

Lutheran Church of Australia

How to read the Bible

September

Read through the New Testament

Daily Devotions with thought-starters and prayer

© Pastor Richard Haar

Get Into It Any Way You Can!

September 1st - Acts 12:1-25.

Reflect: Have you ever been like Rhoda who had earnestly prayed for Peter's release and then was too surprised to fully appreciate that her prayers were answered?

Prayer: "Lord, help me to be more confident that you will answer my prayers! Amen."

September 2nd - Acts 13:1-25.

Reflect: The Antioch Christians were willing to give away half of their ministry leaders for mission elsewhere. Do our budgets show the same commitment to mission?

Prayer: "Lord Jesus, give me a real love for mission - at home and abroad. Amen."

September 3rd - Acts 13:26-52.

Reflect: Paul and Barnabas were expelled from this region and yet were "filled with joy and the Holy Spirit." To do the Lord's work is a joy - whatever the results!

Prayer: "Lord, teach me to faithfully serve you in both good times and bad! Amen."

September 4th - Acts 14:1-28.

Reflect: Paul and Barnabas revisited the Congregations they had founded to encourage them to "remain true to the faith". The same thing happens in our Sunday Worship!

Prayer: "Lord Jesus, strengthen my faith and keep me close to you. Amen."

September 5th - Acts 15:1-21.

Reflect: The early Church debated whether you had to become a Jew before you could become a Christian. What similar "religious" barriers

(expectations) exist today?

Prayer: "Lord, help me to bravely live by your Gospel and not by the Law! Amen."

September 6th - Acts 15:22-41.

Reflect: Paul had his doubts about Mark after he had previously let them down (Acts 13:13) But Barnabas [Acts 4:36 tells the meaning of his name!] didn't give up on him.

Prayer: "Lord, help me to encourage and affirm others like Barnabas did! Amen."

September 7th - Acts 16:1-18.

Reflect: It is the Lord who opens people's hearts to believe the message of the Gospel (verse 14). It's also true that commercial interest is often a barrier to faith (verse 19).

Prayer: "Lord Jesus, continue to move me to respond positively to the Gospel. Amen."

September 8th - Acts 16:19-40.

Reflect: Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved! This simple message is both the foundation of our Christian lives, and something we come back to again and again!

Prayer: "Saviour, fill my heart with the joy of believing in you! Amen."

September 9th - Acts 17:1-15.

Reflect: When witnessing, Paul "reasoned from the Scriptures." This is not imposing our religious opinions on others, this is simply allowing God's Word to speak!

Prayer: "Lord Jesus, use me to speak your saving Word to others. Amen."

September 10th - Acts 17:16-34.

Reflect: Paul points to the true God who fulfils all our religious longings. If people show interest (misdirected!) in spiritual things, that's a good place to begin witnessing!

Prayer: "Risen Lord Jesus, help me to tell others about you and your Gospel. Amen."

September 11th - Acts 18:1-28.

Reflect: Apollos served Jesus well, even though he wasn't clear about something as basic as Baptism. We all have more to learn about the faith, but God can still use us!

Prayer: "Lord Jesus, help me to keep learning more and more about you! Amen."

September 12th - Acts 19:1-20.

Reflect: Jesus' name is not like a magic spell (see verse 15). We need to have a personal (faith)

relationship with him, in order to share in his blessings and power.

Prayer: "Saviour, help me to believe in you, honour you and serve you. Amen."

September 13th - Acts 19:21-41.

Reflect: Money is the most common (false!) god on earth. The Ephesian businessmen chose profit over faith in Christ. How is this pattern repeated in Australia today?

Prayer: "Lord and Master, free my heart from the love of material wealth. Amen."

September 14th - Acts 20:1-16.

Reflect: How long could you have listened to Paul preach before you would have fallen asleep? How well (long) do you manage to concentrate on your Pastor's sermons?

Prayer: "Lord, make me eager to hear your Word - and to live by it! Amen."

September 15th - Acts 20:17-38.

Reflect: Apply Paul's parting blessing in verse 32 to your own life and situation. It is relevant for us all. **God's grace** is what will strengthen us and bring us to eternal life!

Prayer: "Lord Jesus, may I always keep my focus on you and your grace! Amen."

