

STUDY NOTES

The Acts of the Apostles

A MESSAGE SERIES AT NEW CITY CHURCH (Summer 2016)

[WWW.NEWCITYPHX.COM/SERMONS](http://www.newcityphx.com/sermons) - BRIAN KRUCKENBERG

The following content is based on the message “The Power of the Testimony” spoken on 07/24/16 by Brian Kruckenberg at New City Church in Phoenix, AZ. The following is not meant to be a full synopsis of the message but rather a brief look at the main ideas. To use this Study Guide effectively you must listen to the message found at <http://newcityphx.com/sermons/>.

Leaders using these Study Notes for group study and reflection should read the Biblical text thoroughly before beginning, using this resource as assistance and not relying solely on this material for insight. We encourage all leaders to pray and ask the Spirit for revelation as they lead their respective communities.

PRAYER

Pray and ask God to lead the discussion as everyone gets to share.

THE SCRIPTURE: ACTS 26:1-29

THIS IS WHO I AM (ACTS 26:4-11)

Paul consistently shares his story. In this week’s story, we see him standing before King Agrippa begging the king to hear the what Jesus had done in his life. Paul shared how he used to be far away from Jesus and fought against God’s plan even though he followed all the rules. There are often two ways that people live—as either a bad person or a good person, as a rule-breaker or a rule-follower, as a prodigal son or older brother.

- *Who do you relate to more, the prodigal son (the rule-breaker) or the older brother (the rule-follower)?*
- *Talk about how you follow all the rules or break all the rules.*

THIS IS WHO JESUS IS AND WHAT HE DID (ACTS 26:12-18)

There is a third way to live—the Gospel way. Paul was on a road away from Jesus until Jesus met him on the road to Damascus. We are all on a road to somewhere if we aren’t on our way toward God.

- *Did you have a time in your life where you were like Paul—kicking against God’s plan for your life? If so, share about how you were kicking against God’s plan.*
- *Why do we fight against God’s plan sometimes?*

THIS IS HOW I RESPONDED TO JESUS (ACTS 26:19-23)

On the road that he was on, Paul responded to Jesus and began following him. Jesus shows us everything that we are, but are unwilling to admit. When we begin following Jesus, we are admitting that we need him.

- *Remember everyone’s story is important, and so share what kind of moment you had when you met Jesus.*

THIS IS WHAT YOU SHOULD DO (ACTS 26:24-26)

Paul shared his story and people called him crazy for believing that Jesus rose from the dead. They called him crazy for believing that God’s message is for everyone. People will call our stories crazy. However, people observing our lives should see the work of Jesus if we are living openly for Jesus.

Our lives should not be hidden in a corner.

- *Talk about some ways that you have been called crazy for believing in Jesus.*
- *How has it been difficult for you to not “live in a corner?”*
- *Is God laying anything on your heart about how to live in the open, not in a corner?*

OUR TESTIMONY

Revelation says that Satan is conquered by “the blood of the lamb, and the word of our testimony.” Our testimonies matter. Our stories matter. They tell the story of what God has done in our lives. Our testimonies don’t have to look different than Paul’s did.

1) This is who I was.

2) This is who Jesus is and what He did.

3) This is who I am now and who I am becoming.

- *How has someone else’s story impacted you?*
- *How do you feel that sharing what Jesus has done can sound crazy?*
- *What fears do you have about sharing your own story?*
- *In what ways are sharing your own story difficult?*
- *In what ways are sharing your own story easy?*
- *Pray together to thank God for what he has done in our lives. Ask him to give us the courage to share our stories.*