

The Book of Acts

The Gospel, the Romans, the Jews

Interpreting the Text:

1. Now that you have worked through all of Acts, how would you evaluate the various examples of Paul's rhetoric? Do his speeches in Acts reflect what you know of Paul? Do they offer models of how contemporary Christians might address problems confronting the Church today?
2. By now you have read a good deal about the apologetic dimensions of Acts, particularly its stance toward the Roman empire. Having weighed all the elements, how would you characterize that stance? Do you think it offers a model of how Christians should relate to our contemporary political environment? If not, why not? Do other scriptural texts play a role in your answer to the question?
3. How does Luke's portrayal of Paul in Acts differ from what we learn about Paul from his own writing contained in the New Testament Epistles? What objective might Luke have for how he is portraying Paul?

Applying the Text:

1. Professors Attridge and Bartlett propose that the omission of Paul's death at the end of Acts demonstrates Luke's preference to focus on hope. Do you agree that one of the authors primary themes throughout the book is hope? How can you use the Acts of the Apostles as a teaching on hope in your own church communities?
2. Peter and Paul, both featured prominently in Acts, are considered the builders of the Christian church. Having spent time with this book, how has your relationship to one or both figures changed? Do you see the shape of the modern church differently now?