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Discoveries to follow DVD and audio recordings

Bible Discoveries: Acts – Revelation

These Discovery Sheets were designed to help you explore Scripture on your own and draw some conclusions from that exploration.

They were designed for small-group activities, where 4-6 people could do them together and benefit from what others might already know, but they can be done individually or in larger groups if you prefer. Doing them will give you a greater confidence in your ability to explore the Scriptures and get further background on important aspects of the story.

Please don't take these too seriously, or get frustrated in trying to find the "right answer." That's not their purpose. They are meant to be fun and simply help people realize that they can read various sections of Scripture and see them as part of a larger story.

They were designed to be completed in 10-15 minutes of quick reading and discussion. A few may take a bit longer, but not much. If you're in a group see what kind of discussion about particular issues or the Scriptures themselves will arise from these discoveries.

Sermon Themes in Acts

Assignment: Become familiar with the nature and content of teaching in the early church.

- Process:
1. Find one or two major themes for each of the three sermons listed below.
 2. What was the speaker trying to communicate to his hearers in each of the sermons?
 3. List the similarities and differences between these three sermons.

Peter's Sermon - Acts 2:14-41

Stephen's Sermon - Acts 7:1-53

Paul's sermon in Pisidia, Antioch - Acts 13:13-41

Similarities

Differences

Resolving Disputes in the Church

Assignment: Read about the Council of Jerusalem in Acts 15 and answer the questions below.

1. What problem precipitated the gathering?
2. Who was at the gathering?
3. How and why were the two sides divided?
4. What were the issues behind both sides of the disagreement?
5. What were the steps used to resolve this dispute?
6. What conclusions did they come to?
7. What does this teach you about how the church should resolve differences?

The Role of the Prophet in the Early Church

Assignment: Discover how the early church responded to prophetic gifting.

Process: Look up the Scriptures below, and answer the following questions:

Acts 2:17	Acts 2:18	Acts 3:18	Acts 3:21	Acts 3:22
Acts 3:24	Acts 3:25	Acts 7:37	Acts 11:27	Acts 13:1
Acts 13:40	Acts 15:15	Acts 15:32	Acts 21:10	Rom. 12:6
1 Cor. 12:28	1 Cor. 12:29	1 Cor. 13:9	1 Cor. 14:5	1 Cor. 14:24
1 Cor. 14:29	1 Cor. 14:31	1 Cor. 14:32	1 Cor. 14:37	1 Cor. 14:39
Eph. 2:20	Eph. 4:11	1 Tim. 4:14	2 Pet. 2:1	1 John 4:1
Rev. 2:20	Rev. 18:20	Rev. 18:24		

1. What cultural expectations did they already have of prophetic ministry?

2. What did the prophets do in the early church?

3. Name some prophets from Acts.

4. What impact did prophets have in the early church?

5. What guidelines does Scripture place on their ministry?

6. Does Scripture indicate anywhere that their ministry was just temporary for the local church?

7. What else did you learn?

The Church at Philippi

Assignment: Find out all you can about the church at Philippi by looking up the following scriptures and answering the questions below.

1. Read Acts 15:40-16:40

- a. What four people made up the Philippian Church planting team?
- b. Was Philippi originally on their itinerary? What was?
- c. How did they come to be in Philippi?
- d. How does Luke describe Philippi?
- e. Where and how did they begin to present the gospel?
- f. Why did they not begin in the synagogue, as was their custom?
- g. Who was their first convert and how did she treat them?
- h. How did the Philippian Church planting team get into trouble?
- i. Whose household was the second to be converted in Philippi?
- j. How long do you think they stayed in Philippi?

2. Read Philippians 4:15

- a. What was unique about the Philippian's relationship with Paul?

3. Read Acts 20:1-6

- a. How many other times did Paul visit Philippi?

Adam and Christ

Assignment: In Romans 5:12-18, Paul illustrates the redemption that comes in Christ with the sin that came through Adam. Read that portion of Scripture and fill out the chart below. Then, compare the differences between the two and discuss the impact their decisions have on us today.

	Adam	Christ
From the text: What action of each does this passage refer to?		
What word is used to describe this action?		
What results did this action bring into our world? (Match the numbers in each column with the opposites in the other)	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.
Who is affected by these results?		
What place did "self" have in each of their actions.		
How is each of their actions ratified in our own lives?		

Conclusion: What is Paul teaching us in this passage about sin, death, righteousness, and life?

The Stronger and Weaker Believer

Assignment: Because the early church wasn't founded on rules and regulations, one of the problems Paul encountered was the difference in what people felt to be right or wrong. In these passages find out how the church dealt with those differences without trying to standardize everyone's actions.

