

FEATS – Acts: The Mission of God

Homework to be completed prior to the third learning session.

1. Throughout Acts the early Christians insist that their message is entirely consistent with Israel's Scriptures. This fact should remind us that Christianity was never intended as a "new religion." It was instead understood as the fulfillment of God's promises to Israel—and thereby to the whole world.
 - (A) Read "The Urgency of Reading the Bible as One Story" by Michael Goheen.
 - (B) Write down five insights you gained from this article.
 - (C) In a single paragraph attempt to summarize the storyline of the whole Bible—from Genesis to Revelation.

2. In Acts 1:6 the disciples ask, "Lord are you at this time going to restore the **kingdom** to Israel." Initially it appears that Jesus only deflects their question; instructing them not to worry about times and dates. However, in the final verse of Acts we are told that Paul "proclaimed the **kingdom** of God...with all boldness and without hindrance" (28:31). How should we understand this? Was Paul's message about the kingdom of God something other than Israel's kingdom-hope?
 - (A) With the above questions in mind, read again through Acts. Make notes as you do.
 - (B) In what way does Acts see that Israel's hope has *already* been fulfilled? In what way does Acts assert that Israel's hope has *not yet* been completed? Write down your responses.
 - (C) Christians sometimes stress the importance of the NT over the OT. In fact, throughout history Christians have occasionally ignored, neglected, or even discarded the OT. What's wrong with this way of thinking? Read yet again through Acts and note references and allusions to the OT. What do you think the early disciples would say about our tendency to downplay the OT?

3.
 - (A) Read ch. 20, "Authoritative Prayer," in Richard Foster's book, *Prayer*.
 - (B) Throughout this month begin to practice authoritative prayer.
 - (C) In your journal regularly record any thoughts, feelings, or impressions while you do.

4. (A) Read ch. 5 (“Can You Become a Leader?”) in *Spiritual Leadership* by J. Oswald Sanders.
(B) In a page or less, reflect upon the questions listed at the end of the chapter.
(C) Come prepared to share your reflections at the next learning session.

5. Throughout this module we’ve been considering how our lives—both individually and corporately—can be better aligned with God’s mission. The next four articles consider this question from different perspectives.
 - (A) Read “The Mission of Ministry” by Orlando Costas; “Worship to Form a Missional Community” by Marva Dawn; “What is the Missional Family?” by Bo Prosser; and “Ministers in the Marketplace” by Ron Toews.
 - (B) In a sentence summarize the main point of each article.
 - (C) Select one of the articles above. Write a one page reflection in which you consider how you can integrate the ideas presented in this article into your life and ministry.

6. The aim of this module isn’t to just understand the mission of God; it’s to get on board with it. Each one of you is involved in leadership at some level—whether in the home, the church, or the workplace. We’d like you to consider how you can help your specific ministry to become more missional—that is, more intentionally aligned with God’s redemptive purposes in the world.
For this final assignment we’d like you to clarify and cast a missional vision for your ministry. As part of this process you should:
 - (A) Explain the meaning and implications of a missional mentality.
 - (B) Drawing upon your evaluation in Part Two, point out ways in which your ministry is presently operating according to something other than a missional paradigm.
 - (C) Offer specific suggestions as to how your ministry can become better aligned with God’s mission in the world.
 - (D) Make a list of specific steps you intend to take to adopt a more missional lifestyle.
 - (E) After you’ve thought through what you intend to communicate, and how best to do so, present your proposal to the appropriate people involved in your ministry.
 - (F) If possible, invite your coach to observe your presentation.
 - (G) Come prepared to discuss this experience at the next learning session.