



GOOD NEWS

for the unsaved WORLD!

(#28)

The book of Acts shows us the reasons for the early church's success. We should learn from them!

WHY do so few (IN OUR NATION) tell others about Jesus?

OUR SUGGESTION: There can be many reasons. But ultimately, it's a matter of FAILURE to take (1) the Bible, (2) the Holy Spirit, and (3) prayer seriously.

OUR CHALLENGE: Find out how (in the book of Acts) (1) the Bible, (2) the Holy Spirit, and (3) prayer impacted the lives of those who were saved.

WHAT IF they did things different than we do?

We will have to reach some type of conclusion as to what it means. **SOME POSSIBLE CONCLUSIONS:**

- Our modern techniques are better than their primitive methods.
- We are wrong and in need of a change.
- Any way is equally acceptable.
- "What's most comfortable" should determine our choice.
- The culture they lived in influenced what they did; we should adjust the Bible to the culture we live in.
- The Bible transcends culture and we need to submit culture to the teachings and commands of Scripture.

BUT WE NEED TO REMEMBER ...

- Our conclusion will affect how we live.
- When we stand before God at the judgment, it will be too late to revise our choice.

THIS IS HOW I PLAN TO LIVE!

OOPS... CAN I CHANGE THAT?

TOO LATE!

SUGGESTED WAY TO MEET THIS CHALLENGE.

METHOD

- **READ** through the book of Acts, and make notes about every reference to:
 - ✓ Use of the Bible
 - ✓ The Holy Spirit
 - ✓ Prayer
 - ✓ Anything else of that seems to be significant
- **LOOK** for patterns, relationships and cause-effect between these issues.
- **REALIZE** that it will take some time to accomplish this. (You will have to decide if eternity is worth it.)

A QUICK OBSERVATION

- **THE FIRST ~2/3 OF ACTS:** These concepts are mentioned frequently.
 - ✓ Sometimes random references to them.
 - ✓ Sometimes occurring in a specific order.

[This part of Acts focuses more on how the Good News spread across the world.]
- **THE LAST ~1/3 OF ACTS:** These concepts are mentioned less frequently.
 - ✓ Mainly random references to them.

[This part of Acts focuses more on how Paul was arrested and then went to Rome.]

WHAT MIGHT WE DISCOVER?

"EVERY-DAY" LIFE, AS A FOLLOWER OF JESUS ...

These three (**the Bible, the Holy Spirit, and prayer**) did not always appear only in a specific order.

- ✓ **The Bible** was an ongoing part of their lives. Even before they followed Jesus, they paid attention to the Bible (which is what God used to save them).
- ✓ In some sense, being "filled with **the Holy Spirit**" was always true, if the person was saved.
- ✓ **Prayer** was a constant thing, anyway!

But any time God did something special among them, there seemed to be a specific order.

WHEN THESE CONCEPTS OCCURRED IN A SPECIFIC ORDER ...

- STEP 1** FIRST CAME **PRAYER**. This was characterized as:
 - ✓ Frequent, often lengthy, as a group.
 - ✓ Including Scripture and praise, and submission to God's will. (Not just requests.)
- STEP 2** THEN CAME **THE HOLY SPIRIT**.
 - ✓ Occasionally: With special signs.
 - ✓ More often: Evident by the results that followed. [See the next page.]
- STEP 3** [RESULTS]

STEP 3 THE RESULTS: (1) **THEY TOLD OTHERS THE GOOD NEWS**, based on **THE WORD OF GOD**.

But it wasn't just the **GOOD NEWS** that was involved!

ALSO (2) **"ALL OF LIFE"** was involved – ALL CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH **THE WORD OF GOD**.*

(3) **PERSECUTION** also occurred (often).

* (It was always a part of their lives; but at these times, it was more evident.)



ONGOING GROUP PRAYER

◦

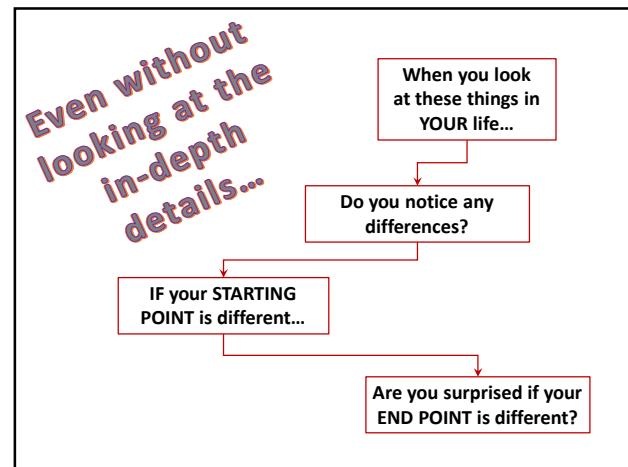
THE HOLY SPIRIT

◦

A BIBLE-BASED LIFE
(that included telling others the Good News)

◦

(sometimes) PERSECUTION



⌚ How do WE follow Jesus? ☚

The book of ACTS
shows us how THEY followed him.

IF WE:
Learn how
(1) the Bible, (2) the Holy Spirit, and (3) prayer
impacted the lives of those who were saved.

THEN WE:
Can make an informed decision... about how much we want
(1) the Bible, (2) the Holy Spirit, and (3) prayer
to impact our own lives.

THEY were ➔

... "followers of the Way" ...
... I worship the God of our fathers as a follower of the Way, ...

... with a fact-based faith ...
I believe everything that agrees with the Law and that is written in the Prophets, ...

... and a future hope ...
... that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.

... that influenced their conduct.
So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man.
Acts 24:14-16 (NIV)

➔ **What about US?**

THINGS TO CONSIDER

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF YOUR "FOLLOWING"?

If it's different from their way of "following" ... WHY?
You may have to choose:
✓ Deal with these issues.
✓ Ignore it all.

WHAT ELSE CAN YOU LEARN (IN ACTS) ABOUT THESE ISSUES?

TODAY: We looked at an overview.
NEXT TIME: We plan to look at some specific issues.

Credits

SCRIPTURE

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