

GOD OPENS DOORS - 16 BIBLE STUDIES IN ACTS

As the Northwest District celebrated its 100th birthday in 1999 a number of items were prepared to assist us in celebration of 100 years of God's blessing to us in the Northwest District - video, worship services, district history, etc. A key item available for congregational use are the following 16 Bible Studies drawn from the book of Acts using the anniversary theme GOD OPENS DOORS.



The Bible Studies are available to all congregations for their use. This sheet provides you with information on the Bible Studies so you can plan now for their use this fall or next year.

All sixteen studies will have the following components -

1. A study of a selected passage(s) from the Book of Acts
2. A parallel story from the history of the Northwest District, which reflects the truths of the Acts passage.
3. Discussion questions relating to the two stories but with major focus on the future - what open doors are there for us for future outreach and ministry. Study length - 60 minutes.
4. A brief Leader's Guide for each lesson.

Furthermore, the 16 Bible studies were written so they could be used in a variety of ways -

- ◆ Each is written so it can stand alone; a congregation could do one a month; or, select from the sixteen the ones to use; or, offer a class using 4, 6 or 8 of the studies; or, offer 8 at one time and the other 8 several months later. Our intent: You simply use them in the way that fits for your education ministry and Bible study goals.
- ◆ Our point: 16 studies from Acts are available for you to use in whatever ways you want to use them to grow in the Word and celebrate 100 years of God's blessings in the Northwest District.

Plan now how you can use the 100th Anniversary GOD OPENS DOORS Bible Studies from Acts.

What will you study in the sixteen offerings? Here is a brief sketch of each study and its content.

STUDY ONE - GOD OPENS DOORS

The anniversary theme verse - Acts 14:27. Study of three door miracles in Acts - 5:17-21; 12:6-11; 16:25-34. Use John 10 - "I Am the Door" and the letter to Philadelphia in Revelation 3:8-13. Revelation 3:20 - I stand at the door and knock.



STUDY TWO - THE WORD OF THE LORD GROWS

Getting into the acts of Acts. Key verses - Acts 1:8 and the occasion for the letter. Study of the six summary statements of the book - Acts 6:7; 9:31; 12:24; 16:5; 19:20; 28:30-31.

STUDY THREE - REACHING OUT TO OTHER PEOPLE

The ministry of Philip - Acts 6:5; 21:8; 8:5. Philip and the Ethiopian in Acts 8:26-40. Ministry to the least, the last, and the lost. Reaching the poor, possessed, women, and the diseased. Challenges to us today.

STUDY FOUR - GOOD NEWS FOR ALL PEOPLE

Acts 11:1-18 - The Cornelius vision and Peter's response. Acts 15 - the Council at Jerusalem and its decisions. Expansion to the Gentiles - the critical event for Luke in Acts. One all sufficient Savior for all.

STUDY FIVE - SOCIAL MINISTRY

Social ministry and its role in outreach to people. Study of Acts 11:27-30 and Agabus and famine relief. Study of Acts 6:1-6 and the incident of the neglect of caring for the widows and the church's solution.

STUDY SIX - A MISSION FOCUS FOR THE CHURCH

Acts 14:19-23 puts forward Paul's approach to missions: Evangelize the unsaved, edify the believers, and establish local churches. How done? Appoint elders. A model for the church today.



STUDY SEVEN - URBAN MINISTRY: REACHING THE CITIES

Acts 17:16-34 records Paul in Athens working with Greek speaking urban dwellers. Focus on content of presentations, preparation, and sensitivity. Also view Paul's other two speeches: Acts 13 to God-fearers and Jews and Acts 14 to illiterate pagans.

STUDY EIGHT - THE ROLE OF EDUCATION

Acts 18:24-28 introduces us to the character and ministry of Apollos, a great teacher. How were doors opened by God for ministry to others via education foci?

STUDY NINE - EVANGELISM: GOD OPENS EYES

Acts 26:12-23 records a portion of Paul's defense speech before King Agrippa. He explains his conversion and his call to serve and witness. In his own words God calls Paul to be a spiritual eye-opener.

STUDY TEN - PASTOR AND PEOPLE WORKING TOGETHER

Acts 20:17-38 is the touching incident of Paul's farewell speech to the Christians at Ephesus. We learn about ministry, working together, and an admonition to take heed and care for one another.

STUDY ELEVEN - IT'S ABOUT PEOPLE



The list of people involved in various aspects of ministry in Acts is a long one - 47. It takes people - many of them with a wide range of skills to get the work done. We also look at three key terms used to describe these people: disciples, Christians and the Way.

STUDY TWELVE - MISSION POWER

The major person in the Acts is the Holy Spirit - the means; the person who empowers, leads and guides. If the major person in Luke's Gospel was Jesus, the major person in Acts is the Holy Spirit. A review of this Power at work in the events of Acts and today.

STUDY THIRTEEN - MINISTRY ENCOURAGERS

Examples abound in Acts of encouragement of one another. The key example is Barnabas. Ten passages in Acts unfold for us the life of Barnabas, the neat model for us of encouraging one another in mission and ministry opportunities. Such people are needed today.

STUDY FOURTEEN - RESPONDING TO OPPOSITION

Opposition happens frequently in Acts. Yet, that doesn't stop the progress of the growth of God's Word. Matter of fact, opposition many times is used to move the mission forward. We'll look at opposition (61 phrases in Acts depict negative responses to the Word) and how to address it.

STUDY FIFTEEN - THE MINISTRY AND MISSION MESSAGE

The speeches of Peter and Paul in Acts 2-20 spell out for us the content/message of the mission and ministry of Acts. The focus is on Christ, the work of the Spirit, and the need of all for the salvation that is in Christ alone.

STUDY SIXTEEN - THE WORK OF THE CHURCH

Acts 2:43-47 and Acts 4:32-37 place before us life in the gathering of believers (the church). Here is a glimpse into what was normal for the early church and what is normative for the church of all times. What marks our fellowship?

