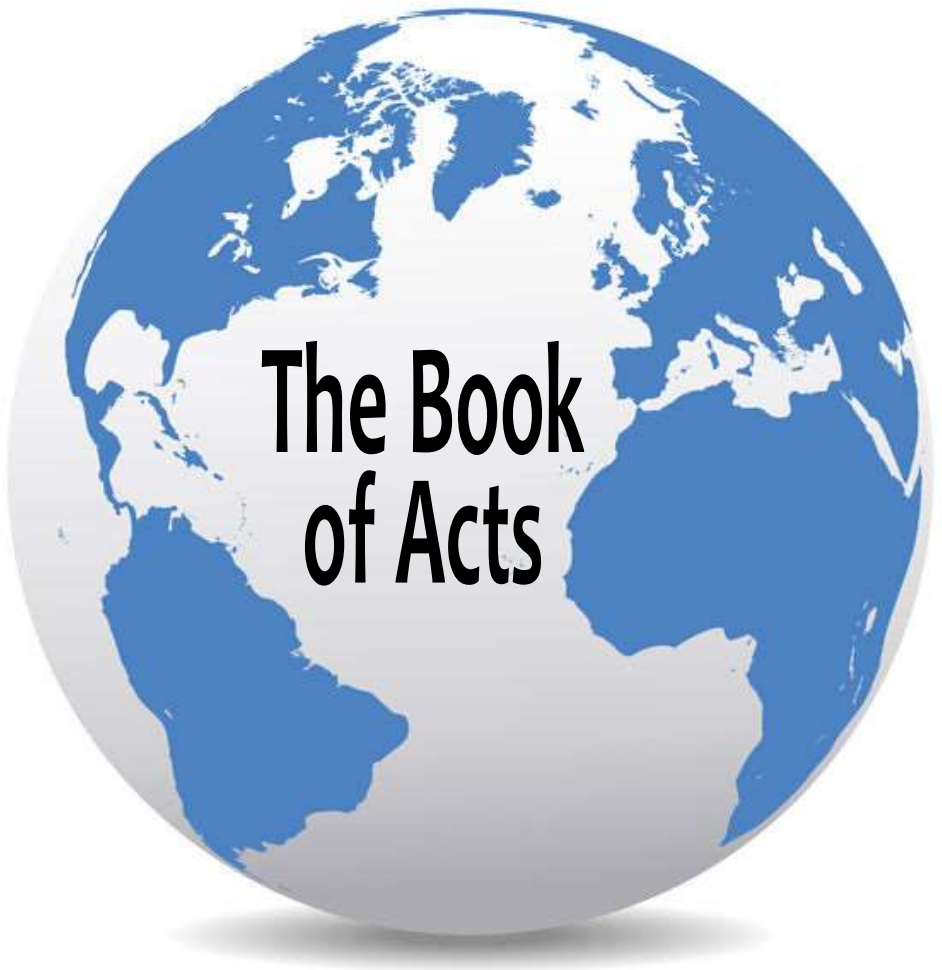


Let's Worship God

12th-17th February 2018
Acts



**The Book
of Acts**



The Book of ACTS

Monday - Acts 5:17-28 - The Continuing Conflict

In chapter 4 we have the first round of external opposition and in the first part of chapter 5, internal trouble. Now we see the next external battle which would ultimately lead to the stoning of Stephen and, in the plan of God, to the spread of the Gospel.

In Gen.3:15 we read of two seeds. The Redeemer and the redeemed are the seed of the woman, and those who serve the Devil are the seed of the serpent. Christ triumphs over Satan and makes His own people more than conquerors. The Devil sought to obliterate both the church and the promise of the Saviour, given within it, in the Old Testament and hated Christ all through His earthly life and ministry. He continues to oppose the seed of the woman and to "make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Revelation12:17). The victory of God's people is sure (Romans16:20).

We learn the twistedness of human nature (vs. 17-18 &26). The miracle had no effect on them, but the fear of the people did. We also learn that there is also a purpose to all our privileges; we are to redeem the time, not waste it. Their freedom was so that they could preach again. They were to deliver the whole message (v. 20). The madness of Christ's enemies goes on (v. 28).

Questions

1. Will unaided reason convince anybody of the truth of the Gospel?
2. Why do we pray for the conversion of sinners (Romans 10:1-3)?

