



ACTS

Of All the Apostles

**You Will Be
My Witnesses:
Running the Race**

Lesson 14



Leaders are Chosen

Acts 6:1-7

Supplemental Scripture

Matthew 7:21-27
Matthew 25:31-46
James 1:22-27
James 2:14-26
Colossians 3:1-24
Ephesians 4:11-12

Memory Verse

I am thankful to Christ Jesus our Lord. He has given me strength. I thank Him that He considered me faithful. And I thank Him for appointing me to serve Him.
1 Timothy 1:12 (NIRV)

Lesson Goals

- Understand that the teachers/pastors of a church cannot do all the work
- Understand that leaders are needed in your church who can serve
- Understand that we must put into practice what we have learned

NOTE: Familiarize yourself with this story. Study the supplemental Scripture and make notes on, but do NOT read from, these pages. To reinforce that these ideas are not your own, hold your Bible as you tell the story.

When you learn how to run a race do you read a book about running? Do you memorize certain steps to take? What you need is a good coach, or another runner who runs well. But what happens if you never put into practice the things you have learned? You would not run very well, would you? So, in this new-life race, have you spent time with the Coach, Jesus? Are you spending time with Him in prayer and Bible study soaking up all that you can? Are you also learning from other runners in this race, other believers who are more mature and have been running a while? And are you putting into practice the things you are learning? Have you thought about showing someone else how to run? Let's see what the apostles and new believers are doing as we continue in the book of Acts.

As the apostles continued teaching, the number of believers kept growing. And even though they were selling houses and land, and sharing with each other, there was a problem. Some of the Jewish believers, the ones who followed Greek practices, had a complaint against the Jewish believers who followed only Jewish practices. Their complaint was that their widows, older women whose husbands had died, were not being taken care of; they weren't getting all the food they should.

Because of this, the Twelve called all of the believers together. Do you remember who the Twelve are? Peter, John, James and Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James, the son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, Judas, the son of James (not Iscariot) and Matthias, who was added after Jesus returned to heaven. They said, "It wouldn't be right for us to give up teaching God's word in order to wait on tables." (Acts 6:2b NIRV) They had a plan; "Choose seven of your men. These men must be wise and full of the Holy Spirit. This important work will now be theirs and we can continue teaching the word and praying."

Everyone liked the plan. It allowed the Twelve to continue teaching others about all that Jesus said and did. It also provided a way for the widows to be taken care of. So the group considered the men among them and chose seven. They chose Stephen. He was "full of faith (a strong and welcome belief that Jesus is the Messiah) and full of and controlled by the Holy Spirit." (Acts 6:5 AMP) They also chose Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas. After these men were chosen, they were taken to the apostles. The apostles prayed for them.

Application

Mark 10:45 says, "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." This was so important to Jesus that on the night before He was killed, He grabbed a basin, wrapped a towel around His waist, and washed the disciples' feet.

Jesus explained what He was doing. "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord.' You are right. That is what I am. I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet. So you also should wash one another's feet. I have given you an example. You should do as I have done for you. . . Now you know these things. So you will be blessed if you do them." (John 13:13-15, 17 NlrV)

No one else who has ever lived on earth was as great as Jesus. He showed us how to lead by serving. If you don't know Him personally, let me share Him with you. And if you do, are you willing to follow His example?

The new believers began serving and the apostles, the Twelve, continued teaching God's word. "So God's word spread. The number of believers in Jerusalem grew quickly." (Acts 6:7 NlrV) Some of the priests, the Jewish leaders with all the extra rules, even began to obey Jesus' teachings!

These believers had all begun a new life. They had also begun to run the race, keeping their eyes on Jesus. The apostles weren't lazy men, they didn't mind serving, but their priority was teaching God's word. They needed help! These seven men would help do the work that the apostles couldn't do. Serving might not sound like much fun, but it is a privilege. The Bible says in Mark 10:45, "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." Don't you want to learn from the best? Will you follow Christ's example of service today?

Review

1. How did the Twelve handle the problem that arose? (They suggested choosing seven leaders from the new believers.)
2. What were these leaders supposed to do? (Serve.)
3. Who was chosen? (Stephen, Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas.)

Next Week
Easter

The following week: Stephen-Acts 6:8-7:53

Preschool Lesson

As the apostles continued to teach, the number of believers kept growing. And even though they were selling houses and land, and sharing with each other, there was a problem. Some of the widows, older women whose husbands had died, were not being taken care of; they weren't getting all the food they should.

Because of this, the Twelve called all of the believers together. Do you remember who the Twelve are? Peter, John, James and Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James, the son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, Judas, the son of James (not Iscariot) and Matthias, who was added after Jesus returned to heaven.

They said, "It wouldn't be right for us to give up teaching God's word in order to wait on tables." (Acts 6:2b NIV) They had a plan; "Choose seven of your men. These men must be wise and full of the Holy Spirit. They will do this important work and we can continue teaching the word and praying."

