

NOTES

**UNIT SIX – “The University of Diversity” – Acts 6 – 12**

- A. Yahweh’s Post-Pentecost CE Curriculum
1. “Geography 101” – God takes the Story “on the \_\_\_\_\_” to ten cities outside Jerusalem.
  2. “Anthropology 201” – Three distinct and historically hostile ethnic groups discover they have the same \_\_\_\_\_!
  3. “Theology 301” – God squeezes monotheistic Jews and Samaritans into a primitive \_\_\_\_\_, and polytheistic Gentiles into a \_\_\_\_\_ monotheism.
- B. “Geography 101” – Expanding the Story Without Franchising Grace
1. Yahweh had to overcome the inertia of 15 centuries of a “theology of \_\_\_\_\_” (10x in Deuteronomy; e.g. 12:5,11; see also Jn 4:19-24).
  2. **PHASE I:** A Daring Death – the martyrdom of Stephen (Acts 6-7)
    - a. Stephen was *not* your “ordinary \_\_\_\_\_”...or was he? (“*full of the Holy Spirit, full of wisdom, full of grace, full of power*”; cf. 1 Tim 3:8-10)
    - b. The word, “\_\_\_\_\_” means to be covered or permeated with something (Gk - phērēs).
    - c. It is used \_\_\_\_ for Stephen!
    - d. This “fullness” empowered Stephen to feed widows, preach boldly, heal compassionately, and \_\_\_\_\_ peacefully (6:3, 5, 8; 7:55).
    - e. Stephen \_\_\_\_\_ at the hands of those he had gone to “church” (synagogue) with (6:8-15).
    - f. Stephen isolated himself as a “new Jew,” one who saw himself as an \_\_\_\_\_ to the Story, *not* the characters in it (cf. “*our fathers*” 9x in Jacob-David, but “*your fathers*” 2x at the end).
    - g. Stephen condemned himself by agreeing with \_\_\_\_\_ own self-description before this same judiciary (cf. Mt 26:63-66 and Acts 7:54-60).
  3. **PHASE II:** Another Deliberate Diaspora (cf. Acts 8:4 and Jms 1:1)
    - a. The “church in Jerusalem” was becoming blinded by the benefits of \_\_\_\_\_:
 

*“Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common. And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.” Acts 4:32, 33*

*“And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.” Acts 6:7*
    - b. We see the \_\_\_\_\_ of Pentecost in Acts 2, but we see the \_\_\_\_\_ of Pentecost in Acts 8.
    - c. Stephen’s \_\_\_\_\_ sent the Story to Judea, Samaria, Phoenicia, Syria and Cyprus (8:1; 11:19).

- d. Luke intentionally records Saul's \_\_\_\_\_ as the first stimulus for "foreign missions," and the prelude to his own \_\_\_\_\_...outside Jerusalem! (8:1-3 and 9:1-2).
4. **PHASE III: Redirecting a Devout Dissident—Saul's Conversion** (9:1-19; 22:3-21; ch 26)
- a. Luke is careful to portray Saul's conversion as a \_\_\_\_\_ of his passion, not a \_\_\_\_\_ of it (8:3; 9:1, 19-22).
- b. Luke is careful to portray Saul's \_\_\_\_\_ to the Story as a vital part of the Story:
- "But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name." Acts 9:15, 16*
- "And I said, 'Who are you, Lord?' And the Lord said, 'I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. But rise and stand upon your feet, for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you as a servant and witness to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you, delivering you from your people and from the Gentiles--to whom I am sending you to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'" Acts 26:15-18*
- c. Luke creatively gives us Saul's " \_\_\_\_\_ " in three installments:
- (1) The " \_\_\_\_\_ " of the narrative (9:1-19).
  - (2) Via Paul's speech to the Jewish \_\_\_\_\_ in Jerusalem (22:3-21).
  - (3) Via Paul's \_\_\_\_\_ before Porcius Festus and Herod Agrippa II (ch 26).
5. **Stephen's Legacy — The First Great Commission Cities**
- a. Joppa - the only \_\_\_\_\_ for Jerusalem (until Caesarea) on 170 miles of coastline.
- \_\_\_\_\_ had been here 700 years earlier with the exact challenge Peter faced in chapter 10 (Jon 1:3).
  - God used the \_\_\_\_\_ of Dorcas, as the prelude to taking the Gospel to the Gentiles (9:32-43).
- b. Antioch - \_\_\_\_\_ largest city in the Roman Empire (half million people).
- Capital city of Syrian Province; " \_\_\_\_\_ " to 24,000 Roman soldiers.
  - Controlled all \_\_\_\_\_ connecting Asia Minor, Egypt, and the Euphrates.
  - The " \_\_\_\_\_ " of intentional foreign missions (13:1-3).
- c. Tarsus - ranked with Athens and Alexandria as a world \_\_\_\_\_ center.
- Saul likely received his "undergraduate degree" here, then went to Jerusalem for " \_\_\_\_\_ " training (22:3).
  - Sat at the intersection of \_\_\_\_\_ major trade routes.
  - A \_\_\_\_\_ Roman city since 41 BC (tax exempt)

