

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/) - NATE BENNER

The following content is based on the message “Leading Like Jesus” spoken on 07/03/16 by Nate Benner 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 that God teaches us and leads our discussion as we each get to share.

THE SCRIPTURE: ACTS 20:16-35

LEADERS ARE IMPORTANT

Paul traveled to different cities in the Roman Empire proclaiming the Gospel. As people began following Jesus, he encouraged leaders to rise up and lead the churches. Paul spent extra time with the Ephesian leaders, living with them for three years. Even though he was busy on his way to Jerusalem, he just had to stop to talk to these leaders.

- *What experiences (positive or negative) have you had with church leaders?*

FINAL WORDS

Paul’s address to the Ephesian leaders was his final time that he would share with them face-to-face. One of the major things that Paul wanted them to remember was the way that he lived like Jesus when he was with them. He went around house to house, and it says that he shed tears with people. He was **in** the difficult moments **with** people, but he kept the same message.

- *How can we learn to “live, work, study, and play” from Paul’s example?*
- *Why is it so difficult to be **with** people in difficult moments?*
- *Think about a difficult moment in your life. What type of reaction would have helped you in that moment?*

PROTECT THE FLOCK

Part of the leader’s responsibility is to watch out for opposition to the message of Jesus. We can face opposition from outside our community, inside our community, or within our own life personally. It is part of the leader’s responsibility to watch out for people trying to twist the message of Jesus. But here is what can happen within a leader’s own life. They start to think that they are the ones that are building the church. However, in Matthew 16:18, Jesus says “I will build my church”. As leaders, we need to help keep each other accountable to the message of Jesus.

- *What type of opposition to the Gospel have you faced?*
- *How can we keep each other accountable to the message of Jesus?*
- *Why don’t we need a higher status over others?*
- *What can we do to protect ourselves from trying to gain a higher status over others?*

GRACE

As humans, we will fail. We will fall. We will lose sight of Jesus. As Jesus says in Revelation, the Ephesian leaders lost sight of their first love. They lost sight of him. However, Jesus gives them the opportunity to repent, or to turn back to him. Repentance is such a gracious thing. But people don’t think “repentance” is gracious. It sounds so mean because it means that people have to be vulnerable. But when we are vulnerable It allows someone else to be gracious. And here’s the thing—Jesus will always be gracious to us.

When vulnerability meets grace, life is breathed into our souls.

- *In what ways do you feel like the repentance offered by Jesus can actually be gracious?*
- *Why is it so vulnerable to repent?*
- *Who has shown you grace in your own life? What did that do to your relationship with that person? How did that change your view of yourself?*
- *How does grace allow people to move from where they are?*
- *How has God’s grace moved in your own life?*

REFLECTING ON JESUS

Paul reflects on Jesus at the end of his speech to the Ephesian leaders. Jesus said that it is “more blessed to give than to receive”. What did Jesus give? His life. Jesus came to earth to live among us. He met us where we were at. He lived the perfect life, and took the punishment for us. He loved us that much.

- *What does reflecting on Jesus’ love for you do in your own heart?*
- *How we can reflect Jesus to others?*
- *Pray together and ask God how you can better reflect Jesus.*