

Study Guide for the Week of April 22, 2007

This study guide is designed to help you to become more familiar with the Bible. For 2007 the study guide will help you read through the New Testament in a year. Study these passages on your own, with a friend, or with a group. If you or someone you know needs a Bible, please take one from under a chair in the Worship Center. They are there for you to take home and use! Sermon manuscripts are available at www.spwired.com.

Monday, April 30. Read Acts 13:26-52. This is the second part of Paul's message in Psidia. He's showing that Jesus is the culmination of history. What in Paul's messages speaks to you? Paul and his companions draw the attention of the entire city. What sorts of responses do people give to Paul's message?

Tuesday, May 1. Read Acts chapter 14. What occurs here in this chapter is repeated often. Paul and his companions go to a village or city and begin to tell people about Jesus. Many believe, but some are envious, and some even try to worship Paul and the others. Paul establishes a church and trains leaders, then moves on. What do you learn about the early church in this chapter? Later, Paul's letters to these churches he had started become a large part of our New Testament. **Read Proverbs 29:11.** In terms of managing your anger, does the balance tip more toward foolishness or wisdom?

Wednesday, May 2. Read Acts 15:1-21. This chapter points out one of the very first disagreements in the early church. The issue was whether or not Gentiles (non-Jews) should be circumcised as Jews first in order to become Christians. How do these Christians handle their differences? What conclusion do they come to? How should we model the way they handled themselves when we disagree? **Read Ephesians 4:26-32** in the New Testament. In verse 26, what can happen if we let anger linger? In verse 31, notice that anger and outward expressions of out of control anger are listed. Have you ever given in to any of these? How did you feel after an angry outburst?

Thursday, May 3. Read Acts 15:22-41. The decision of the early church on the issue of circumcision is put in writing and then sent off with witnesses to the fledgling churches. What is the reaction in those places? In verses 36-41 we see a split between Paul and Mark. Mark had left Paul for an unknown reason, and this had hurt Paul deeply. However, they both continued to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ and start churches and later would become friends again. What does this tell you about Christians and disagreements? **Read Psalm 103:8-12 and Psalm 145:8-9** in the Old Testament. These passages describe the anger of God. What do they tell us about God's anger? If we do have anger, what is the godly way to handle it? Has your anger ever prompted you to do something that addressed an injustice?

Friday, May 4. Read Acts 16:1-15. At the end of yesterday's reading in Acts, Paul decides to go and check on the churches that he had started. This begins his second missionary journey. It had been 5 years since Paul had been to Derbe and during that time a young man had matured in the faith and become a leader. Paul was always looking to train the next generation of leaders in the faith. How are you doing this? How is the church doing this? How can you and the church be more intentional about raising up the next generation of faithful leaders? It is during this time that Luke, the author of Acts and the gospel bearing his name, joins Paul. Notice that the language changes from "they" to "we" indicating Luke joining the journey. **Read Proverbs 16:32, 22:24-25, 29:22.** These are all proverbs about anger. What can you learn from each of these that you can apply to your daily life?

Saturday, May 5. Read Acts 16:16-40. In this section we see many things. An interaction with a demon-possessed girl; the consequences of the interaction; Paul leading his jailer to Christ; Paul using his Roman citizenship shrewdly. What do you learn about the early church from this section? What in the courage of Paul might you apply to your own life?

Sunday, May 6. Read Acts 17:1-15. Why did some people resent and reject the message of Jesus? Why did some accept it? Why do some people today reject the message of Jesus? Why do some people today accept it?