

Term 2, 2025

Name:

Acts – Bible Studies



ACTS

TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

"Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. This man was handed over to you by God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him....God has raised this Jesus to life and we are all witnesses of it.

Acts 2:22-24,33

Term Overview

Week Starting on Sunday	Passage	Big Idea
27 th April	Acts Overview Study	
4 th May	Acts 1:1-11	Jesus reigns, and His followers empowered by the Holy Spirit grow his kingdom by bearing witness to him.
11 th May	Acts 1:12-26	God is sovereign in every circumstance and the church devote themselves in prayer and appoint another Apostle to replace Judas to be a witness to the world of Jesus' resurrection
18 th May	Acts 2	The Holy Spirit empowers Christ's church to boldly proclaim Jesus as Lord and gather as a transformed community.
25 th May	Acts 5	God works powerfully to purify and grow his church
1 st June	Acts 9	God is powerful and gracious to save the unexpected – transform their lives and call people to serve him.
8 th June	Acts 10	The saving message of Jesus and his kingdom is for all people from all nations.
15 th June	Acts 17	God alone is to be worshipped as the creator and now is the time to repent and follow him.
22 nd June	End of Term Social	

The Book of Acts Overview

This is the second volume in the unified, two-part work that we know today as Luke-Acts. Both books were written by the same author, Luke, a traveling co-worker to Paul (Col. 4:14). This is clear from the book's introduction, in which Luke says, "I produced my first volume (that is, the Gospel) about all the things Jesus began to do and teach" (Acts 1:1).

In this opening line, Luke is also giving a clue as to what the book of Acts will be about. In volume one, Jesus began "to do and teach," and so volume two will naturally be about what Jesus continued to do and teach.

This leads to an interesting point about the book's traditional, but not original, title, The Acts of the Apostles. While different apostles do appear throughout most of the stories, the only single character who unifies the story from beginning to end is Jesus, appearing personally or acting through the Holy Spirit. The book, therefore, could be more accurately named The Acts of Jesus and the Spirit.

The big idea of the Book of Acts is the expanding rule of the risen King Jesus as the gospel spreads to the ends of the earth.

Structure of the Book of Acts

From Acts 1:8 Jesus declares that his saving message is to ring to the world and the disciples are the ones who are going to take the message out. This message is going to first be preached in Jerusalem, then to Judea and Samaria and eventually to the ends of the earth. This spread of the gospel message shapes the structure of the book of Acts.

1. The Witness of the Church in Jerusalem (1–7)

The gospel takes root among the Jews in Jerusalem.

2. The Witness of the Church in Judea and Samaria (8–12)

The gospel spreads beyond Jerusalem to surrounding regions, crossing cultural and ethnic boundaries.

3. The Witness of the Church to the Ends of the Earth (13–28)

The gospel goes to the heart of the Roman Empire and continues to ring out, showing that the mission of Jesus is unstoppable.

Key Themes across the Book of Acts

1. The coming of the Spirit to empower the church
2. The reign and rule of the risen Lord Jesus
3. The sovereignty of God
4. Bold Witness in the Face of Opposition
5. The birth of the church
 - Unity and Tension in a Diverse Church
 - The Kingdom of Jesus and the gospel is for all nations

Study 1: Overview of Acts

Getting started:

What things do you know already about the book of Acts?
Favourite stories or characters?

Pray that God would transform us by his word to treasure Christ more and to seek to live for his kingdom.

1. Watch the bible project video giving an overview of Acts:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CGbNw855ksw>

2. What things strike you from it?

3. What things did you find helpful?

4. What questions did it raise for you?

5. In groups work through the table below, skimming through the sections of Acts

Bible section to skim and scan	How is Jesus mission spreading?	Any notable events or people introduced?
Acts 1		
Acts 2-7		
Acts 8-12		
Acts 13-20		
Acts 21-28		

6. What keys themes did you pick up?

To finish

7. How are you seeking to be a part of Jesus' mission to the ends of the earth?

Something I'd love to remember...

Something I'd love prayer for...

Study 2: Acts 1:1-11

Getting started:

What are some key events or moments in your life that you have witnessed?

Pray that God would transform us by his word to treasure Christ more and to seek to live for his kingdom.

