

## Study Guide for the Week of May 6, 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](http://www.spwired.com).*

**Monday, May 7. Read Acts 17:16-34.** Paul is taking the gospel to the people of Athens. Notice that Paul did not shame the unbelievers, or bash their various religions. How, instead did he share the good news of Jesus Christ with them? What might we learn about sharing our faith? How might you go about sharing your faith this week in a similar way?

**Tuesday, May 8. Read Acts chapter 18.** In this chapter we get a glimpse of Paul's trade. Every Jewish Rabbi (teacher) was expected to have a trade that he pursued. For Jesus that was carpentry, for Paul it was tent-making. Paul never wanted to be a drain on anyone, so he worked wherever he stayed to provide for himself. Eventually believers drew together to provide for Paul so that he might concentrate more fully on spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ. What does this tell you about Paul. The Nazirite vow in verses 18-23 was often done by Jews in a time of deep thanksgiving. For 30 days he would have gone without eating meat or drinking wine. At the end of that 30 days he would have shaved his head. As you reflect on what Paul has done and seen, what might he have been deeply thankful for? **Read and reflect on a section of Proverbs in the Old Testament.**

**Wednesday, May 9. Read Acts 19:1-20.** In verses 13-20 some Jewish exorcists attempt to use the name of Jesus to drive out demons and their technique backfires on them because they were merely using Jesus' name and not interested in a relationship with him. That many of those people burned their incantation books and charms that were very, very profitable to them, shows that they were willing to make a clean break with the past, even if it cost them personally. All this so that they could begin a new relationship with Jesus. What does this say to you? Are there any clean breaks you need to make? **Read and reflect on a section of Proverbs in the Old Testament.**

**Thursday, May 10. Read Acts 19:21-41.** Paul is now in his third missionary journey, visiting the churches he has started and starting new ones. He was also uniting those early churches to help the Christians in Jerusalem. They had been under severe persecution and many were starving and homeless. Paul united the early churches in collecting an offering to help the Jerusalem Christians in a time of desperate need. What does this tell you about the early church? What does it tell you about the power of churches working together? In the altercation with the silver smiths, what is their motivation in starting a riot? Why did Christianity threaten them? **Read and reflect on a section of Proverbs in the Old Testament.**

**Friday, May 11. Read Acts 20:1-16.** These few verses summarize over a year's journey. There were many stops Paul made, many encounters he had, that we know nothing about. In verses 7-12 we get the first account of what a Christian worship service was like. There was a celebration of the Lord's supper, a common meal, and a message by Paul. They would have met at night so that slaves could take part. **Read and reflect on a section of Proverbs in the Old Testament.**

**Saturday, May 12. Read Acts 20:17-38.** This is Paul's farewell speech to a group of Christians that he knew he would see no more. Paul knew that his work was causing him to be a target of hatred, and that his work was nearly done. What in his speech connects with you? What do you learn about Paul here? **Read and reflect on a section of Proverbs in the Old Testament.**

**Sunday, May 13. Read Acts 21:1-36.** In this section we see Paul's determination to go to Jerusalem no matter what he encountered there. When he arrives there is celebration at the way people are receiving the good news of Jesus Christ, and at the same time Paul is met with rumors that he is making Jews abandon their heritage, which he was not. To make peace in the church and in the face of the rumors, Paul takes part in another Nazirite vow and pays for the process of 4 others. Paul more than likely did not want to do this, but he was willing to make the compromise for the greater good of the church. What does this tell you about Paul? About his determination?