

Purpose

To give an accurate account of the early Church

Author

Luke, a Gentile physician

Recipients

Theophilus (63-70 AD) and Christ-followers

Setting

Acts is the connecting link between Christ's life and the life of the Church, between the Gospels and the Letters

Key People

Peter, John, James, Stephen, Philip, Paul, Barnabas, James (Jesus' brother), Timothy, Silas, Apollos, Felix, Festus, and Agrippa

Key Places

Jerusalem, Samaria, Antioch, Cyprus, Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, Corinth, Ephesus, Caesarea, Malta, and Rome

Key Verse

"When the Holy Spirit has come upon you, you will receive power and will tell people about Me everywhere..."

Acts 1:8

Special Feature

Acts is a sequel to *Luke*.

An Overview (28 Chapters)

- Peter's Ministry (1:1-12:25)
- Paul's Ministry (13:1-28:31)

Major Themes

- *Church History*: *Acts* is the history of how Christianity was founded and organized and how it solved its problems; the Church was a dynamic, growing community of believers from Jerusalem to Syria, Africa, Asia, and Europe. In the first century, Christianity spread from believing Jews to non-Jews in 39 cities and 30 countries, islands, or provinces.
- *Holy Spirit*: The Church did not start or grow by its own power or enthusiasm. The disciples were empowered by God's Holy Spirit. He was the promised Counselor and Guide sent when Jesus returned to heaven. The Holy Spirit's work demonstrated that Christianity was supernatural.
- *Witnessing*: Peter, John, Philip, Paul, Barnabas, and thousands more shared their new faith in Christ. By personal testimony, preaching, or defense before authorities, they told their story with boldness and courage to all who would listen.
- *Opposition*: Through imprisonment, beatings, plots, and riots, Christians were persecuted by both Jews and Gentiles, but, the opposition became a catalyst for the spread of Christianity. Growth during times of oppression showed that the Church was not the work of humans, but a work of God.