Read Luke 1: 1-4 and Acts 1:1-3

1. In what ways are the books of Luke and Acts similar? In what ways are they different?
2. What key details is Luke telling us about Jesus' last days with his followers?
3. What do you think is the significance of the word 'began' in Acts 1:1?

Read Acts 1:4-11

4. It would seem that the disciples are going to have an important role in what Jesus will continue to do and teach. What does Jesus want the disciples to do, and why?
5. What signs are there that Jesus' plans are different from what the disciples expected (vv. 6-8)?
6. The disciples were people like Peter, James, John... What do you know of their track record with Jesus up until then? How surprising is Jesus' mission for them?
7. What comfort does Jesus give his disciples in the mission he sets before them?

To finish

8. In what ways are we different from the disciples in Acts?
In what ways are we similar?

9. Where do we fit into Jesus' mission plan of 1:8? What
difference should this mission plan make to our lives?

Something I'd love to remember...

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Study 3: Acts 1:12-26

Getting started:

Have you ever had a setback in life, then after some time been able to look back and see the good that came out of it?

Pray that God would transform us by his word to treasure Christ more and to seek to live for his kingdom.

Read Acts 1:12-26

1. The Apostles have just returned to Jerusalem, What have they recently witnessed and why have they returned to Jerusalem?
2. Look at the list of names in Acts 1:13-15. What does this tell us about the disciples?
3. What image do we have of the church here in Acts and do we have any similarities in today's church?

4. What characteristics must Judas' replacement have to become an Apostle and why are they important?

5. Peter quotes Ps 69 & 109 in reference to Judas' betrayal. Split into 2 groups and read a Psalm each. Look at how these Psalms are fulfilled in Jesus and what confidence does that give us?

To finish

6. What's something in this passage that you've found convicting?

7. How should we respond knowing God is sovereign and in control in every circumstance?

Something I'd love to remember...

Something I'd love prayer for...

Study 4: Acts 2

Getting started:

What's the most significant celebration or festival you've ever attended? What made it memorable?

Pray that God would transform us by his word to treasure Christ more and to seek to live for his kingdom.

Read Acts 2:1-13

1. What happened to the disciples on the day of Pentecost?
What were the physical signs that accompanied the Spirit's coming?

2. How did the crowd respond to what they were witnessing? What does this tell you about the significance of the event?

Read Acts 2:14-21

3. How does Peter interpret what's happening? What Old Testament passage does he refer to?

4. According to Peter, what time period had now begun with the coming of the Spirit? What future event does this period lead to?

Read Acts 2:22-36

5. Peter quotes from two Psalms (16 and 110) to show that Jesus is the promised Messiah. What key points does he make from these Scriptures?

6. What is Peter's main conclusion about Jesus in verse 36?

Read Acts 2:37-47

7. How did the people respond to Peter's message? What did Peter instruct them to do?

8. What did the new believers devote themselves to?

9. What does this passage teach us about the birth of the church? What elements were present from the very beginning?

To finish

10. The disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit so they could be witnesses to Jesus (Acts 1:8). How does this shape your understanding of the Spirit's work in your life?

11. How does the pattern of the early church in Acts 2:42-47 challenge or encourage you in your participation in church life today?

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Something I'd love prayer for...

Study 5: Acts 5

Getting started:

Can you think of a time when you under-estimated something important?

Pray that God would transform us by his word to treasure Christ more and to seek to live for his kingdom.

1. **Read Acts 4:32-35.** What do you notice about the community of believers?
2. **Read Acts 5:1-16.** Summarise the key events of this passage.
3. What was different about the approach Barnabas took to sharing the proceeds of his land sale in 4:36-37, compared to Ananias and Sapphira?

4. What does Peter accuse Ananias of (vs 3-4)? What does Peter accuse Sapphira of (vs 9)

5. What does this passage tell us about the Holy Spirit and his concern for the church? How does this challenge your heart and actions towards God's church?

6. What are the consequences of Ananias and Sapphira's death for the believers?

Read Acts 5:17-42.

7. A common 'story arc' repeated throughout Acts is:
 1. Christian leaders arise and preach the gospel
 2. Listeners are converted and added to the church
 3. Opponents begin to persecute the Christian leaders
 4. God intervenes to rescue the leaders or otherwise protect the church

Identify the way each of these points unfolds in Acts 5:12-42?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

8. What message were the apostles preaching?

9. How do these events answer the prayers of Peter and John in Acts 4:23-31?

10. What does Acts 5 show us about the power of God?

To finish

11. The apostles say “We must obey God rather than human beings” (vs 29) and rejoice that they are counted worthy to suffer disgrace for the Name (vs 41). How does this challenge you in your own obedience to God, even when it is uncomfortable/difficult?

