

A LOOK AT THE BOOK | FROM RESURRECTION TO PENTECOST

Title—“The Acts of the Apostles” → “The Acts of the Holy Spirit”

Author—5 reasons to believe that _____ wrote the book:

1. The writer traveled with Paul on some missionary trips; several “we” passages.
2. The books of Luke and Acts are written to the same person: Theophilus.

Luke 1: 1-4: Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, ² just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. ³ With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, ⁴ so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.

Acts 1:1-2: In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach² until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen.

Who was Theophilus? A Roman official of high rank, a personal friend whom Luke could count on to read the book and then have copies made and circulated.

Theo = _____ *Philus* = _____

“One who loves God”—that’s us!

3. The writer was not an apostle. He was eyewitness to Christ's ministry on earth. He was a physician.
4. Scholars believe that Luke and Acts were two parts of one volume.
5. Luke and Acts are organized alike.

Date written—around AD 63. It gives us a history of the first thirty years of the Church. It contains just a fraction of everything that happened in the Early Church.

What's So Important About Acts?

_____—Acts serves as a bridge between the Gospels and the rest of the New Testament. Most all of the books thereafter are letters written during the time that the events of ACTS were happening.

Records _____—Traces the growth of the Church from Jerusalem to Rome.

Guide for _____—It gives us guidance in what we, as the Church, should believe and do.

Guide for _____—It defends Christianity, and answers questions that government leaders would ask.

Emphasis on _____—He is the KEY to BEING witnesses for Jesus. He works through us.

How is the Book Structured?

We can outline it three different ways:

1. Geographically

Acts 1:8, "You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Jerusalem	Ch. 1-7
Judea & Samaria	Ch. 8-12
The whole earth	Ch. 13-28

2. Peter and Paul

Peter—Ch. 1-12	mainly to the Jews
Paul—Ch. 13-28	mainly to the Gentiles

3. Messages

Luke recorded at least 24 different messages.

Luke began Acts with the ascension and final words of Jesus. This is right where He left off in his gospel. (*Check it out at Luke 24:45-53*).

⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. ⁴⁶ He told them, "This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹ I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."

⁵⁰ When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. ⁵¹ While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven. ⁵² Then they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. ⁵³ And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.

Before He walked up to the top of the Mount of Olives, He gave them a command in Acts 1:4.

On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about.

This was a promise that had been given more than four hundred years earlier in Joel 2:28-29.

*"And afterward,
I will pour out my Spirit on all people.
Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
your old men will dream dreams,
your young men will see visions.
²⁹ Even on my servants, both men and women,
I will pour out my Spirit in those days.*

Jesus makes 2 COMMANDS.

_____—be witnesses

_____—for the power of the Holy Spirit

Why is this so important?

1. The task is bigger than we are. ALL of us need to be filled with the Spirit.
2. The task is too hard to accomplish without the Spirit's power.
3. The task is not yet finished.

At least 7 times in Luke and Acts, Luke referred to the baptism in the Spirit as being given by the Father. Luke sometimes referred to this inner filling as being baptized in the Spirit (1:5). This baptism is an immersion in the Holy Spirit.

A person is baptized in water on the outside of his or her body.
The baptism in the Spirit happens inside the believer.

We are to _____ witnesses. What do witnesses in a court do?

Jesus left the Mt. of Olives in a cloud—the same kind of Shekinah glory that filled the temple. He'll return in a cloud.

Meanwhile, we have a job to do.

4 Ingredients necessary to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit (and to continue walking in the Holy Spirit):

1. _____. Throughout scripture, we see that blessing follows obedience.
2. _____. The 120 in the Upper Room had 10 days together between the Ascension and Pentecost. If they spent an average of sixteen waking hours a day together, the total hours for the ten days amounted to 160 hours. That is the equivalent of nearly three years of Sunday morning worship services.
3. _____. Praying constantly should be a way of life for believers. This type of prayer includes talking to and listening to God. When we develop lives of constant prayerfulness, we open the door to a fresh move of God.
4. _____ **and application of Scriptures.** As believers, we base our faith on the Bible, placing the Scriptures on a level above humans. *2 Timothy 3:16, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness."*

ACTS 2

Day of Pentecost is one of Israel's 7 major feasts. It's related to the wheat harvest. The Day of Pentecost is related to the spiritual harvest. Jesus said, *"The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field"* (Luke 10:2).

One of the things we must do when reading Acts is distinguish between unique events not intended to be patterns for the church...and events that should be repeated over and over. We call these "normative" (normal) and "descriptive" (unique), seem to have been needed only once.

DESCRIPTIVE SIGNS

Acts 2:1-3

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. ² Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them.

The sound was loud enough to attract the attention of crowds that filled Jerusalem. It was just the sound of a tornado. It reminds us of:

- Job's windstorm
- The mighty wind that dried up the Red Sea
- The wind was a frequent symbol of the Spirit in the OT

Tongues of fire

- Moses' burning bush
- Lord's appearance on Mt. Sinai when the covenant was given
- Fire of God burning up Elijah's sacrifice on Mt. Carmel
- Tongues indicate speech
- Fire signified God's acceptance—not judgment

NORMATIVE SIGN—tongues

Acts 2:4, All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

Notice the word “began.” It shows that, as in Acts 1:1 (Jesus began to do things), that which was begun was to continue.

The initial Day of Pentecost is somewhat unique, yet the baptism in the Holy Spirit is not given once for all. The text of Acts shows the baptism in the Holy Spirit to be available to all believers.

Acts 2:17, “In the last days...I will pour out my Spirit on all people.”

Acts 2:38-39, “You will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off.”

Responses to Pentecost

1. **Bewildered** _____
2. **Utter** _____
3. _____
4. **Unified** _____

Peter preached from book of Joel and pointed people to Jesus. 3,000 came to salvation that day.

Speaking in Tongues

Here are some points to think about:

- 1 Corinthians 12 outlines the gifts that the Holy Spirit gives and speaking in tongues is one of them.
- Speaking in tongues is a regular means of personal prayer. Inspired by the Spirit, such prayer *edifies* or builds up the believer who prays.
- Praying in tongues releases the human spirit to fully express itself to God.
- Speaking in tongues is adoring God. It is the closest we can get to the deepest kind of love toward God. Comparable to “hugging” Him.

HOMEWORK:

1. Did I already receive the Holy Spirit when I was born again?
2. Why do we need to experience Spirit baptism if we already have the Holy Spirit?
3. Does the New Testament teach there is only one baptism?
4. Why did God link speaking in a new language to being filled with the Holy Spirit?
5. Are spiritual things like healings, miracles, and speaking in a new language for today?