Process: Read Romans 14:1-15:13 and 1 Corinthians 8:1-13 and answer the questions below:

1. What specific issues were causing problems among the Romans and Corinthians that these chapters address?
2. How does Paul define those who are weak in faith?
3. What counsel does Paul give to those who are weak in faith?
4. How does Paul define those who are strong in faith?
5. What counsel does Paul give to those who are strong in faith?
6. Does this instruction apply to every difference that believers have? If so, how should the church deal with false teaching or open sin in the church?
7. Make a list of issues that confront the church today where Paul's counsel in these passages would apply:

Dealing with Sin Among Believers

Assignment: One of the problems Paul addressed among the Corinthians was the blatant sin that went unchallenged in the church. Let's take a look at the sin, and how the Corinthians were told to handle it.

Process:

1. Read I Corinthians 5:1-3 and 2 Corinthians 2:5-11.¹
2. Answer the following questions.
 1. What was the specific sin was causing a problem in Corinth?
 2. How was the church handling it?
 3. What did Paul want them to do and how should they do it?
 4. Is this true for every sin? If not, what sins specifically merit this kind of action?
 5. Did the Corinthians do as Paul told them?
 6. How did the sinner respond?
 7. Combine this instruction with Matthew 18:15-20 and map out the Biblical process for dealing with sin in the body of Christ.

¹ Though it is not definitely certain these two passages are addressing the same situation, for the purposes of this lesson we'll assume that they are.

Paul's Relationship to the Corinthians

Assignment: Research Paul's contacts with the Corinthians, and how they affected the two letters Paul wrote to them that are currently preserved. Read Acts 18:1-22 and answer the questions below.

1. Who participated in planting the Church in Corinth?
2. How did the work get started?
3. How long did Paul stay in Corinth?
4. What kind of resistance did the Church planting meet?
5. What year was it, and how do we know?
6. Where did Paul go upon leaving Corinth?
7. What further contact did the Corinthians have with Paul? See 1 Corinthians 1:11 and 7:1...
8. How many letters did Paul write to the Corinthians? See 1 Corinthians 5:9-11 and 2 Corinthians 2:4, 7:8...

The Joy of Giving

Assignment: Find out what the early church understood about sharing financial resources. Read 2 Corinthians 8 and 9 and answer the questions below.

1. What was Paul collecting an offering for? See also 1 Corinthians 16:1-4...
2. What techniques did Paul encourage the Corinthians to use?
3. Who techniques did he not use that are common in Christian circles today?
4. From this passage, list and explain five concepts that Paul taught about giving in the early church, especially the kind of giving that helps those in need.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.

The Righteousness that Comes From Faith

Assignment: In Galatians and the Prison Epistles much is said about the believer and righteousness. Let's examine these Scriptures, and find out how they apply to our lives today.

1. Read Philippians 3:4-11. Paul seems to give us two options of pursuing righteousness. What are they? Which one did Paul base his life on?
 - a.
 - b.
2. Read Galatians 3:5-11. Paul continues to describe the two ways to pursue righteousness. How does he describe them? What result does each option produce in us?
 - a.
 - b.
3. Read Colossians 2:16-23. Why are so many people drawn to righteousness produced by observing rules and regulations? Why are they valueless?
4. Read Galatians 5:1-6. What climate is necessary for people to discover the righteousness that comes from faith? How did Paul use this with Philemon in Philemon 8-10?
5. Read Galatians 5:13-25. How, then does God produce righteousness in us? How does this approach fit with Ephesians 4:22-32:
6. Application
 - a. Where do rules of Christian conduct become legalism?
 - b. On the basis of these Scriptures, outline the approach we should take to overcoming sin in our own lives:

Hagar and Sarah

Assignment: Read Galatians 4:22-31. Here Paul likens the Galatians' approach to God to that of the children of Hagar. He then encourages them to be like the children of Sarah instead. Fill out the chart to contrast the two. Then, answer the questions below.

	Hagar	Sarah
What kind of woman was she?		
How did she produce her offspring?		
What kind of children did she have?		
Which covenant does she represent?		
What geographical place does this covenant correspond to?		
Did her son receive the inheritance of Abraham?		

1. Whose children are we to be?
2. What can the children of promise expect from children born the ordinary way?
3. How do we remain children of the promise?

The Nature of Church Life

Assignment: Explore how Paul lays out for the Ephesians and Colossians a definition for how the body of Christ lives out its mission. Answer the following questions.

1. What does Paul say in these books about the church's foundation?
2. Find every scripture reference in these books that refer to the church's head.
3. What does Paul say in these books about the church's mission?

Eph. 1:22-23

Eph. 2:19-20

Eph. 3:10

Col. 1:24-29

4. What does Paul say in these books about the church's leadership? Who are the church's leaders? What are their objectives?

