most in these chapters.

When Paul arrived in Jerusalem, what was the concern of James and the elders there?

When Paul has a chance to address the crowd, what story does he tell them?

What made the crowd at Jerusalem so angry?

- A | Write down the names of 3 people you would love to experience Christ in a redeeming way.
- **P** | Thank God for His Word and the story He has given you. Pray for the people you've wrote down.

Take a moment to invite God into this time and ask Him for eyes to see the truth of His character in His Word.

- **S** | Read Acts 22:30-24:27.
- **O** | Write down one thing that stood out to you most in these chapters.

What do you notice about how Paul chooses to communicate?

List the leaders who are mentioned in these chapters.

- **A** | Read Acts 23:11. How would it affect your heart to have the Lord stand by you and encourage you?
- **P** | Write a short prayer below thanking God for His ever present character. Include anything personal that may have impacted you as you looked at His Word today.

Pray that God's Spirit would fill you, reveal His truth, and give you understanding as you read.

- **S** | Read Acts 25-26
- **O** | Who are the leaders we find in these chapters?

What stands out to you about how Paul communicates with King Agrippa and Festus in chapter 26?

What does Paul say he prays in Acts 26:29 in response to King Agrippa's question?

- **A** | What truth about this passage do you need to believe?
- **P** | Thank God for His Son Jesus and the power of His resurrection. Write a short prayer thanking God for a way He has been present in your life.

Take a moment to invite God into this time and ask Him for eyes to see the truth of His character in His Word.

- **S** | Read Acts 27-28:16.
- **O** | Write down one thing that stood out to you most in these chapters.

Since Paul had appealed to Caesar, we find Paul and Luke on their way to Rome.

What did Paul warn the sailors? Did they heed the warning?

Where do we see God in these chapters?

- **A** | Take a few moments to meditate on the faithfulness of God in these chapters and in your own life.
- **P** | Thank God for times of storm and times of still. Praise Him because He is faithful in all of it.

Pray and ask God for wisdom as you read His word and apply it to your life.

- **S** | Read Acts 28:17-31
- **O** | Who does Paul call together?

What Old Testament passage does Paul reference in this section? Why might that be important for his audience here?

What do we learn about Paul at the close of this book?

A | What truth about this passage do you need to believe?

Write down a practical way the truth you've learned this week can be applied to your life.

Remember to share this with a friend, your huddle, or your City Group!

P | Pray for an opportunity to show Christ to those around you.Pray specifically for the individuals you wrote down in Day 1.

THE MISSIONARY JOURNEYS OF THE APOSTLE PAUL





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