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- d. Caesarea - (re)built by Herod the Great to \_\_\_\_\_ the people of Joppa.
- gave \_\_\_\_\_ to 6,000 Roman colonists, many soldiers.
  - Herod Agrippa I was struck dead by Yahweh here (12:19-53).
  - “\_\_\_\_\_ the Evangelist” lived here with his four prophet-ess daughters (6:5; 21:8-9).
  - Peter led \_\_\_\_\_ and a large number of Gentiles to faith in Jesus here (ch 10-11).
- C. Anthropology 201 — “Guess Who’s Coming to Seder?”
1. Just as Yahweh had to destroy the “theology of place,” in order for the Story to stay true, He had to dismantle the “theology of \_\_\_\_\_.”
    - a. Stephen and the “Seven” — from Jew to “\_\_\_\_\_ -Jew” (Acts 6)
      - (1) The “\_\_\_\_\_” were all Greek-speaking Jews, and had their own synagogue in Jerusalem (6:8-9).
      - (2) “Seven” was a number pointing towards \_\_\_\_\_ in some first century Jewish thinking (Mk 8:20; Acts 13:19).
    - b. Simon “The Great” — from Jew to \_\_\_\_\_ -Jew (Acts 8).
      - (1) The Jews had “no \_\_\_\_\_ with Samaritans” (Jn 4:9).
    - c. Cornelius the Centurion — from Jew to \_\_\_\_\_ (Acts 10-11).
      - (1) Jews avoided all \_\_\_\_\_ with Gentiles (Mk 7:3-4; Mr. 10:5; Acts 10:9-16).
- D. Theology 301 — “Holy Smoke It’s the Holy Ghost!”
1. The Holy Spirit had always been an integral part of \_\_\_\_\_ theology from Genesis to Zechariah (Gen 1:1; Is 63:10; Ps 106:33; Zech 4:6).
  2. The Holy Spirit’s ministry had not changed—revealing the \_\_\_\_\_ and calling God’s people \_\_\_\_\_ to it—only the extent of it:
 

*“You shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the LORD your God and there is none else. And my people shall never again be put to shame. “And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit.” Joel 2:27-29*
  3. The Holy Spirit’s ministry in the Book of Acts is always the same—validating the \_\_\_\_\_:
 

*“And they were amazed and astonished, saying, “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language?...Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know-- this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it.” Acts 2:7, 8, 22-24*

*“And the crowds with one accord paid attention to what was being said by Philip when they heard him and saw the signs that he did....Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, who came down and prayed for them that they*

might receive the Holy Spirit, for he had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit. Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money," **Acts 8:6, 14-18**

"While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles. For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared, "Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to remain for some days." **Acts 10:44-48**

4. The one common denominator in all the occurrences of speaking in tongues in the Book of Acts is the presence of \_\_\_\_\_:
  - a. Pentecost: - tongues were the sign of the fulfillment of a \_\_\_\_\_ - year-old prophecy (Acts 2; Joel 2:27-29).
    - tongues was a sign to the 120 that the time had come to take the Story to the \_\_\_\_\_.
  - b. Samaria - tongues are \_\_\_\_\_ from baptized, converted half-Jews until the Jerusalem Jews can "\_\_\_\_\_" them receive the Holy Spirit.
    - tongues verified inclusion in the Story to \_\_\_\_\_ as well.
  - c. Caesarea - tongues are given to converted, *unbaptized* \_\_\_\_\_ at their conversion so that the Jerusalem Jews can "\_\_\_\_\_" them receive the Holy Spirit.
    - tongues verified inclusion in the Story to them as well.
  - d. Saul/Paul - It is significant, that in this book, there is no mention of \_\_\_\_\_ speaking in tongues; there is no need.

E. Acts 6-12 and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Church

1. In these first 12 chapters, the Story had \_\_\_\_\_:
  - geographically
  - ethnically
  - theologically
  - socioeconomically
  - numerically
2. Which of these five expansions do we \_\_\_\_\_ most, 20 centuries later?
3. What caused them to \_\_\_\_\_ 20 centuries earlier? (cf. Acts 11:18).
4. Dorcas and Stephen's \_\_\_\_\_ force us to rethink our criticism of God for "\_\_\_\_\_" gifted people when they're at the "top of their game."