
Book of Acts – Course A

Instructions:

Please take all courses in order as listed on our home page (the computer will ask!). If you have not done all the lessons of previous courses, please [click here to go to the beginning](#).

If you have not already done so, save this lesson to your computer using the "save" feature of your browser or PDF reader. Then print out the lesson (or at least open it in your browser or PDF reader **offline** – not on the Internet). Read the lesson and **study in your Bible the passages indicated >>> Scripture <<<**. Following each passage, study each question that has a number enclosed in asterisks (*1*, *2*, etc.), and **write down your answers on paper**. Some questions include more than one number because they have more than one blank to fill in. ("Think" questions should be carefully considered for your own benefit, but your answers will not be submitted to us.) Please take your time, study each passage carefully, answer the questions honestly, and consider the applications to your own life (John 12:48; 2 Tim. 2:15).

When you have studied the whole lesson and written down answers to all the indicated questions, return to the menu for this course on our web site at www.BibleStudyLessons.com and click on the link for the **answer quiz** for this lesson (or simply click on the link at the end of this lesson). Follow the directions to submit your answers and receive your grade. You will then be given an opportunity to see the correct answers to the questions. Please save this lesson and the correct answers for future reference.

Then move on to the next lesson or the next course in order. **Please study all lessons in all courses in order as listed in the menus on our web site.**

Thank you for your interest, and God bless your study of His word.

Preparing for the Church to Begin – Acts 1

Lesson 1

Introduction:

The book of Acts records the history of the early church and the spread of the gospel.

It discusses these themes:

Themes in Acts

- * Examples of conversion (how to be forgiven of sin)
- * Evidence Jesus is God's Son and the Bible is God's word
- * Basic truths about the church (its origin, organization, worship, etc.)
- * Information about the work of the Holy Spirit through the apostles

Note: To complete this study we suggest you have a Bible with cross-references and concordance. The best translations would be New King James Version, King James Version, American Standard

Version, or New American Standard Version, though others may work acceptably.

Additional special note: Please be aware that this lesson introduces some subjects and raises some questions which are discussed further in future lessons. This may make this lesson seem somewhat more difficult than others. Please be patient and continue the studies so you can study the subjects further in future lessons.

Author of the book

>>> Please read Acts 1:1,2 and compare Luke 1:1–4. <<<

1 The books of Acts and Luke are both addressed to whom? Answer: Acts and Luke are both addressed to _____.

Comments: For the following reasons, Luke is generally considered to be the inspired author of Acts:

- * The author of Acts had written a former account of Jesus' life.
- * Both Luke and Acts are addressed to Theophilus.
- * Luke was a physician (Col. 4:14), and Acts contains several medical terms.
- * The use of "we" in describing Paul's journeys indicates the author was one of Paul's traveling companions.

I. Promise of the Spirit and the Kingdom – Acts 1:1–8

The Apostles and the Evidence for Faith

>>> Please read Acts 1:1–5. <<<

2&3 To what men (v2) did Jesus show Himself alive, and for how long? Answer: Jesus showed Himself to the _____ for _____ days.

4&5 What did He promise would happen to them and where? Answer: They would be baptized with the _____ in the city of _____ not many days later.

6 Holy Spirit baptism was which of the following (read vv 4,5 carefully)? (a) a command, or (b) a promise from the Father? Answer: _____.

Comments: "Apostle" means "one who is sent on a mission." Jesus chose His apostles to serve as eyewitnesses of His resurrection (see 1:21,22). He appeared to them repeatedly over a period of 40 days. Other people also saw Him, but the apostles were especially commissioned to preach and testify of Him (v8).

Our faith in Jesus is based on "many infallible proofs" (v3). The Christian's faith is not based on myth, speculation, prejudice, family religion, or gullibility. God knew the gospel faith would be challenged, and men would need convincing evidence that it is true. So He has provided us with solid eyewitness testimony that would stand up in any legitimate court.

To preach Jesus' message (v8) the apostles needed special guidance of the Holy Spirit. Jesus promised to send the Spirit to them in Jerusalem soon after His ascension (cf. Matt. 3:11; John 14:26; 16:7–13).

Predictions of the Kingdom and the Holy Spirit

>>> Please read Acts 1:6–8. <<<

7 What question did Jesus' disciples ask? Answer: They asked if He would restore the _____ to Israel then.

8 What would they receive when the Holy Spirit came? (a) riches, (b) fame, (c) good health, (d) power, (e) all the preceding. Answer: _____.

9 What would they do as a result? Answer: They would be _____ of Jesus.

10 In what area does v8 say the apostles would preach? (a) Jerusalem, (b) Judea and Samaria, (c) the uttermost parts of the earth, (d) all the preceding. Answer: _____.

Comment: Verse 8 summarizes the spread of the gospel as recorded in Acts.

