

Family Worship Guide – Week 1

READ

Acts 1:1-11

The book of Acts is the historical account of how Jesus is continuing His mission of bringing salvation to the nations through His church. The church goes out in the power of the Holy Spirit to be Jesus' witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the end of the earth (Acts 1:8).

Acts 1:8 provides an outline for the advancement of Jesus' kingdom in the book of Acts. In Acts 2-7, the disciples are preaching the gospel in Jerusalem and the church is formed there. In Acts 8-12, the disciples begin to preach the gospel in all Judea and Samaria and the church extends to these regions. In Acts 13-28, we see the apostle Paul taking the gospel to the ends of the earth and churches springing up all over the Roman Empire.

We today are still a part of this story. We are disciples of Jesus who have been commanded to preach His gospel in every place on earth. We are witnesses who are called to proclaim the death and resurrection of King Jesus and to call all people to submit to Him as Savior and Lord. We will continue to do this as we look forward to His promised return (Acts 1:9-11).

Acts 2:1-41

Acts 2 tells us about the birth of the church. While all of the followers of Jesus were gathered together for prayer, the Holy Spirit rushed upon them in the form of a wind and tongues of fire. These believers immediately began to speak in other languages and tell all the people in the city about the great things that God had done.

The apostle Peter preached the first Christian sermon on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14-40). He told the people that Jesus was the Messiah, the Anointed King, and that they must repent of their sins and believe in Him for salvation. Peter commanded the people to repent and be baptized and promised that if they did, their sins would be forgiven and they would receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). The Holy Spirit worked powerfully and three thousand people became followers of Jesus in one day!

Acts 2:42-47

These new followers of Jesus did not just go back to living life as they always had. They couldn't! They were part of a new family called the church. They had publically entered this new family through baptism (Acts 2:41) and now they committed themselves to doing the things this family did.

Acts 2:42 tells us that the faith family called the church "devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers." Today, we have the apostles' teaching preserved for us in the Bible. "Fellowship" is another way of saying they shared life together. In Acts 2:44-46, we find that they actually shared their own possessions because they realized they were all one family. "Breaking of bread" refers to the Lord's Supper, and of course, throughout the book of Acts, we see that the early church was always devoting herself to prayer. And the Lord was faithful; He continued to add daily to their number those who were being saved (2:47). It is ultimately Jesus who is continuing to carry out the mission He has begun to bring salvation to the nations.

Questions:

Jesus' kingdom includes people from every nation (Acts 1:8). How will you as a family be a part of extending His kingdom?

Peter tells the people they must repent (turn from their sins) and be baptized for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38). Have you followed this command?

The early church was devoted to the apostles' teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread and prayer (Acts 2:42). How will you more fully devote yourself to these things? How can you more fully participate in the life of the faith family?

Bottom Line: Jesus has command and empowered His disciples to take the gospel to all nations.

PRAY

This week we are concentrating our prayers as a church family on the Arundo people group in Northern Africa.

Specifically we ask that you pray for JD and JJ, our Brook Hills Church Planters who are moving to plant their lives among the Arundo in North Africa. Arundo is an adopted nickname for a people group whose identity must be kept secure due to high risks. Most of the 10 million+ Arundo live in North Africa, but there are significant pockets of refugees in Western Europe, Great Britain and North America. The situation among the Arundo has been called the world's worst humanitarian disaster. About half of the population relies on outside aid for survival. Food and clean water are scarce. Medical care and veterinary services are widely needed to keep the people and their herds alive. Large traditional groups live by planting crops or tending herds of camels, goats or sheep. More urbanized groups live in typical developing cities. Refugees worldwide may live in crowded camps or developed cities. All Arundo are divided into clans and sub-clans to which they are very loyal. Honor and respect for family and clan are among their chief values. The Arundo are almost entirely Muslim. Some may hold to a mix of Islamic and Animistic beliefs, but the Qur'an is their ultimate religious authority. The Arundo are among the top five unreached people groups in the world. Islam dominates the culture and is especially harsh in its response to Christianity, causing the small number of Arundo Christians (0.01% of the population) to live in spiritual isolation and churches to gather in secret. If a Christian is discovered, the resulting persecution can be devastating. The harshest persecution often comes directly from one's own family. Pray for believers to remain faithful and for workers to go to the Arundo. Please be in prayer for JD and JJ as they prepare to move their family to North Africa and plant their lives among the Arundo. Pray that God will use their family to spread the Gospel and that He will make His name known in North Africa. Please see the Prayer Card for additional guided prayer this week.

SING

This week our family worship song is 'O Church Arise' by Keith & Kristyn Getty. In the beginning of Acts, Jesus' disciples receive a command to be witnesses of the Gospel to the ends of the earth and they are given the Holy Spirit to carry out this command.

The amazing reality for us, as the church today, is that we have received the same Spirit. Now we may live our lives in such a way that the kingdom of God is advanced and the Gospel is spread all over the world.

Let's sing together, as we reflect on how God has called us to be witnesses here in our city and in all the world. Let's rejoice in His great commission, knowing that it is not by our own power, but by His Spirit that He will accomplish His will through us!

Please follow the link on the website to download and listen to this song together as a family. The lyrics are provided at the end of this guide as a song sheet while you listen and participate.

MEMORIZE

Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

SUGGESTIONS

These suggestions were created by the age-group ministry leaders as a way to help parents better communicate the biblical truths discussed in the Family Worship Guide. These suggestions are intended to help parents facilitate God-centered discussions with their children. Parents should prayerfully use these suggestions, and any other means necessary, to help their children discover the truths of God's word and worship Him together.