Prayer Points

1. Pray for the salvation of family and friends.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men."
Acts 5:29

Praise: Psalm 66A:5-8 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.



The Book of ACTS

Tuesday - Acts 5:29-42 - Biblical Extremism

"... Rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name" (v. 41). In this passage in Acts, we have many of the features of the conflict highlighted. The indignation of the high priest and Sadduces (v.17) at the healing of the sick and afflicted and the challenge to their prestigious and cosy grip on power and influence, their continued preoccupation with self-interest in the face of the miraculous deliverance of the apostles from prison (v. 24), and their continued unreasonable opposition scarcely held in check by Gamaliel's counsel (v.40) - these things bear all the hallmarks of the enmity of the unrenewed heart to the truth of God. All pretence of reasonableness soon evaporates when the truth of God begins to strike home. "They were cut to the heart" (v.33).

In stark contrast is the boldness of the apostles. They defied earthly rulers when they were commanded by them to disobey God (v.29). Peter took up the high priest's comment about bringing Christ's blood upon them and openly affirms their guilt - "whom ye slew and hanged on a tree" (v.30). After the beating and release, the apostles carried on with their ministry (v.42). One fears that in too many of our church circles, such men would be labelled 'extreme' and 'unwise'. There is, of course, an unbiblical rashness to be avoided, but that is quite different from an inordinate desire for a quiet life and a respectable image.

In devotion to Christ, in careful following of His Word, and in Biblically-governed zeal for His glory and royal prerogatives, let us be extremists! Can we really be too Biblical? And if trouble comes as a result, let us seek such a high view of our Master in Heaven that we, too, will rejoice at being counted worthy to suffer shame for His name!

Questions

1. Is our view of Christ too low that we do not consider it a joyful privilege to suffer for His sake?
2. When should be the only time we disobey the law of the land?

Prayer Points

1. Pray that we would have a whole-hearted devotion to God.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men."
Acts 5:29

Praise: Psalm 82:all - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.



The Book of ACTS

Wednesday - Acts 6:1-7 - The Head Caring for the Body

"... Men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom..." (Acts 6:3) Christ was adding to the church, judging within the church, and giving boldness to the ministers of His Word. He was also caring for the government of His church.

The office of elder is not specifically introduced in Acts, but merely appears. It needed no special introduction, since it was already known in the church of the Old Testament. Israel had elders for centuries and they were still present in the synagogues and Sanhedrin. The office of deacon, however, was new. The word 'deacon' (diakonos) is not used here as elsewhere (Philippians 1:1, 1 Timothy 3:8), but the word 'ministration' (v.1) is a translation of the Greek word diakonia and the verb form (diakono) is rendered 'serve' in v.2. Also, the word 'tables' (v.2) is trapeza - the same word rendered 'bank' in Luke 19:23 and used of moneychangers' tables in Matthew 21:12 and John 2:15. This is definitely giving us the origin of the office of deacon, and they were to be men, not women (the word translated 'men' in v.3 is the word meaning male as opposed to female, not another word that speaks of mankind as opposed to animals etc.) It is also clear that they were to look after the material affairs of the church.

They were not merely to be efficient accountants. They were to be godly men; men who would look after church finance with zeal for Christ's glory and compassion toward others. One of these men, Philip, went on to be an evangelist (21:8) and was mightily used of God. Nevertheless, at this stage, he was content to be a deacon in the church. Godly people will be content with the role to which the Lord calls them, whether prominent or not. "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness" (Psalm 84:10).

The offices Christ has appointed in the church show His care for His church, and we should not be impatient with Biblical church order. Such impatience shows disbelief of the Lord's wisdom and love in appointing a form of church government in His Word. The Christian who unnecessarily 'floats' from church to church without committing himself to any church that is Biblical in doctrine, worship, and government, far from being spiritually-minded, proudly imagines that he does not need what Christ has appointed. Let it not be true of us.

Prayer Points

1. Pray for the deacons in the congregation.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men."
Acts 5:29

Praise: Psalm 48:1-7 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.



The Book of ACTS

Thursday - Acts 6:8-15 - Grace to Help

Although the appointment of Deacons strengthened the Church internally, it didn't stop the battle with the world outside. In God's providence, the Christian life includes conflict with the world (Philippians 1:29; 2 Timothy 3:12). We must take up our cross to follow Christ.