5. What does Paul say in these books about the church's life together?

Eph. 5:18-21

Col. 3:12-17

Application: Where do these passages challenge you in your involvement with the body of Christ?

The Second Coming of Jesus

Assignment: Find out what Paul says about the Second Coming of Christ in 1 and 2 Thessalonians

Process:

1. In Part 1 list in order the events of the Second Coming as found in 1Thess 4:13-5:11 and 2 Thess. 2:1-12.
2. In Part 2 list the instructions Paul gives the Thessalonians about the Second Coming.

Part 1

Part 2

Who is Timothy?

Assignment: Learn all that you can about Timothy by reading the following Scriptures: Acts 16:1-5, Acts 17:14-15, Acts 18:5, Acts 19:21-22, 1 Cor 4:14-17, 1 Cor 16:10-11, Phil 2:19-24, 1 Thess 3:1-10, 1 Tim 1:1-4, 2 Tim 1:1-7. Now, answer the following questions.

1. What nationality was Timothy?
2. What heritage did he receive from his mother and grandmother?
3. Why did Paul choose to take him on his travels?
4. What churches did Timothy help Paul establish on his second missionary journey? Hint: scan Acts 16-18...
5. When and where did Paul and Timothy first split up?
6. When did they join up again?
7. Why was Timothy sent to Corinth, and how were they to receive him?
8. Describe Timothy's relationship with the Thessalonian Church?
9. Describe Timothy's relationship with the Philippian Church?
10. Why did he leave Timothy in Ephesus?
11. From all these readings, list the qualities of Timothy's life that made him such a helpful brother in working with various churches on Paul's behalf.

The Nature of False Teaching in the Early Church

Assignment: Find out what kinds of false teaching began to distract the early church and see if you can think of any modern-day counterparts.

1. Examine the following Scriptures:

I Timothy 1:3-7 I Timothy 4:1-5 I Timothy 6:3-10
II Timothy 3:1-9 II Timothy 2:18 Titus 1:10-11

2. In the first column list the false teachings Paul addresses. In the second, list any similar teachings that produce the same results in the church today:

The Early Church

The Church Today

Timothy's Challenges in Ministry

Assignment: I and II Timothy contain a lot of personal encouragement to this young friend of Paul's who was handling some major responsibilities. See if you can find out what kinds of things were troubling him about ministry.

1. Search these Scriptures:

I Timothy 1:18-19	I Timothy 4:11-16	I Timothy 5:21-25
I Timothy 6:20-21	II Timothy 1:3-8	II Timothy 1:13-14
II Timothy 2:1-7	II Timothy 3:10-17	II Timothy 4:11-5

2. In the first column list the struggle Timothy is having; and in the second column list the encouragement Paul gives him.

Challenge

Encouragement

3. Application: Which of Timothy's challenges are similar to what you face about God releasing your life in ministry.

Who is Titus?

Assignment: Learn all that you can about Titus from the following Scriptural references to him: 2 Cor 7:5-14, 2 Cor 8:6, 16-24, Galatians 2:1-3, Titus 1:4-5, 2 Tim 4:10. Now, answer the questions below.

1. What nationality was Titus?
2. Where did Titus and Paul most likely meet for the first time?
3. Where was Titus serving with Paul when he was first sent to Corinth?
4. How many trips did Titus make to Corinth?
5. List the various assignments Paul assigned to Titus in Corinth.
6. What was Titus assigned to do on Crete?
7. Where is the last place we know Titus was sent and where is it located?
8. From all the readings, list the qualities of Titus's life that made him such a useful brother in working with various churches on Paul's behalf.

The Lessons of Philemon

Assignment: Discover what the book of Philemon is all about. Answer the questions below:

1. The cast of characters.
 - a. Who was Onesimus and why was he with Paul?
 - b. Who was Philemon?
 - c. How did Paul get involved between them, and why was Onesimus going back?
2. What does Paul really want from Philemon?
3. List the tactics and arguments Paul uses to convince Philemon of his request.
4. What tactics did Paul specifically not use?
5. Do you think Philemon honored Paul's request? Why or why not?
6. What does this passage teach you about how you should treat another believer if you have a request of them?

Melchizedek and Jesus

Assignment: To study the symbolism and relationship between Jesus and Melchizedek in Hebrews 7.

Process:

1. Read Genesis 14:17-20. List everything we know about Melchizedek from this passage:
2. Read Psalm 110:4
3. List the comparisons the author of Hebrews makes between Melchizedek and Jesus in Hebrews 7:1-25.

Faith, Works, or Both?

Assignment: How do Romans 4 and James 2 compare regarding works and faith?

