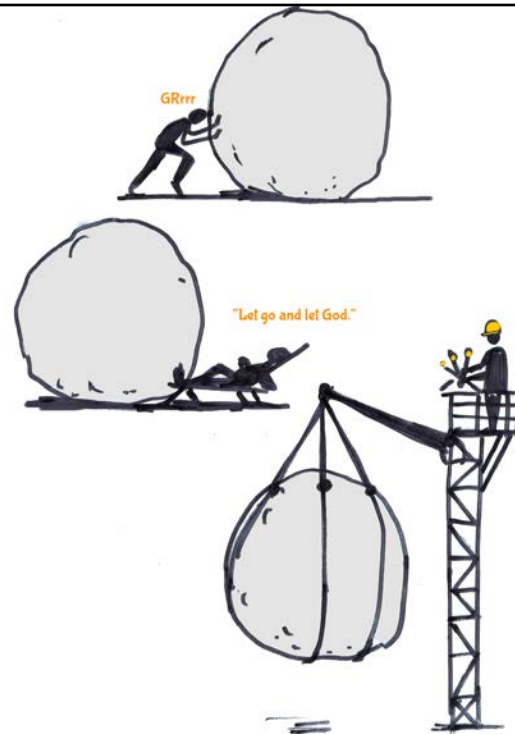


Division of Labor

- What does “Division of Labor” mean?
 - Divide a task into pieces,
and different people do different parts
- What are some examples?
- What can be good about it?
- What can be bad about it?
- How does it apply to God and us?
 - How might we get it wrong?

God at Work **Acts 9:31-43**

Chinese: page 1781
 Spanish: page 1398
 Brown: page 1101
 Green: page 750



The Book of Acts

- Written for early churches
 - And us too
- Description of the growth of the church
 - To teach us

Acts 9:31-43

31: Summary: Church enjoys peace and growth

32-34: • Living in the fear of the Lord (Jesus as God)

35: • Encouragement/exhortation of Holy Spirit

36-38: • What did this look like?

39-41:

42-43:

Chinese: page 1781

Spanish: page 1398

Brown: page 1101

Green: page 750

Acts 9:31-43

31: Summary: Church enjoys peace and growth

32-34:

35:

36-38:

39-41:

42-43:

Peter's ministry travels

- Was a fisherman from Galilee (north)
- Came to Jerusalem with Jesus
- Jesus told disciples to stay in Jerusalem after resurrection
- Jerusalem became the home base for the church
- Peter & John went to Samaria to meet new Christians
- Peter met with Saul in Jerusalem
- Now Peter goes to the west



Acts 9:31-43

31: Summary: Church enjoys peace and growth

32-34: Jesus heals paralyzed Aeneas through Peter

35: • Perhaps visiting new Christians (following Philip?)

36-38: • Lydda & Joppa: Jewish towns in Gentile region

39-41: • Aeneas: seems to be Greek-speaking Jew

42-43: • A Christian?

• Jesus' work at Peter's declaration

Acts 9:31-43

31: Summary: Church enjoys peace and growth

32-34: Jesus heals paralyzed Aeneas through Peter

35: Many people turn to Jesus

36-38: • People turn to Jesus, not to Peter

39-41: • Church is growing away from Jerusalem and the

42-43: temple

• Belief is growing in Gentile areas

Acts 9:31-43

31: Summary: Church enjoys peace and growth

32-34: Jesus heals paralyzed Aeneas through Peter

35: Many people turn to Jesus

36-38: Tabitha (Christian, good deeds) dies; people call Peter

39-41: • Fits with Saul arresting women too

42-43: • Her faith led her to help the poor

- She is highly honored (Aeneas was not)

- What do they want Peter to do?

- 3-4 hour walk to get Peter

- Burial may have come later that day

- They feared Peter wouldn't come (2 witnesses)

Acts 9:31-43

31: Summary: Church enjoys peace and growth

32-34: Jesus heals paralyzed Aeneas through Peter

35: Many people turn to Jesus

36-38: Tabitha (Christian, good deeds) dies; people call Peter

39-41: Jesus raises Tabitha to life through Peter

42-43: • Tabitha's significant ministry to widows is stated again

- Prayer expressed dependence upon God

- Specific words are not the point

- Rather: faith, and God's power and will

- Amazing!

Acts 9:31-43

31: Summary: Church enjoys peace and growth

32-34: Jesus heals paralyzed Aeneas through Peter

35: Many people turn to Jesus

36-38: Tabitha (Christian, good deeds) dies; people call Peter

39-41: Jesus raises Tabitha to life through Peter

42-43: Many more people believe in Jesus

- Good for this news to travel, bringing more belief
- Peter stays: maybe to help new believers grow
- Peter stays with a tanner (not liked by Jews or Gentiles, often “unclean”) → foreshadow

tanner = turn dead animal skins into leather

The Big Idea

**The church grows
and lives are transformed
by God’s work
through God’s people**

- There is a rich integration of God's work and human actions

“Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always **obeyed**—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to **work out your salvation with fear and trembling**, for it is **God who works in you to will and to act** in order **to fulfill his good purpose.**”

Philippians 2:12-13



The Big Idea

**The church grows
and lives are transformed
by God's work
through God's people**

Application

- **Re-see God's work and our work as a rich integration of human responsibility and God's sovereign action**
 - Tabitha was the hands of Jesus to meet the needs of widows
 - Peter and believers joined by faith in the work of resurrection
 - We are not God!
 - Only He can raise a body or soul to life, or build the church
 - In God, we have power and authority
 - “When Jesus had called the Twelve together, **he gave them power and authority**...and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.” *Luke 9:1-2*
 - “**You will receive power** when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses...” *Acts 1:8*

Application

- **Re-see God's work and our work as a rich integration of human responsibility and God's sovereign action**
- **Take the risk of taking action**
 - Head: when we can't reason it out
 - Heart: when our souls are running dry
 - Hands: when our strength is gone/our actions seem pointless
 - Our actions
 - Pray in faith → it is powerful, bringing God's actions
 - Obey in head, heart, and hands: miraculous & mundane
 - With seriousness (fear and trembling) and hope
 - God's work includes our work
 - Yet is not dependent upon our power or perfection

Application

- **Re-see God's work and our work as a rich integration of human responsibility and God's sovereign action**
- **Take the risk of taking action**
- **Expect and recognize the work of God by faith**
 - Ask / Seek / Knock → and God will work (in His ways)
 - Give praise to God, even when we see the direct means
 - Give thanks to people as God's instruments by faith
 - Some temptations we might face
 - Putting faith in people instead of God
 - Taking pride in people (or selves) instead of God
 - Focusing on limitations of people (us and others)

The Big Idea

**The church grows
and lives are transformed
by God's work
through God's people**

**Pray and act as people through whom God works
May our actions be an expression of God's power and will**

- **Where do you need to see God work today?**