Preschool

- Before you begin, print an outline Map of Continents (www.outline-world-map.com).
- Read Acts 1:8 with your preschooler.
- Identify where you live on the map and pinpoint the location with a marker.
- Talk to your child about how God, as creator of the world, wants His followers to tell people everywhere the good news of Jesus.
- Let your preschooler place dots or pinpoints on the different continents on the map. Now the map is a visible example of how the good news of Jesus can be spread throughout the whole earth!
- Questions: Who commands us to spread the good news to all the nations? Who gives us the power to tell others about Jesus, the Savior?
- Conclude by re-reading Acts 1:8 with your preschooler.

Children

- As a family, re-read Acts 1:8.
- Locate a Bible map and show children where Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria appear on the map.

- Next locate a map of the United States and ask, “Where is our Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria?” Give everyone an opportunity to make the comparison of their context to the audience Jesus was addressing in Acts 1:8.
- Explain to your child that their Jerusalem is their neighborhood, their school, at the ball park, at the dance studio; their Judea is the state of Alabama; their Samaria is the United States; and the ends of the earth means all the other nations.
- Ask your children, “To which people are we asked to take the good news about Jesus?”
- Jesus gave each Christian the command of telling others about Him. Challenge your children to tell two people about Jesus Christ this week.

Students

- As a family, re-read Acts 1:8.
- Ask, “When do you receive power?” (Answer: When the Holy Spirit comes on you.) Ask, “When does the Holy Spirit come alive inside of you?” (Answer: When by faith, you trust in Christ for salvation.)
- As a family make a list with two columns. The headings for the two columns should be “Constructive Power” and “Destructive Power”. Spend 30 seconds making a list of the kind of things that can be accomplished when power is used for constructive purposes. Spend 30 seconds making a list of the kind of things that happen when power is used for destructive purposes.
- Explain that when we trust Jesus, God gives us power for very intentional constructive purposes. Acts 1:8 says that purpose is to take the Gospel across the street and around the world. The Church in Acts was serious about using that power for the God’s purposes.
- Re-read Acts 2:42-47 and note the things the church did together to accomplish God’s purposes. Then, make a list of the results of them using God’s power wisely.
- Pray together asking God to build us into a people like the early church who see God’s power add to our number daily those who are being saved.

Prayer

Lives/Church

Jesus is the resurrected Lord of heaven and earth (Acts 2:36). Thus, we owe Him perfect obedience. This week, ask God to convict you of sins private and public, and spend some repenting of those sins. And having done that, find great comfort in the gospel promise that, because of the cross, God is faithful and just to forgive us and cleanse us from all unrighteousness when we confess our sins (1 John 1:9).

Local

Focus: School Campuses/Homeschool Families
Local Church: Meadow Brook Baptist Church, Pastor Ron Summers

Monday: Pray for all of our elementary, middle and high school students to see their lives as the center point for God reaching the Next Generation in Birmingham.

Tuesday: Pray that God would use Brook Hills' students' lives to establish a great reputation for the gospel in their schools.

Wednesday: Pray for our Home Schooling families to create connections with their neighbors as a point of mission influence.

Thursday: Pray for all of Brook Hills' teachers to be encouraged as they see opportunities for ministry on their campuses.

Friday: Pray for the administrators of our schools to make wise decisions that affect the Next Generation on their campuses.

Saturday: Pray for our faith family to fully embrace the opportunity to reach succeeding generations by fully investing in the Next Generation now.

Global

Partner: JD and JJ (Brook Hills' Church Planters) planting their lives among the Arundo of North Africa

Short Term Teams: India, Thailand

Monday: Only a small number (0.01%) of the Arundo population are Christians and it is risky to share the gospel. Pray for open doors among the Arundo and for God to give JD and JJ the best and most effective access to share the gospel.

Tuesday: Persecution is a reality for the few Christians among the Arundo. Pray for community and encouragement with other believers and for God to strengthen them in their suffering.

Wednesday: Please pray for JD and JJ as they prepare and transition their lives to move to North Africa.

Thursday: Currently there are very few workers among the Arundo. Pray for those God is calling and will call from The Church at Brook Hills to join JD and JJ's team in North Africa.

Friday: Pray for God to give dreams and visions to those who do not know Christ. Pray for the Arundo to have access to the Word of God and relationships with other believers.

Saturday: Pray for the spiritual and physical health of JD and JJ's team. Ask for patience and perseverance in a physically difficult place to live, for favor as they develop relationships with nationals and for ways to stay connected back home.

Scripture Memory

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth. Acts 1:8

O Church Arise

by Keith Getty & Stuart Townend

O Church Arise and put your armour on
Hear the call of Christ our Captain
For now the weak can say that they are strong
In the strength that God has given
With shield of faith and belt of truth
We'll stand against the devil's lies
An army bold whose battle-cry is Love
Reaching out to those in darkness

Our call to war to love the captive soul
But to rage against the captor
And with the sword that makes the wounded whole
We will fight with faith and valour
When faced with trials on every side
We know the outcome is secure
And Christ will have the prize for which He died
An inheritance of nations

Come see the cross where love and mercy meet
As the Son of God is stricken
Then see His foes lie crushed beneath His feet
For the Conqueror has risen
And as the stone is rolled away
And Christ emerges from the grave
This victory march continues till the day
Every eye and heart shall see Him

So Spirit come put strength in every stride
Give grace for every hurdle
That we may run with faith to win the prize
Of a servant good and faithful
As saints of old still line the way
Retelling triumphs of His grace
We hear their calls and hunger for the day
When with Christ we stand in glory

Copyright©2005 Thankyou Music

Due to copyright limitations, we are only allowed to print the lyrics to this song with no chords. We encourage you to download an mp3 of this song from iTunes.



© 2011 The Church at BrookHills