

# Acts - Introduction

The Book of Acts is a history of the growth of the church from it's creation until Paul's first Roman imprisonment. It reveals how Jesus used His people to build His church.

## 1. Author Luke the beloved physician. Col 4:14

A. The former Treatise - narrows it to the four gospels, Luke being most likely Acts 1:1-3; Lk 1:1-2

B. The similarities between <u>Lk 24:47 &amp; Acts 1:1-12:(See next page)</u>			
You are witnesses	<u>Acts 1:8;</u>	<u>Luke 24:48</u>	
I Send the Promise	<u>Acts 1:4;</u>	<u>Luke 24:49</u>	
Tarry in the city	<u>Acts 1:4;</u>	<u>Luke 24:49</u>	
parted and carried to heaven	<u>Acts 1:9;</u>	<u>Luke 24:51</u>	
You will receive power	<u>Acts 1:8;</u>	<u>Luke 24:49</u>	
Returned to Jerusalem	<u>Acts 1:12;</u>	<u>Luke 24:52</u>	

C. One of Paul's traveling Companions. Acts 16:10-17; 20:6-16; 21; 27; 28. used "**we**" instead of "**they**"

D. All other possible authors except Luke and Titus are mentioned in the book. (Not an Apostle [all mentioned in Acts 1:13]; Not John Mark [mentioned in 12:12,25; 15:37-39]. So very unlikely it was Matthew; Mark or John. This only leaves the Gospel of Luke.

E. All writers in the first and second century state that Luke was the author.

## 2. Chronology

It is difficult to pinpoint exactly when all the events in the book of Acts took place. But there are three references in the book that give us the means to put firm dates.

Jesus death & the establishment of the church	Acts 1	33	
Herod's Death	Acts 12	44	
Paul in prison in Caesarea(two years)	Acts 24:27	58-59	
Recall of Felix	Acts 24:27	60-61	
Paul imprisoned in Rome(two years)	Acts 28:30	61-63	

Everything that occurs in the book of Acts must fit into these dates:

Acts 1 - 12	about 11 years
Acts 12 - 24	about 14 years
Acts 25 - 28	about 4 years

Since Luke was with Paul when he got to Jerusalem (Acts 21:17), but not while he was in Caesarea(No "**we**" until 27:1), it is very probable that that Luke wrote the gospel while Paul was in prison in Caesarea for two years, and Acts while Paul was in Rome for two years. This is only conjecture, but fits with two main points. Luke was written before Acts and Acts ends with Paul still in prison in Rome(probably because he finished the book then).

## 3 Contents of the book of Acts

The Outline of the book is easy to remember. Just memorize Acts 1:8

*"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth. Acts 1:8*

You shall be my witnesses. The book of Acts gives a history of the apostles witness in:

In Jerusalem	Acts 1:1-8:4
In all Judea and Samaria	Acts 8:4-12:25
To the uttermost parts of the earth	Acts 13-28

<u>Acts</u>	<u>Main Character</u>	<u>Main City</u>	<u>Main People</u>
1 - 12	Peter	Jerusalem	Jews
13 - 28	Paul	Antioch	Gentiles

## **B. Similar Historical facts of Luke 24:44-53**

### **& Acts 1:1-12:**

#### **You are Witnesses**

*But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and **you shall be witnesses to Me** in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth. 1:8*

*And **you are witnesses** of these things. Lk. 24:48*

#### **Send the Promise**

*And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to **wait for the Promise of the Father**, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me; 1:4*

*Behold, **I send the Promise of My Father** upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high. Lk. 24:49*

#### **Tarry in the City**

*And being assembled together with them, He commanded them **not to depart from Jerusalem**, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me; 1:4*

*"Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but **tarry in the city of Jerusalem** until you are endued with power from on high." Lk. 24:49*

#### **Parted and Carried to Heaven**

*Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, **He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.** 1:9*

*Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that **He was parted from them and carried up into heaven.** Lk. 24:51*

#### **You will Receive Power**

*But **you shall receive power** when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth. 1:8*

*"Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you **are endued with power from on high.**" Lk. 24:49*

#### **Returned to Jerusalem**

*Then **they returned to Jerusalem** from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey. 1:12*

*And they worshiped Him, and **returned to Jerusalem** with great joy, Lk. 24:52*

### **Goals in the Class:**

1. Learn the Main Points for each Chapter.
2. Be able to draw a map of the areas and place the cities that are listed on it.
3. Memorize cities Paul visited on his: Pre-journey; 1<sup>st</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> missionary journey and journey to Rome.
4. List the books Paul wrote in chronology order; placing them in their proper place in Acts and giving a general outline of the book and the events in Acts that relate to it.
5. Learn key memory verses.
6. Take the tests.

