

## Acts of The Apostles

Luke wrote both the Gospel of Luke and Acts of the Apostles. Many, if not all, ancient authorities agree that Luke wrote this book probably as a continuation of the Gospel of Luke. Acts is the history of the church.

There are many examples of how God adds obedient people of all nations, races and gender to His Body. It also reflects the difficulty of people letting go of past prejudices, of man's desire for exclusiveness and of problems with desire for power, pride and wealth.

Luke in the book of Acts furnishes us with many examples of eyewitness statements, confirmed by signs and miracles and acknowledgment by men. God also stated that Jesus is The Son of God.

Jesus willingly gave his life as the only sacrifice needed for forgiveness of sins for those obedient to His message. As you study Acts ask God to help you to keep your mind open so you will obtain a clear understanding of His Word.

### Studies from Acts of the Apostles:

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### Church Established in Jerusalem

**Setting:** Fifty days had past since Christ's resurrection. He had ascended back into Heaven to be with the Father. His disciples were in Jerusalem as he had instructed. It was also Pentecost day.

**Text:** Acts 1 - 5:16

**Key Point:** Christ had ascended back to Heaven. Those who believed and obeyed continued in the apostles teaching, in fellowship with other obedient believers, eating together as one and in prayer.

### **Word Study:**

2:2 Tongues - little flames symbolizing the gift of foreign languages. Tongues is from the Greek word *glossa* meaning the language used by a particular people in distinction from that of other nations:(from Thayer's Greek Lexicon by BibleSoft)

2:13 Too much wine - sweet grape juice, highly inebriating

2:36 Lord - one having power or authority

2:36 Christ - anointed one, the Messiah, the Savior

2:38 In the name of - a) by one's authority, into the power or ownership; b) Thayer: "by one's command and authority, acting on his behalf, promoting his cause"; c) Pulpit Commentary: "into the power ... influence ... faith ... family of"; d) International Critical Commentary: "by way of consecration to" and e) W. F. Flemington: "into the ownership of"

2:38 Baptize - to cleanse by submerging into the death of Christ - thus to make clean with water. A related study Baptism Into Christ, BibleWay Publishing

### **Church Persecuted**

**Setting:** At this time only Jews were given the opportunity to hear the Gospel. The Christians met in the synagogues and still practiced many of the rites and traditions of the Law. But Jewish leaders were becoming concerned.

**Text:** Acts 5:17 - 8:3

**Key Point:** Wherever, in public places or in homes, they continually proclaimed the Good News that Jesus was the Anointed one, the Christ.

### **Church Established in Judea**

**Setting:** Persecution by the leaders of the Jews of those following Christ caused the Christians to move out of Jerusalem. This action is exactly what Jesus had stated. They were to go to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the utter most parts of the earth (Acts 1:8).

**Text:** Acts 8:4 - 9

**Key Point:** Whenever Christians' sin they must be made aware if it, be sorrowful for their action, desire for forgiveness not wanting to repeat and then plead through prayer for God's forgiveness.

### **Church Opened to Gentiles**

**Setting:** Peter was in Joppa staying with a tanner named Simon. God used a vision of eating unclean animals and the Spirit falling upon Cornelius as it had done to them to convince Peter that the Gospel was intended for all man.

**Text:** Acts 10 - 12

**Key Point:** God is not a respecter of people, neither gender or race, but wishes everyone to become his disciple by obedience to Christ's message.

### **Church Established Outside Judea**

**Setting:** The Church in Antioch on the east coast of the Mediterranean Sea in northern Syria, now in southern Turkey, had grown rapidly accepting Jew and Gentile. Barnabus was teaching there and went to Tarsus to get Paul. They taught there until the Holy Spirit sent them to "the uttermost parts of the earth."

**Text:** Acts 13 - 14

**Key Point:** There is work, a body function, to be done if the body is to remain healthy and reproduce. Each Christian must perform his function for the body to be accomplishing the Father's will.

### **Attempts to Judaize the Church**

**Setting:** It was difficult for the Jews to let go of the traditions of their Law and to accept the fact that it had been fulfilled being replaced by a new covenant based upon faith rather than works. Some Christian Jews from Jerusalem went to Antioch teaching this false doctrine.

**Text:** Acts 15 - 16.5

**Key Point:** There are no requirements outside the Gospel that must be followed. Therefore, observance of the Law is not necessary.

### **Short Term Missionary Efforts**

**Setting:** Luke provides examples of people in many Gentile cities believing and accepting Christ by being immersed into Him after hearing the Gospel message.

**Text:** Acts 16.6 - 17

**Key Point:** Teach Christ always. Those who desire to know the truth will hear. Those who have faith enough to believe will obey leading to baptism such as Lydia and the jailer

### **Long Term Missionary Efforts**

**Setting:** Paul stayed in Corinth one and one-half years and in Ephesus over two years. Eventually riots broke out so Paul left to teach the crucified Christ in other cities, always desiring to teach anyone who would listen.

**Text:** Acts 18 - 20

**Key Point:** The message of Christ must be preached even when the hearers reject the message because of jealousy, pride or desire for wealth, power and prestige.

### **Trouble in Jerusalem**

**Setting:** Jews jealous of their Law and traditions and relying on “our father Abraham” did everything they could, including violation of their own religion. They rioted without knowing why, resulting in Paul’s arrest by the Romans.

**Text:** Acts 21 - 23

**Key Point:** Prejudice must be overcome before anyone can hear. It takes an open mind desiring to know the truth and to please God.

### **Paul's Trial**

**Setting:** Paul was falsely accused by the leaders of the Jews and was held in prison in Caesarea. However, God provided an audience of Kings and Governors for Paul to proclaim the Gospel, His message of redemption.

**Text:** Acts 24 - 26

**Key Point:** Paul preached about the resurrection, righteousness, self-control, the judgment to come and his hope for eternal life.

### **Finally, on to Rome**

**Setting:** Roman governors and kings found no fault in the charges against Paul but refused to free him so he appealed to Caesar. As a prisoner for Christ, Paul sets sail for Rome under Roman guard. Along the way he continues to proclaim Christ amid ship wreck, a winter’s delay in Malta.

**Text:** Acts 27 - 28

**Key Point:** When a Christian desires to please God, God’s means and method may be considered unusual as He accomplishes His will. Paul was finally allowed to go to Rome to edify and encourage the saints and impart spiritual gifts. He as always taught any who would listen.