1. Read Romans 4:1-5 and 9-12. What conclusions does Paul make about the relationship between faith and works?
2. Read James 2:14-24. What conclusions does James make about the relationship between faith and works?
3. How does each use Abraham as an example of the point they are making?

Romans:

James:

4. How do these two passages *seem* to conflict?
5. What kind of works is Paul referring to in Romans?
6. What kind of actions does James address?
7. Describe a relationship between faith and works that applies the information from both passages together.

Encouragement to Sufferers

Assignment: Peter writes to believers who are caught in severe trials and persecutions for their faith. Examine what instructions and encouragements he gives to people in similar circumstances. Read I Peter 1:3-9; 3:13-22; 4:1-7; 4:12-19, and answer the following three questions:

1. What instructions does Peter give those who are suffering?
2. What encouragements does Peter give those who are suffering?
3. Which of those things listed above holds the most meaning for you concerning the situations you are facing right now?

The False Teachers of Peter & Jude

Assignment: Discover what kinds of false teaching distracted the early church.

1. Read II Peter 2 and Jude 3-19
2. In the columns below list the teachings, tactics, and judgments that Peter and Jude ascribe to these false teachers. Compare the illustrations they use concerning these teachers.

	PETER	JUDE
TEACHING		
TACTICS		
JUDGMENT		
ILLUSTRATIONS		

3. What is really at the heart of false teaching in the body of Christ?

We Know... Because

Assignment: Discover an overview I John.

1. Look up the verses in the first column. In the second column write down those things that John says we can be absolutely sure of. In column 3 write down the evidence that guarantees what we know. Finally, in the last column write down whether that evidence has to do with God's action or ours.

Reference	What do we know?	How do we know it?	Whose action?
2:3-5; 5:18			
2:20			
3:14			
3:16			
3:18-19			
3:24; 4:13			
5:2			

2. Look at your answers in column 3. What two words do you see repeated most often? What do you think that means?
3. Now look up verse 5:13. Summarize what the book of I John is all about:

The Letters to the Churches

Assignment: Research the letter to the church at Pergamum as a model for studying the other churches.

1. Read Revelation 2:12-17 and fill out the chart below. As an example, Ephesus is already done for you in the first column.

Question	Ephesus (2:1-7)	Pergamum (2:12-17)
How is Jesus revealed?	Caretaker of the church	
What are they commended for?	Their discernment for true and false ministries.	
What problem do they face?	They have left their first love.	
What do they need to do to correct the problem?	Repent and return to their calling.	
What does he promise to those who overcome?	They will have the abundance of his resurrection life.	
What is the theme of this letter?	Simplicity and Love	

2. Go ahead and fill out a similar study for all the churches in Revelation 2 and 3.

Who Are the 144,000?

Assignment: See if you can figure out who the 144,000 are in the book of Revelation.

1. Does John intend for us to take his list in Revelation 7 as the literal Israel? Below you'll find room for four lists of the Israelite tribes. The first is filled out for you. Look up the Scriptures and fill out the other three.

The sons of Jacob Genesis 49	Possessing Tribes Numbers 26	Post-exilic Tribes Ezekiel 48	? Revelation 7
Rueben			
Simeon			
Judah			
Zebulun			
Issachar			
Dan			
Gad			
Asher			
Naphtali			
Benjamin			
Joseph			
Levi			

2. What do you think counts for the discrepancies between these lists?
3. What could John be telling us about the 'Israel' he is referring to in Revelation 7?
4. If you have time, read Revelation 14:1-5. List the attributes in this passage credited to the 144,000.
5. Read Revelation 7:14-17. Do these sound like the same people?
6. Conclusion: Who are the 144,000?

A Want Ad for the Antichrist

Assignment: Fill out the following information on the Antichrist found in Revelation 13:1-18.

1. Name of Position Available:

2. Physical Description:

3. Answers to:

4. Duration of Job:

5. Qualifications

6. Medical History:

7. Speaking Ability:

8. Job Description:

9. Administrative Assistant:

10. Job Description of Assistant:

11. Personalized License Plate Number:

12. Method of Termination (19:19-20):

Who Is the Harlot of Babylon?

Assignment: Read Revelation 17 and 18 and answer the following questions about the harlot described in this passage.

1. Describe the nature of the woman that John saw by listing her attributes:

2. Answer the questions by reading the Scriptures indicated.

Does she represent last-day humanity (17:15)?

Does she represent business people of the day (18:11)?

Is she the devil (17:16)?

Does she represent the governments of this age (18:9)?

4. How are the saints to react to her (18:4)?

5. What does verse 17:18 mean?

6. Conclusion: So who do you think is the harlot of Babylon?