## Main Points of Each Chapter in the Book of Acts

- 1 Jesus teaches for 40 days then ascends.  
Promise of the Holy Spirit.  
Appointment of Matthias as 12th apostle.
- 2 Coming of the Holy Spirit  
Peter's first sermon  
3000 Baptized
- 3 Healing of Lame Man  
Peter's second sermon
- 4 Peter & John arrested and threatened.  
Barnabas sells property.
- 5 Ananias and Sapphira lie  
Second Arrest(all twelve beaten)
- 6 Grecian Widows cared for  
Stephen Arrested
- 7 Stephen preaches sermon  
Stephen stoned to death
- 8 Church scattered from Jerusalem  
Disciples preach in Judea and Samaria  
Philip preaches in Samaria  
Conversion of Simon & Ethiopian Eunuch
- 9 Conversion of Saul of Tarsus  
Peter in Lydda & Joppa
- 10 Conversion of Cornelius
- 11 Peter's defense of Gentile conversion  
Barnabas and Saul at Antioch
- 12 James beheaded  
Peter's arrest and deliverance  
Herod's death
- 13 1st Missionary Journey:  
Paphos and Antioch of Pisidia
- 14 1st Missionary Journey:  
Iconium, Lystra, Derbe
- 15 Jerusalem Conference  
Letter to Gentiles
- 16 2nd Missionary Journey: Philippi.
- 17 2nd Missionary Journey:  
Thessalonica, Berea, and Athens.
- 18 2nd Missionary Journey: Corinth.  
Begin Third Missionary Journey.
- 19 3rd Missionary Journey: Ephesus.
- 20 3rd Missionary Journey.  
Macedonia; Corinth; Troas.  
Sermon to Ephesian Elders.
- 21 3rd Missionary Journey ends.  
Paul Arrested in temple at Jerusalem.
- 22 Paul's sermon to Jews after arrest.
- 23 Paul before the Sanhedrin.  
Paul moved to Caesarea.
- 24 Paul speaks to Felix.
- 25 Paul speaks to Festus.  
Paul appeals to Caesar.
- 26 Paul speaks to Agrippa.
- 27 Journey to Rome.
- 28 Paul arrives in Rome.  
Paul preaches to Roman Jews.  
Acts closes with Paul in prison.

## Nouns and Pronouns of Acts 1-2:15

In both English and Greek grammar, the pronoun is always refers back to the nearest antecedent. In the case of two antecedents, the only way to interpret is by context. There has been a question whether only the twelve apostles or all 120 who were in the upper room received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. A careful look at the context leans more strongly to the apostles.

1 The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, 2 until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the **APOSTLES** whom He had chosen, 3 **TO WHOM** He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by **THEM** during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. 4 And being assembled together with **THEM**, He commanded **THEM** not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "**YOU** have heard from Me; 5 "for John truly baptized with water, but **YOU** shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." 6 Therefore, when **THEY** had come together, **THEY** asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" 7 And He said to **THEM**, "It is not for **YOU** to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. 8 "**But YOU** shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon **YOU**; and **YOU** shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." 9 Now when He had spoken these things, while **THEY** watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of **THEIR** sight. 10 And **WHILE THEY** looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by **THEM** in white apparel, 11 who also said, "**MEN OF GALILEE**, why do **YOU** stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from **YOU** into heaven, will so come in like manner as **YOU** saw Him go into heaven." 12 **Then THEY** returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey. 13 And when **THEY** had entered, **THEY** went up into the upper room where **THEY** were staying: **PETER, JAMES, JOHN, AND ANDREW; PHILIP AND THOMAS; BARTHOLOMEW AND MATTHEW; JAMES THE SON OF ALPHEUS AND SIMON THE ZEALOT; AND JUDAS THE SON OF JAMES.** 14 **THESE ALL** continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers. 15 And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples (altogether the number of names was about a hundred and twenty), and said, 16 "**Men and brethren**, this Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus; 17 "**for HE** was numbered with **US** and obtained a part in this ministry." 18 (Now this man purchased a field with the wages of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his entrails gushed out. 19 And it became known to all those dwelling in Jerusalem; so that field is called in their own language, Akel Dama, that is, Field of Blood.) 20 "For it is written in the book of Psalms: 'Let his dwelling place be desolate, and let no one live in it'; and, 'Let another take **HIS OFFICE.**' 21 "Therefore, of these men who have accompanied **US** all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among **US**, 22 "beginning from the baptism of John to that day when He was taken up from **US**, one of these must become a witness with **US** of His resurrection." 23 **And they proposed two:** Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. 24 **And they prayed and said,** "You, O Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which of these two You have chosen 25 "to take part in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place." 26 **And they cast their lots,** and the lot fell on Matthias. **And HE** was numbered with **THE ELEVEN APOSTLES.**

