

An overview of the New Testament

Acts, part 1

Introduction – Whose acts are they?

- Read Acts 1:1,2. The *first book* mentioned in verse 1 refers to what? _____
- How does Luke describe the contents of that former book?
- What, then, is he indicating will be the contents of this second volume?

Traditionally, this book has been called “The Acts of the Apostles.” A more fitting title would be “The Acts of Jesus and the Holy Spirit.”

Key aspects of Luke’s book

Birth of the Church	Growth of the Church	Scattering of the Church	Extension of the Church	First Missionary Journey	Second Missionary Journey	Third Missionary Journey	Arrest in Jerusalem	Trials in Caesarea	Arrival in Rome
1	2 3 7	8 9 10 12		13 15:35	15:36 18:22	18:23 21:26	21:27 23	24 26	27 28
Triumph		Transition		Travels			Trials		
“Jerusalem”		“Judea & Samaria”		“To the ends of the earth”					
Jews		Jews and Samaritans		Gentiles					
Peter		Philip, Peter, Paul		Paul					
2 Years (30-32 AD)		14 Years (32-47 AD)		14 Years (47-61 AD)					

Background and contents

Author (review)

- Luke was a _____ (occupation) who was a _____ (ethnicity) believer.
- Luke was a faithful companion of the apostle _____.
- Luke possibly wrote his two-volume Gospel from _____ in _____ A.D. and wrote with _____ as his primary audience.

Theme and outline

A good theme for Acts is verse 8 in chapter 1: "You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Luke outlined his book around six summary statements, each marking the progress of the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem to Rome.

- Act I: The Word of the Lord grows in Jerusalem (1:12-6:7).
- Act II: The Word of the Lord triumphs over persecution; it spreads (6:8-9:31).
- Act III: The Word of the Lord is also for the Gentiles (9:32-12:24).
- Act IV: The Word of the Lord spreads, uniting Jews and Gentiles (12:25-16:5).
- Act V: The Word of the Lord triumphs in Macedonia, Achaia, and Asia (16:6-19:20).
- Act VI: The Word of the Lord goes before rulers and authorities (19:21-28:31).

Act I – The Word of the Lord grows in Jerusalem

Pentecost – the church is born

- Acts 2:17. During the period of time known as the _____, the member of the Trinity whose work would take center stage is the _____.
- Acts 2:38. One of the tools used by that person to carry out his work would be _____, through which people (including _____) receive _____ and _____.

The church blossoms

- Acts 2:42, 4:33. In the newly-born church, the Christians fed on a steady diet of _____.
- Acts 2:45, 4:32. The believers were perfectly united, not only in their _____, but also in sharing their _____ with one another.

Tension within the church

- Acts 5:1ff. Just like today, the young church had _____, people that said one thing but did another.
- Acts 6:1ff. As the church grew, seven men were appointed to handle certain issues so that the apostles could focus on _____.

Opposition from outside the church

- Acts 4:12. In spite of persecution, the apostles boldly testified that Jesus _____.
- Acts 5:29. Due to ongoing opposition from the Sanhedrin, the apostles were forced to obey _____ rather than _____.

Act II – The Word of the Lord triumphs over persecution; it spreads.

Stephen's speech

- Acts 7:51,52. Stephen delivered a lengthy speech to the Sanhedrin, in which he condemned the people for _____.
- Acts 7:60. Stephen's speech resulted in him being the first Christian _____.

Persecution and the scattering church

- Acts 7:58. A young man named _____ was working coat check at Stephen's death.
- Acts 8:1. The persecution that broke out after Stephen's stoning caused Christians to scatter throughout _____ and _____.

The ministry of Philip

- Acts 8:9-13. Philip preached to a man named _____ in Samaria.
- Acts 8:26-40. At the direction of God, Philip preached to the _____ in Judea.

Paul's conversion

- Acts 9:1-5. While on the road to _____, Saul was stopped in his tracks when _____ appeared to him.
- Acts 9:19,26,30. Paul preached in _____, then _____, and then was sent to _____, after which the church enjoyed a time of peace.

Act III – The Word of the Lord is also for the Gentiles

Peter and Cornelius: buildup and vision

- Acts 9:36ff. Before summoned by Cornelius, Peter was in _____, where he had raised a woman named _____ from the dead.
- Acts 10:9ff. Peter received a vision in which he was taught that nothing God made was to be considered _____.

Peter and Cornelius: visit and aftermath

- Acts 10:19-24,44-48. Peter visited the home of a centurion in _____. The Holy Spirit came on him and his household, surprising the disciples because they were _____.
- Acts 11:1-4. Peter recounted all that had happened because he had to explain his actions to the Christians in _____.

The church in Antioch

- Acts 11:19-21. At first the church in Antioch was primarily _____, but later expanded to also include _____.
- Acts 11:25,26. _____ and _____ preached for a year in Antioch, where the believers were first called _____.

Peter in prison

- Acts 12:2. The only time the apostle _____, the brother of John, is mentioned in Acts is to report the news of his _____ at the hands of Herod.
- Acts 12:12,17. After escaping prison, Peter went to the home of _____ and asked that news of his escape be delivered to _____.

Your homework

For next time...

1. Review the books of the Bible you memorized – Matthew through Revelation.
2. Mark the beginning and end of Acts I, II, and III in your Bible, along with their headings.
3. Read Acts 12:25-28:31, looking for the distinctive themes of Acts IV, V, and VI.