Something I'd love to remember...

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Study 6: Acts 9

Getting started:

How did you first hear about Jesus?

Pray that God would transform us by his word to treasure Christ more and to seek to live for his kingdom.

Read Acts 9: 1-19

1. What do we know about Saul prior to this point?

Read Acts 7:58 – 8:3

2. What did Saul go to Damascus to do?

3. Luke gives us a complete picture in Acts of Paul becoming a Christian by mentioning details of the event three times. The first here in Acts 9 by Luke. The other two times are by Paul himself. Pair up and choose either Acts 22: 1-21 or Acts 26: 1-23. Read and note what extra details or background information we get in comparison to Acts 9.

Acts 22

4. What did God choose Saul to do? (read Acts 9:15-16 & 26:16-18)

Read Acts 9:18-31

5. What did Saul do in response to his healing?

Read Acts 9:32-43

6. How do we see Peter's dependence on Jesus in these verses?
7. What were people's response to the two healings who either witnessed it themselves or heard of it?

To finish:

8. Saul's response to his meeting Jesus was to be baptized and preach that Jesus is the son of God – how does this spur you on in the mission of sharing the gospel?

9. "If God can forgive Saul, he can forgive anyone!" Do you think that's true? In what ways do we sometimes limit God's grace?

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Study 7: Acts 10

Getting started:

In a Cadbury box of favourites, which one is your favourite to eat? (*Caramilk, Crunchie, Twirl, Moro, Boost, Dairy Milk, Turkish Delight, Cherry Ripe, Old Gold, Picnic, and Caramello*)

Pray that God would transform us by his word to treasure Christ more and to seek to live for his kingdom.

Read Acts 10:1-23

1. What do we discover about Cornelius in these verses?
2. Why do you think Cornelius needed a vision to encourage him to invite Peter?
3. Describe in your own words the content of Peter's vision. (For the artistic, try drawing it.)
4. What does Peter mean when he says that some animals are "unclean" (v. 14)?

Read Acts 10:24-48.

5. What lesson does Peter say he learned from his vision of the foods? How does he put that lesson into practice?

6. Peter tells Cornelius about Jesus. The climax of the speech is in verse 43. Why does the word 'everyone' have special significance in verse 43? (See also how Peter starts his speech in verses 34-35.)

7. How do the Gentiles respond to Peter's message? How do the Jews who are there respond?

To finish

8. Peter realises that "God shows no partiality" (10:34). In what ways do we sometimes show favouritism in:
our evangelism?

our church relationships?

9. So far in Acts, we have seen that the risen Jesus is powerfully committed to saving all peoples. To what extent do you share this desire? How can we encourage each other to share Jesus' priorities?

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Study 8: Acts 17

Getting started:

What do you think it means to worship? And what kinds of things do you worship?

Pray that God would transform us by his word to treasure Christ more and to seek to live for his kingdom.

Read Acts 17:1-15

1. Fill in the table below as to the various responses to message of Jesus in Thessalonica and Berea.

Responses in Thessalonica	Response in Berea

2. What are the different reasons people are hostile to the ministry of Paul & Silas?

3. How does that shape the way you think about evangelism?

Read Acts 17:16-34

4. From verses 16-23, what can we learn about Athens at this time? (*the people, culture, religion?*)

5. How would you describe the tone / vibe / emotion of this passage?

6. What is idolatry? What did their idolatry look like in Athens?

- a. Read Romans 1:18-25. How does idolatry make us foolish?

b. What is God's response to false worship and idolatry?

c. What does idolatry look like today in Wellington?

7. Back to Acts 17... Looking at Paul's speech in vs. 22-29, make a list of all the facts we learn about God. (Perhaps do this in pairs or trios).

a. What stands out to you from Paul's speech?

8. Paul argues that God can't be found in images made by humans. How does he arrive at this conclusion?

9. What does Paul encourage the people of Athens to do? What motivation does he give them?

To finish

10. How should this passage shape the way we think about God, ourselves, and the world?

11. God commands everyone to repent of false worship.
What are you most tempted to worship instead of God?

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