1 Now when the Day of Pentecost had fully come, **THEY** were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where **THEY** were sitting. 3 Then there appeared to **THEM** divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of **THEM**. 4 And **THEY** were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave **THEM** utterance. 5 And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. 6 And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard **THEM** speak in his own language. 7 Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "Look, are not **ALL THESE WHO SPEAK GALILEANS?** 8 "And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born? 9 "Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, 10 "Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, 11 "Cretans and Arabs-- we hear **THEM** speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God." 12 So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "Whatever could this mean?" 13 Others mocking said, "**THEY** are full of new wine." 14 **But PETER, STANDING UP WITH THE ELEVEN,** raised his voice and said to them, "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words. 15 "**For THESE** are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day.

## The Teachings of Baptisms

Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, 2 of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. 3 And this we will do if God permits. Heb 6:1-3

As one carefully sifts through the NT there are five baptism described. In the order in which they were introduced they are:

### **1. The Baptism of John. Matthew 3:6-13; 21:25 Mark 1:4ff**

*But He answered and said to them, I also will ask you one thing, and answer Me: 4 The **baptism of John**-- was it from heaven or from men? Luke 20:3-4*

### **2. Holy Spirit Baptism Matthew 3:11;**

*I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, Upon whom you see the Spirit DESCENDING, and remaining on Him, this is He who **baptizes with the Holy Spirit**. 34 And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God. John 1:33-34*

### **3. Baptism of Fire Matthew 3:11**

*John answered, saying to all, I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will **baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire**. 17 His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather the wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire. Lk 3:16-17*

### **4. Baptism of Suffering Luke 12:50**

*But Jesus said to them, You do not know what you ask. Can you drink the cup that I drink, and **be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with**? 39 They said to Him, We are able. So Jesus said to them, You will indeed drink the cup that I drink, and with the baptism I am baptized with you will be baptized; Mk 10:38-39*

*"But **I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am till it is accomplished!** Lk 12:50*

### **5. Baptism in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit Mt 28:19**

*And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen. Matt 28:18-20*

## **Today there is but ONE baptism!**

*There is **one body** and **one Spirit**, just as you were called in **one hope** of your calling; 5 **one Lord, one faith, one baptism**; 6 **one God** and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. Eph 4:4-6*

This passage was written while Paul was in prison in Rome. So by the time of that writing all other baptism were either in the past: (1) John's baptism(Acts 19:1-5); (2) The baptism of the Holy Spirit (3)Jesus baptism into suffering. Or they were in the future: (4) The baptism of fire when thrown into the lake of fire(Rev 20:14-15).

This left the baptism Jesus told His apostles to use until the end of the age.

*"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen. Mt 28:19-20*

Acts 8:36-38 The Eunuch was baptized in **water**.

Eph 5:25 Church sanctified by washing of **water**.

I Pet 3:20-21 The **water** of baptism now saves us.

Heb 10:22 Our bodies were washed with pure **water**.

John 3:3-5 Born of **water** and the Spirit to enter kingdom.

The one baptism, The baptism in the name of Jesus Christ is water baptism. Therefore, anytime the word is used and it is unqualified, this is the baptism under consideration. When it is Holy Spirit baptism, God calls it such.

1. Baptism **in the name of Jesus Christ** is for remission of sins and to receive gift of the Holy Spirit.

*Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit Acts 2:38*

2. The Samaritans were baptized **in the name of the Lord Jesus** but did not receive any miraculous abilities from the Holy Spirit as he had not yet fallen on any of them. Acts 8:12-16

*But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized. 13 Then Simon himself also believed; and when he was baptized he continued with Philip, and was amazed, seeing the miracles and signs which were done. 14 Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, 15 who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. 16 For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 17 Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. 18 And when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money, 19 saying, "Give me this power also, that anyone on whom I lay hands may receive the Holy Spirit." Acts 8:12-19*

3. Philip preached Jesus to the Eunuch and when he saw water and he asked to be baptized. Instead of correcting him, Philip stopped the chariot, they both went into the water and Philip baptized him.

*Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. 36 Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?" 37 Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." 38 So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. 39 Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing. Acts 8:35-38*

4. When Peter saw that the Gentiles were baptized with the Holy Spirit as they had been at the beginning, he commanded them to be baptized in water **in the name of the Jesus Christ** for the remission of sins.

*While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. 45 And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. 46 For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then Peter answered, 47 "Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" 48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days. Acts 10:44-48*