September 16th Acts 21:1-19.

Reflect: Do you think Paul being courageous or foolish in his determination to go to Jerusalem? How does his attitude parallel the attitude Jesus had? (See Luke 13:31-33)

Prayer: "Lord, I often don't feel very brave. Help me to trust in you more. Amen."

September 17th - Acts 21:20-40.

Reflect: Take heart, Church policy decisions have **always** taken a long time to be fully implemented! These issues (see Acts 15) had supposedly been settled six years earlier!

Prayer: "Lord, you don't give up on your Church. Help me not to either! Amen."

September 18th - Acts 22:1-30.

Reflect: The Jewish crowd more-or-less listened to Paul (a well credentialed Jew!) until he spoke about salvation for the Gentiles. Then pure prejudice took over!

Prayer: "Lord, forgive my religious blind-spots, and cure me from them! Amen."

September 19th - Acts 23:1-15.

Reflect: Wherever Paul went riots seemed to always

follow! And yet in the midst of this constant danger and opposition, Paul continued to faithfully witness about Jesus!

Prayer: "Crucified Lord, help me to remain faithful to you no matter what! Amen."

September 20th - Acts 23:16-35.

Reflect: What do you think motivated the Roman official to protect Paul (or was he merely glad to hand this "problem" over to Felix?) Where was God in all this?

*Prayer: "Heavenly Father, help me to trust in **your** protection and care. Amen."*

September 21st - Acts 24:1-27.

Reflect: Two years is a long time to wait for Felix to pass judgment. It was left to his replacement to finalise the situation! All this was again an opportunity to witness!

Prayer: "Lord, help me to recognise the 'witness potential' of every situation. Amen."

September 22nd - Acts 25:1-27.

Reflect: Paul was now caught up in red tape: being passed on from the Commander in Jerusalem, to Governors Felix and Festus (King Agrippa), and finally to the Emperor!

Prayer: "Lord, when life gets real hard, help me to remember your love. Amen."

September 23rd - Acts 26:1-32.

Reflect: Again and again throughout his many trials, Paul has the privilege of sharing the Gospel with the highest officials in the land. God knew what he was doing!

*Prayer: "Lord Jesus, help me to view the world from **your** perspective! Amen."*

September 24th - Acts 27:1-26.

Reflect: Despite not being able to resist a little, "I told you so", Paul shows great compassion by encouraging his captors that God would spare their lives.

Prayer: "Lord, in times of public danger or fear, let me speak for you. Amen."

September 25th - Acts 27:27-44.

Reflect: Paul remained calm under great pressure/danger. His faith in God's protection gave hope to the others and enabled him to think clearly in the midst of much panic.

Prayer: "Lord, help me to look to you as my anchor in the storms of life. Amen."

September 26th - Acts 28:1-16.

Reflect: Once ashore, Paul continued to minister to the others - gathering firewood; healing the sick. How has God worked through you in times of disaster or need?

Prayer: "Lord Jesus, help me to care for people in need and distress. Amen."

September 27th - Acts 28:17-31.

Reflect: Note the spread and growth of God's Kingdom throughout Acts: Starting in Jerusalem and finally reaching Rome. See Acts 6:7; 9:31; 12:24; 16:5; 19:20; 28:28.

Prayer: "Lord Jesus, may I too boldly spread the good news about you. Amen."

September 28th - Romans 1:1-32.

Reflect: The righteous live by faith! We are made righteous (**forgiven**) through faith in Jesus. Living rightly with God (**being righteous**) is characterised by trust (**faith**).

Prayer: "Lord Jesus, thank you for the forgiveness and new life you bring. Amen."

September 29th - Romans 2:1-29.

Reflect: None of us measure up to the requirements of the law. Therefore we should not pass judgment on others but instead repent as we focus on God's mercy (verse 4).

Prayer: "Lord, help me to repent and to call others to repent, by your mercy. Amen."

September 30th - Romans 3:1-31.

Reflect: The law shows that we are all sinners. The good news is that our relationship with God is not based on performance but on what Jesus has done for us (forgiveness)!

Prayer: "Heavenly Father, thank you that you forgive and accept me in Jesus! Amen."