The Spread of the Gospel in Acts

Acts 1–7 – The gospel preached in Jerusalem
Acts 8–12 – The gospel preached in Judea and Samaria
Acts 13–28 – The gospel preached throughout the world

>>> Please read Mark 9:1. <<<

11 What would come with power in their lifetime? (a) the kingdom, (b) the Pope, (c) Jesus' second coming, (d) all the preceding. Answer: _____.

Jesus predicted His kingdom.

Comments: Jesus and His apostles had been discussing His coming kingdom (v3). Jesus' kingdom was a major theme of the gospel (see Matt. 3:2; 4:17; 10:5–7; Mark 1:14,15; Acts 8:12). Nevertheless, Jesus' disciples seriously misunderstood it, and so do many people today.

When the apostles asked when the kingdom would come, Jesus did not tell them (v6,7). But He said they would receive power to testify of Him when the Holy Spirit came (v8). They already knew the kingdom would come when the power came (Mark 9:1), and He had just said the Spirit would come in Jerusalem soon (Acts 1:4,5). Consider what we have learned about the kingdom:

Facts about the Coming of the Kingdom

- * The kingdom would come with power during the lifetime of the apostles (Mark 9:1).
- * The power would come when the Holy Spirit came (Acts 1:8).
- * The Holy Spirit would come in Jerusalem soon after Jesus' ascension (Acts 1:4,5).

Conclusion: The kingdom would soon come with power in Jerusalem when the Holy Spirit came on the apostles.

Great events were about to occur!

Think: Some people today say the kingdom still has not come but will come when Jesus returns. Can this be true in light of the above passages? (See also Col. 1:13; 1 Cor. 15:21–26; Rev. 1:9; Heb. 12:28.) We will study much more about the coming of the kingdom as our studies proceed.

Jesus promised the Holy Spirit.

Comments: Jesus here promised that the Holy Spirit would give the apostles power to testify of His resurrection. Note what we have learned about Holy Spirit baptism:

<i>Facts about Holy Spirit Baptism</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">* Not a command but a promise (v4).* Not in water, but in the Holy Spirit (v5).* Promised, not to people in general, but to the apostles (v2–5).* Came, not when the people chose, but when God chose (v4,6).* Came in Jerusalem (v4)* Gave apostles power to teach about Jesus (v8)* Came when the kingdom came (v2–8 cf. to Mark 9:1).

Think: Some folks claim that any Christian, even today, can receive Holy Spirit baptism if he wants it or knows how to receive it. Some even claim that, in this way, anyone today can do or receive miracles in his life. Can this be harmonized with the above facts?

>>> Please read Mark 16:15,16 and Matthew 28:18–20. <<<

12 The gospel of the Great Commission was to be preached where? Answer: The gospel should be preached to all the _____.

13 This baptism was which of the following? (a) a command or (b) just a promise? Answer: _____.

14 Who needs to obey this instruction? (a) just a small group of people, (b) everyone. Answer: _____.

Comment: Comparing these passages to Acts 1, we can learn that Holy Spirit baptism and the baptism of the Great Commission were two separate baptisms. The baptism of the Great Commission was a command required of all people throughout the whole world. We will see many examples of this baptism in the book of Acts and will learn much more about it. We will learn that it is a baptism in water, and that its purpose was to give salvation through the death of Jesus (Mark 16:15,16; see also Acts 8:35–39; 2:38; 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21; etc.).

Holy Spirit baptism, on the other hand, was a special promise to special people so they could do special work before the Bible had been completed. We will also learn much more about the work of the Holy Spirit as our study proceeds. We will see that there are only two events in all the Bible that are described as Holy Spirit baptism. There are no instances of Holy Spirit baptism after Acts 10 and 11.

II. Jesus' Ascension – Acts 1:9–11

>>> Please read Acts 1:9–11. <<<

15 What happened to Jesus in these verses? Answer: Jesus was taken up into a _____.

16 What promise did two men (angels) make? Answer: Jesus would _____ like He went.

Comment: The ascension took place from the Mount of Olives east of Jerusalem (v12). It was another great miracle witnessed by men to prove Jesus was from God.

The two men who spoke were clearly angels. Their promise that Jesus will come again is repeated in many other passages. See 1 Thess. 4:16,17; Rev. 1:7; Matt. 25:31–46.

Note that Mark 16:19 says that, when Jesus was received up into Heaven, He sat down at the right hand of God. This is the very place where the Christ is to reign and serve as King and Priest according to Psalm 110:1–4. We will learn more about this also in chap. 2. Indeed, all preparations were being made for the kingdom to begin!

III. A Replacement for Judas – Acts 1:12–26

>>> Please read Acts 1:12–14. <<<

17 How many apostles are named in v13? Answer (give a number): V13 names _____ apostles.

18 Who was with them? (a) Jesus' mother Mary, (b) His brothers, (c) other women, (d) all the preceding. Answer: _____.

>>> Please read Acts 1:15–19. <<<

19 Which apostle was not present here? Answer: The missing apostle was _____.

20 What sin had he committed? Answer: He served as guide for those who _____ Jesus.

21 How had he died? Answer: He _____ and his body burst open.

Comment: Judas had betrayed Jesus for 30 pieces of silver (Matt. 27:3–10). Afterward in remorse he had committed suicide. The current account shows how a replacement was chosen for him.