Stephen taught in the synagogue of the "Libertines" (v. 9) or "freedmen", perhaps freed slaves. They were certainly from North Africa and Asia Minor originally and had settled in Jerusalem with others. They could not answer Stephen but neither did they accept what he said (vs. 9-11). No wonder Christ taught we must be born again, no matter how clearly the truth is presented to us.

A charge is brought against Stephen (vs. 11-13) that he taught the people to despise the temple by preaching Christ. It is this point he is going to answer. But meanwhile, notice the grace given (v. 15). The Lord will not leave us on our own in a tight spot.

Questions

1. Are you at peace with the fact that the Christian life is one of trial?
2. Do you think that good arguments are enough, or see the need of the work of the Holy Spirit?

Prayer Points

1. Give thanks for the grace that God gives His people.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men."
Acts 5:29

Praise: Psalm 44:15-19 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.



The Book of ACTS

Friday - Acts 7:1-18 - God With His People Everywhere

"And the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt: but God was with him" (v.9). If you are a churchgoer, why do you go and why do you do what you do when there? If we are true believers, who are redeemed by Christ's blood, surely we will go not just because we have always done so, but because we love Him who first loved us and desire consciously to worship Him exactly as He has appointed for His glory and our good. "... to behold the beauty of the LORD..." (Psalm 27:4). But when Church cannot be found, God is still with His people. This is good news for the people of God: they are glad God is everywhere even though this means God sees our sins and failures. We are "pressing towards the mark" and want God to search us and lead us (Psalm 139:23-24). God was with Joseph to look after him and bless him.

But the men at the synagogue wanted God tied to a place so they could live as they wanted the rest of the time. They wanted a more "comfortable" God, separate from everyday life, tucked away safely in a corner.

Questions

1. Do you want God to see you?
2. Given that God does see everything, are you running from Him like Adam and Eve (Gen 3:8-10), or have you come to Christ, the only real hiding place for sinners that God Himself has appointed?

Prayer Points

1. Give thanks that God sees everything.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men."
Acts 5:29

Praise: Psalm 139:1-5 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.



The Book of ACTS

Saturday - Acts 7:19-50 - God is in Charge of His Own Worship

The charge against Stephen was that he had insisted that there was to be Divinely authorised change - "that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us" (6:14). Stephen's defence, far from being an incoherent ramble as some liberals claim, is a superb summary and application of Old Testament church history - we say "church history" for such it was, as we can see later on when Israel is called "the church in the wilderness" (v.38).

We consider two things that Stephen brings out. First of all, he shows that God had never irrevocably tied Himself to one place. God had appeared to Abraham in Mesopotamia. He promised that Abraham's seed would inherit the land of Canaan, but only after 400 years in a strange land and yet God was with Joseph in that land of Egypt and brought the house of Jacob there. Moses lived in Egypt and Midian before the great work of the Exodus. Israel was forty years in the wilderness and later was captive in Babylon. Even their place in the promised land was not automatic. "They could not enter in because of unbelief" (Hebrews 3:19).

Secondly, Stephen shows that as God unfolded His revelation, there were changes in the form of worship that He authorised. Only when God gave His law at Sinai was the tabernacle set up only to be replaced by the temple in Solomon's time, but this, too, could only be symbolic and temporary (vs. 48-50).

In this case, the unwillingness to change was due to rejection of Christ and the final phase and climax of God's revelation in His coming into the world. All along, their "worship", even in those things that were outwardly Scriptural, was being performed merely because of tradition and as part of their imaginary self-righteousness. When they were confronted with the Saviour, of whom the Law and the Prophets spoke, they despised Him.

Questions

1. Are we bound to God's ordinances of worship because they are His, not just because we are used to them?
2. Are we willing to change, but only if shown from the Scriptures?

Prayer Points

1. Pray for the preaching and hearing of God's Word tomorrow.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men."
Acts 5:29

Praise: Psalm 84B:1-3 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

The goal of Let's Worship God is to encourage and help you in your worship of God each day.

**God tells us that
Ezra read from
the book of the Law
day after day
and that
the people of God
were filled with joy!**

Let's Worship God is produced for the RP Global Alliance
by Airdrie Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

If you have any queries please contact - admin@rpglobalalliance.org