Everyone liked the plan. So the group thought about the men among them. They chose seven. They chose Stephen, Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas. After these men were chosen, they were taken to the apostles. The apostles prayed for them.

The new believers began serving and the apostles, the Twelve, continued teaching God's word. "So God's word spread. The number of believers in Jerusalem grew quickly." (Acts 6:7 NIV) Some of the priests, the Jewish leaders with all the extra rules, even began to obey Jesus' teachings!

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Activities

Memory Verse Activity - Print phrases of the memory verse on large craft sticks (tongue depressors). Don't forget the reference. Make several sets and encourage your students to practice ordering the memory verse by groups. Race to see who finishes first.

Sing "The Twelve Disciples" substituting Matthias for Judas.

Help younger children trace their hands onto construction paper. Write "[Abby] is a Helper."

Make Plaster of Paris handprints. Be sure to include the memory verse reference.

Discuss practical ways to help out . . . at home . . . at church . . . in your community. Begin today!

Review the lesson. Talk about how a relationship with Jesus leads to obedience and service. Discuss the supplemental Scriptures.

Learn about Greece. Remember that the Jewish believers who followed Greek practices felt that their widows were not being cared for. Provide Greek flag coloring pages. Learn some of the Greek alphabet. Decorate pottery.

Run a Greek relay race. You will need two teams. Each team will need a hula hoop. (Greek children would have used wooden hoops.) The relay consists of racing from the starting point, around a turning point, and back to the next in line, all while rolling the hula hoop. If the hula hoop falls, the player returns to the starting point and tries again.

Test your students on their memorization of Hebrews 12:1-2. Make up hand motions to help them remember it better.



I am thankful to Christ Jesus
our Lord. He has given me
strength. I thank him that
He considered me faithful.

And I thank Him for
appointing me to serve him.

1 Timothy 1:12

Racing Riddles

Fill in the blanks with the correct name of each of the twelve apostles. Unscramble the circled letters to find out who the apostles chose as helpers.

— (_) — — —

Fisherman; also known as Simon

— — — — —

Fisherman; the disciple Jesus loved

— (_) — — —

Fisherman; John's brother

— — — (_) — —

Fisherman; Simon Peter's brother

— — — — —

Jesus once saw him under a fig tree

— — — — —

Doubted that Jesus had risen from the dead

— — — — — (_) — — — —

Also known as Nathanael; friend of Philip

— — — — —

A former tax collector

— — — (_) —

The son of Alphaeus

— — — — —

The Zealot; not Peter

— — (_) — —

The son of James; not Iscariot

— — — — — (_)

Added after Jesus returned to heaven

— — — ○○○○○○ — — —

Write in the missing letters to discover which seven men were chosen as leaders.

_TE_HEN

P_IL_P

PR_ _ORU_

NIC_N_R

IMO

P_R_E_AS

N_CO_AS

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Fisherman; also known as Simon

J O H N

Fisherman; the disciple Jesus loved

J Ⓐ M E S

Fisherman; John's brother

A N D Ⓡ E W

Fisherman; Simon Peter's brother

P H I L I P

Jesus once saw him under a fig tree

T H O M A S

Doubted that Jesus had risen from the dead

B A R T H O Ⓛ O M E W

Also known as Nathanael; friend of Philip

M A T T H E W

A former tax collector

J A M Ⓔ S

The son of Alphaeus

S I M O N

The Zealot; not Peter

J U Ⓛ A S

The son of James; not Iscariot

M A T T H I A Ⓢ

Added after Jesus returned to heaven

L E A ○○○○○○○ D E R

Write in the missing letters to discover which seven men were chosen as leaders.

STEPHEN

PHILIP

PROCORUS

NICANOR

TIMON

PARMENAS

NICOLAS

Word Search

w i d g l t h e t w e l v e
d a e r p s d r o w s d o g
r r y e y e p r a t i c s e
o t a e l l h i y h p s r d
w o r k a b o r e l s b e n
s e p p c a l h e i n e d s
d a s r b t y c n a b l a e
o p e a e n s r o t s i e e
g o l c a o p e d w o e l c
h s t t t t i e o e t v n e
c p s i w i r d o w v e e d
a l o c a a i d e t i r v r
e e p e i w t r e d e s e e
t b a s l e p l n e v e s s

the Twelve

serve

widows

Greek practices

believers

seven leaders

wait on tables

teach God's word

wise

Holy Spirit

apostles prayed

God's word spread

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o t a e l l h i y h p s r d
w o r k a b o r e l s b e n
s e p p c a l h e i n e d s
d a s r b t y c n a b l a e
o p e a e n s r o t s i e e
g o l c a o p e d w o e l c
h s t t t t i e o e t v n e
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