

# *The Church at Work*

## TEACHING NOTES

### KEY VERSES

Acts 5-7

### KEY THEMES

The Church: one body, many roles  
 Unity in the Church  
 Church growth through prayer and teaching



**God establishes His authority and power (Acts 5:1-16)**



**The Apostles' response to persecution (Acts 5:17-42)**



**Keeping their focus (Acts 6:1-7)**



**The Church: one body, many roles**

 **Unity in the Church** **Church growth through prayer and teaching****The importance of prayer** **More opposition to the Gospel (Acts 6:8-14)** **Stephen's approach to teaching (Acts 7:2-53)****Lesson Objective:**

*To see the early church functioning in unity and the significance of prayer and teaching in continued growth of the church – both in size and maturity.*

## PERSONAL STUDY

**This week’s Personal Study has been combined into one larger study. Feel free to break the study up over several days.**

### Prepare your heart and mind

Reading God’s Word is essential in the life of a Christ follower. God’s Word never changes and is as relevant today as it was 2000 years ago. Ask God for wisdom, understanding, and a desire to know Him more as you read His Word this week.

 **The Church: one body, many roles**

 **Church growth through prayer and teaching**

 **Unity in the Church**

Keep these themes in mind as you read Acts 5-7. When you see these themes in the text, circle them.

 **Read Acts 5-7**

After you’ve read through these three chapters, complete the following charts. It may be helpful to read the chapters again while you go through it.

### Where do you see unity in the early Church and how it worked together?

Scripture reference	When/where did this happen?	What was happening?	What was the result?
Acts 5:12-15	At the temple (Solomon’s Colonnade)	Believers are meeting regularly. Apostles are performing miraculous signs and wonders.	Highly regarded by the people and people were added to their numbers daily.

**Where do you see the power and role of prayer?**

Scripture reference	When did this happen?	Who was there?	What was the result?

**Where do you see teaching and sharing the message of the Good News taking place?**

Scripture reference	Where did this happen?	Who was teaching/sharing and who was there?	What was the result?

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**Key verse**

Put to memory Acts 5:20b.

*“...give the people this message of life!”*

**Prayer time**

Thank God for His Word and how it teaches us to share the message of life. Tell God your struggles when it comes to sharing the Good News to those around you. Ask God to give you wisdom and courage and to help build your life on His Word.

## PARENT GUIDE

In this week's study, we are learning how prayer was a priority for the first church. *All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to the fellowship, and to the sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer.* (Acts 2:42)

They prayed for boldness, power to heal, and to speak with wisdom. As you read through Acts 5-7, you see how God answered their prayers through the power of the Holy Spirit. Ordinary people spoke with authority, healed the sick, and, though persecuted, did not back down from preaching the Gospel.

We are ordinary people just like the first believers. Why should parents pray for their children? We can pray for wisdom when it comes to raising our children and boldness in sharing our faith with them. Prayer is a powerful tool! *The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results.* (James 5:16b) When we go to the Lord in prayer on behalf of our children, we are putting our faith and trust in the Lord that He knows what is best for them.

### Prayer time

Spend some time in prayer using the prompts below. Feel free to write out your prayers in the space provided.

Ask God to give you wisdom and guide you as a parent.

Pray for your children to respond to God's plans and purposes with faith.

Spend time thanking the Lord for each one of your children.

**OPTIONAL STUDY**

Why do we as Christians pray? This is a question that has crossed most of our minds at one time or another. To answer this question we must understand who God is and who we are as His children. We have established during this study that God is the creator of the heavens and universe and therefore our owner. The title of Creator also means that creation was made for His purposes and plans. God alone has the plan for the nations, the Church and for you. This is why Jesus said in John 15:5, *“Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing.”* Because God is owner there is an inherent dependence on Him by His children for both purpose and power.

John 1:12 says that, *But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God.* Because of our faith, the Father has given us the privilege of adoption into His family. As family members, *Now all of us can come to the Father through the same Holy Spirit because of what Christ has done for us.* (Ephesians 2:18) Because of Jesus our high priest, Hebrews 4:16 says, *So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most.* So we see that God has created us for dependence on Him. Prayer is a reflection of that dependence and privilege we have as His children, made possible by the Spirit.

**Read Luke 11:1-4**

How should we pray?

**Read Luke 18:1-8**

How should we pray?

**Read James 5:13-18**

How should we pray?

Prayer is one of the greatest and most powerful blessings that we as believers have been given by God. We have been given access into the very Holy of Holies, the presence of God, by the blood of Jesus, and prayer is the way we communicate with Him. Not only does prayer satisfy a need in us, but the Lord is also pleased when the saints cry out. In the book of Revelation John gets an inside look at the throne room of the living God. Revelation 5:8 says, *And when he took the scroll, the four living beings and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp, and they held gold bowls filled with incense, which are the prayers of God's people.* Our prayers are sweet smelling incense and a blessing to the King. Do not believe the lie that your prayers are falling on deaf ears, but heed the encouragement of the apostle to *Never stop praying.* (1 Thessalonians 5:17)