

Acts 29

The Apostolic Age (AD 33-70)

Introduction

The history of the church is a continuation of the story concerning what Jesus began in his earthly ministry. Luke records for us real history to teach us about being men and women on mission with Jesus. One thing we learn is that our history is shaped by the power of the Spirit and the providential circumstances of the day.

Discussion Questions

- In preparation for and anticipation of the Spirit's power, the disciples studied Scripture (Luke 24:44-49) and prayed (Acts 1:14). Bible study and prayer fueled the Spirit's flame in their life (6:4). Do you find prayer and study to be essential in your own life? What are the benefits you experience from studying the bible and praying? When are you less likely to engage in these activities?
- Many miracles done by the apostles are described and we're told many more were being done in the midst of the people (Acts 2:43). Some people are skeptical of miracles, the supernatural, and religion. Others have a great deal of belief and even obsession with them. What is your disposition towards the miraculous? How do you see miracles as relevant for us today?
- Stephen becomes the first martyr and his death led to widespread persecution of the church. However, the resultant scattering actually led to increased ministry (Acts 8:1-4). Those who wanted to stamp out the flame of the church only served to spread it more. Have you ever suffered for being a Christian? How has God used suffering in your life as an opportunity to tell people about Jesus?
- Luke's account clearly shows the outworking of Jesus' plan for the gospel to go to into every culture and nationality. We see the barriers that normally separate people come down as a result of gospel preaching. In Antioch believers had to be defined as "Christians" when others realized something remarkable was happening (Acts 11:26). What do you think distinguishes Christians today? In your experience, what issues are continually divisive? How have you seen the gospel bring reconciliation?

Think About It

We can have complete faith that our lives are not arbitrary and that God arranges things so that his purposes are fulfilled. We often gain comfort from this on the personal level, but we often forget that this is true of history itself.

What Will You Do?

Devote yourself to more diligently seek his presence in prayer and bible study. Evaluate your circumstances and identify the ways God has prepared you providentially to serve him today... then step out in faith!

Renewing Your Mind

He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. (Luke 24:45-47)

You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth. (Acts 1:8)

When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. (John 15:26)

When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth,... He will glorify me. (John 16:13-14)

Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. (John 17:17-18)

It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look. (1 Peter 1:12)

Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen. (2 Peter 3:18)

Prayer Requests

