

THE ART OF BEING

UNORDINARY



HOW GOD CALLS US TO BREAK THE MOLD
STUDY OF THE BOOK OF ACTS



Summary



Context

- Acts best understood as the sequel to Gospel of Luke
- Key Theme
 - Empowering testimony of commissioned disciples
 - Ability to carry out this mission empowered by the presence of the Holy Spirit.

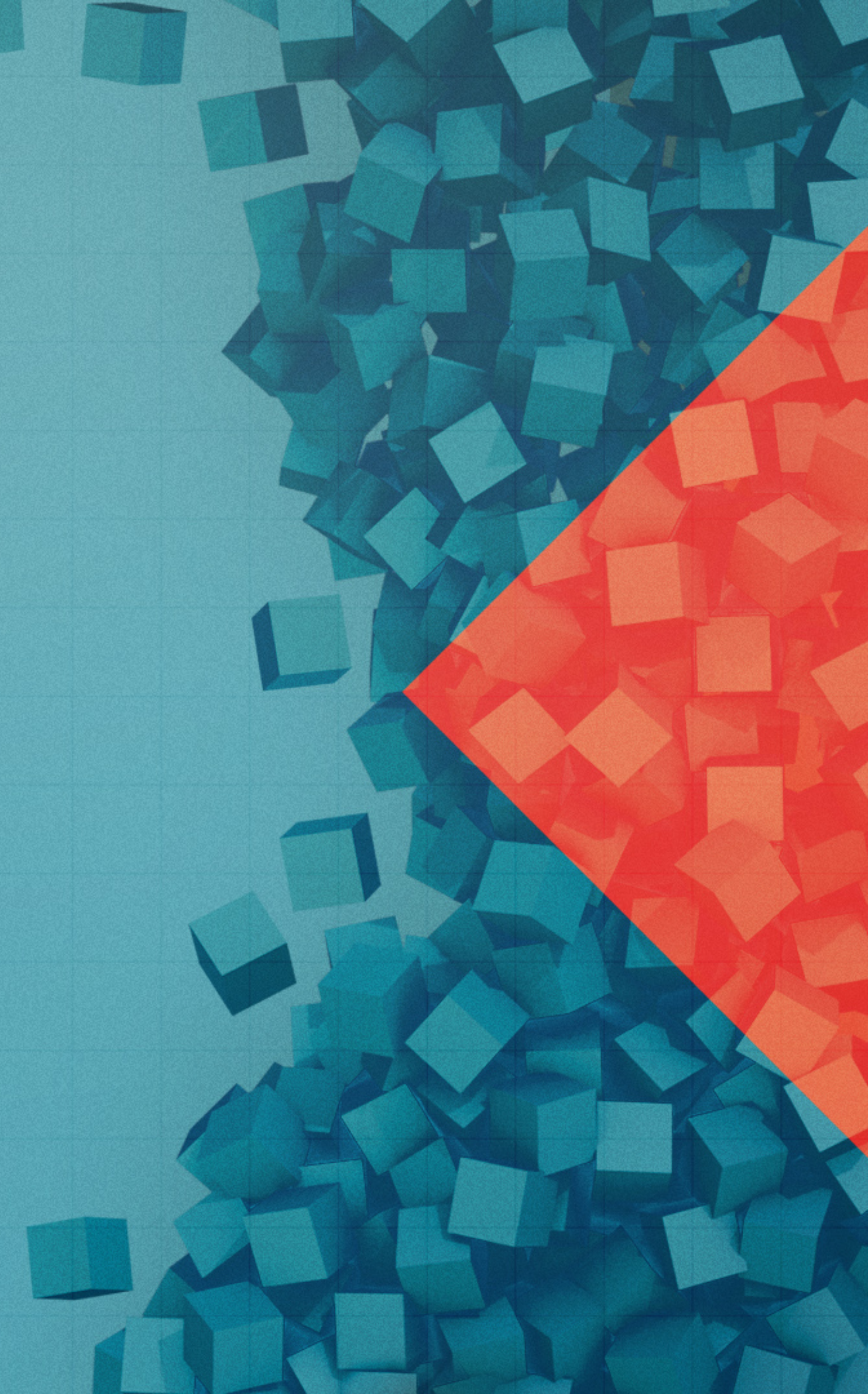
Purpose of Acts

- Acts describes the rapid spread of the testimony of Jesus' followers.
 - Jesus, whose Messiahship is questioned in Luke
 - Now broadly proclaimed as Lord and Messiah.
- Acts records the community of disciples that emerges.
 - They are eventually called Christians (11.26) and first referred to as the church (5.11; 8.1, 3; 9.31; 20.28)

