

## LUKE'S RECORD OF THE FIRST DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

### Introduction

“The design of Luke in writing Acts was to supply... an illustration of the power and workings of that religion which Jesus died to establish” (J.W. McGarvey, Acts Commentary).

1. The book of Acts records the fulfillment of Jesus' commission to the apostles, i.e., to preach the gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15-16).
2. In this brief lesson we shall take a look at what Luke records about those who first heard and obeyed the gospel.

### 1. THE CONVERTED CHARACTER OF THE DISCIPLES

- a. Humble in serving the Lord. One way in which this humility was expressed was in giving glory to God when miracles were worked through them (Acts 3:12-13; 20:19).
- b. Sacrificial in providing for needy brethren (Acts 2:44). Notice their attitude toward their possessions: "... and not one of them claimed that anything which he possessed was [exclusively] his own" (Acts 4:34-37).
- c. Bold and courageous in proclaiming the gospel despite the threats of the Jews (Acts 4:18-20, 23-31; 5:18-21; 9:28-29; 13:45-46; 14:2-3; 18:26; 19:8).
- d. Willing to suffer for obeying God and serving the Lord and Savior (Acts 5:29-42).

### 2. RELIANCE ON GOD THE FATHER, SON AND HOLY SPIRIT (Acts 9:31, 14:3, 23).

- a. Prayerful to God at all times; they were devoted to prayers (Acts 2:42; 4:23-31; 6:4; 12:5-12; 13:1-2; 20:36; 21:5).
- b. Devoted to the study of God's word (Acts 2:42; 11:26; 16:4-5).
- c. Reliance on God's grace (Acts 14:26; 15:40; 20:32).
- d. Credit is given to God for success (Acts 11:28; 14:27; 15:4; 21:19).

### 3. THE ATTRACTIVE EXAMPLE OF DEDICATED DISCIPLES HAD A POWERFUL INFLUENCE

- a. Their joyful worship and sacrificial love brought them into favor with all the people (Acts 2:44-47).
- b. God is holy and demands that His people be Holy (Acts 5:9-14). Commenting on the death of Ananias and Sapphira, the Pulpit Commentary says, "The awful death of the two liars to God not only struck a salutary fear into the minds of the whole Church, but filled with awe all outside the Church who heard of it; and doubtless gave a temporary check to the persecutions, while it disposed many to hearken to the apostles' preaching".
- c. The people glorified God when they witnessed miracles (Acts 4:21).

### Conclusion

1. The disciples of the first century had character, they relied on God, and they adorned the doctrine of God.
2. Are Christians today like those disciples? Are you like those disciples?