>>> Please read Acts 1:20–22. <<<

22 What did Peter say should be done? (a) appoint him to serve as Pope, (b) take up a collection, (c) appoint a replacement for Judas, (d) all the preceding. Answer: _____.

23 What qualification did one need to serve as an apostle? Answer: Apostles had to be witnesses of the _____.

Comments: Note that a witness is someone who can testify about what he has personally seen or experienced with his physical senses. Many other passages confirm that apostles had to be personal eyewitnesses that Jesus was alive after His death and resurrection. See Acts 1:2,3,8; 2:32; 3:15; 1 Cor. 9:1; Luke 24:48; John 15:27; 1 John 1:1–3; etc.

Think: Some folks say that their church has had successors to the apostles throughout the ages even till today. Are these "successors" all eyewitnesses of Jesus' resurrection? If not, how can they be true successors of the apostles? In fact, how can there be such a thing as a successor to an eyewitness?

The work of the apostles was to testify to the resurrection of Jesus and preach the gospel by direct revelation. The apostles completed that work in the first century and recorded their testimony and

their message in the New Testament Scriptures. That message now instructs us in righteousness and provides us to all good works (2 Tim. 3:16,17). It will live and abide forever (1 Peter 1:22–25).

The original apostles completely accomplished the work God intended apostles to complete. God never intended to have apostles or their successors throughout the history of the church, but He did want 12 at the beginning. Obviously we will learn more about the work of the apostles as we continue our study of "the Acts of the Apostles."

>>> Please read Acts 1:23–26. <<<

24,25,&26 What two men were suggested to take Judas' place? Answer: _____ called _____ and _____.

27 Who actually chose the new apostle? (a) the Lord, (b) the apostles, (c) a council of Cardinals. Answer: _____.

28 How many apostles were there then? Answer (give a number): There were now altogether _____ apostles.

Comment: All apostles had to be chosen personally and directly by Jesus (cf. Acts 1:2). Some folks today claim that their church chooses successors to the apostles by a vote of church leaders. But the Scriptures clearly say that the Lord chose all the apostles. (Note: Casting lots was used here as a means for God to reveal His will directly. See Josh. 14:1,2; 1 Sam. 14:41,42; Prov. 16:33.)

>>> Please read Acts 2:1. <<<

29 "They were all ... in one place" refers to what group of people (read carefully 1:26 and 2:1–4,14)? (a) the apostles, (b) all of Jesus' disciples, (c) a large group of believers and unbelievers. Answer: _____.

30 What day was it? (a) Passover, (b) Christmas, (c) Pentecost. Answer: _____.

Comments: "Pentecost" means literally "fifty days." It was a Jewish holy day that occurred about fifty days after the Passover. Since Jesus had been crucified at the Passover, the events of Acts 2 occurred about fifty days after Jesus' death.

Leviticus 23:15,16 shows that Pentecost always came on a first day of the week. Jewish males were required to assemble for this holy day, just as they had been for Passover (2:5). The events in this chapter occurred in Jerusalem (2:5,14).

In Acts 1 Jesus had instructed the apostles to wait in Jerusalem to receive the Holy Spirit. Chapter 2 begins by describing a meeting of the twelve apostles (cf. 2:1 to 1:26). They had assembled in Jerusalem waiting for the Spirit, just as Jesus had told them to do.

Conclusion

In this lesson we have learned several important facts that prepare us for the great events of Acts 2:

- 1) The apostles were men specifically appointed by Jesus to act as eyewitnesses that Jesus had been raised from the dead.
- 2) Before He ascended to heaven, Jesus promised the apostles that they would be guided by the Holy Spirit in preaching His message and bearing testimony of Him.

- 3) They would receive the Holy Spirit in the form of Holy Spirit baptism, which they were to wait in Jerusalem to receive a few days later.
- 4) The kingdom of Christ would come when the Holy Spirit came and gave the apostles the power to spread His message.

Chapter 1 has provided the background and set the scene for the events of chapter 2. As mentioned in the introduction, you may be wondering what the answers are to several questions that this lesson has raised. As we study chapter 2 and as we continue studying future lessons, we will see the fulfillment of the great promises of the coming of the Spirit and the beginning of the kingdom. This should answer many of your questions.

(Note: Lessons in this course include "personal application questions." These questions do not affect the student's "score," but they do help the student examine his commitment to the truths in the lesson, and they help us understand the student's viewpoints. Please answer the application questions below.)

Personal application questions:

31 Do you believe the apostles were guided by the Holy Spirit to preach the truths of the gospel?

32 Do you believe that all apostles had to be eyewitnesses of Jesus' resurrection?

33 Do you recognize that Holy Spirit baptism was a different baptism from that of the Great Commission? _____

When you have carefully studied this lesson and written down answers to all the questions, [click on this link to submit your answers.](#)

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