Purpose of Acts

- **The Jesus story begins in the gospels**
 - **Jesus is the point of origin for the story that evolves in to the church.**
 - **Acts records that beginning and still expanding story of the church.**
 - **You and I are the continuation of that story.**
- **Christian story deeply connected to the Jewish story.**

Outline of Acts



Outline of Major Sections of Acts

- **The Early Church Community (1.1-26)**
- **The Witness in Jerusalem (2.1-8.4)**
- **The Witness in Judea and Samaria (8.4-40)**
- **The Witness Carried to the Gentiles (9.1-14.28)**
- **The Jerusalem Decision about the Gentile Christians (15.1-35)**
- **Paul's Universal Mission and Testimony (15.36-22.21)**
- **Paul's imprisonment for the Gospel (22.22-28.31)**

The Early Christian Community (1.1-26)



The Prologue (1.1-2)

- Luke begins Acts as he did his gospel. (**Acts 1.1-11**)
 - Summarizes details already presented in Luke's Gospel.
- Prologue (**1.1-2**) accomplishes three things:
 - Name of the person to whom the author is writing.
 - Description of the contents of Luke and the continuity of this writing to the earlier one.
 - An allusion to what follows in this work.

The Prologue (1.1-2)

- Prologue introduces:
 - Jesus and the beginning of his works (Luke).
 - Jesus' instruction to his disciples
 - Disciples become the official transmitters of the Gospel that Jesus himself preached.
- Luke stresses the Spirit guided apostolic character of the Christian gospel.
 - This is the first of 57 occurrences of **Spirit** in Acts.

Empowering of the Holy Spirit

- Spirit of God will play a central role in the spreading of the Good News from Jerusalem to the ends of the world. (1.8)
 - Only a few chapters in the book of Acts where the Spirit's influence not evident in some way.
 - Spirit emphasized from the very beginning.

Empowering of the Holy Spirit

- **Holy Spirit the driving force behind**
 - **The Launching the Age of the Church**
 - **The Work of Disciples and Apostle**
 - **Spread of the Gospel.**

Empowering of the Holy Spirit

- **How is the Spirit presented?**
 - **Picture of the Spirit's actions becomes clearer as we proceed through the story of Acts.**
 - **Will inform how the church current understands the work of the Spirit.**
 - **Luke builds upon the descriptions of the work of the Spirit from the Old Testament.**

Descriptions of the Spirit

- Old Testament expressed God's presence to disciples or to the world:
 - Form of breath or forceful wind activity (Gen. 1, 1 King 19.11)
 - Raising up leaders (Judges 6.34; 11.29)
 - Inspiring prophecy (Num. 24.2; Ezek 2.2; Hos 9.7)
 - Judging (Isaiah 4.4)

The Twelve

- Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen: **Acts 1:2**
- Alludes to Luke 6.13
 - And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles;
 - Foreshadows the last disciple who will be chosen.

The Twelve

- Seems to limit the group of apostles to the Twelve chosen by Jesus.
- Foreshadows the last disciple who will be chosen: Paul.

Instructing the Disciples

- Jesus' instructions deal with four issues:
 - **The idea of the Kingdom of God**
 - Issue first introduced in the gospels
 - And he said unto them, I must preach **the kingdom of God** to other cities also: for therefore am I sent.
Luke 4:43
 - Emphasis on Jesus's proclamation of God's kingdom instructs the disciples and modern believers.

What does it mean to
proclaim the **Kingdom of
God** today?

The background features a teal grid pattern. On the right side, there is a large, semi-transparent red triangle pointing towards the center. Scattered across the teal background are numerous small, 3D teal cubes, some of which are partially obscured by the red triangle.

Instructing Disciple

- **Command for the disciples not to depart of Jerusalem.**
- **Jerusalem will become the focal point of activity.**
- **But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in **Jerusalem**, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.**

Acts 1:8

Command: Do Not Depart

- Jerusalem the city from which the testimony must be carried.
- Links the beginning of Acts to the end of Luke
 - And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at **Jerusalem. Luke 24:47**

Promise of the Father

- **Explanation of the promise of the Father mentioned in Luke 24.49**
- **Now interpreted as coming baptism with the Holy Spirit.**
 - **Apostles and Disciples to be invested with power.**
 - **Spirit is the dynamic principle of the existence of Christians and empowers their role as witnesses.**



How Is the Spirit
Empowering Your
Christian Existence?