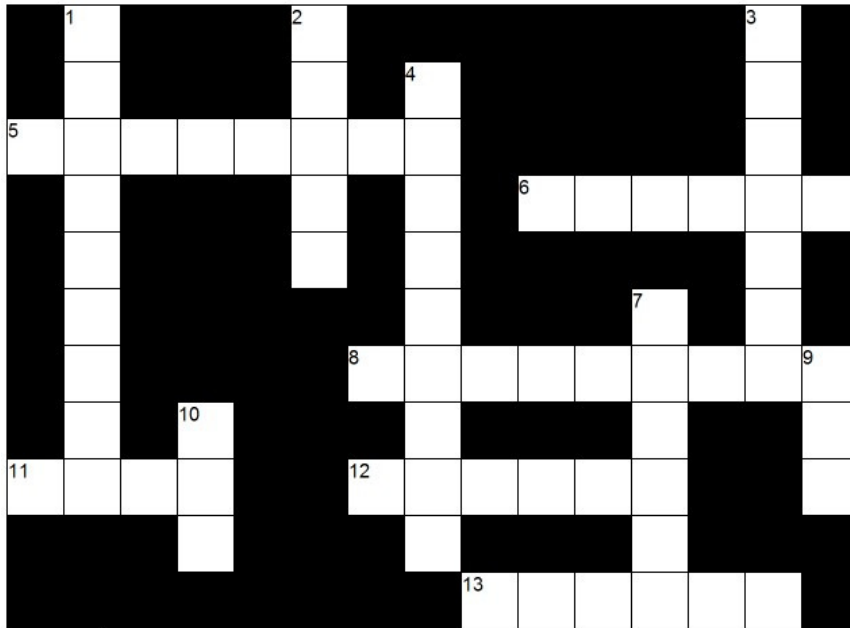


A Bible Crossword: The Book Of Acts, Part 13

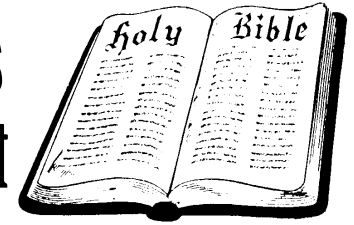


Across: 5. The wife of Felix. 6. Festus and Agrippa agreed that Paul had done nothing worthy of death or these. 8. The Jews asked Festus to summon Paul to this city; they planned to ambush Paul on the way. 11. Paul noted that the Jews from this province, who had stirred up the Jerusalem riot, weren't present at his trial. 12. Porcius _____. The second governor to hear Paul's defense. 13. The language Jesus used to speak to Paul on the road to Damascus.

Down: 1. The orator who spoke against Paul. 2. The first governor to hear Paul's defense. 3. She came with Agrippa to meet Festus. 4. The Jews called Christians members of the sect of these, referencing Jesus' hometown. 7. The one to whom Paul appealed to escape ambush. 9. What Festus thought much learning had driven Paul. 10. In response to the statement that Christianity was a sect, Paul used this travel term to describe Christianity.

—All answers can be found in Acts 24-26, NKJV.

Chapman Acres Church of Christ



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Lost, Found, Arrested

After becoming disoriented and lost while hunting in Cheboygan, Michigan, Howard Keshick called for help on his cell phone. Despite high winds and driving snow, police and a Coast Guard helicopter flew in to the rescue. Unfortunately for Keshick, the authorities discovered he was a convicted felon, already scheduled for sentencing on February 3rd for previous criminal charged. They arrested him for illegal possession of a firearm. He was lost, found, and arrested.

We don't typically associate being lost with being guilty of something. Those who become lost are unfortunate, but the worst thing for which they are guilty is a poor sense of direction. In Scriptural terms, however, the experience of being lost is more like Keshick's—we are lost and guilty. Moreover, our guilt, our sin, is the very reason we are lost.

Isaiah spoke of our sin and our redeemer, saying, "All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (53:6).

We are lost, wandering in sin, but we have a Savior who came to find us. Peter says, "For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls" (1 Peter 2:25). If we will return to Him, we can be forgiven and found.

—RAB

The Blackheaded Gull

In the 2003 film *Finding Nemo*, Pixar represented the seagull as the epitome of selfishness. While they gave the majority of the wildlife extensive vocabularies, the seagulls uttered only one word. Over and over again, they said, “Mine, mine, mine...” Pixar’s view of seagulls is not without some scientific foundation.

I recently read a rather disturbing description of the behavior of Blackheaded gulls. They nest in large colonies, the nests being only a few feet apart. When the chicks first hatch, they are small and defenseless. Hungry adult gulls will wait until a neighboring gull’s back is turned, perhaps while it is away fishing, and then pounce on one of the neighbor’s chicks, swallowing it whole. They are thus able to get a good, nutritious meal without having to go to the trouble of fishing or leaving their own nests unprotected.

Clearly, these gulls, devourers of one another’s young, lack much of a sense of community. To gain personal fulfillment, they happily prey upon one another.

Does this description sound vaguely similar to what goes on within some congregations?

In Romans 12:4-5, Paul told the Romans, “For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.”

To the church at Philippi, he said, “Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others” (Philippians 2:3-4).

Paul attested to the fact that some Christians pursue selfish ambition within the church. He warned the Galatians, “For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another....But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!” (Galatians 5:13, 15).

After setting a little child in the midst of the disciples, Jesus said, “Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven....But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea” (Matthew 18:3-4, 6).

I believe that the warning Jesus gave them applies to both the physically and spiritually young. Those new in Christ are like babes just beginning to grow (1 Peter 2:2). God commanded the establishments of local congregations to provide an environment of love and edification, an assembly we are commanded not to forsake (Hebrews 10:24-25).

Selfish ambitions, divisions, and heresies divide churches, discouraging and sometimes devouring the young in the faith. We have to do better, be better. We don’t want to be found guilty of mimicking the distressing, predatory behavior of seagulls.

—RAB

Prayer List

Keith Copeland	Herman McKenzie	Faye Seiler
Dennis Depew	Louise Moore	Gene Shannon
David Depew	Sara Nance	James Howard